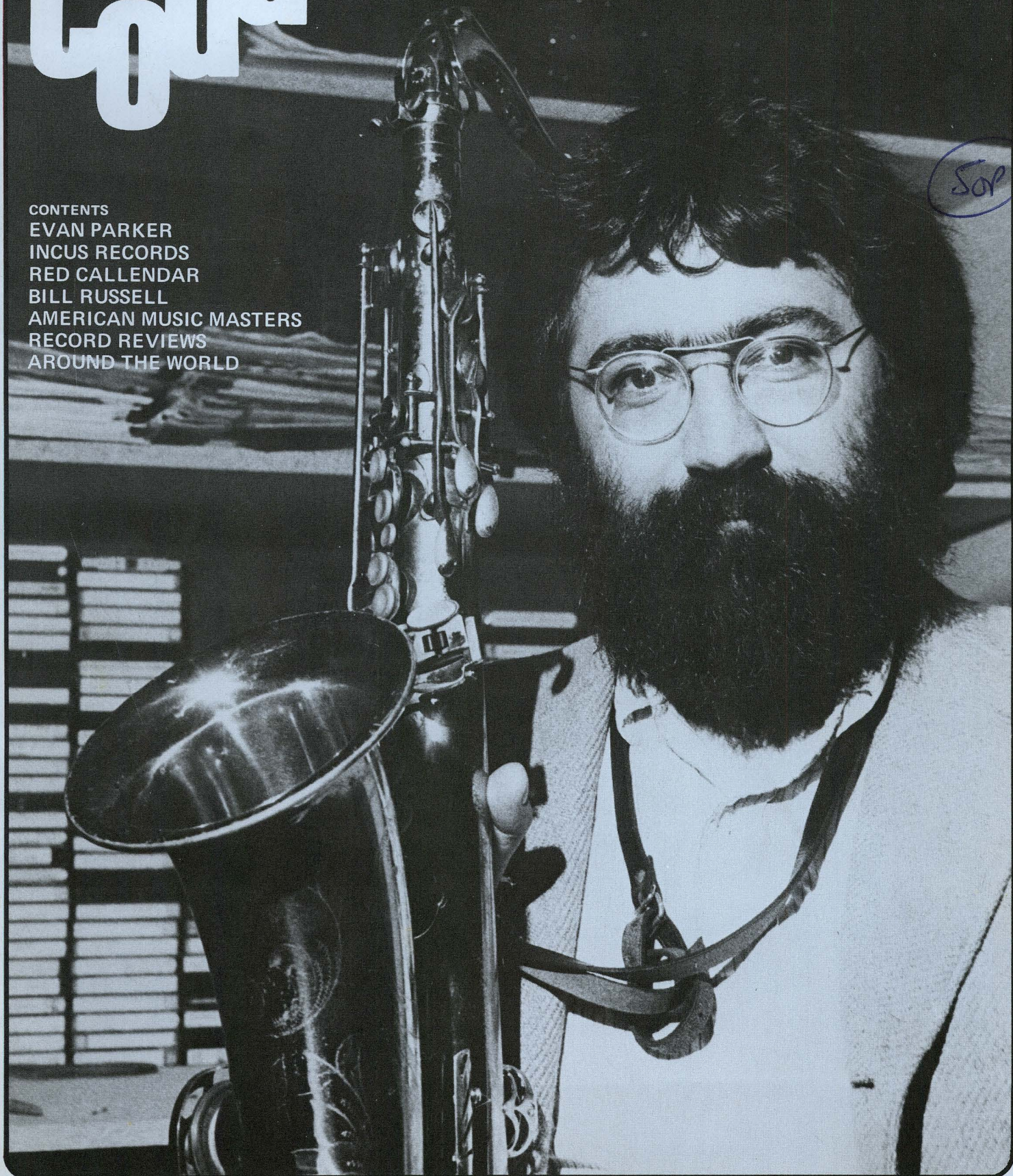


Coda

THE JAZZ MAGAZINE ● ISSUE NUMBER 167 (1979) ● \$1.50

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Nostalgia In Times Square
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The Original and Final Master
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CONTAINS 2 RECORDS
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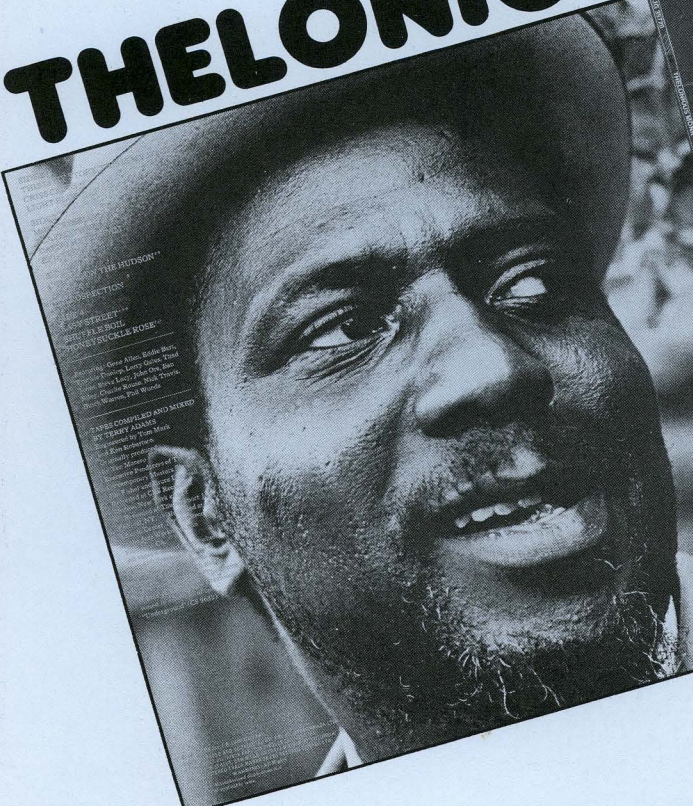


COLUMBIA JG 35717

THELONIOUS MONK

Thelonious
Monk


Always
Know



CONTAINS 2 RECORDS
CONTINENT 2 RECORDS DISQUES



COLUMBIA JG 35720

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LESTER YOUNG
photograph by Bob Parent from his exhibition
"Golden Years of Jazz" on view at the
OPTICA Gallery,
451, rue St-Francois-Xavier,
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EVAN PARKER

A PROFILE BY ROBERTO TERLIZZI



One of the key figures in the emergence of the English new music scene is certainly Evan Parker. In the late sixties some refreshing music was starting to reach receptive ears outside of England, along with threatening sounds coming from Holland and Germany. The spring of some kind of European approach was a welcome change. Until the tragic loss of John Coltrane, the world of jazz was dominated by its African-American origins and had allowed very few original contributions from abroad (Django Reinhardt and so few others). But as styles, society, and conditions for playing the music changed, the music entered a new phase, ready to accept every sincere contribution from anyone who really understood the essence, which was to be found beyond the style.

The first lineup of John Stevens' Spontaneous Music Ensemble (Stevens, Parker, Derek Bailey, David Holland, Kenny Wheeler) was, in 1967, just the tip of the iceberg of a very vital gather-

ing of musicians. One one hand, they were involved in a musical revolution; on the other they were trying to work out many problems, beginning with their very right to exist. Evan Parker was active in the organization of these musicians. He contributed to the formation of the Incus record label (which by now is made up of over two dozen well-recorded albums, testifying to the gorgeous development of his own music as well as others': Bailey, Paul Rutherford, Barry Guy at first, many others afterwards), and collaborated in editing *Musics* magazine.

His musical life runs from big band work with Chris McGregor's Brotherhood of Breath or Alex Schlippenbach's Globe Unity Orchestra to solo saxophone performances. His collaborations are many and rewarding, due to his skill in understanding his fellow musicians and in placing his music in different settings. Exemplary in this regard are the collaborations

with Bailey and Paul Lytton, and more rare encounters with Anthony Braxton, Steve Lacy and Leo Smith.

His concept of phrasing (totally new in the history of this music, one can almost think in terms of hearing clusters on the saxophone) has succeeded in revealing new musical and emotional areas. Whereas most experimenters lose themselves in the process, Evan Parker stands beyond the edges of tonality with the totality of his being; intelligence and emotion in perfect balance.

ROBERTO TERLIZZI: I suppose you play because you like to play.

EVAN PARKER. It is a very unoppressive kind of work. It is a very fortunate situation to live from this kind of work. I suppose the reason why this work is interesting is because it is, most of the time, something I define for myself, a very rare situation for people in the world, it's something of a research kind of

situation. The need to maintain a critical attitude makes the work in a certain period maybe not particularly a pleasure, but there's even a pleasure associated with the critical nature of the work. In others times, in periods of relative success in terms of getting to where you want to be, then there is the pure pleasure of the feeling of progress. But sometimes the pleasure comes more from an awareness that even though there is no progress you are aware of the absence of progress and perhaps you have some idea of what corrective actions to take in order to get back to some form of progress in the music.

Roberto: The music you play may be difficult for most people but I think it is very easy to see its relation to the jazz tradition. What is your attitude towards the people who come to hear you?

Evan: I want to do the best playing I can for the ones who already know about it and at a certain level I'm active in trying to increase the number of people that we can reach with the music; at the same time I'm working out in some way, maybe in a very extended way, from the jazz tradition; but this is the best context in which to place my work in that sense because the whole jazz scene in England is very much less a social thing than in other European countries, it has more to do with record collections and discographies and books, something distant instead of something immediate that is around the corner, so the average English jazz fan actually doesn't want to believe that the music is attainable, it seems almost that it has to be unattainable to be attractive to him. That is a somewhat different relation to the music than in most of the other European countries, where it is very closely tied up with a particular social experience. Outside of Ronnie Scott's there is no kind of continuing presentation of the music apart from the presentation organized by the musicians themselves which retains the real spirit of the music in the total social context.

Roberto: To what extent does the response of the public affect the music?

Evan: It must have some effect. You see there's two parts to it. I wouldn't say I'm making my music particularly for a select group of critics, I'm making the music in relation to a certain community of musicians. Something has to come out which makes sense among us, between us, and if it has that capacity then surely it is going to communicate outside the circle of musicians at some point, on some level, because if it's true between the musicians it must be true outside the music too. Some of the criticism of group collective group playing says that it is introspective or narcissistic or something like that, but I don't think that's ever been true of any of the musicians I worked with who have been interested in projecting some kind of ideal of music which is for other people to listen to. I don't know any musicians who could actually be called totally introspected or introverted or whatever the criticism is; it's just that it sounds different, that's what disturbs people, it doesn't sound like they want it to sound. This is a problem when you make a music that doesn't correspond to people's expectations in every detail. They either can be pleasantly surprised or either can be rather unpleasantly shocked, or maybe some combination of both reactions, it just depends on their own relationship to themselves, how they process that experience or how they in-

tegrate that experience into their lives. It may be something quite superficial for them, or it may have some almost revelatory function in their view of themselves, they may draw analogies which may be helpful, or it may skip right over their heads and have no meaning at all. The response at that psychological level is very varied, it seems to me. But the music is certainly played and directed towards a possible social use.

Roberto: What is your attitude to the way composition is related to improvisation? One of the things that Cecil Taylor was speaking about when he spoke of a Black methodology was that the action of reading absorbs you so that you don't have enough energy to improvise, so in some way composition gets in the way of improvisation. In the Roscoe Mitchell and Anthony Braxton duo concert yesterday [at the Festival in Pisa, July 13, 1978] there was a lot of reading involved.....

Evan: That sounds like a debate between Braxton and Mitchell and Cecil Taylor, it doesn't involve me at all; my view is something closer, if you like, to Cecil Taylor's view in general, because in most of the situations that I feel close to there is no written, no precomposed aspect or part. I don't work like that. But I'm probably removed from it by one stage again whereas Cecil Taylor quite clearly establishes themes and works with thematic material. I'm not working with melodic forms in quite the way that Cecil Taylor is, I have themes which are more connected with instrumental resources, so I return again and again to certain resources of the saxophone which are revealed through personal techniques. This is my sense of theme, some sense of continuity in the work which is through an attempt to personalize the technique of playing the instrument.

Roberto: When were you able to make a living from music alone?

Evan: It was a very slow transition. I was supported in my early period by my wife. Exactly at what point I became self-sufficient I don't know, we haven't looked at it like that, but now she doesn't work, at the moment, and we are living, so it seems we are living from my music, which is a daily surprise for both of us.

Roberto: You started to play early?

Evan: From the age of fourteen.

Roberto: Not this way?

Evan: No, not this way. Strangely enough, perhaps it's not so strange, but Paul Desmond seems to be a lot of people's early influence from this generation of saxophone players. I don't know why that should be. I really was interested in Paul Desmond's music at the beginning, I played alto to begin with. Then there was a period when I played soprano only, of course Coltrane was a big influence, a period of about nine months. I think I've been playing soprano from about 1960.

Roberto: You know how to play bop?

Evan: It is a very complicated question. I know something of the mechanics of it, but to play that music in an authentic personal style is a life's work. My life's work has been directed towards current technical considerations, largely, although a certain part of my time has been taken up with those techniques.

Roberto: What kind of music do you like to hear?

Evan: Now I'm very open to all things: Scottish bagpipe music, aboriginal music from Australia, Korean music, music from Southeast Asia generally, Japanese music, African music. Tradit-

ional musics. Musics which have roots that go back before Western European classical music. I find this to be, when seen in so large a context as that of world music, an increasingly narrow section of the possibilities of what music can be, both to hear as well as in its social context. It's based on rather well-defined limits, self-imposed limitations. It's natural for a musician looking to expand, working in an open field situation you must work with fresh material, influences, they have to be brought in. And in terms of sound resources, especially dextrous manipulation of overtone sequences and so on, these are actually more common in non-western musics. Japanese vocal music for example: many of the techniques of overtone manipulation which have only recently come to the fore with certain experimental vocal work, are just a part of the tradition of Japanese vocal music; this is just part of the style of singing, narrative singing and so on. The "digery doo" in Australian music [Eugene Colombo, Italian musician and ethnomusicologist, later explained that the dijery doo is just the bark of a tree that termites have eaten (except the bark of course) and can be used as an instrument only briefly, it soon breaks] is the most basic instrument you can imagine, it's just a hollow tube, but there is a complexity of techniques for circular breathing and overtone manipulation.

Roberto: How about English folk music?

Evan: I'm pretty friendly with some very knowledgeable people in English music. So far my best experiences have come from this bagpipe music from Scotland. That's about as close to home tradition as I can find at the moment, and as an Englishman you can't really claim Scotland as your home (it's a bit different). But in terms of technical resources and emotional content I can relate to that music.

INCUS RECORDS

ARTICLE BY PETER RILEY

HISTORY

Guitarist Derek Bailey, drummer Tony Oxley and saxophonist Evan Parker founded Incus Records in 1970 (with financial help from journalist Michael Walters), and Bailey and Parker have run the concern ever since. Basically Incus is Bailey and Parker; the label was primarily conceived as a medium for their activities in improvised music and has remained so, occasionally issuing the work of other musicians either through their association with Bailey-Parker, or as a reflection of Bailey-Parker's admiration. All the music on the label has been improvised (in some cases, not totally improvised) and this commitment to improvisation in music has established the character of the label.

In the late 1960s in England the record industry was in a state of disarray. Vast fortunes had been won and lost in the rock explosion at such an alarming rate that record promoters were quite frenetically trying to keep pace with the music. By the end of the decade rock itself was trying out all sorts of new formats, so that the big-label promoters, completely lost in this sudden profusion of new styles, became

willing to give almost anything a try. One result of this was the commercial market's brief flirtation with improvised music. The music itself had been in existence since about the mid-sixties in Britain as a very advanced, and almost audience-less practice of totally free improvisation — not entirely jazz-derived nor anything-else-derived (Incus 17 is evidence of this).

It was in connection with the escalation of styles in rock that this music first got onto record, as bewildered promoters latched onto it and managed to persuade their boards of directors that this, unlikely as it sounded, just might be the next big thing to hit the market (especially when some established rock musicians such as Charlie Watts of The Rolling Stones began to take some interest in the music). Some very unlikely records were issued by commercial companies at that time: The Spontaneous Music Ensemble had records on Island and Polydor; Elektra issued a record of the then-very-formidable sound of the group AMM; Transatlantic issued the only record ever of an early improvisation group called The People Band, and so on.

Of course it didn't take long for the big labels to discover how uncommercial this music was, and to drop it like a hot brick. All these records were deleted.

But meanwhile many of the musicians had realised what was involved in working for the commercial record business — especially that records were issued for the good of the company and no one else. The musician got paid a fairly miserable sum (as The Beatles also discovered at this time) unless the record really sold. But perhaps what offended most was the speed with which the records issued were removed from the market and became totally unobtainable. Tony Oxley had some particularly bad experiences with records issued by CBS which seemed to be deleted almost as soon as they were issued, in what is assumed to be some kind of tax-loss dodge. Records of Oxley, of SME and AMM, could be found hanging around provincial newsagents and railway stations at five shillings [editor's note: about 75¢] each, if they weren't melted down.

In this setup the musician had no control over the pressing, production, packaging, distribution or subsequent fate of his work, which in improvised music can only continue to exist in documented form when it is recorded. Any use a record might be in spreading the music to a potentially supportive audience was annulled by commercial demands for immediate returns. Often even the music had been distorted by ignorant production techniques.

The demand in this situation was for complete control over all these factors and processes. It wasn't just a matter of the size of the label. Small-label production financed and run by enthusiastic non-musicians, increasingly in a jazz context, was available from time to time, but however sympathetic such help might be, the musician still had to relinquish some of his control over the product. And in any case such production was subject to the "taste" of the producer, and the audience was so small that most people who undertook such a task were only marginally interested in the music — "giving it a try" as much as CBS was. It was unlikely that any label of this kind would build up a representative collection of the music, and continue to serve the music whatever it did. ECM of Germany, for instance, issued two records in its early days with Derek

Bailey and the Music Improvisation Company, but shortly changed policy considerably, so that those two issues remain worthwhile but meaninglessly isolated items. It should perhaps be added that by 1970 knowledge of the new black music in the USA was established, and sad tales were coming in of black musicians getting very raw deals indeed from certain medium-sized American and French labels run by apparently enthusiastic non-musicians.

The only way to make sure the activity served the music exclusively, and didn't become an institution gathering power unto itself, was for the musicians to do the whole thing themselves. There were useful precedents for this by 1970, almost all (naturally) in the field of improvised music: Instant Composers' Pool (Holland, started 1967), Free Music Production (Germany, 1969) in Europe, and in the USA Sun Ra's Saturn label dating from the 1950s, and more recently Don Pullen and Milford Graves' SRP (1967), JCOA (1968), plus Jihad, New Music Ensemble, etc. And the composer Harry Partch preceded them all with his Gate 5 label in 1953. These were all musician-run concerns arising out of similar dissatisfaction with the music business and similar concerns to have total control.

In the announcement issued with Incus 1 Evan Parker briefly associated the enterprise with a leftist theoretic implying that the musician-controlled company was a political act parallel to the anarchic societal model provided by the combination of musicians into a free improvisation group. He quoted Aldous Huxley:

Only a large-scale popular movement towards decentralisation and self-help can arrest the present tendency towards statism.

and G.D.H. Cole's *The Meaning Of Industrial Freedom*:

Men will act together in the full consciousness of their mutual dependence: but they will act for themselves. Their liberty will not be given them from above: they will take it on their own behalf.

Although such overtly political sentiments are rarely attached to the music now, and it is probably thought of more as a self-sufficient creative sphere (certainly no one imagines improvised music is going to change society by precept), practical principles survive from this early optimism which make it possible for Incus to continue. One is the disposal of such funds as result from record sales, first announced with Incus 2:

Once initial costs have been recovered, the bulk of all revenue goes to the artists on each record.

and since those artists are often Bailey and Parker this can mean ploughing money back into Incus to make more records possible, without the company becoming a depersonalised profit-growth mechanism. Small as the audience for such music may be, its present almost global spread, largely the result of record distribution, makes such precautionary factors far from absurd. In Germany FMP passed out of the hands of musicians, probably because the comparatively large audience for such music there made the company such an active business that it would have absorbed the musicians' time and energy to the extent of preventing them from playing as much as they would like to. Incus is still fortunately in a balance between such augmented demand and an economic inviability which would cause collapse, though re-

cently this has only been made possible by the use of professional distribution agencies.

These financial matters may seem very unmusical, but to the musicians they are and always have been of great importance in a music which is not in itself a commercial proposition. The question of how to survive financially is also the question of how to continue playing. Incus has managed to survive recent inflationary crises by renouncing profit maximisation as a business method, without falling into the sentimentality of willful loss-making. It can ride inflation because it immediately converts its revenue to its own spending-power. A comparison could be made with the small-press publication of poetry in England, where, since nobody ever got together into a supportive organisation, terrific increases in printing costs have virtually stopped the publication of poetry.

Incus' second principle emerged on a later hand-out as:

The aim is to keep records available permanently, rather than adopt the artificial marketing procedures of deleting and reissuing, although from time to time financial limitations mean that records are temporarily out of print.

And on a recent catalogue:

An important function for records of improvised music is to build up a system of documentation that can be approached chronologically by anyone sufficiently interested. When records are deleted almost as soon as they have been issued... this cumulative effect of long-term documentation is lost.

Apart from pure archivism, such a procedure helps to support the music, not only by demonstrating its "development" so that a potential audience can take it at its earlier stages, and be led to support its present tense — more importantly, a documentation is established of what the music has been. All sorts of futile arguments as to the music's sources and allegiances could be abandoned simply by referring to some of the early playing still available on Incus (particularly numbers 1, 3/4, and 17), for in such a volatile medium as free improvisation various polemics are always in the air seeking to restrict the music to versions of traditionalism. These notions of what the music "should be" (eg. it should be jazz, it should be non-jazz, etc.) justify themselves by referring to origins; but when the originary playing is still on the market it becomes impossible to present distorted versions of it.

The history of Incus is basically the history of getting it started and making sure it continued. After that it's the history of the music itself as it appears on the record. Improvised music is more than what goes on in England, but the important point (from an economic point of view too) is that Incus remains a personal enterprise, and the archive it builds up is that of two musical careers, with their context.

RECORDING IMPROVISED MUSIC

It's interesting to find that the two men who run Incus have quite different views, amounting almost to a conflict, as to the nature and function of recorded music. Indeed one begins to wonder whether these differences (which combine with a great deal of agreement of course) aren't an important factor in keeping the enterprise alive.

The central issue is a discomfort which everyone admits to concerning the viability of recording as a medium for improvised music, and a deep sense of contradiction between the music and the disc. Given this, Evan Parker remains optimistic, whereas Derek Bailey remains distrustful.

In the jazz world recording seems to be taken for granted; it's assumed that we "have" Charlie Parker on record, meaning that we can experience his music as well as anyone could at the time (making a few allowances for the time limit on 78s, lack of hi-fi at the time, etc.). This is patently not so — hearing Charlie Parker in 1978, even on an uninhibited 'live' tape, is obviously a very different thing from hearing him in 1943. This is true of all music, but with improvised music it is surely acutely so. The music doesn't claim like "classical" written music to become a permanent object, completely repeatable at will; it is very conscious of occurring at a particular time and a particular

place, and hearing it is part of the experience of being there and then. Jazz is also very sensitive to its time-place context, reacting with or against it. The music could be called an enrichment of the time-place experience.

It is also part of the nature of the music *not* to be repeatable — the whole energy of improvisation is devoted to producing the music *now*, and if the music becomes completely repeatable like a written symphony, the player is not working on the present any longer, since the moment of playing is no longer the music's whole time of existence. All the urgency which drives an improviser to do his best disappears, that sense which Eric Dolphy mentioned — that you have to do it all now because after you stop, it's gone forever.

What we get on record is the documentation, not the thing itself, because we can no longer share that acute sense of instant creation. I suspect that a lot of flaccid forms of jazz since 1950 have been the result of the loss of that

sense of urgency through the easy availability of recording.

Evan Parker acknowledged the improvisation-recording contradiction in his note to *Incus 1*, where having set down as a final aim of improvisation "You shall do all this for its own sake for an end in itself", he added:

Does the taping and distribution of a record contradict this rule? At first it seems to, but in the final analysis I am sure that the problem of record as artifact can be transcended given the need to communicate the incommunicable.

His present attitude has not shifted from this — he accepts that the record is considerably less than the performance, but believes that from the unique time-place set of a good improvisation a "truth" emerges which can be "translated" to a different time and place. This "truth" survives the recording processes. The record-owner is just as engaged in the music as a listener is at the time — the difference is that he participates by determining the new time and place at which the music shall occur. But Parker also concedes that repeated listening to one improvisation could be dangerous for the listener and for the music, as familiarity drains all the surprise out of the listening experience, and in the end you hear it as a piece of composed music because you know exactly what's coming next.

Recording must have a reciprocal effect on the music, but Parker believes that free improvisation is flexible enough to take that in its stride. You sometimes play for the record, shaping the music to the record frame, or (more frequently with the music on *Incus*) you just play, and worry about the record at the editing stage. Editing then becomes very important, as a manipulation of the music, a compositional activity which accepts that the record will only be documentation and treats it as such. Parker's solo record (*Incus 19*) was made almost without editing — just played through and issued as played, in fact it was necessary to record a few extra minutes to complete a side [editor's note: Evan Parker's second solo saxophone record was recorded direct-to-disc, and is now available as *Incus 27*.]

There are so many advantages arising from rec records, in terms of the spread of the music, not only to listeners but even in the creation of free-improvising musicians where there might otherwise have been none. Italy, for instance, has recently been "opened up" to free improvisation through records.

Question: Is there a sense of loss when a good improvisation is not recorded?

E.P.: "Yes there is, because after all there are good and bad sessions. A recording of a bad session may be of use for self-criticism but apart from that it's a waste. A good improvisation record is of use to more than the person who played it."

Same question.

D.B.: "No"

Bailey declared openly in the notes to his first solo record (*Incus 2*):

Making a record is a very anomalous action for somebody interested in improvisation as I am... There are two reasons which perhaps justify it — it is a sort of example of what you're up to, and maybe it facilitates getting a few gigs... As long as it is fairly representative of what you're concerned with, whether it is a strikingly successful improvisation or not doesn't seem to me that important.



photograph of Evan Parker by Bill Smith

Such considerations must have influenced the issuing in 1974 of the Incus Tapes, three small (10-minute) reel-to-reel tapes of Bailey solo, accompanied by the announcement:

Making records is increasingly a lengthy, unreliable, inefficient, inferior way of producing recorded music. Incus Tapes is an attempt to provide an alternative to it. Unfortunately the immense labour of copying tapes with no better equipment available than two standard tape recorders proved a far greater time-consuming annoyance than all the delays, setbacks and quality control problems involved in translating an improvisation from performance to discs. The project was scrapped, and the tapes are no longer available.

For both partners in Incus the other big problem with recording is simply how to get the best possible representation of the music onto disc, technically. Even in the best recording there is a reduction in the dynamic range of the sound. Hearing can reach up to 130 decibels but on tape you get less than 90, and less still on the disc itself, depending on the equipment. The problem is dynamic range, not dynamic level. Electric rock is very loud, but it has a very narrow dynamic range and presents no great recording problems. The dynamic range of improvised music is probably greater than that of any other music, and this presents great problems in the cutting and pressing processes. Incus like to locate a presser who is prepared to accept the challenge rather than soften the effect of the music by levelling out its range. Bailey was told by one presser that his solo record "Lot 74" (Incus 12) was "utterly unpressable". The dynamics of his playing don't change gradually in episodes — at any point there is likely to be an instant shift between very high and very low levels. A high-level sound can't be brought down in the cutting without losing very delicate low-level sounds which may be in direct contact with it. He was told that if the level were kept as high as he wanted in parts of this disc the needle would literally jump out of the groove at those points. His response was that it would be better to have that happen than to reduce the sound-spectrum.

More recently he has affirmed that to him "The contradiction between free improvisation and recording is obvious and undeniable", and yet he and other improvisors remain happy to issue records. "Apart from financial gain and vanity", he lists the following possible reasons for issuing records:

- 1) Quite a lot of it is worth listening to more than once.
- 2) Recording for the improvisor is a unique playing situation. There is an audience but it is absent when the music is made. Normally when improvisors make their music, if there is an audience it is in a position to influence the actual creation of the music. And in one way or another it generally does influence the music. Recording f.i. means that the audience is retained but their direct influence is removed. Whether that is good or bad is probably decided by other things but it is a unique situation for an improvisor. A special sort of playing situation. On this one occasion maybe he's got something in common with the composer.
- 3) Most people who listen to music do so via a loudspeaker. In itself I can't see why that should be a reason. But I'll bet it is.
- 4) I think I can put no. 3 in a different way. A very high proportion of any music listen-

ed to is recorded music. Recording f.i. can produce good recorded music. So, while recorded f. i. is no substitute for the real thing it has no need to be. It needs only to be worth listening to as recorded music.

The point is that Derek Bailey is extremely uninterested in music as an object, which is the aim of the composer and a side-effect of the issue of improvisation on record; to him music is entirely a time occurrence. Therefore he has to accept that in making and issuing records he is producing a somewhat different kind of music from what he normally does.

THE ANVIL

"Incus" is Latin for "anvil". It is the name of a small bone (ossicle) in the mammalian middle ear (named after its shape), which has an important function in the transmission of sound to the inner ear. No one can remember why it was chosen as the label name except that none of the other ear bones sounded "right". Evan Parker remarked that the meaning "anvil" is good, because you put the needle down on it, "and then the sparks start flying". It's ironic, too, perhaps, that the label was named after part of the middle ear — an interposed middleman between the sound and the actual organ of hearing, just as a record with all its musical problems is a transmissive barrier between the improvisor and his listener.

THE RECORDS

Incus 1. Topography of the Lungs. Parker, Bailey and Han Bennink (percussion). Recorded July 1970.

Incus started with a really forceful (though not really aggressive) presence: high-energy improvisation from the three principal *enfants terribles* of the earlier European free music scene. As with many of the groupings on Incus records, the trio was not a regular combination but an *ad hoc* get-together of three musicians, each with very distinctive ways of playing. This trio cohered its disparate energies by common exploration of fast playing, intense driving force and a certain amount of shock tactics — one of the best and most powerful sessions on record.

Incus 2. Derek Bailey Solo. 1971 (Reprinting) Bailey's diffidence towards recording resulted in a rather strange record, made before he began to concentrate almost exclusively on solo work. Side A is a "sample" of his solo work at the time — four intense but calm improvisations, a chapter of his continuing quest into the musical inexhaustibility of the guitar and improvisation. He apparently considered this sufficient for one record and put on the other side performances of pieces for guitar by Misha Mengelberg, Willem Breuker and Gavin Bryars — mostly fascinating miniatures of sound-manipulation, not at all a normal part of Bailey's work. The record is soon to be reissued with, it is rumoured, a new side A recorded at that time.

Incus 3/4. Iskra 1903. Paul Rutherford (trombone, piano), Barry Guy (bass), Derek Bailey (guitar) 1970 and 1972 - double album (temporarily out of print).

This trio played together regularly in the early '70s and had a style of its own — tense, spiky,

fluctual playing which renounced dramatic effects in favour of a vibrant continuum of shifting pressure. Of the two discs in the set the first was recorded live, the second two years later in a studio, and the differences are noticeable as regards the group's refinement of its playing, perhaps exaggerated in the studio context.

Incus 5. Collective Calls (Urban) (Two Microphones). Evan Parker and Paul Lytton (percussion and live electronics).

This duo formed the staple playing situation of both these musicians for about six years. Their first record shows the initial concentration on sheer pressure — Parker's powerful fluctual sax playing merging into and separating itself from Lytton's barrage of sound on his vast kit, with skin, metal and electronic sources. There are also episodes of suspended calm and pointillistic intensity.

Incus 6/7. Ode by Barry Guy: London Jazz Composers' Orchestra, 1972. Double album, boxed (temporarily out of print).

This was the first exception to Incus' exclusive interest in free improvised music. Guy's huge composed/semi-improvised/graphic score with supported solo improvisations is performed by the 21-piece London JCOA — a modernistic version of big-band music, or a fusion of contemporary orchestral music and big-band jazz; England's answer to Mike Mantler's "Communications".

Incus 8. Tony Oxley. Solo percussion, quartet with Bailey, Parker and Rutherford, and sextet. Recorded 1971 to 1975.

This record, issued out of series in 1976, is a personal collection of Oxley's solo and group work over five years, to illustrate the development of his own playing vocabulary hand-in-hand with the extension of his percussion kit, particularly in the use of amplification and electronic devices. Like almost all of Oxley's music, the playing is improvised on semi-composed structures and combines his jazz-based skills with concepts of concert-music.

Incus EP1. AMM at the Roundhouse. Lou Gare (tenor sax), Eddie Prevost (drums). 45 rpm ep. 1972 (out of print).

Incus's only extended play disc caught the surviving duo of AMM at a transitional stage of thoughtful soulfulness between the experimental free improvisation of the earlier extended group, and the free jazz these musicians play now.

Incus 9. Selections from Live Performances at Verity's Place. Bailey and Bennink, 1972.

Bailey becomes a different person when he plays with Han Bennink. This is their second record, the first being on ICP in 1969. What can anyone say about this kind of thing in a few lines? — it's a unique experience: flying sparks, growls and thumps, jokes, calm landscapes, plum puddings. The record was edited from a concert, largely on the editorial principle of "cut the tape with a pair of scissors when you think you've heard enough of that", said to have been originated by Misha Mengelberg for ICP Records.

Incus 10. Song For Someone. Kenny Wheeler. This is the second, last, and most outstanding exception to Incus' rule to issue only free improvisation on disc. Compositions for big band



by Wheeler, very much in the jazz tradition, modernised in the harmonic concept. There's solo work involved, and both Bailey and Parker are in the band, but it's very far from being 'free music'.

Incus 11. Balance. Frank Perry (percussion), Ian Brighton (guitar), Philipp Wachsmann (violin), Radu Malfatti (trombone, klhene, bass recorder), Colin Wood (cello). 1973.

Incus intends to issue the work of younger ("second generation") improvisors in England from time to time, though it doesn't claim to be representative of all the work that is being done in that scene (Bead Records have to some extent taken on that task). Incus issues work which wouldn't otherwise be issued, as finances permit. This first venture into that field is of a group working in a fairly quiet version of free music, tense and nervy but with a definite hint of the 'ethnic' at times in calm oriental coloring.

Incus 12. Lot 74. Derek Bailey solo, 1974.

This is the principle documentation of Bailey's period of concentration on solo work — one 22-minute improvisation on side A and five short ones (or excerpts) on side B, including the famous *In Joke*.

Incus 13. Synopsis. Howard Riley (piano), Barry Guy (bass), Tony Oxley (percussion), 1973. This trio is one of the permutations available in the Riley/Guy/Oxley department, which is an area where sources are taken very seriously, both as jazz and as western music. So the mus-

ic is structured, and played by a fairly heavy and dramatic improvisation. Riley is the leader and composer in this case, and although the improvisation relies on all three musicians, his virtuosic piano playing (including all sorts of goings-on in the innards of the instrument) is featured.

Incus 14. Evan Parker and Paul Lytton at the Unity Theatre. 1975.

It seems to be an unspoken principle of Incus that a group is not repeated unless their playing is thought to have changed significantly. In this case, as against Incus 5 the change might be seen as towards a less theatrical, more acoustic presentation, with new-found vocabularies in evidence from both musicians — less overt energy and more widespread resources. Lytton's playing in particular has renounced the more obvious "drummer" reference, and his kit become a medium of sound exploration.

Incus 15. Tea Time. Steve Beresford (piano, toys), John Russell (guitar), Nigel Coombes (violin), Garry Todd (tenor sax), Dave Solomon (percussion). 1974-5.

The second issue of "second generation" English improvisors represents the opposite camp to that of the first in many ways. But this is actually an *ad hoc* assemblage of musicians of various attitudes from post-Dada to post-free jazz and together they form a very lively and strangely coherent group, with plenty of

verbal and musical tomfoolery welded to plenty of strong playing.

Incus 16. The London Concert. Bailey and Parker. 1975.

The only duo record of the two owners of Incus Records. It's an edited presentation of a concert in four excerpts (a "highlights" concept which Incus doesn't normally go in for), and apart from the intrinsic qualities of the playing perhaps its chief interest lies in the range from "playing together" to "playing apart" exploited.

Incus 17. The Music Improvisation Company 1968-1971. Bailey (guitar), Hugh Davies (live electronics & organ), Jamie Muir (percussion), Parker (soprano sax & autoharp); 1969-70.

This important retrospective issue of long-dormant tapes of this "pioneer" English improvisation group caused quite a stir when it was issued last year, presumably because people had forgotten (though there is a record of the group on ECM issued in 1970) how advanced in idiom the playing was at the end of the sixties. Indeed it sounds as though it could have been recorded yesterday (apart from being partly in mono).

Incus 18. February Papers. Tony Oxley (violin, electronics, percussion), Barry Guy (bass), Philipp Wachsmann, David Bourne (violin), Ian Brighton (guitar); 1977.

Apart from three solos, Oxley here joins in quartet and trio with younger musicians, producing a quite different effect from that

normally associated with him; much lower-key, more intimate and acoustic on the whole, though with sections of electronic pressure. A lot of the music is entirely for stringed instruments, which is an increasingly important format of group improvisation in England at present, probably started through Bailey's work with Honsinger and Altena (see Incus 21). There is also a brushes solo from Oxley on this record which is a thoroughly traditional knock-out.

Incus 19. Saxophone Solos. Evan Parker, 1975. Four improvisations on soprano sax. This is the best record on which to hear Parker's particular qualities — the duos with Lytton suffer somewhat from reduction in recording, but here everything comes through with the utmost clarity. Continuous soaring playing on the little soprano which achieves as full and rich a musical experience as any symphony of a thousand could hope to. [editor's note: this record was also reviewed in *Coda* # 160, April 1978].

Incus 20. Duo. Derek Bailey and Tristan Honsinger (cello), 1976.

When Bailey effected a kind of return to playing with others around 1975-6 he formed combinations which had the effect of completely revising current notions in England of who might be the principal operators in improvised music. This record is of the concert at which he introduced the American-Dutch cellist Tristan Honsinger to England, edited into seven juicy excerpts. Honsinger appears here as a fully-fledged and absolutely unique musician, operating mainly bowed cello with an inexhaustible supply of speed and energy.

Incus 21: see below.

Incus 22. Statements V-XI. Barry Guy, solo bass, 1976.

Guy is a musician much involved in composing and other aspects of the "classical" music scene (he's actually a professor of double-bass somewhere, I think), but for Incus he sticks strictly to improvisation, fully exploring both acoustically and by amplification the instrument which he has opened up to a whole new range of possibilities. It's a serious kind of intensity-improvisation, playing the dry and spiky clatter of the strings and fingerboard against the reverberatory booming of the amplified interior of the instrument.

Incus 23: see below.

Incus 24. Biosystems. The Spontaneous Music Ensemble: John Stevens (percussion & cornet), Nigel Coombes (violin), Roger Smith (guitar), Colin Wood (vocal). 1976.

John Stevens' SME has existed from the first days of English improvised music (at least since 1965) and has produced all kinds of music, including something a bit previous to free jazz. But the Ensemble consists of Stevens plus whoever else takes part and here, like Oxley, he has joined forces with younger musicians, in fact some of the most original and dedicated of them, and it's their record as much as his. Coombes' almost plaintive loose-wristed violin playing, and Smith's dry, unpredictable acoustic guitar are perhaps the outstanding features of this set of lively improvisations, largely in the "wry" mode of most younger English players.

INCUS RECORDS

INCUS RECORDS ARE AVAILABLE FROM CODA PUBLICATIONS FOR \$10.98 EACH PLUS SHIPPING (see ad page 20 for shipping costs).

THE COMPANY RECORDS

Derek Bailey founded Company in 1976. It's an association of improvising players — not a fixed group but an assortment of musicians who come together in various combinations from time to time under Bailey's auspices. For Bailey it seems to be a way of continuing to explore improvisation by a constantly shifting musical context in performance. In its initial phase Bailey looked mainly outside England, and to players of his own generation. The important principle was probably that each musician should be "his own man" — i.e. a musician who has firmly established his own musical identity, who plays his own music; so it is an exploration of how these musicians combine together, given the one strict condition: that whatever else these players do at home, in Company they improvise. The climax and conclusion to this first phase was Company Week — six days of concerts in London in 1977 which brought together all ten then members of Company, including four Americans, one young British musician, plus Dutchmen and others. [editor's note: these concerts were reviewed in *Coda* # 156, August 1977. Since this article was written, the records mentioned below have all been issued.

Company 5 (Incus 28) features Leo Smith, Maarten van Regteren Altena, Derek Bailey, Tristan Honsinger, Anthony Braxton, Steve Lacy and Evan Parker. **Company 6 (29)** and **Company 7 (30)** feature Smith, Altena, Parker, Lacy, Honsinger, Braxton and Bailey with Han Bennink, Steve Beresford and Lol Coxhill.

All this is to be documented in a series of seven Incus records, of which four have so far appeared:

Incus 21, Company 1 (1976). Bailey, Parker, Honsinger and Maarten van Regteren Altena play four trios in the four possible trio combinations. This is as yet the definitive record of the new possibilities of group improvisation occasioned by the existence of Company. Here its fast, unrelenting string-band-like playing, a kind of new improvised chamber music with all the instant gusto of a bebop ancestry.

Incus 23, Company 2 (1976) has Bailey, Parker and Anthony Braxton in a somewhat more relaxed version — plenty of the usual flurry of sound but also calm interludes, and a delighted play with melodic fragments and spaced-out sonic landscapes.

These have been followed by two duo records, both made late in 1977 several months after Company Week:

Incus 25, Company 3, Derek Bailey and Han Bennink. Bennink's playing has changed immensely since Incus 9, since he is no longer anything of a loudness-expert and plays a lot of non-percussion instruments, though always with his own playful unpredictability and shock tactics. The record's full of the kind of outrageous (innately musical) details to be expected, with quite a lot of parodic spoof playing: Bailey does his west-coast restaurant guitarist by moonlight thing, while Bennink does his demented bebop player on hosepipe, etc.

Incus 26, Company 4, Bailey and Steve Lacy. Apart from anything else this is important as pretty certainly the only Lacy record where he simply improvises right the way through. His great creative facility at this was one of the surprises of Company Week for those who only knew him on record. He does it in his personal way, always dedicatedly calm, occupying a wide range from instant melody through to remote squeaks and white sound, with Bailey very much there too in his middle range of slightly amplified intelligent conversation.

EPILOGUE ON SURVIVAL

Incus is remarkable because it still continues under the terms by which it was initiated. This isn't only a matter of policy and acumen — it's also a result of the continuing validity of the music which the label serves. In the final analysis the arts support the economy.

All the others either stopped or changed. Many of them turned out to be one-off affairs (SRP, NME), or short-term (Jihad) because the musicians split up, travelled, gave up, etc. One-man record companies have found it very difficult to survive, though Saturn did, if Sun Ra can be considered to be one man. Some became commercialised. In Europe the very popularity of the music (comparatively speaking) caused musicians to retire from the lives of businessmen and pass the label to others (FMP) or stop.

There are now dozens of new musician-run labels in improvised music, and as the music proliferates it's likely that even one-man concerns will be able to survive financially. Incus not only set a precedent for this, but also made the whole thing possible by opening up the international market in small-label distribution — it was probably responsible more than any other concern for this proliferation of the music (or holds equal honours in this respect with the New Music Distribution Service in New York, FMP in Germany and ICP in Holland).

The next question, of course, is whether as it becomes easier to survive as a recorded improvising musician, there is sufficient attention paid to the reciprocal effects records can have on the music. There is danger of a reduction of the music to the terms of an international specialist market and to the framework of the LP. Records could bring about a "softening" of free music to cater to easy casual and repeatable listening through loudspeakers. That's when the record production begins to control the music; with Incus, however much Bailey & Parker do (or don't) enjoy producing records, there has never been any doubt that the record is posterior to the music, subservient to it, and exists only in the music's honour.



I guess I really got started in music when I was a kid, nine years old. I was standing outside a tavern in Atlantic City that had a juke box, and I heard my first Duke Ellington record — *Mood Indigo*. When he came out with another a few months later, I discovered that the bass player was Wellman Braud. I guess he was the earliest bass player to find a good recording technique. Bases were in before the tuba, but they found they couldn't record the bass well, so they took the tuba because it had a sharper sound. Before amplification, of course, they mostly used sousaphones in dance halls, for their carrying power. Then as recording equipment improved, they went back to basses. Guys used to bow the rhythm then, before the plucking, because I guess the musical roots were European. I think Pops Foster was one of the first to start plucking the bass, but I remember seeing him once when I was a kid. He had a little stick about six inches long and a quarter-inch through, and he used to hit the strings with it. Then they discarded the stick and started slapping the bass. That was one thing I never did I like to do, because it hurt my fingers and I'd end up with them all bloody. I think maybe I was one of the original guys to try to get a long sound with the bass.

About my birth, I tell people a rather complicated story. My father and mother met in Boston, and I was conceived there, but Mother wanted to go home, to Richmond, Virginia, to have me, so that was where I was born. A couple of months later, she went back to Boston, and then, when I was about two, back to Virginia. I remember some of this, too, although my mother doesn't believe it. When I was three, we moved to Atlantic City, which I really consider my home, because that's where everything began for me.

My mother liked to sing and she also played guitar. My father liked to sing, too, and at one time he had a saxophone, but that was like a hobby with him. An uncle was the first I heard play funky blues on guitar. He used to sing the blues and he had a real way with them, like a cross between Muddy Waters and T-Bone Walker.

I actually started on trumpet, and then switched to trombone, but along about that time I heard Paul Whiteman's band. He had tubas and basses in it, and I guess that inspired me to take both instruments. The stocks used to have bass and tuba parts on them, written an octave apart, the bass being a transposing instrument and tuba written as it sounds. Bass was the biggest and softest instrument, so the tuba sort of amplified the bass, and vice versa. I got on well because I liked the bass, had a feeling for it. All I wanted to hear was bass! I also played alto horn, but my chops were better for the tuba, which was like a natural thing for me. I studied with Alexander Valentine, a friend of W.C. Handy's, in Bordentown, New Jersey. Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Shavers, 'Bama Warwick — we all went there at the same time.

When I was twelve or thirteen, a guy named Banjo Bernie came to Atlantic City. He was a typical, road-band type of guy. He'd get young kids and give us a quarter or fifty cents now and then, but otherwise he kept all the money. I just wanted to play and I didn't worry about

RED CALLENDER

INTERVIEW AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY STANLEY DANCE

that. It was still fun, and experience, and that's how I got started early. By the time I was fourteen, I was working in bands, and when I was fifteen I got as far as Cleveland. My father came after me when school opened and made me come home.

In 1936 I went out to California in a show called "Brownskin Models". There were two sections to it. Nat Cole was in the first and I was in the second. During that period I made my first record date – with Louis Armstrong when Pops Foster got sick. Paul Barbarin was on drums then and we made *Once In A While* and *On The Sunny Side Of The Street*. Then Pops Foster came back and I was out, but I never lost contact with Louis. When they made that picture in 1947, "New Orleans", he called me for it. Barney Bigard was there, Charlie Beal on piano, and a guitar player, Bud Scott.

Before 1947 I had worked with Lionel Hampton, Buck Clayton, C.P. Johnson, and other local groups. There's a lot of jazz history out there. Take Paul Howard, who went to L.A. in 1911 and played with King Oliver and Jelly Roll Morton before he formed his own Quality Serenaders. He was one of the original guys to play tenor saxophone, because he had been a friend of Coleman Hawkins. Lawrence Brown and Lionel Hampton were in his band at one time. Buddy Collette and I have been taping his life story, because it has so much value. He was at college with Ralph Bunche, and he tells us stories about how they used to ride down the street and play in wagons. So many people like him have contributed a lot, but no one ever heard of them. Alton Redd, the drummer, is another one we're doing.

In the '40s I was in a band that was called Lee and Lester Young's. Bumps Myers, Paul Campbell and Jimmy Rowles were in it too, and we went to New York to play Cafe Society. After Benny Goodman plucked Jimmy Rowles from us, we got Clyde Hart. Lee was really the leader and during the two years I was with him I met Jimmy Blanton. I used to carry my bass around for him to play. We became friends, and I was with him the day before he died. Nowadays they could cure the TB he had, but when they moved him out to the City of Hope he was probably already too far gone. He had beautiful hands, beautiful long fingers, and he was a handsome devil, too. We were about the same age and I just loved what he did. He and Billy Strayhorn used to hang out together, because they were the youngest guys in the Ellington band. We probably played *Take The A Train* before Duke did, because Billy scratched it out in pencil for Lee and Lester's band. We'd make arrangements and rehearse everything. I used to write for them, too, and Lester was the first one ever to play *Pastel*. I had started to write about the same time I started to play, but I guess I was nearly twenty before I wrote anything that made any sense. I had had training in orchestration and harmony, but for the most part, after you get the basics, you go for yourself. Nobody can really teach you to write, but if it's inside it has to come out. What Professor Valentine did was to give me the tools to use, but later on I was frustrated in the writing area. You see, when you're a Hollywood-type musician, they label you, and I'm labeled as a player. In order to make it as a writer I would actually have had to quit playing and concentrate on that. Unfortunately, if you're not wealthy you can't

afford to make the transition to quit one for the other. I still enjoy playing, I enjoy writing... I enjoy the whole thing.

When I left the Youngs' band the war was on; it must have been 1944. I formed a trio with Sir Charles Thompson and Louis Gonzales. We didn't record, but we played all over the East in little towns like Middletown, New York. The trio I first recorded with had Duke Brooks on piano and Leonard Enoise on guitar. We did *Skyline*, an original thing I wrote. Then I had another trio with Willard McDaniels and Enoise, and we did *Red Light* and a bunch of stuff for Exclusive Records. McDaniels was heavy-handed, but a *good* piano player. He died, and then Enoise died, here in Denver.

I did a batch of things for RCA, too, during the '40s. I had a contract with them, but you know how the story goes: you make a number of records and if you don't come up with a hit they just put the rest of them on the shelf. There were some good things there. They were conscious of jazz all right, but they were beginning to get interested in rock 'n roll, or rhythm and blues as it was then called. All the would need do is boost the lower band on those records and they would still sound good. I did some things with Benny Carter for them, too.

After that, I worked for a couple of record companies, one of them owned by Jack Lauderdale. We started out to go to St. Louis to meet Clark Terry, who took us to hear Jimmy Forrest. Jimmy played *Night Train*, which was lifted from Duke's *Happy-Go-Lucky Local*, but Duke didn't seem to care. I suggested to Lauderdale, the a. and r. man, that we record it, but he was in a hurry to get to Chicago and said he didn't like it. Everybody knows what happened a couple of months later. It became one of the biggest hits of the year. Every time I saw Lauderdale afterwards, I'd call him an idiot and ask, "Why hire me and not trust me?" We went on to Chicago and Jimmy's record was a hit. Then Buddy Morrow had an even bigger hit with the number. It was the same thing when Glenn Miller had a hit with *Tuxedo Junction*. I don't suppose you could find ten people who associate that with Erskine Hawkins. Or take T-Bone Walker and Elvis Presley, two different people. Elvis used T-Bone's act and made millions.

I was a. and r. man for a lot of little labels on the West Coast like Downbeat, Swingtime and Hollywood. I'd get the artists, and write and play. Lloyd Glenn, the pianist, was on some of them. I don't remember using Teddy Bunn. He had a heart attack and dropped out of sight. He didn't use a pick. He's the original guitarist who used the finger style, years before Wes Montgomery. Hollywood was John Dolphin's label, and I was the first guy to record Jesse Belvin, a singer of blues and ballads. He was more or less in the King Cole vein, but he had his own thing. He was another that got wiped out young, in an automobile accident, but his stuff is still around.

In short, I was knocking my brains out at that time, writing and playing. You remember that record of Gerald Wilson's on which I was the soloist, *Dissonance In Blues*? I thought it was far ahead of its time, and with better recording it would still be good now. Another title at that session was *Vonce*, which was Lester's name for pot. He had names for everything, and he talked the way he played. We'd hang around and listen to the things he said, but rather than ask him what he meant I'd act like I understood. He was a baseball fan, like John-

ny Hodges, and he'd say, "Four, three, two...." And I didn't know what that meant till lately!

After this recording phase, I began getting into studio work. Jerry Fielding, God bless him, was responsible for that. I had done some studio work as a specialist, but not on a regular basis. Jerry first took Buddy Collette and put him on the Groucho Marx Show. It really caused an uproar. They called him a communist and everything, because the field was really closed to black musicians. Then he gave me the "Life Of Riley" show. So Buddy Collette and I were like pioneers, not just because we were black but because they dug the way we played. There were still two unions then, one black the other white, and both fought amalgamation. They preferred to stay separate, because the guys had their own fish fries, their own things going, and ways, I imagine, to rake off a little bread. Benny Carter, Gerald Wilson, Buddy and I were among those who worked hard and really put that thing together – amalgamation, I mean.

I got locked into the studio thing every day. I worked hard on the bass and played with anybody and everybody who would let me play with them, including a few symphonies. Before this I was in the Honolulu Symphony from '48 to '50. I got my reading ability down, and also the technical end. It was good experience, and prestige-wise it didn't hurt.

I make time now for affairs like this (Dick Gibson's Colorado Jazz Party). Whenever anybody asks me, I'm ready to go, because I enjoy the change after twenty years in the studios. You can forget how much fun it is to play in this kind of freedom. I never got completely away from the tuba, but I sort of came back to it. Even now, even in the studios, some people don't know I play it. But I do Emergency with Billy May, and he makes sure I get to play all three instruments on every segment – string bass, tuba and Fender. Do I like the Fender? Let's say I accept it. It's really another career and I don't think I'll ever be as good on it as on bass. As opposed to string bass, the electric bass is a cold instrument. The string bass is alive... it breathes. But one of the really fabulous Fender players is Bob Cranshaw. Chuck Rainey is another.

I've recorded quite a few things on tuba. About fifteen years ago I made an album where I did *Speak Low*, *Foggy Day*, *Sentimental Mood* and *Darn That Dream*. More recently I did *Lush Life*, *I Want A Little Girl* and *Sophisticated Lady*, with the banjo. I think of the tuba as an oversized trumpet, just a giant trumpet. It's quite different, of course, when it comes to chops, and you have to keep them up. It's a much larger cup and the lips vibrate differently. With the trumpet, you have to build up an embouchure in the centre. On tuba, you have to shift around more. For instance, to get from a very low note, you really have to shift quickly to make a high one. I think of it more or less like a camera lens opening, where to get more light you open more. The tuba requires wind, of course, and you have to know how to marshal it by thinking ahead.

In 1973 Buddy Collette, Al Aarons, Al Viola, Leroy Vinnegar, Grover Mitchell and I formed the Legend record company, a cooperative effort. We didn't get into it to make a million dollars necessarily, but because we could do exactly what we wanted to do. With the existing record companies, if you don't come up with a hit record, they don't want anything to do with you. And jazz is not

generally hit material. L.A. is a record manufacturing centre and very commercial-minded. The accountants call the shots, and even the a. and r. men have become accountants. They have to think like them to keep their jobs, and as a rule they don't know anything about music.

Because I'm a Duke Ellington fan, I always mention Wellman Braud first among the bass players I've most enjoyed. I used to call Duke my musical father, and he's the reason for my existence. At one time he had two bass players, Hayes Alvis and Billy Taylor, and what he did with them was very interesting. After Blanton he had Junior Raglin, who I thought was forceful, but rough compared to Blanton, not as polished. Then there was Oscar Pettiford, another of my favorites... I also admire Charles Mingus, and not just because I actually started him on bass. He tells it all the time and even gives me credit in his book, which didn't have much to say about music after it was edited. He was one of my prize pupils.

There probably is too much virtuosity today. Milt Hinton and I were just talking about that.

Bass is really an accompanying instrument, a foundation instrument. You can't have a building without a foundation, and if the foundation floats you have no building. Primarily, we're accompanists, and when you get a chance to solo you take it, but then you should go back to making the rest of the band sound good. That's how I think of the bass, and that's always been my role. A lot of bass players today need somebody else to play bass while they're soloing, and really everything they play is a solo. Drummers are not using their feet in the way they used to, so it all becomes like a floating rhythm section. Of course, there are some marvelous players that I admire, and they play things I can't believe, but when Milt, George Duvivier and I were coming along, there was no amplification and we had to use *muscle* to get through. Now all the guys are playing with amps, but if you took the amps away you couldn't hear them. They're marvelous, but they're not playing *bass*. In my estimation, there will always be room for the foundation-type bass player. And when it comes down to it, I feel if it

doesn't make you pat your foot, there's something missing! You take this audience downstairs. It's always the things with a good beat that turn them on.

The fact that Art Tatum wanted me to be with him was a signal honor, something I'm really proud of. I played in clubs with him and made quite a few albums with him, always as an accompanist. He didn't need a soloist! We made things with Ben Webster, Buddy De Franco and Jo Jones for Norman Granz. I worked with Duke Ellington on several occasions, and for a week at the Oasis in L.A. when something happened to Wendell Marshall. The last time I saw him to talk to, he asked me, "When are you going to go on the road with me?" His rhythm section was just not cooking at that time. It required something special to play in that band.

INTERVIEW 1975, COPYRIGHT STANLEY DANCE 1979, FROM HIS FORTHCOMING ANTHOLOGY "JAZZ JUNGLE".



Red Callendar and Flip Wilson

THE ROVA SAXOPHONE QUARTET

The Rova Saxophone Quartet was formed in November, 1977, when Robert Haven, founder of the Bay Area Free Jazz Festival, phoned Bruce Ackley to invite him to play in the Festival's third annual incarnation. Bruce had just finished a series of concerts with Twins, a quartet consisting of Ackley on soprano sax and clarinet, John Zorn on same, and guitarists Eugene Chadbourne and Henry Kaiser, but that group had disbanded when Chadbourne and Zorn returned to New York. Looking around for musicians to form a band with, Bruce realized that most of the people he was jamming with in San Francisco and environs were saxophonists, particularly altoist Jon Raskin, tenorist Larry Ochs, and baritonist Tony Blase.

The concept of four horns without rhythm is a fortuitous joining of experimental sensibility and plain necessity, since the Bay Area is top-heavy with horns, and rhythm players, especially bassists, are scarce. As Bruce put it, "There are so many groups with just horns because the bassists and drummers here aren't committed to free music — they work casuals instead, so they aren't around when you need them."

The four saxophonists made some tentative rehearsals, then parted when their December concert was cancelled. But the seeds were planted, and when the concert was rescheduled for February, 1978, they decided to try again — all except Blase. "Tony was doing something else," said Larry Ochs, "but just then Andrew Voigt showed up, and his playing and energy were so perfect for us that Jon agreed to switch to baritone. And after that concert, when I first heard the tape of Jon's composition *Ride Upon The Belly Of The Waters, Building Your Boats To Carry All* (featured on Rova's album "Cinema Rovate", Metalanguage ML 101), I said to myself, "We're really saying something here! I'm going to put energy into this, this has to get out to people."

Bruce shared Larry's enthusiasm: "When I first joined the quartet I made it clear that I didn't care if we ever worked, ever played in front of people, as long as the music came first. But when I realized the commitment of the others, I knew we had something."

In the year of its existence, the Rova has achieved a remarkable degree of success. They have played in every performance space featuring avant-garde music in the Bay Area (and played benefits for many of them), and have toured as far as the Western Front in Vancouver, B.C. Their record has been favorably reviewed from as far away as the Swiss magazine *Jazz 360°*. And they are going to Germany this spring to play this year's Moers New Jazz Festival.

I first met Bruce Ackley in 1973, when he was doing a jazz program on KPOO-FM. Bruce had come to San Francisco from Detroit, Michigan (where he was born in 1948) in 1971, writing jazz criticism for the *Aquarius Record Rag* and jamming with people like guitarist Richard "Duck" Baker (who in the early '70s was *Coda's* San Francisco correspondent). Early in 1975 Bruce formed Sound Clinic with altoist Lewis Jordan and trumpeter George Sams. This group was an early prototype of the Rova in that it was all horns and mixed composition with structured improvisation so smoothly that it was hard to tell the two apart. And like the Rova, Sound Clinic was a highly rehearsed, disciplined group. Speaking of the band just before its breakup in 1977, Bruce told me, "We believe in rehearsing, in working



JON RASKIN

LARRY OCHS

BRUCE ACKLEY

ANDREW VOIGT

hard. Too many groups in the Bay Area are practicing in public'.

Later in 1975, Bruce joined the large group Continuum (which also included Jon Raskin) and with that group founded Blue Dolphin, the first Bay Area artist-owned space for the presentation of avant-garde music, which closed in 1978. Bruce stayed with both bands until 1977, Twins, and then Rova. His first recording was an overdubbed solo on "Alice in Blunderland" by Monster Island (Visible V-7771).

Jon Raskin was born in Portland, Oregon in 1954, came to the Bay Area in 1972, and studied composition with such diverse personalities as Barney Childs, John Handy and Allaudin Mathieu. From 1975 through 1978 Jon was musical director of the Tumbleweeds Dance Troupe, and toured the U.S. and Europe with them. He led a group of his own at the First Annual Free Music Festival in 1975, and played in the next two with Continuum. To my ears the most jazz-oriented member of the Rova, Jon often takes groups into a San Francisco nightclub called Precita Park Cafe, playing bebop, mainstream and post-Ornette material.

Larry Ochs was born in New York City in 1949, and studied trumpet while growing up in Scarsdale, but took up tenor saxophone after hearing Roscoe Mitchell on records. Larry came to San Francisco in 1971, then moved up the coast to Mendocino in 1973, where he was Musical Director of a conceptual arts ensemble. He played with Charles Bobo Shaw's Human

Arts Ensemble in New York in 1977, then returned to the Bay Area, where he helped to found the Metropolitan Arts Center in San Francisco, started Metalanguage Records in Berkeley, and joined Rova.

Andrew Voigt was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1955. He also studied with John Handy, and in 1975-76 attended the Creative Music Studio at Woodstock, New York, studying with Maurice McIntyre, Oliver Lake, Karl Berger, Anthony Braxton and David Holland. Then, in 1976-77, Andrew got a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to study with Roscoe Mitchell, arriving back in the Bay Area in time to join Rova.

If there is any one feature that all of the members of the Rova have in common, it is the fact that none of them come from the Bay Area, and they could not have met anywhere else. Bruce, Jon, Larry and Andrew are typical of the hundreds of artists who migrate to the Bay Area every year from everywhere to find a community of artists and a congenial environment. Whatever its deficiencies, the Bay Area provides....

Considering how much jazz studying and playing is in the backgrounds of the Rova, it's surprising (to me, at least) how far from jazz much of "Cinema Rovate" sounds. The free improvisation that was a hallmark of the Sixties Free Jazz movement and is still a major approach in much of Free Music is absent from the Rova's approach, and their improvisation is improvisation bound, or as they call it, "structured improvisation". The legacy of

high-energy free improvisation is present in brief solo passages by Andrew on Larry's *New Sheets* and by Bruce on *Belly Of The Waters*, but here the concept of freedom has been sacrificed to stylization for a particular effect in a particularly designated part of each composition.

Larry Ochs explained his position when asked him how much free improvisation occurred in the structured improvisations called *Trobar Clus # 1 & # 2*. "There isn't any. I love free improvisation, I play it all the time, but as a listener I have reservations about it. I think a record should be a work of vinyl art, and its main element should be ideas. Too much free improvisation is just sound without ideas. There are musicians in the Bay Area who could totally blow us away with their technique, their ability to play anything, but their music lacks ideas. That's why we'll probably always do very structured pieces on our albums. I think valleys work in a live situation, but they don't work on a record — a record should be all peaks".

In response to my question as to whether the Rova played jazz or New Music, the group seemed to resist either definition. As Bruce put it, "I think of jazz as playing chord changes, and playing regular time. We certainly don't do that. But there's also a jazz approach to playing instruments that we do use — a more vocal sound, a very personal way of expressing ourselves...."

"Yeah, that's it," Larry continued. "New Music is about using your instrument to express what a composer wants. But even though we play compositions, we express ourselves through them."

An interesting comparison between the compositional approach of the Rova and the non-idiomatic free improvisation currently prevalent world-wide can be made by listening to "Cinema Rovate" and then to Metalanguage's second release, guitarist Henry Kaiser's "Protocol" (ML 102). Kaiser's record could not be more different in approach — he duets with trumpeter Toshinori Kondo, who has just come to the U.S. from Japan (where he recorded with Derek Bailey and Milford Graves) on one side, and on the other with percussionist Andrea Centazzo, on a visit from Italy.

Metalanguage has four more releases pending in April, making them the largest producer of free music recordings on the West Coast. One of these will be a collaboration between Kaiser and Rova (Rova plays compositions which Kaiser improvises over) entitled "Daredevils" (ML 105), and another the second Rova album, "The Removal of Secrecy" (ML 106). The other two albums are released in conjunction with Berkeley pianist Greg Goodman's Beak Doctor label. "A Similar Review" (ML 103/BD 1) is a solo recording by Goodman, and "Abracadabra" (ML 104/BD 2) is a live recording documenting Evan Parker's duets with Goodman at the latter's Berkeley performance space, Woody Woodman's Finger Palace. These recordings attest not only to the tremendous vitality of the free music scene in the Bay Area, but also to its standing as one of the major centers of the free music movement throughout the world.

Metalanguage Records are available from 2639 Russell St., Berkeley, Ca. 94705. Visible Records address is 69 Charlotte St., Worcester, Mass 01610.

ARTICLE BY LOREN MEANS

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BILL RUSSELL

EXTRACTS FROM A CONVERSATION WITH DICK ALLEN

I first got the idea of recording for myself after 1942 when the first Bunk Johnson records were made in New Orleans. These were recorded on a little twelve inch federal recorder that didn't work too well. It was difficult for anybody to record during the war but especially in New Orleans.

I decided that I couldn't really do much worse. So the next year, 1943, I decided I'd try and get a recorder. At that time they only had disc recorders and possibly a few wire recorders which worked on the magnetic principle. There were no tape recorders until after the war when they found them in Germany. My brother was a good electrical transformer engineer and he got the parts together for me. We got an old turntable, an ordinary amplifier, a Knight recorder and a cutting head which was screwed onto the turntable. I had to buy a new microphone — an American Dynamic mike — which I got wholesale for about \$10.00.

I had planned to go down to New Orleans from Pittsburgh during vacation time in May but about a week before I planned to leave I got a letter from Bunk Johnson who had gone out to San Francisco to play a concert there at the museum which Rudi Blesh had organised. Bunk decided he'd stay there and try his luck at the music in San Francisco that season. I went to San Francisco instead on the train and took my little recorder with me. I had also decided I would go through with the recording date in New Orleans. I wrote to George Lewis right away and asked him if he could arrange to get the band together and get another trumpet player.

In San Francisco I made a few records with Bunk which I had never intended to issue. I didn't expect them to be of that good a quality. I recorded Bunk playing with Bertha Gonsoulin at her home as well as some talking sides in which he talked about Pete Lala's, Tony Jackson and parades. These were made at Bill Colbourn's house where Bunk was living. I just wanted the information but eventually some of the sides were issued on Bunk Johnson talking records on American Music.

When I got to New Orleans George Lewis told me that he'd arranged to have the date with what he thought was the best available trumpet player — Kid Howard. The next day we had a rehearsal. The day after that was a Sunday and we made the records at the Gypsy Tea Room.

I still wasn't intending going into the recording business. Before going to New Orleans I had talked to Frank Wolff of Blue Note and they wanted something from New Orleans. However the material I recorded was all non-union since the fellows in George Lewis' band didn't belong to the union at that time. So Blue Note decided to put them out on a special label. I sold the material outright for \$300 to Blue Note which issued it on the Climax label later in 1943.

I was just recording the music because I liked it. Anyway that was my reason, theoretically, for getting into the business and doing any recording. I felt I couldn't do any worse than other people. Actually some of the things recorded were worse than probably any recording ever done. The first Climax records were recorded so badly technically that some sides couldn't be used. The records were cut on steel based and aluminum based acetates which we picked up in Pittsburgh because you could no longer buy blanks. To look at the cut on the first records it was such a strange pattern

looked like what they called a vibration pattern which you can see pictures of in recording books. When you inspected it with a magnifying glass it turned out that the cutting head was bouncing up and down. It would cut for maybe half an inch then it would skip for maybe an eighth of an inch. And of course every revolution would happen at a different time with each revolution shorter in distance. At first I thought we were just having thread trouble. That thing was so bad I usually made the band wait a while until I turned on the machine to record. By that time a third or half of the blank would be gone. Most of the records were made on twelve-inch blanks but in certain numbers like *Careless Love* the space on the blank ran out before the musicians finished and it just stopped in the middle of a phrase.

By the next year (1944) I had bought a better machine — a Federal 16-inch recorder. It was the same make that we used for Bunk's first recordings in 1942. I got it one day before I left on my trip and it wouldn't work at all. The shaft of the turntable was frozen into it and wouldn't turn as it was all rusted. My brother finally got it apart and sanded down so it would turn. But it went at the wrong speed of 82.6 revolutions so everything I recorded that year was that little bit fast and had to be played back at that fast speed or else they'd be about half a tone low. A couple of sides were cut at 33 — a nine-minute blues, we had a couple of takes of that.

I was never satisfied with the drummer (Edgar Bosley) we had in 1943 so I got Baby Dodds to come to New Orleans. I don't like to criticize anyone but still I never criticised him as much as somebody like Lawrence Marrero did a year or so later in New York when he heard some of the playbacks of the Climax session. Lawrence complained bitterly how the drummer was rushing things so badly. Lawrence had a very steady beat as everyone knows. Naturally he wouldn't like that. I said, "how come you used a drummer like that who you knew was going to rush and didn't play to suit you?" He said, "Oh well, of course we used him because the week before he got us a job — we played some Saturday night bar room." Each of the non-union musicians were paid \$3.00 a night at that time in New Orleans so they had paid Edgar Mosley back by giving him the recording job. This shows the attitude of a lot of musicians in New Orleans for years and it may be the proper attitude at that. They don't think of a recording as anything different than playing any other date — it's just another night of music. Bunk was the same way. Baby Dodds always mentioned that as well, except Baby did say that it sometimes made him more nervous and self-conscious, to think that this was going on a record. Of course the fellows down here had never recorded much and didn't worry about a recording as anything special that was going to do down in history.

I had planned to record Bunk's band for a whole week but Bunk could never understand why I wanted all those records. After about four nights he really got fed up and didn't even show up for the last night. We got Kid Shots to fill in for Bunk that last night at San Jacinto Hall.

I stayed at George Lewis' house for about a month that trip. As soon as I arrived I hooked up the machine in his bedroom (not in his kitchen as people usually said) as George wanted to check his clarinet playing. He had just

come out of hospital where he had stayed a few days after being hit in the chest by a small hand truck. We recorded *Burgundy Street Blues* and a couple of other numbers that I'd forgotten until about five years ago when I found some of them on acetates. One of them is a tune the musicians here called "*I Can't Escape From You*" which they thought was from a movie that Bing Crosby had made. I found the sheet music for it later and it turns out it wasn't at all from the movie but some ordinary tin pan alley song of little importance or interest or beauty you might say. I never heard it before or since. Other people told me later this tune was really called "*You Can't Escape From Me*". Since I wasn't sure of the title or the composer (if there was a composer for it) at the time I called it by various names such as *San Jacinto Stomp*.

The year before we had recorded at the Gypsy Tea Room but I thought it might be better to have a quieter place to record. George Lewis suggested the San Jacinto Hall which was maybe five or six blocks from his house. We went and rented it and the rent was, I believe, ten dollars a night at that time. A fellow named Williams was managing the hall — a very nice fellow who was very helpful the week we were recording. Nobody bothered us and it was very quiet. A couple of nights some kids would come in along the alley at the side of the hall and poke their heads in the window. We kept the doors closed and there were only a few visitors. Normally would just as soon have a lot of visitors. The ideal place to record is at a dance and have your microphones placed so as not to pick up the crowd noise and drown out the band. I never did mind a lot of people listening or watching as far as that goes. At least I thought it would be better to have some control over who was there in case they did get too noisy.

Bunk didn't say he could still play the trumpet. He said I can "stomp myself some trumpet". To him music was mainly rhythmic. One quote I've used years ago — "music is rhythm, rhythm is music". Of course you have to have the melody along with it too. Bunk didn't think of himself as singing a melody or playing it that way on the trumpet. It was "stomping out" the melody — it had to be with the rhythm. And while that concept may not be original with New Orleans it was more or less original to me. I'd been playing music all those years and knew I was supposed to count but classical teachers told you not to pat your foot, you're supposed to feel the rhythm but not make it too evident. In this music the fundamental part of it was the rhythm.

In 1941 Bunk had made some acetates of himself playing at home by himself, of *Maple Leaf Rag* and *Weary Blues*. He was mostly interested in sending some messages on records to some of his friends like Louis Armstrong and Sidney Bechet. He sent a message to me and one to the Bob Crosby band. He sent these messages to anybody he though could help him get a trumpet. You couldn't really tell much about how Bunk played — he was just playing by himself on a ten dollar horn. Incidentally Lu Watters and his band donated the money to Bunk to get that first horn. Lu was leader at that time of a little larger band than he later had. One night when the musicians were paid off he didn't ask them, he just said, "I'm taking two dollars from each pay. We're sending it to Bunk to get a cornet with."

So Lu was the first to do anything to help. Bunk hitched a ride into New Orleans as soon as he got the twenty dollars and went into a pawn shop on South Rampart Street and bought himself both a trumpet and a cornet for ten dollars apiece. Of course they weren't very good quality or condition and he was just hoping they might do until he could get something better.

Gene Williams of *Jazz Information* magazine agreed with me that Bunk showed some possibilities when we heard these home recordings. You couldn't really tell much how he played. His lip wasn't in shape and the type of trumpet playing that Bunk did wouldn't sound that effective by itself. Bunk was hardly ever on the beat. If you didn't hear him patting his foot you couldn't really tell where the beat was. He was never hitting any note quite on the beat. Lee Collins, when he first tried to describe how Bunk played, said it sounded like he's missing all the time, he's always behind. Yet, as Lee tells in his book, Bunk was his favourite trumpet player. One time later in New York I showed Bunk a book on trumpet styles from Harry James to Louis back through to Bunk, giving a sample of how they played. They had notated *Bunk's Blues* and they tried to show that delay by having a little sixteenth rest maybe before each note. The music was always a little bit off beat. Bunk thought it ridiculous to notate it that way. "All they have to do is put it down straight just because I have this lazy attack" which was how Bunk described it.

I mentioned that Bunk got both a cornet and a trumpet when he went to the pawn shop and we found out many years later that all that time he'd really wanted to play a cornet. He always did like the cornet tone better. His favourite make was Conn. Most of the people in New Orleans played Conn cornets. Joe Oliver had used one in New Orleans and Manuel Manetta told me that Bolden used a Conn cornet. When Bunk had asked for a trumpet it was more or less a figure of speech because trumpets were so much in style but what he really wanted was a cornet. Actually his tone a lot of the time on trumpet did sound just as mellow as a cornet. He played cornet briefly in San Francisco and I even arranged to have a cornet down here for the 1944 records but he couldn't get used to the cornet mouthpiece so he have up the idea of using a cornet and used a Selmer trumpet. Quite a few trumpet players used the cornet because it was probably easier to get a mellow tone. Some people think they are easier to blow and some people have told me they are a little harder to blow than a trumpet. It depends on the individual. I don't think it made too much difference with Bunk because I heard him play on three or four different horns and sometimes he'd borrow a horn. No matter what horn he played he always sounded the same.

I remember a wild night in Chicago when Bunk was scheduled to appear at Orchestra Hall in concert on September 6, 1946. Bunk didn't like concerts that much in the first place. He should have just refused to play because he thought dances were the thing. It was all right to play in bar rooms and honky tonks but to get up to Orchestra Hall and give a concert was the wrong place for his music. On this occasion Bunk left his trumpet behind in New Orleans in some bar room and finally showed up late for the concert at ten o'clock

with only his mouthpiece. So Bunk sat beside Lee Collins and they used the same horn. Bill Colbourn, a longtime Bunk fan, and I were sitting in the Grand Ballroom, outside the auditorium, where you could still hear the music very well. Bill made the remark, "just listen to the difference in tone when Bunk plays a horn and when Lee plays it". It was so distinct, the quality. Lee had a very good tone but Bunk's was a little more brilliant. Virgil Thompson, the classical critic/composer, once wrote in the *Herald Tribune* after he'd been to San Francisco, that he'd never heard the blues played like Bunk played them. He said Bunk had the darkest tone quality on trumpet he'd ever heard in his life. It was not necessarily more mellow than Lee but had a bluer quality. More subdued in a way, but just as big a tone.

Some people think that Lee Collins was a Louis imitator which he always denied. Of course everybody in the world was certainly influenced by Louis. And then undoubtedly without thinking about it Lee would have been influenced by Louis, such as the high note feature of Lee's playing. But this isn't necessarily true because there was Kid Rena playing high notes in New Orleans before Louis. Louis probably didn't develop his high notes until he went to Chicago and took a few lessons. On the early records such as *Cornet Chop Suey* he certainly doesn't go above high C. Lee claimed he modelled his own style after Bunk and Buddy Petit. Buddy Petit (even without hearing him on records) by reputation was never a high note man, he played on the staff and Bunk certainly did. Bunk would play high C's of course in his later years — perhaps more than when he was younger. Lee still didn't have that beautiful dark sombre quality that Bunk had.

Some of the recordings I made were never intended to be issued at first. Some were just informal sessions and yet the Japanese company wanted to try and make it as complete as possible. They even wanted to issue everything I ever recorded which would be several hundred titles. But those weren't really masters. I gave a certain master number to every take rather than yelling take one, take two. All the recording I did before 1949 was on disc so nothing could be erased. Some of them I'm still going to destroy — things that haven't been issued. But actually — and this might not be an excuse for issuing all the things we did in Japan — but some of those things when you hear them now sound pretty good compared with some of the music you hear today. When I copied a few of the unissued takes a year ago I was astonished myself. I hadn't heard them since the day they were made. At the sessions we might play back parts as soon as they were made. Usually Bunk or George Lewis or whoever was there would want to hear it. Not that they were that much in love with their own playing but they wondered how

bad or good it sounded and if they should do it over again. Baby Dodds, in particular, always wanted to hear certain things he did to see if they came out all right. I remember after one take he said, "Oh my life, I ain't ever going to do that again, ain't going to do that." I don't know what it was for it didn't sound bad to me. They would catch a few little things that they didn't think were quite the right thing to play and they'd try to play something different the next take. Playing those originals in the studio without any loss or distortion from the mastering, processing and sometimes bad pressings, I couldn't believe that they sounded pretty good, with a good fresh sound. That band (Bunk's) sounded like a million dollars. It wasn't the perfect band, maybe, it wasn't the best band even I ever heard in some ways. The best band I ever heard that played together as a dance group was Kid Ory's back in 1946. It had such a good easy relaxed beat when they played for their dances. They never did get that entirely on records either. When they dropped down real soft the music of the dancers' feet would almost drown out the band. Ory did a lot of playing like that at that time. This is something you miss in the bands today who play as loud as they can all the time. But the real New Orleans tradition was to play a variety of dynamics. Hit the introduction loud, as Bunk and Baby Dodds would say, then you dropped down a little softer to medium loud for the first chorus or for a few choruses, finally you drop down so soft you can just barely hear it. As Manuel Manetta said, that's the only time you could ever hear the guitar come out real good. Bunk wanted a band like that which would use a lot of variety, but most of the musicians in his band would never follow those principles, and he would never be the type to argue or tell anyone how to play. So he never insisted on dropping down real soft. One reason I'm convinced that he would drop out for a chorus was just to add a little bit of dynamic variety. In certain bands when he was satisfied with the personnel, he would never stop playing. In fact he did that on a couple of numbers I recorded. When things are going really well the tradition, of course, was for the trumpet never to stop anyway. The trumpet would play every chorus. When things were going all right Bunk would play all the way. He used a really pretty, soft second part but never stopped. It was only a rumour that Bunk was an old time has-been who had to stop and rest after playing a couple of choruses to catch his breath and rest his lip. Bunk could outblow anyone.

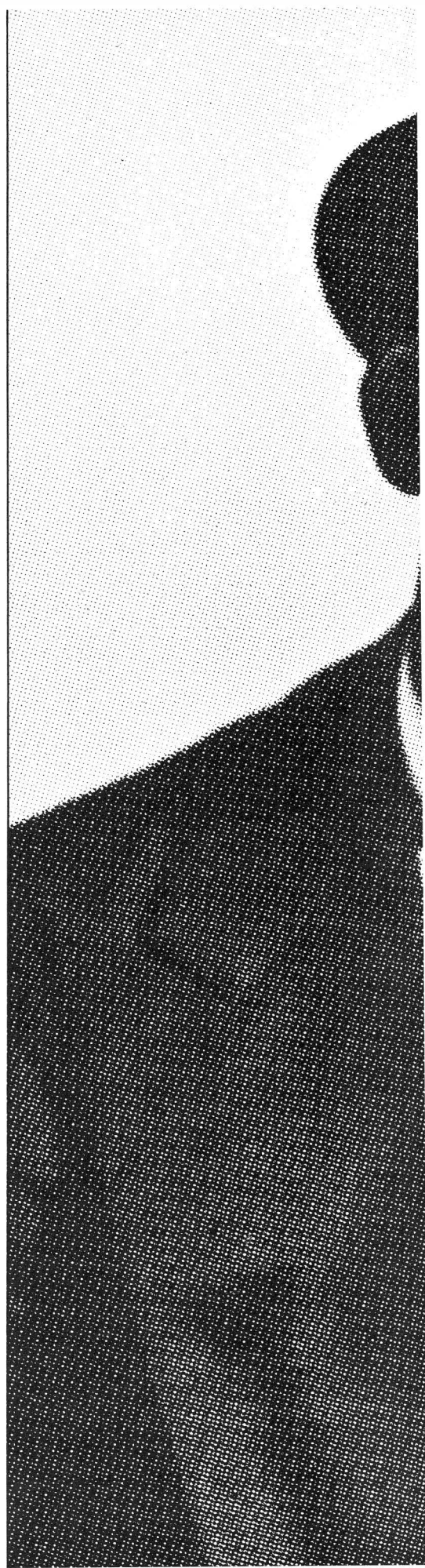
(Note: There is considerable information about the American Music recordings and Bill Russell in Tom Bethel's biography of George Lewis published by the University of California Press.)

AMERICAN MUSIC

BY JOHN
NORRIS

More than thirty years have elapsed since Bill Russell recorded Bunk Johnson and George Lewis in New Orleans. And yet, today, these recordings are among the most elusive of jazz masterpieces. Russell issued some of the titles on 78s in the 1940s and in the 1950s he released several lps. His press runs were small and the records received minimal distribution. Those lucky enough to own them have clung tenaciously to their jewels but, for most peop-

Bunk Johnson





le, judgement of Bunk Johnson's music has been based on his New York recordings from 1945 and the early 1942 sessions which were reissued by Commodore and Good Time Jazz.

European collectors were pleasantly surprised a decade ago with the issue, by Storyville, of ten lps from the American Music catalog which included several masters not previously available. Five years ago Dan Records in Japan began a reissue project of American Music masters which eventually resulted in twenty lps becoming available. The first ten closely paralleled those issued by Storyville while the second ten were, almost exclusively, previously unissued American Music masters. Much of the unissued material consisted of alternate versions of tunes originally released but there was also a reasonable number of new songs — some never recorded elsewhere by the musicians.

Historically and musically the most important music was recorded by Bill Russell during his trips to New Orleans in 1944 and 1945. Most of his efforts were centered around Bunk Johnson, a pioneer jazz trumpeter who had already left New Orleans for obscurity by the time jazz recordings became popular in the 1920s. He had become a legendary figure and his return to music had all the elements of a Hollywood romance. His first recordings were made in 1942 and Bill Russell was on hand during the Jazz Man session in June of that year. Several rehearsal takes and some unissued alternates turn up on Dan 7022 (Early Bunk 1942-43) — a largely documentary lp in which Bunk talks about early New Orleans and such famous personalities as Buddy Bolden and Tony Jackson. There are also some trumpet/piano duets with Bertha Gonsoulin but if this was the only music available to listeners today it would be quite understandable to dismiss Johnson as a curiosity — a relic of the early days of jazz.

It does not prepare you for the drive, intensity, imagination and remarkable consistency of ideas and execution which are evident in five nights of recordings in the summer of 1944. 47 different tunes were recorded during that period — a total of 83 performances taken down on acetate blanks by Bill Russell. The recording apparatus was primitive, the echoey sound of San Jacinto Hall giving the music a lively brightness but eliminating almost completely any real kind of bass response. By today's standards, then, this recorded sound would be considered primitive. However, the remarkably sustained level of the music night after night makes these sessions among the finest every recorded. They are the apex of an indigenous musical style which had been developing unheeded in New Orleans since the 1920s. The core of this band was George Lewis (clarinet), Jim Robinson (trombone), Lawrence Marrero (banjo) and Slow Drag Pavageau (bass). These musicians were old friends who played together all the time and were in tune with one another's way of expressing music. Combining them with Bunk Johnson and drummer Baby Dodds created a unique situation. Johnson, far more than any other trumpeter in New Orleans, played with melodic authority. His playing gave the ensembles (which constituted most of the performances) an almost baroque perfection. He would attack the melody with an almost lazy delay which blended perfectly with the more aggressive tendencies of Lewis and Robinson while riding casually over the

relentless swing laid down by the rhythm section. Lawrence Marrero's banjo beat was an unshakable four beats to the bar and he combined with bassist Pavageau to give the music a flowing pulse. Adding Baby Dodds' impressionistic virtuosity was a stroke of genius on the part of Russell. His syncopated pyrotechnics gave the music a lively dancing quality — the final touch in a seemingly muddled jigsaw puzzle which came out as remarkably intense and exhilarating ensemble music which has never been equalled. It also sounds unlike any jazz music which precedes it on record. Johnson's melodic embellishments have the clarity and economy of phrasing which characterized early Louis Armstrong but Lewis and Robinson attack the music with the rhythmic intensity of the Basie band and while their mode of expression is much simpler harmonically it has the same kind of rhythmic flexibility which characterized most jazz music by the late 1930s.

There are five lps issued by Dan to document this week of recording activity. The first three volumes virtually duplicate those issued on Storyville and represent Bill Russell's original choices of material to issue. The selections are dominated by the blues and pop tunes from the early part of the Twentieth Century — harmonically simple material which suited the musical horizons of everyone. The overall impression of this music is that despite the heat and intensity of the playing there is an unhurried, very relaxed air to the performances. Most numbers run for close to five minutes and there is an extraordinary long blues of more than nine minutes in length which sums up the authority with which these musicians play their own music. Volumes 4 and 5 are all previously unissued performances but the only fresh tunes are *Royal Garden Blues*, *Ole Miss* and *You Are My Sunshine*. While the inner details within the performances vary considerably the overall interpretation of the tunes is basically the same and in many of the selections it must only have been arbitrary decision on the part of Bill Russell which determined the original "takes" for release. Only *After You've Gone* (AM LP 647) and the LP version of *When The Saints Go Marching In* remain unreleased by Dan from previously issued masters but there are still many performances which have never been heard from these sessions.

In May of 1945 Russell returned to New Orleans for more recordings with Bunk Johnson. On this occasion they used George Lewis' home as a studio and while the overall sound quality is better the musical performances are tighter and less inspired. The tunes are generally shorter in length and there is greater predictability to their interpretation. These are still superior performances to those made several months later in New York but are not really magical. Out of the 56 masters recorded only 13 were issued on American Music. Dan 7020 is a complete lp of previously unissued masters and is a good cross section of the music recorded over the three days of sessions. Three titles are included in Dan 4009 and three further titles are included in the Baby Dodds lp on Dan 4013. Eight selections issued by American Music/Storyville remain unissued on Dan.

During his 1945 New Orleans trip Russell also recorded Johnson as leader of a brass band. This was a conscious attempt to document the parade music which has always played a prominent part in the musical life of the Crescent

City. The results are characteristic of this music rather than being outstanding examples of New Orleans parade music. Those would come later, in the 1950s with recordings by an organised band — the Eureka. The eerie sound of George Lewis' E-flat clarinet and the brassy timbre of the alto and baritone horn give these recordings an authenticity which overrides their musical qualities.

Russell's final recordings of Bunk Johnson were made in New York in 1946 with pianist Don Ewell and drummer Alphonse Steel. Eight pop tunes were recorded which focus on Bunk's ability at melodic embellishment. Heard here in stark clarity are the basic characteristics of his style. Four of these performances are included on the Brass Band lp (Dan 4009) which almost duplicates that issued on Storyville 202. The remaining selections (including some alternates) can be found on Dan 7026 along with the mediocre piano performances by Dink Johnson's trio.

Bill Russell was the principal architect in the international recognition of George Lewis. He had been an active musician in New Orleans since the 1920s without once recording until Russell and his cohorts decided to record Bunk Johnson in 1942. Even then, it was only through fortuitous accident (as described in detail in Tom Bethell's excellent biography "George Lewis: A Jazzman from New Orleans") that Lewis ended up as part of Bunk's recording band. In 1943 Russell had recorded Lewis' band with the brilliant Kid Howard on trumpet (because Bunk Johnson was in California) and most of these titles were issued on Climax 78s and subsequently on Blue Note lps. Dan 7021 includes some unissued selections from these sessions while a version of *Careless Love* from this date can be found on Dan 4005 (which includes all the music re-issued on Storyville 201). The bittersweet clarinet of George Lewis was a completely fresh sound at this time. Only later was his music to echo around the world through the interpretations of hundreds of European and Oriental musicians. The four George Lewis lps on Dan all contain examples of his unique concept in the fragile intimacy of trio and quartet performances. The originally issued versions of such tunes as *Burgundy Street Blues*, *Over The Waves*, *The Old Rugged Cross* and *St. Philip Street Breakdown* are to be found on Dan 4004 and 4005. These lps also contain more remarkable examples of this music at its best from the week of Bunk Johnson sessions in 1944. On August 5 Bunk failed to show up and Kid Shots Madison was enlisted as a replacement. Madison was primarily recognised as a parade trumpeter and his forceful style contained little of the subtle embellishments which characterised Johnson. But his playing at this session contributed to another evening of remarkable music. The band is in tremendous form and the music has much of the same excitement generated with Johnson as leader. *Sheik Of Araby*, *When You And I Were Young Maggie*, *Bucket's Got A Hole In It*, *Dumaine Street Rag* and *Gloryland* (all on Dan 4005) are remarkable examples from this session. After Kid Shots' departure the band recorded two versions of the blues as well as an astonishing version of *Ice Cream* which Russell succinctly described as "a miracle of uninhibited joy". These recordings put the seal on one of the most extraordinary weeks of location recording ever carried out in the history of jazz. The remaining perform-

ances from this session, which include previously unissued versions of some of the tunes as well as performances of *Everybody Loves My Baby* and *Baby Won't You Please Come Home*, can be found on Dan 7017.

The remaining six lps in the Dan collection of American Music masters are of comparatively minor interest to those not totally fascinated with New Orleans jazz. In general they document the work of either lesser musicians or else they are recordings by early pioneers who are of minor interest. Trumpeter/clarinetist Wooden Joe Nicholas is remembered as much by the fact that he was an uncle of Albert Nicholas as by his prowess as a musician. Russell recorded him successfully in May of 1945 at Artesian Hall. Twelve titles were recorded but only the first three have a unique quality to them. *Shake It And Break It*, *Lead Me On (Precious Lord)* and *Careless Love* were made before drummer Cie Frazier arrived and the balance and interaction between the musicians produces some hauntingly beautiful music. Wooden Joe's shout style on trumpet is complemented by the searing intensity of Albert Burbank's clarinet. Lawrence Marrero's banjo ensures the rhythm is held together through his efforts and those of bassist Austin Young. Dan 4010 is completed with more music from the same session by the complete band, including what is probably the first recording of the ubiquitous *Eh La Bas*. This lp is essentially the same as Storyville 204. Unissued titles from this same session are on Dan 7019.

The remaining New Orleans sessions date from 1949 and 1951. Clarinetist Emile Barnes is featured with Billie and DeDe Pierce — essentially a grouping drawn from Luthjens, then one of the few places featuring the older style of New Orleans music. Barnes was also the clarinetist in a Kid Thomas Valentine session also recorded in 1951. These two lps are antecedents of the now familiar sound emanating from Preservation Hall — a highly stylised, rather rigid interpretation of the music which tends to move with regimented syncopation rather than the freewheeling swing of jazz music. Filling out the Kid Thomas lp (Dan 4012) are some selections ostensibly under the leadership of clarinetist Big Eye Louis Nelson. These 1949 sessions also include elderly trumpeters Charlie Love and Wooden Joe Nicholas as well as trombonist Louis Nelson. More music from these sessions can be found on Dan 7026 as well as a 1949 session with trumpeter Herb Morand and clarinetist Albert Burbank joining trombonist Nelson. They are idiomatic and ordinary examples of parochial musicians.

The final lp in this collection focuses on the considerable talents of Baby Dodds and the music is drawn from a number of sources. All of it appeared originally on three American Music 10" lps. There are two segments of Dodds demonstrating the various components of his drum kit and how he coordinated these when playing in a band. The drummer discusses at length his stylistic concept and then there are various musical examples. Two of the selections come from the Bunk Johnson sessions (*Listen To Me* — with a vocal by Dodds over his immaculate press rolls — and *Maryland My Maryland*); *Tea For Two* was recorded in 1944 with pianist Tut Soper; *Slow And Easy* is from 1953 with Darnell Howard and Art Hodes; the final *Chicago Slow Drag* is with a seven-piece band which features Natty Dominique, Darnell

Howard and Preston Jackson and is also from 1953. This is an important document describing in some detail the concept and methods of execution of one of the premiere jazz drummers to predate today's drum methods. As such it is a fitting closure to this series.

The Dan Ips are luxuriously packaged. The photographs are from Bill Russell's personal collection and the later volumes in this series include handsome folders extolling the virtues of the music (usually in Japanese) as well as supplying the listener with extensive discographical information on these recordings as well as others of interest to lovers of New Orleans jazz. Bearing in mind the overall inadequacies of the original recordings it is a pleasant duty to report that 4004 through 4013 have generally excellent sound. The later issues, however, are generally disappointing. The sound on some of the records is distorted and generally speaking they are less pleasurable to listen to. Manipulating the settings of your amplifier can bring some improvement to the sound but it is regretted that it is necessary to concur with Tom Bethell's judgement (*The Mississippi Rag* - July 1975) that someone at Dan Records seriously tampered with the natural sound of these recordings. His efforts at improving the sound actually made them worse.

It is now 1979 and there is still no indication that this material will become readily available in North America. The Japanese records are still available, we understand (the first ten have been repackaged recently with the catalogue numbers listed in this survey), but it requires a great deal of effort and dollars to obtain these recordings. The shrinking dollar has made Japanese imports extremely expensive and thus totally unattractive to North American specialty dealers and they are no longer a reliable source if you wish to obtain any of these recordings. We do recommend the following Japanese sources as possible suppliers of the American Music Dan Ips:

Junichi Kawai, 16-5 Kitahorie-Dori,
Nishi-ku, Osaka, Japan 550.

Disc Center, CPO Box 874, 530-91 Osaka, Japan.

— *John Norris*

THE AMERICAN MUSIC RECORDINGS

VC 4004 - George Lewis 1943-45

VC 4005 - George Lewis

VC 4006 - Bunk Johnson 1944 Volume 1

VC 4007 - Bunk Johnson 1944 Volume 2

VC 4008 - Bunk Johnson 1944 Volume 3

VC 4009 - Bunk Johnson Brass Band

VC 4010 - Wooden Joe Nicholas

VC 4011 - Emile Barnes

VC 4012 - Kid Thomas & Big Eye Nelson

VC 4013 - Baby Dodds

VC 7017 - George Lewis & Kid Shots

VC 7018 - Bunk Johnson 1944 Volume 4

VC 7019 - Wooden Joe Volume 2

VC 7020 - Bunk Johnson 1945

VC 7021 - George Lewis at home

VC 7022 - Early Bunk

VC 7023 - Bunk Johnson Brass Band Volume 2

VC 7024 - Bunk Johnson 1944 Volume 5

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RECORD REVIEWS RECORD REVIEWS..

ARTISTS HOUSE

Paul Desmond (alto sax), Ed Bickert (guitar), Don Thompson (bass), Jerry Fuller (drums). *Bourbons Street, Toronto 1975.* Artists House AH 2

Jim Hall (g), Red Mitchell (b). *Sweet Basil, NYC, 1978.* Artists House AH 5

"As Long As There's Music"
Charlie Haden (b), Hampton Hawes (piano). *California 1976.* Artists House AH 4

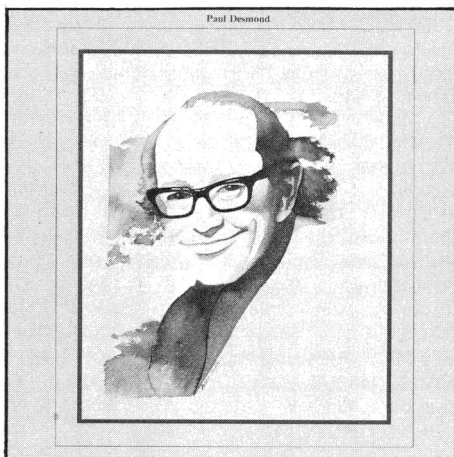
Producer John Snyder has left A&M/Horizon and now blows his own horn. Besides the music, which is good on all three recordings anyhow, there is something to be said for John Snyder's conception of a record. So first let us consider the package and save the content for later on.

Both sides of an Artists House folding cover are sober and tasteful, using either photographs or graphic creations. Printed on quality paper, the 8-page booklet that accompanies each recording includes pictures, statements, information and transcriptions of the highest pertinence. For example, the Haden/Hawes booklet presents the complete technical characteristics of the recording session, a special one-page letter by Ornette Coleman, the transcription of Haden's solo on *As Long As There Is Music* and a complete (as far as I know) discography of both artists. Charlie Haden even points out the best records to listen to for his playing! The inside cover is Hawes' and Haden's respective messages.

In a similar format, Mitchell and Hall's booklet contains several transcriptions including Hall's solo on *What's New* and Mitchell's solo on *Beautiful*, plus complete discographies and technical information.

Paul Desmond's booklet opens with the transcription of the famous *Take Five*, although it is not heard on the recording, and follows with notes by Brubeck, Don Thompson and Nat Hentoff, the transcription of Desmond's solo on *Line For Lyons*, a complete discography plus a thoughtful addition: an article by Paul Desmond that appeared originally in *Punch*, January 1973, about a gig at the Orange County Fair in Middleton. What a charming and witty person Desmond was! We miss you Paul, and I believe that the angels in Paradise have dropped the trumpet routine and reapplied themselves to the study of alto sax as soon as they heard you play the first notes of *Audrey*!

Since his beginnings on Horizon, Snyder has always put a high value on the presentation of the recording. Artists House keeps up the good work and makes it even better. Is the trouble worth it? Definitely yes. I quite agree with the idea that the music is self-sufficient and does not need logorrhea from zealous liner note experts; I like to approach any music in a blindfold way, trying to put aside any prejudice, difficult as that sometimes is. Nevertheless, if a music is good enough to produce some transformation, some growth of oneself, it becomes hard to eliminate the musician from



your perception of his music. And he just might just become your friend. So, at one time or another, you might just feel like knowing a bit better this person who, in some way, helps you to survive. It seems to me that John Snyder, by carefully selecting the type of information most relevant to the musician, and by packaging it in a very sensible way, fills exactly this need.

Paul Desmond is captured live in Toronto and shows his usual inspiration and his very melodic lyricism. There is little difference between this album and similar ones (quartet live on A&M, "Pure Desmond" on CTI) except for an exceptionally beautiful composition of Desmond (*Audrey*) and for Don Thompson's bass solos. The latter have not been edited, hence the longer-than-average playing time. As a matter of fact, Thompson himself proposed the cutting out of his solos — an excess of modesty as he is one hell of a good bass player. I would even go so far as to say that the only surprises on this record come from him; the rest of the music being mostly predictable — but so good!

The Red Mitchell/Jim Hall duet provides a real listening pleasure... friendly complicity all the way. Instead of getting drowned in superlatives, I would rather stress soberly the importance of Red Mitchell as a bassist. This guy is contemporary (born 1927) with Ray Brown, Oscar Pettiford and Charles Mingus. That's the generation that immediately follows John Kirby, Walter Page, Wellman Braud and Pops Foster. Jimmy Blanton would be only six years older than Red, had he lived. So Mitchell is heir to an incredible heritage, and age and experience have worked wonders on his playing. Those who think he is just another good walkin' bass should check this recording. It is a true celebration of the bass.

Hampton Hawes and Charlie Haden are both very versatile and talented and both possess an amazing musical experience, so the quality of this record comes as no surprise. On this recording, some passages swing hard, some are very reflective, if not austere. But the density and the quality of emotion never thin out. As Hawes says, "the message is strong and beautiful". Surely those of you who admire Haden and cannot stomach Jarrett will rejoice at these sounds. And those of you who still wonder who Hampton Hawes was should lend an attentive ear to this music. They will find out what a great pianist he is. And maybe they will understand what it is to be such a

great musician and be so little known....

Now I know a so-called critic should not say that but I strongly recommend the acquisition of these recordings; if not for the music, at least not to see Snyder, obviously a man totally devoted to the music and most probably honest to the tip of his fingernails, go bankrupt. Thank you!
— Jean-Pascal Souque

CHADBOURNE / ZORN

Eugene Chadbourne and John Zorn
School
Parachute Records P004/6

On first hearing, both records which make up "School" seem to fall into that area of timbral investigation and rhythmic confluence which has been identified with the "English School" of new music, especially considering that Chadbourne's guitar uses a few of Derek Bailey's trademark effects, and Zorn's composition *Lacrosse* is performed by an ensemble aurally reminiscent of the Music Improvisation Company minus the drums. However, it turns out that there are subtle yet distinct differences not only between these apparently obvious derivatives, but also between Chadbourne and Zorn's compositional approaches as well.

"School" is divided into one record featuring Zorn's compositions and one for Chadbourne's. Chadbourne's record includes guitar, banjo, violin, viola, reeds in various combinations over the seven scores. By far the most immediately accessible piece is his solo guitar version of Ellington's *Solitude*, which includes some surrealistic interludes but never strays too far from recognition of the original. By taking notice of Chadbourne's relationship to Ellington's standard, however, we find a clue as to his own compositional aesthetic, which is based upon spontaneous variations or modifications or interruptions of a *given* theme or structure. What makes this approach especially intriguing is the diversity of Chadbourne's musical interests, which manifests itself here in the variety of compositional moods — from the meditatively ghostly and elegaic duet on *Missing Persons* to the flaps and waves of pure color alternating with static moments of nearly inaudible activity on *Welcome West*, to the incorrigibly bizarre and entertaining unison line of *The Shreeve* — a sort of electronic rockabilly. And is *The Fling* some sort of new music adaptation of a highland fling in microtones?

Whereas in Chadbourne's work the importance of "the moment" places each individual event into a position of eminence, in John Zorn's compositional aesthetic it is the accumulation of a series of events which creates the musical experience. Thus Zorn's record contains three different versions of his score for *Lacrosse*, which uses both precise notation and prosaic texts to initiate musical interaction between the participants. Each musician (in this case, six, including two guitars or banjo, two violin or violists, Zorn on reeds, and synthesizer) is given instructions for backgrounds, plus a "solo concerto" which places him/her out front in a totally flexible setting.

Since *Lacrosse* is at least partially conceptual

in that its ultimate shape is dependent upon not only an intuitive sense of improvisation but also the precise recreation of preconceived notated parts *and* the individual musician's interpretation of a prose text, each performance is radically different in terms of detail and overall direction. What we hear is a reliance on continuously fluctuating textures, dynamics, and timbres. There is not so much a layering of simultaneous voices as can be heard in Chadbourne's music (though this can be heard in spots throughout *La-crosse*) as there is a linear involvement from player to player — closer to the original concept of Schoenberg's "Klangfarbenmelodie", where the music's "line" is passed from instrument to instrument without snapping. A great many personal stylistic moments occur within the flow of the composition, for example whenever Davey Williams throws in a bluegrass banjo lick, or LaDonna Smith quotes from the traditional fiddle tune *Orange Blossom Special*, or in fact whenever a recognizable chordal modulation takes place. Nevertheless, it becomes obvious through repeated hearings that these events are only smaller variables in a much larger preconceived outline. The fact that Zorn and Chadbourne, each in their own separate manner, have been able to incorporate such flexible and yet characteristic compositional techniques into the realm of new music makes them worth investigating further.

— Art Lange

JOE CHAMBERS

Double Exposure
Muse MR 5165

Hello To The Wind; The Orge; Mind Rain; After The Rain; Message From Mars; Rock Pile.

Joe Chambers: acoustic and electric piano, tabla, cymbals, drums.

Larry Young: organ, synthesizer.

"Double Exposure" is an important recording for several reasons. First, it presents the wide-ranging musical talents of composer/percussionist/pianist Joe Chambers who has performed with Bobby Hutcherson, Andrew Hill and Freddie Hubbard as well as his own groups. Second, the album features Larry Young, an uncommonly inventive musician who passed away on March 30, 1978 at the age of 37. Disdaining the prevalent funk/soul groove of the preceding decade that most organists then followed, Young developed his own voicings and sounds. Many considered him the premier practitioner of his instrument, and this recording adds to his substantial musical contributions.

"Double Exposure" presents Chambers and Young in five duet performances using various instrumental combinations (with some overdubbing) and one Chambers piano solo. The two musicians work well together with Chambers tending to dominate the keyboard duets. On the organ/drum pieces, however, they engage in an equal partnership.

Chambers' involvement as a composer has made him especially cognizant of and sensitive to formal structure. His compositions are developed either melodically, rhythmically, or texturally, or in various combinations,

producing strongly unified works. *Hello To The Wind* is an uncommonly beautiful melody and a well-developed performance. Chambers' lyrical piano lines leave enough space for Young's organ commentary. *The Orge* features an exciting dialogue between the two musicians.

Message From Mars and *Rock Pile* are two fine organ/drum explorations. The latter composition is especially interesting, as it is a re-working of *Mind Rain*, a keyboard duet on the same album. Both versions illuminate how a particular instrumentation can affect a composition's development, the organ/drum version being more rock-influenced while the keyboard duet emphasizes a swirling, fantasy-like feel.

— Clifford Jay Safane

TED CURSON

Cattin' Curson
Marge 01

Flatted 5th; Marjo; Airi Tune; Searchin' The Blues; Typical Ted (Cattin' Curson).

Ted Curson (tpt, fl-h, piccolo tpt); Chris Woods (fl, alt); Georges Arvanitas (p), Jacky Samson (bs), Charles Saudrais (d).

Recorded Paris, October 26, 1973.

Although it may seem a marriage of convenience to pair two visiting players with a French rhythm section, the hallmark of this session is its homogeneity. Curson and Woods share a common approach to improvisation, nurtured by the doctrines of post-Parker guidelines. Arvanitas, Samson and Saudrais, their styles formed in a context that was musically similar if geographically separate, enjoy the extra asset of having long performed together as a working trio. Thus the collaboration of these five men, though fortuitous, promised well on theoretical grounds; and in the event, thanks in part to spare but intelligent ensemble programming, produced music which, over and above its particular interests, offers collectively the type of satisfaction one feels when the last piece of a jigsaw puzzle finally slots into place.

Perhaps because of his association with Charles Mingus, Curson has at times been bracketed with the avant garde of the 1960s; actually he is a fairly conventional spirit, at his most effective when carving out aggressive sequences over a straightforward driving beat. This material gives him ample opportunity to display his talent in that regard. Even at the rapid pace of *Typical Ted* he rarely fails successfully to resolve his tumbling phrases, though *Flatted 5th* and *Searchin' The Blues*, set in a rather less demanding tempo range, provide the ideal outlet for his extrovert though always controlled emotionalism.

Woods, who sometimes displays an uncanny resemblance to the excellent altoist of the same surname who recorded for Contemporary 17 years ago, enjoys comparable facility. Like his occasional use of different sound densities on a repeated identical note, his many vocalised effects are deployed with a sense of taste that goes hand in hand with agreeable continuity of line. His flute playing, best represented here by *Marjo*, where his phrases intertwine appealingly with Curson's, benefits from a sensitivity which never lurks far beneath the surface of his more vehement alto work.

— Michael James

JAZZCRAFT RECORDS

TURK MAURO
The Underdog
Jazzcraft 1

This is not just a good album, it is a bloody marvelous one. Turk is a 34-year-old saxophone player who has paid his dues with R&B bands and the big bands of Woody Herman and Buddy Rich. He divides his time here between tenor and baritone. On tenor he belongs in the stylistic arena with Zoot Sims and Al Cohn and their brothers and cousins. In fact Al who is Turk's favourite all around musician joins the proceedings on three of the six tracks and makes a perfect front line partner.

On baritone Mauro has a somewhat lighter, smoother tone than heard from other leading exponents of the big horn such as Pepper Adams, Nick Brignola or Ronnie Cuber. His original blues line, *Jazz Leif* shows his talented, fluent baritone work off to fine advantage. On *Zoot And Al*, another original blues, he really cooks on tenor. The modulations on this tune are particularly creative and stimulating. And the lyrical, melodic side of Turk's playing is on display on Al Cohn's title tune *The Underdog*, formerly called *Ah Moore*.

Hugh Lawson is the perfect pianist for this group. His solos and comping are on target throughout. Bob Cranshaw and his son Tom Barney split the bass playing; Cranshaw even uses the acoustic instrument rather than the Fender with which he has been more closely associated in recent years.

Drummer Ben Riley is rapidly becoming one of my favorites. His combination of crisp, swinging, inventive fills, and sympathetic support for the horns and piano are an aural joy.

All told, I can't recommend this record highly enough. Everything comes together beautifully: a great new saxophone voice joined by the masterful Mr. Cohn (I think of Al as "The Foghorn"), and a together, creative rhythm section. The results are jazz at its best. Dare I close by calling this record "A Turkish Delight"?

HOWARD MCGHEE
Jazzbrothers
Jazzcraft 2

Fans of Be Bop will find this record a treat. While it is true that a large number of so-called jazz recordings are being released, the stylistic variations are actually quite broad. Only a rather small percentage of jazz records fall within the parameters defined by the music of Bird, Diz, Bud Powell and their associates.

Howard McGhee has roots in the Bop era, having played with Charlie Parker on some of the classic Dial sides. Unless I am mistaken, this is only Howard's second record date in quite a few years. If this album is any indication of what we have been missing, the hiatus was far too lengthy. Charlie Rouse is McGhee's front line partner, and as I indicated on my review of Rouse's own LP (Jazzcraft 4), he is playing better than ever. Barry Harris is the pianist, and that is a guarantee that musical excellent will be forthcoming. Lisle Atkinson is a fine bass player — listen to his solo on *Driftn'*. Drummer Grady Tate provides a swinging yet unobtrusive contribution. I'm usually drugged by conga players who are frequently super-

fluous and often detract from the music. Such is not the case with Jual Curtis.

Leader McGhee wrote and arranged all seven tunes on this most enjoyable session.

HUGH LAWSON

**Prime Time
Jazzcraft 3**

It has taken pianist Hugh Lawson a long time to get his first record date under his own name. I remember Hugh from his days in Detroit during the late 1950s. His playing shows elements of the two great Detroit jazz pianists — Barry Harris and Tommy Flanagan — both of whom I suspect he listened to at length during his formative years. There are also stylistic and harmonic qualities in Lawson's current work that demonstrate familiarity with some of the more recent pianists.

While to my taste, the more purist bebop aspects of his playing show him at his best, this album rates as a complete success. The rhythm team of Bob Cranshaw and drummer Ben Riley are perfect partners for Lawson's fine piano work. My favorite track is Lawson's blues version of *Lazy Bones* entitled, logically enough, *Blues Bones*. Jazzcraft is to be commended for giving Lawson the opportunity to show he is a first rate jazz piano player. Recommended.

CHARLIE ROUSE

**Moments' Notice
Jazzcraft 4**

In a free association exercise, the name of tenor saxophonist Charlie Rouse is likely to bring the response — Thelonious Monk. That response is understandable when you consider that Rouse was a member of Monk's quartet for over ten years.

My attitude toward Rouse's playing has always been rather ambivalent. On the one hand, his playing with Monk (and perhaps in general) had a rather dull sameness about it. I often had the feeling of a lack of dynamics and development in his solos. Rarely could one find the building to a climax in his work, and it is hard to think of a *memorable* Rouse solo. On the other hand, he was a decent interpreter of Monk's music. He is a competent musician, and on occasions his playing can be quite enjoyable.

In light of the above comments, let me quickly state that this is quite likely the best record Charlie Rouse has ever made. He seems inspired and his enthusiasm is translated into one interesting solo after another.

Certainly a portion of the credit for the level of quality achieved must go to the marvelous rhythm section. Pianist Hugh Lawson is in top form as he contributes flowing, sparkling solos on every track. Bassist Bob Cranshaw supplies that nice round bottom sound with just the right choice of notes. Drummer Ben Riley is also an alumnus of Thelonious Monk's quartet. He has impressed me greatly of late and in my opinion deserves to be classed among the finest jazz drummers now playing. Listen to him on this album and I think you will agree.

Charlie Rouse is 54 years old and would seem to be playing at his creative peak. Who was it that said jazz was a young man's music?

— Peter S. Friedman

LEE KONITZ/MARTIAL SOLAL

**Duplicity
Horo HDP 17/18**

There exist other examples of the collaboration between two such abstract architects of sound as Martial Solal and Lee Konitz: a couple of old albums for an Italian label, C.A.M.; a masterpiece like "Satori" for Milestone and "Jazz A Juan" for SteepleChase. Now, for Horo Records, the active Italian label, a step back to the duo formula. The duo setting seems to make Lee Konitz feel particularly at ease, allowing the vibrant and complex radiant lines of his alto sax to flow freely with the collaboration of a particularly creative partner. Here we find the same searching energy of the celebrated "Lee Konitz Duets": Martial Solal, undoubtedly one of the most ingenious and open of European soloists, is a secure partner for Konitz. Here the altoist is compelled to create, not relying on the respectful accompaniment of a second voice like, for instance, Hal Galper in the duo setting for SteepleChase. Martial Solal does not follow Konitz; they speak together in a constantly changing dialogue.

The collaboration is tense, nervously creative; tempi change continuously, and the endless number of musical ideas flow through ever-changing moods. The sound of Konitz's alto sax is dark, nearly baroque (listen to the sombre *Blues Sketch*, where Konitz, by means of overdubbing, dialogues with himself and Solal), raising nervously to high pitches and then falling graciously and sinuously to a thicker perspective. There is a dramatic quality in his music, a kind of a nervously quiet anguish which is ever-searching through the harmonic changes: an aura of ambiguity constantly surrounds the sound of the alto, backed by the acid and kaleidoscopic piano of Solal. The latter displays one of the best techniques around, with a bitter sense of irony, Monk-style in his changing of tempo and breaking of phrases. Solal's way of playing is a constant delight, as much as his flexible dialogue with Konitz: building up many and different massive walls of notes, he moves them all throughout, creating a moving tapis-roulant of sounds you don't know what to expect from. Actually, what comes out of these duets is above all the unexpected.

Note: as usual, most of the tunes are just paraphrases of very well-known standards: so here you have beautifully sketched performances of tunes like *I Got Rhythm* (here called *Rhythm Sweet*), *Sweet And Lovely (Esselle)*, *Indian Summer (November Talk)*, etc.

— Mario Luzzi

BINGO MIKI

**Bingo Miki with the Inner Galaxy Orchestra
Back To The Sea
Three Blind Mice Records TBM 5010**

The Japanese tend to take their jazz seriously, if somewhat derivatively, and this album is no exception. The Inner Galaxy Orchestra consists of twenty-six pieces, including a rhythm section of two bassists, three percussionists, three keyboards (one exclusively on synthesizers), and guitarist. Bingo Miki himself seems

to be a composer, arranger, and general factotum, but he is not listed as playing any instrument. The band, with its domination of brass and electronics, revives memories of the various Don Ellis aggregations of the late sixties and early seventies, and their energetic approach to Miki's material reinforces this aural parallel.

Unfortunately the compositional melodies are for the most part extremely pedestrian. Only *Back To The Sea* really retains interest, and that is mainly due to the Gil Evansish scoring for muted trumpets, french horn, oboe and bassoon.

The individual soloists on each of the six selections are not named, but there are no outstandingly distinctive voices anyway; everything reaches a level of competence but goes no further. Much of the music on this disc would have sounded stunning ten years ago, but today it merely sounds old hat. In fact, I wouldn't have thought the album worth reviewing except for the exceptionally lush, vivid recorded sound, which captures every timbral nuance clearly and reproduces the full ensemble work powerfully and warmly without a trace of distortion — no small feat in an orchestra of this size and instrumentation. This is by far the best recording of a big band I have ever heard, and if you're an audiophile this is definitely worth hearing. — Art Lange

LOUIS MOHOLO OCTET

**Spirits Rejoice!
OGUN 520**

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

Khanya Apho Ukhona; You Ain't Gonna Know Me 'Cos You Think You Know Me; Ithi-gqi; Amaxesha Osizi; Wedding Hymn.

The English record label Ogun appears to be accelerating its efforts lately by releasing a rash of recordings featuring various combinations of musicians known for their work in the Spontaneous Music Ensemble or Brotherhood Of Breath units. This latest, under the leadership of drummer Louis Moholo, displays an interesting synthesis of African music with the current conception of English "jazz" — though the African influence here is not in the AACM manner of percussion and flowing rhythmic reorganization, but rather the popular styles of chanting and high-life bands.

The opening cut features a chant-like head and energetic ensemble interplay which seems a throwback to the firebrand playing heard at the New York loft sessions which LeRoi Jones chronicled so persuasively in the mid 1960s. Moholo is a veteran of those musical wars, of course, having created poetic and explosive work with Steve Lacy, the New York Art Quartet (which also featured Roswell Rudd and John Tchicai) and other ad hoc aggregations. This particular track, nevertheless, is the LP's weakest, with Tippett sounding discursively Cecil Taylorish, and Evan Parker unable to adapt his phenomenal technique to the issue at hand. Things improve, however, with the trombonist's contrapuntal preaching over *You Ain't Gonna Know Me's* lovely gossamerish changes, and the rhythm-and-blues-influenced *Ithi-gqi*.

The two tracks on side two contain the session's meatiest music. *Amaxesha Osizi* finds Parker avoiding his extreme upper register trademarks to create a Dolphy-like middle register solo of darting chromaticism, echoed and extended by Tippett's accompanying piano contours. Finally *Wedding Hymn* is precisely that; a stately theme in march tempo with a long soulful Wheeler solo and one by Tippett in which he wanders sublimely in a florid fashion through a variety of keys, contrasting expressively from the harmonic base supplied by the two basses. — *Art Lange*

MUNOZ

Rendezvous With Now India Navigation IN 1034

Munoz (guitar, percussion & vocals), Cecil McBee (bass), Bernie Senensky (piano), Claude Ranger (drums), Sat Guru Singh Ji (Clayton Johnson) percussion & vocals, Faith and Hope (vocals).

Munoz is an interesting new voice on the guitar. His first album is not perfect but at this stage of his career, he needs encouragement more than anything else. His sound is original, a bit fuzzy around the edges, within the tradition established by comrades Santana and McLaughlin. A sound very distinctive as well as attractive. His writing, as well as the ways he chooses to improvise/sing/scream testifies to his own urge to create something a little different, his own brand of music. Munoz seems heavily involved with spirituality (his liner notes are very religious!) and soul-searching invests almost every note he plays.

Blessings is a meditative piece, long sustained sounds over polyrhythmic foundations. Senensky sounds particularly in tune with Munoz on this one. *The Word Of God Chant* has a structure resting upon a chanted phrase not unlike most of the caricatures of *A Love Supreme* from Pharoah Sanders and their like in their worst moments. Strangely enough, this kind of atmosphere seems to stimulate Munoz on the highest level. His exuberant playing saves the whole thing.

The Shepherd's Chant occupies all of side one and shows that if Munoz is often inspired, regardless of how highly, his mastery of the guitar does not always rise to his inspiration. *Waiting For Now To Be Forever* is the highlight of this record and really demonstrates that Munoz is a promising guitarist. It is a straightforward swinging composition, fast tempo, in the same vein as *Do You Hear The Voices That You Left Behind* on John McLaughlin's "Guitarist". Makes you want to sing and dance!

Although remarkable, this effort towards a wide variety of styles could turn into an obstacle to greater achievements. I would be willing to bet that *Waiting For Now To Be Forever* sounds so good because Ranger, Senensky and McBee felt much more at ease within this type of musical concept, which implies a problem: if Munoz continues to exert his total leadership over his bands, it is possible that he will have to search out other accompanists, who are able to respond fully to every one of his musical ideas.

On the whole, Munoz on this record gives us a good sampling of what he is capable of doing. His music is basically very attractive. If he



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makes the right decisions about whom to play with and if he continues to develop his style and technique, he could become a guitarist with a real charismatic appeal. Hold on, here comes Munoz!

POSTSCRIPT: It is time for the people at India Navigation to realize that a good mix is not an impossible dream. Remember that not everybody is willing to encourage new talents at any price. So please, be more careful next time!
— *Jean-Pascal Souque*

P.J. PERRY

Sessions Suite 101

Sascha Nova/ Autumn In New York/ Nameless Blues/ Torquin' With Torben/ Variations On A Blues By Bird/ A Time For Love/ If I Were A Bell.

Perry (alto saxophone), Bob Tildesley (trumpet), George McFetridge (piano), Torben Oxbol (bass), Claude Ranger (drums).

Recorded July 11-16, 1977 and March 23, 1978, in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

An outstanding group of young Canadian jazzmen, Perry and associates seem every bit as worthy of serious attention as their more well-known American cousins. In fact, their approach to contemporary bop emerges as a far purer, less tainted one than many which derive from these shores, their energies being directed towards genuine creativity rather than fashionable folderol. Leader Perry has undoubtedly been impressed by many fine players, but in his own effortless articulation one is hard pressed to find a singular model. Fellow Edmontonian Tildesley plays hot, driving horn in the early Hubbard / recent Shaw vein and complements quite properly the searing yet smooth-edged alto of his companion frontliner.

Stafford James' *Sascha Nova* provides a heated opening, but resists an easy perfectability by reason of a muddy-sounding bass. At this sprightly clip, the notes simply fail to retain any well-defined pitch or pulse. *Autumn*, however, is a fully-realized performance as it is devoted entirely to the

self-directed alto of the leader. The Monkish head to *Nameless Blues* was written by Toronto pianist McFetridge, a non-Monkish player who uses his solo opportunity to excellent advantage. There is some strong alto on this one also. Perry wrote *Torquin'*, again a Monkish line, as a unison theme for alto and bass, with Oxbol the featured soloist, but it is his *Variations* that proves the highlight. Here, after the hauntingly familiar pastiche-like head, the three major soloists, Perry, Tildesley, and McFetridge, each turn in their most provocative work. The trumpeter, especially, shines as a successful risk-taker, but the imaginative pianisms should garner equal praise as well. Johnny Mandel's *A Time For Love* is a balladic excursion for Perry's heartfelt reminiscences of Bird, while the final *Bell* is tolled by Tildesley's Miles-ish horn. On this, Perry shows a grand humour in his rhythmic placement and choice of notes, but most commendable by far is the artful way he varies his timbral quality within a line. He appears to be mindful of detail, and that is very much to his credit.
— *Jack Sohmer*

JAMES NEWTON

From Inside (Flute Solos) BVHaast 019

A few critics whose writings I admire have been singing the praises of flutist James Newton recently, and since I respect their judgement I admit that Newton is a remarkable instrumentalist. Nevertheless, I find it difficult to work up much enthusiasm for this album.

First of all, this is a solo flute album, and the flute is an instrument whose mechanics do not allow a great amount of timbral variance; thus without supporting/contrasting voices this makes for rather bland, monochromatic listening. Secondly, four of the six compositions recorded herein were penned by Newton, and though they contain a certain amount of atmosphere, they are somewhat deficient in terms of thematic and structural distinction. By far the most interesting cuts on this record are Ellington/Strayhorn's *A Train*, and David Murray's *The Hill*. Still, from a structural standpoint, Newton's three solo performances of his half of "Flutes" (Circle Records RK 7677/7) surpass anything here.

It should be said that Newton has every aspect of his axe under control including some outstanding chops, and that he (like his influential predecessor Eric Dolphy) attempts, through modifications of dynamics and phrasing, to mask the timbral monotony. Flute lovers and those who have enjoyed Newton's work in other settings should hear this recording; others can pass.
— *Art Lange*

OSCAR PETERSON

Oscar Peterson and the Bassists: Ray Brown, Niels Henning Orsted Pedersen.

(Pablo Live: Montreux '77)
Pablo 2308 213

On the arrestingly designed cover, Norman Granz tells us: "In 1975 I toured Europe with the Pablo Jazz Festival and on it had both Ray Brown and Niels Pedersen... They did some duet work, but... it never really came off as I had envisaged." Oscar Peterson suggested

letting them play with him as "the buffer". This gives a good idea of what you can expect from this record: Pedersen and Brown accompany, solo and swap fours through each of these numbers, with Peterson providing the framework.

The Pablo Jazz Festival is, of course, Jazz At The Philharmonic in laundered jerseys; and the session for two bassists is just another version of Granz's old tenor battles, which he believed, unhappily, were productive of the best in jazz.

The live recording is not the best situation for capturing the tone qualities of the string bass; but it is hard to imagine a format less suited to a recording by two bassists than the string of solos peppered with applause and piano playing that we get here. Peterson's work is extraordinarily glib; and all the tunes are taken at medium or fast tempo. The result is a plethora of impressively high-speed plucking: after three quarters of an hour, one longs to ask "What is the sound of one hand slapping?"

This is another Pablo record to avoid.

— Trevor Tolley

KEITH SMITH

American All Stars: 1966
Hefty Jazz HJ 102

Strutting With Some Barbecue, Beale Street Blues, Bugle Boy March, Melancholy Blues, Panama Rag, Royal Garden Blues, See See Rider, Hindustan, Preaching Blues, Shake It And Break It.

In early 1966, trumpeter Keith Smith assembled an all-star sextet of veteran traditional musicians for some recordings (I know of G.H.B.-35, International Polydor. 62317, and one side of 77 LEU 12/17) and tours, occasionally sitting in along with (*Bugle, Panama*) or replacing (*Shake*) the regular trumpeter, Alvin Alcorn. This disc is culled from various live European concerts, including three new versions of titles previously waxed on the above-mentioned platters (*Bugle, Panama* and trombonist Jimmy Archey's semi-humorous, cackling, plunger-muted feature, *Preaching*).

Unfortunately, the pickup could be closer to the band, often giving us too much echo from the hall and placing the ensembles on the tinny, unpleasant and hard-to-sort-out side. Quieter tracks work better, especially the laid-back *Rider*, clearly the best performance, sporting a fine triplet-filled bass interlude from Pops Foster, reflective keyboard ruminations from Alton Purnell over some tasty double-time brushwork on the cymbal by Cie Frazier, and generally worthwhile contributions from all hands. *Hindustan* is a stomper, if you can tolerate the clatter, while *Shake* (a misnomer for *Weary Blues*) benefits from Smith's more incisive tone, vs. Alcorn's legato phrasing, to take up-tempo honors.

Individually the heroes are Purnell, whose mostly single-note-in-each-hand approach develops a solid drive and surprising right-hand twists, and clarinetist Darnell Howard, whose warm, reedy Creole intonation is an absolute joy, slurring out swooping arpeggios, agitated chirps, and breathy low-register lines. Conversely, Archey's putt-putt solo styles never

does much for me, while Alcorn seems awfully easy-going for a lead horn (though he rises to Smith's challenge with more biting stuff on the two-trumpet tracks).

The voices of several of these jazzmen have been forever stilled, thus perhaps justifying release here of several selections containing a significant amount of material not otherwise worth preserving, and which may be most attractive to those who enjoy the American All Stars' previous albums. From Hefty Jazz Productions, Box L18, 30 Baker Street, London W1M 2DS England. — *Tex Wyndham*

SUN RA

St. Louis Blues (solo piano)
Improvising Artists Inc. IAI 37.38.58

Ohosnixaeht; St. Louis Blues; Three Little Words; Honeysuckle Rose; Sky And Sun; I Am We Are I; Thoughts On Thoth.

This second installment of the Sun Ra piano sans Arkestra was recorded live at the Axis-in-Soho (hence the anagram of the first song title) on July 3, 1977, only two months after his premier solo recording, issued on IAI 37.38.50. Not surprisingly, this session finds the pianist in a similar frame of mind, attacking (and that seems to be the proper word) a blend of standards and originals and ultimately exposing not only their emotional but also structural ramifications.

There is a great deal of wit audible in Ra's reconstruction of the three chestnuts — notice especially the bucking bronco rhythms and "wrong note" stride of *St. Louis Blues*, and the rhapsodic modal passage interrupting the progress of an otherwise garrulous *Three Little*

The Jazz and Blues Record Centre is a participant in the Ontario government's 1979 Half Back Program. Between now and September 30 you can use tickets from the Wintario Lottery draws in April, May, June, July, August and September as partial payment for recordings by Canadian artists.

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Words. In the four original compositions we are afforded the same sort of dissonant, dark sonorities, Monkish stutter-step rhythms, and Cecil Taylorish clusters which made the previous "Solo Piano Vol. 1" so attractive and compelling. Due to the greater variety of tempi, ornamentation, and lightning-fast phrase modifications, however, this second release is even more appealing than the first. But if you're at all interested in the art of contemporary keyboard improvisation, hear them both.

— *Art Lange*

SOME OTHER STUFF

— **March 30th, 1979**

If I suggest that these three recordings are based in an approximate zone of similarity, it is not to follow that the music has been influenced by each other, or even to think the results are the same, but only to know that its philosophy of small group free improvisation is the common identity.

Paul Rutherford and Paul Lovens
trombone percussion instruments
euphonium zither etc.
PO TORCH RECORDS PTR/JWD 3

Paul Rutherford is an English brass player and very much involved with the developed process of English improvised music. Paul Lovens is a Dutch (?) percussionist of like intent, concerned with the inner movement of sound.

Rhythm is not always what it feels, perhaps a morbid confusion with time results in the misconception of pulse, a movement in reality. An identity for sound, though of as "in time", seems synonymous, at least in the popular song kind of way, with the idea of organising the elements most easily recognised. Even with the use of words to makes its content more memorial.

And this, is all very well.

Since the real identity of art is to always remain partially hidden from the observer, it seems more useful to discover sound on a higher level than cheap thrills, and as the total situation requires a higher point, then the artists themselves, concerned with music, can make their art a most personal experience. On a level of conversation.

Speech.

Nothing needs to be remembered, a fresh new start can always occur.

"Yes, those birds did the same with me", said the first nightingale.

"And what did you say?"

"I said, 'I am singing because I simply cannot help it'."

"And then."

"And then they attacked me, as I have described."

"Ah," said the other bird, "that was your mistake. They thought that you might try to make them behave in a similar manner. When I was asked the same question, I said: 'I am trying to please you with my song'. That was an aim they could understand."

"This is a clear proof that the hearer is more perfect in state than the reader, for the reader may recite with or without true feeling, whereas the hearer feels truly, because speech is a sort of pride and hearing is a sort of humility."

What is to be considered music of quality should be as clear as this. The free improvisat-

**PROGRESSIVE
RECORDS**



LEE KONITZ QUINTET

"Figure And Spirit"

Progressive 7003

Lee Konitz, alto and soprano saxophones; Ted Brown, tenor sax; Albert Dailey, piano; Rufus Reid, bass; Joe Chambers, drums.

Figure And Spirit; Dream Stepper, Smog Eyes; April; Without You, Man; Dig It.

CARMEN LEGGIO QUARTET

"Smile"

Progressive 7010

Carmen Leggio, tenor and alto saxes; Derek Smith, piano; George Duvivier, bass; Ronnie Bedford, drums.

Broadway; Japanese Sandman; Smile; Cherokee; Someday My Prince Will Come; Who Can I Turn To?; Okay Bug; Hinchcliffs.

BUDDY DE FRANCO QUINTET

"Like Someone In Love"

Progressive 7014

Buddy DeFranco, clarinet; Tal Farlow, guitar; Derek Smith, piano; George Duvivier, bass; Ronnie Bedford, drums.

Like Someone In Love; Melancholy Stockholm; Playa Del Sol; How Long Has This Been Going On?; Coasting At The Palisades; I Loves You Porgy.

CHRIS CONNOR

"Sweet And Swinging"

Progressive 7028

Chris Connor, vocals; Mike Abene, piano; Mike Moore, bass; Ronnie Bedford, drums; Jerry Dodgion, alto sax and flute.

Things Are Swinging; Any Place I Hang My Hat; Just In Time; Here's That Rainy Day; Out Of This World; The Sweetest Sounds; Where Flamingos Fly; I've Got You Under My Skin; I Wish You Love; I Feel A Song Coming On; When Sunny Gets Blue.

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ions are entitled — *And When I Say Slowly, I Mean As Soon As Possible - Du Chat Botte: Armand Schuthess and As Deafness Increases.* 20 Deutshmarks will suffice for a copy of this recording from
PO TORCH RECORDS
Convenstrasse 13
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West Germany

— May 7th, 1979

Protocol

Metalanguage 102

Side One - Toshinori Kondo - trumpet & Eb alto horn.

Side Two - Andrea Centazzo - percussion.

Henry Kaiser plays electric guitar on both sides.

Just a week ago, in Montreal, a young lady came up to us and said "I know you're all good musicians, I can tell. Why don't you all play together?"

"We are all playing together", I said, "you just can't hear it."

.....seem to present another possible situation to do with the definitions of the *new musics*. There is a privacy, a personal enjoyment among the participants of a secret sharing. I rather think ballroom dancing satisfies the same thought. But anyway.

In answer to the young lady's question, I can say that side one of this recording with Kondo and Kaiser, has many easily identifiable signals that show they are attuned to each other's path. Rhythmically (it's fine to use *that* terminology), the music is continually overlapping, and as such is not that much interrupted by shifts and sudden stops. There are only two of them. An ideal number for concentration. Overlapping constantly seems a fair definition, two instruments that have melodic and percussive possibilities based in tone/scale systems, utilized in multitudes of free ideas in improvisation. Sometimes the music is in such tight parallels, it could be presumed to be composed.

Toshinori Kondo is a Japanese musician who has recently been performing in Canada and the United States.

Henry Kaiser is a resident of California.

Andrea Centazzo is from Italy and performs in duet with Kaiser (on side two) with what I would consider less effect. Although based in similar concepts, except the possibilities becoming more inclined toward percussion instead of melody, it sometimes results in "noise" music. Last time I saw Henry I said he should perhaps do a trio record. A fine illustration of the internationalism that exists in the new music.

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Zyzzle #1**

Side One: W&F - How Thick It Is To Be - Crossover one - R 35-8 and R35-5.

Side Two: Riverboat - Crossover Two - R35-6 - R22-7 - Not Until Another - Things You Hit.

Mark Langford (tenor saxophone & electric piano)

Bob Helson (percussion) and Will Menter (soprano & tenor sax)

Styles in the current music are becoming more readily recognisable, beginning to create definite outlines in style as it gradually builds into

positive personalities. And so this music has the feeling of the "London" sound, based in the style that has been developed by Evan Parker, Derek Bailey, Paul Rutherford - (Company etc). Will Menter seems to be the most outspoken voice, on soprano he seems to be very much influenced by the lyricism of Steve Lacy, and due to this, their music has a light and (somewhat) lyrical quality.

In my youth I spent a great deal of my formative years in the city of Bristol, only a few miles away lived Evan Parker, and now there is the Bristol Musicians' Coop. Nothing of this nature, true invention if you will, occurred publicly when I resided there, Evan and I did not know each other. This continuing proof that the true art of improvised music continues without the existence of commercial media information. Perhaps the underground is real. Some other Stuff.

Bristol Musicians Coop
36 York Rd
Montpelier
Bristol 6, England

— Bill Smith

REISSUES

DEXTER GORDON: POWER (Prestige 24087) repackages Gordon's Prestige albums of 1969 (7623 and 7680) — his first U.S. sessions since 1965. James Moody joins Gordon for extended interpretations of *Montmartre, Sticky Wicket* and *Lady Bird* with the one horn showcased on the rest of the tracks. The rhythm section of Barry Harris, Buster Williams and Albert Heath are comfortable associates who provide Gordon with the necessary ambience for music-making of a superior level. While not quite reaching the level of the Blue Note sessions of a few years earlier and the best of the Black Lion/Steeple-Chase sessions from Europe, this is still excellent music.

JAKI BYARD: GIANT STEPS (Prestige 24086) restores to circulation the pianist's 1961 and 1962 trio sessions issued originally on New Jazz as "Here's Jaki" and "Out Front". They have stood the test of time very well and remain exemplary examples of Byard's multi-dimensional view of jazz piano. "Out Front", in particular, is a remarkable microcosm of jazz piano — ranging from James P. Johnson through George Shearing, Monk and Weston to the expressive nuances of Byard's own *Tillie Butterball* and *There Are Many Worlds*. This reissue also restores *When Sunny Gets Blue* to the other titles from the March 1961 session. It was previously released on "Out Front".

AL HAIG: MEETS THE MASTER SAXES VOLUME TWO (Spotlite 140) focuses on the tenor playing of Stan Getz and Allen Eager. Side one contains all known takes of an October 1948 session for Sittin' In With. Three of the titles were last issued on Mainstream 56025 while the fourth (*Pardon My Bop*) and the alternate takes are much rarer. Getz, while still very much into Lester Young, was emerging as an individual voice and this session captures his virile playing very well. Side two opens with the very dated vocal gymnastics of Dave Lambert, Blossom Dearie and Buddy Stewart (*Deedle, In The Merryland Of Bop*) which were also found on Mainstream 56025. There are instrumental glimpses from Eager and Bennie Green but in general they are

dispensable. The three Eager titles (*Pogo Stick, Alleytalk, The Way You Look Tonight*) are another matter and the tenorman is at his expressive best as he utilises Lester Young's language extremely well. Finally there are three further vocal offerings by Buddy Stewart. The original recording quality was mediocre and *Spotlite* has done a good job with with the sound, but this is an album for collectors rather than listeners.

ERIC DOLPHY: FIRE WALTZ (Prestige 24085) contains sessions originally issued under Ken McIntyre ("Looking Ahead" - New Jazz 8247) and Mal Waldron ("The Quest" - New Jazz 8269) from 1960/61. This was a period of burgeoning growth for Dolphy and his solos burst through with the brilliance of a shooting star. The Mal Waldron session has long been one of my favorites - the virile tenor sax of Booker Ervin nicely complementing Dolphy's angularity over a rhythm section which is augmented by Ron Carter's cello. The McIntyre date is much simpler in concept but it succeeds admirably. The rhythm section of Walter Bishop, Sam Jones and Art Taylor lays down a crisp pulse upon which the hornmen can improvise effectively. Almost everything Dolphy recorded during this period is worth listening to. He was one of the great stylists of the music.

JOHN COLTRANE: ON A MISTY NIGHT (Prestige 24084) is a continuation of Prestige's documentation of 1950s Coltrane. These are among the earliest sessions - from September and November 1956. Sides one and two appeared originally as "Tenor Conclave" and Coltrane shares the limelight with Hank Mobley, Zoot Sims and Al Cohn in a fairly typical blowing session situation. More attractive, though is the second session: Tadd Damerson's "Mating Call". The material is more appropriate, for one thing, and Coltrane's playing shows plenty of conviction as well as being more readily identifiable. In some respects this is an important transitional session for Coltrane. His playing points towards the concepts he was to develop later while Dameron's elemental piano style harks back to the past. Coltrane enthusiasts will be primarily interested in this music.

FATS WALLER: FINE ARABIAN STUFF (Deluxe 601) is a collection of satirical Waller vocals with piano or organ accompaniment recorded originally for the Lang-Worth Transcription Service. All thirteen selections included here were available on Riverside 12-109 but this is the first reissue of the material in some time. *Loch Lomond, Faust Waltz* and *Intermezzo* are omitted from this issue. There are some marvelous glimpses of Waller's phenomenal piano style on the first side squeezed in between the banalities of the songs and their vaudevillian treatment. Only when tackling the spirituals (*Swing Low Sweet Chariot, Deep River, The Lord Delivered Daniel, Go Down Moses*) does Waller reach beneath the surface to bring out some of the depths of his feelings.

LILLIAN GLINN (VJM VLP 31) will be an unfamiliar name to all but the most assiduous of collectors. Only *Shake It Down* from this collection has been widely circulated before on BC 26 and Paul Oliver's "Story Of The Blues" (Columbia CG 30008). Hearing the first 18 of her Columbia 78s in sequence is a revelation. The power, expressive depth and consist-

ent blues tone reestablishes Lillian Glenn as one of the best singers from her time. The lyrics are not particularly original but are arranged in interesting sequences while the melodic structures avoid undue repetition. The accompaniments are spare but appropriate - and there is none of the theatrical overtones which diminish the impact of so many singers from this period. This is an invaluable collection, beautifully transcribed from clean 78s. - *John Norris*

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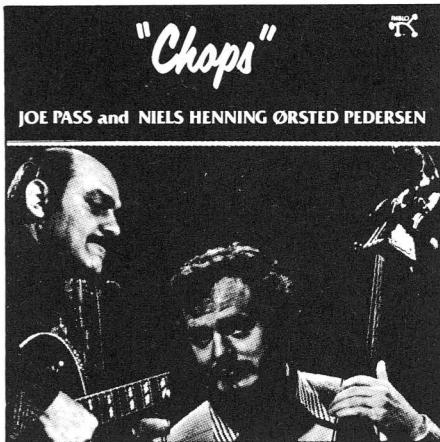
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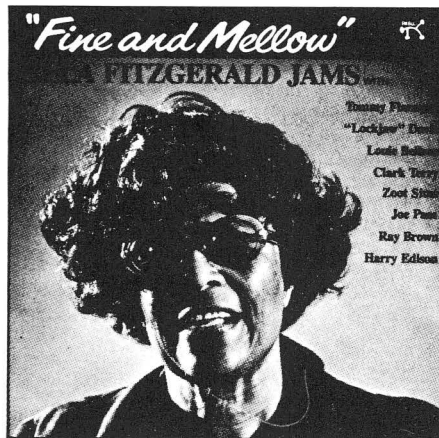


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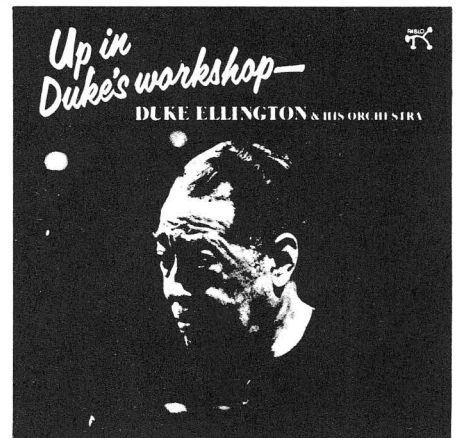
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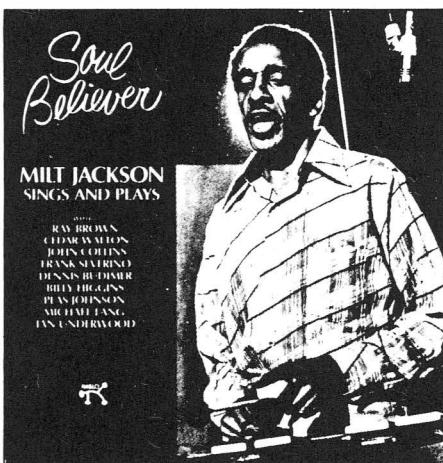
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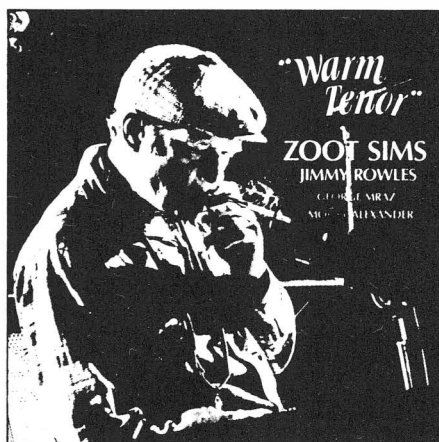
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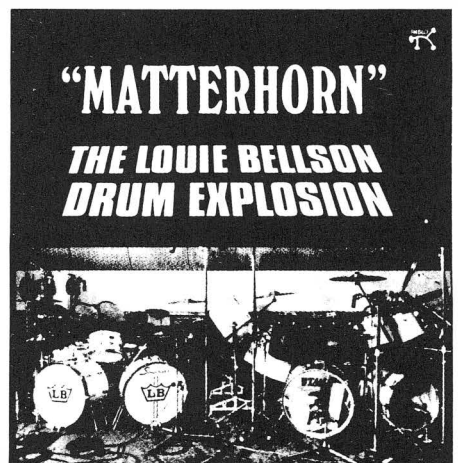
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AROUND THE WORLD AROUND THE..

CANADA

A major jazz festival is being presented at Toronto's Ontario Place June 22-24. The Humber College Band, Kathryn Moses, Matrix, Woody Herman and Ella Fitzgerald are featured June 21 with Moe Koffman, Buddy Rich, the Boss Brass and Ella being heard on Saturday. The final day has concerts with the World's Greatest Jazz Band, Toshiko Akiyoshi-Lew Tabackin and Keith Jarrett.

The Isabella Hotel at 556 Sherbourne Street has undergone something of a facelift and now features live entertainment on a regular basis. The Cameo Jazz Band features Lorne Nearing, Pat Coleman, John Toulson and Simon Stone. They are in residence Tuesday through Friday between 4 and 7 p.m. as well as playing a Saturday matinee and a Sunday evening show.

The CBC succeeded in recouping its investment in a TV version of Oscar Peterson's Canadiana Suite - which was aired March 8. The hour-long show was notable for the Rick Wilkins charts, the polished performance of the band and the excellent sound quality captured by Phil Sheridan. Visually it was imperfect.

Taping has now concluded for the third season of Peter Appleyard Presents. The series is produced by William F. Cooke Television Programs and this year's headliners include Barney Kessel, Lionel Hampton, Earl Hines, Herb Hall, Turk Murphy, Joe Williams and Bob Wilber.

Gatmouth Brown and Bessie Jones are among the performers at this year's Mariposa Festival to be held June 15-17. Tickets are obtainable from the Jazz and Blues Record Centre.

The summer season at Jazz Radio Canada will include a profile on P.J. Perry as well as live music from Halifax and Edmonton. Coming up this fall will be a three-part salute to 25 years of weekly live jazz programming. The latest edition of the Great Canadian Jazz Discography is available from Jazz Radio Canada, Box 160, Winnipeg, Manitoba.... From Vancouver, Willi Germann reports that the Gambado Gallery has been featuring excellent music by the Bob Murphy trio (Murphy, piano; Torben Oxbo, bass; Al Wiertz, drums).... A two-week jazz workshop is being held at the Banff Centre July 31 to August 11. Once again Phil Nimmons heads the faculty which has been augmented this year by Pat LaBarbara, Ed Bickert, Rob McConnell and Big Miller.

— John Norris

MONTREAL — This past spring the Syndicat de la Musique du Quebec (SMQ) celebrated its first anniversary with a large musical spectacle in Montreal. Last year the SMQ was launched as an alternative to La Guild (the American Federation of Musicians - AFM), a union it claimed was a mere appendage of the multinationals. The AFM was perceived as reluctant to fight for the specific interests of Quebec musicians, plus many came to resent the fact that their dues went to New York (and hence beyond their control) and to a local president who they claimed made five times the average income of union members. The SMQ was formed to gain greater control of music production, distribution and diffusion through the active and democratic participation of all

those involved in the music.

Presently the SMQ is a 400-strong, province-wide organisation consisting of five regional locals which are open to musicians, composers, arrangers, copists, technicians, etc. Democratic principles are considered to be of paramount importance with regular general assemblies at the regional and national levels acting as the supreme bodies of the union's organisation. All executive bodies are strictly accountable to the membership and the various committees for recruitment, negotiations, information, condition of women, etc., are open to the general membership.

In the spirit of Quebec trade union militancy and nationalism, the SMQ is affiliated to the 200,000-strong Confederation of Syndicats Nationaux as members of the media workers' Federation Nationale des Communications which also includes the Syndicat National du Cinema.

To no one's surprise the SMQ's recent demands for a first collective agreement were rejected by the employers. A series of pressure tactics are currently being considered to back up their demands for a collective agreement guaranteeing decent working conditions (equipment, health, security, etc.) and salaries; acquisition of social benefits such as vacations; establishment of contractual grievance procedures; application of the Rand formula; guarantee of comprehensible contracts; and boycott of all individual contracts.

The SMQ's activities also include a critique of the Parti Quebecois's (PQ) white paper on cultural development. The PQ's vision of a nationalist renaissance tied to big business (Quebecois, if you please) is hardly inspiring. Presently 70% of the Quebec market is controlled by such multinationals as CBS, Capitol, Polygram, WEA, A&M, London, etc. The PQ plans to assist, through its Societe de Developpement des Industries Culturelles, those Quebec firms which can be profitably rationalised and compete. Obviously this will lead to even greater concentration of control. It illustrates the PQ's unyielding faith in private enterprise. The prospects of cultural uniformity and banality are all too evident, remark the SMQ. Its watchword is simple: "Prenons Notre Musique En Main!" (Take Our Music In Hand!)

The SMQ's monthly bulletin can be obtained at 935 rue Rachel est, Montreal H2H 2J1.

Milt Jackson and the Bob Cunningham trio played at the Rising Sun during the second week of April. It was the second time in six months, which was not the least regrettable for this listener. With so many incredible innovations occurring these days, much of straight-ahead jazz seems rather pale. This was certainly not the case with Jackson. Kicking his set off with such classics as *Bags Groove*, *Milestones* and *St. Thomas*, his music swung up, down and all around. Cunningham delivered, whether it was a walk or a solo. And when Boss Townsend was ignited, the piano resonated with impressive rolls, chops and runs.

Montrealer Sonny Greenwich, along with Claude Ranger (drums), Don Thompson (piano) and Neil Swainson (bass) moved in the following week. It was also Greenwich's second stint in less than half a year. The repertoire had

not changed much. Greenwich's compositions build up into soaring mountains of majesty with a spirit akin to Coltrane's. And the body of sound became really formidable when Ranger added ominous, driving rolls and sharp rhythmic cuts and rings.

The sophisticated grand-daddy of modern jazz piano, Earl 'Fatha' Hines, played four nights at the end of the month. Dressed to kill in his finely tailored suit, two-tone shoes and flashy rings, Hines was right in his element. He was accompanied by a slick vocalist, Marva Josie, and his instrumentalists, Eric Schneider (reeds), Clarence Becton (drums) and Jimmy Cox (bass) were all decked out in three-piece suits. It was the sort of thing you might catch at the Hilton or Playboy Club.

Their act was rehearsed to perfection with all the traditional material. But at 73 Hines remains magnificent. He defies category, playing stomping stride, powerhouse tremelos, swirling improvisations and gentle aperitifs to boot. His group was another matter. Although Schneider did a good job taking puffy Hawkins and swinging Goodman solos, Marva Josie was tragic. Josie's physical presence may have fit the bill, but her R&B voice was totally out of place. Her dreary ballads in the second set were downright pitiful. Then again, as Hines assured everyone, you get 'an entire show like the old days', and it's always worth hearing this giant of the music.

During the second week of April, L'Orchestre Sympathetique (L'OS) did a live recording session at La Grande Passe (411 Ontario Est). The group members — Jean Vanasse (vibes), Mathieu Leger (drums), Richard (flute) and Stolow (bass) — performed their swinging Corea/Burton style music to capacity crowds five nights running. The record should be out later this spring.

Pierre St-Jacques (piano), Richard Derome (flute) and Claude Simard (bass) of Nebu also did three evenings the following week. Their music was in the same vein, with somewhat freer improvisations. And when the energies of the audience seemed right, they added more arbitrary sound mixtures with an assortment of equipment.

The New Art Music Ensemble of Bill Smith (soprano saxophone & alto clarinet), David Lee (bass & cello) and David Prentice (violin) did three nights at La Grande Passe early in May. Regrettably I only heard one evening, but there is no doubt Bill and David, and their new colleague Dave Prentice, are developing a fine sound. They did pieces by and dedicated to Braxton, Mitchell and (Leo) Smith, plus classics like *Goodbye Pork Pie Hat*, *I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart* and *Lonely Woman*. Bill's range has expanded to include fully-textured, vocal wails along with his characteristic angular motifs and wicked runs. David's improvisations on bass projected depth and solid rhythms. And the duet exchanges, eerie overtones and shakey tremelos of the two string players were frequently dangerous. The music was rough in spots and not without its flaws (like the duration of certain free cubist portions), but they were minor — so look out Toronto!

On March 9 and 10 L'Ensemble de la Musique Improvisee de Montreal (L'EMIM) performed their multi-unit exchanges at Conventum, an

experimental, cultural community centre. Like all free music the total ambience of musicians and audience is key. In the case of L'EMIM poor publicity resulted in very sparse attendance which was a shame for listeners and musicians alike. As I mentioned in my last column, L'EMIM bassist Claude Simard and altoist Robert LeRiche are very impressive. Simard combines an array of techniques with a very real improvisational skill. From Simard's foundation LeRiche tears up the notes on top with guttural punches and overtones — together this duo shake and build up a layered landscape. On May 5 Simard and LeRiche sat in with the abovementioned New Art Music Ensemble at La Grande Passe, and the resulting music was broadcast live over Radio Centre-Ville (CINQ 102.3 FM).

Last December, photographer Bob Parent had a small exhibit at Cafe Melies (Cinema Parallel). For the better part of May, Gallerie Optica in Old Montreal presented a larger exhibition by Parent - 77 photos to be exact. Parent was a pioneer photographer in the mid-'40s and '50s, before the advent of high-speed film technology. Using kitchenware and other gadgetry to control the lighting from his do-it-yourself flash attachment, he photographed many jazz giants - Armstrong, Bechet, James P. Johnson, Ellington, Hawkins, Hodges, Young, Parker, Monk, Davis, Mingus - in various New York and Boston clubs. A good deal of this work originally appeared in *Metronome* and *Downbeat* and books by Nat Hentoff and Leonard Feather. The show also included photos of the late '50s generation - Mulligan, Coltrane, Taylor, Lacy - at Newport Festivals and in the studio. It all made for a superb visual presentation of jazz the the people who create it. Fortunately visitors to the gallery had an opportunity to purchase prints of the photos at very reasonable prices.

Three more jazz spots have opened up in the last few months: Cafe Timenes (4857 Ave de Parc) Thursday to Saturday; Club 406 (1500 de Maisonneuve East) where the AFM local has concerts every Friday night; and L'Audition on Notre Dame in Old Montreal. La Funambule 'Cafe Chimeras' (3817 St. Denis) and La Grande Passe continue to book local free musicians. And in addition to Danyel Buisson's contemporary, Quebecois and free jazz programme's on Thursday, Friday and the first Wednesday of every month on Radio Centre-Ville from 14:30 to 15:30 hr, there is also dixieland, '40s and traditional jazz (Monday); blues and contemporary jazz (Tuesday); Salsa, European, African, and '50s (Wednesday). On Saturday (20:00 to 21:00 hr) there is jazz and blues, and '30s and '40s big band music on Sunday (22:00 to 24:00). Concerts direct from downtown bars and cafes are aired Saturdays (21:00 to 23:00).

Doudou Boicel is presently arranging the city's second Festijazz at Place des Arts, July 27-29. Oscar Peterson, B.B. King, Big Mama Thornton and Clifton Chenier are already confirmed. Cleo Laine is billed at Place des Arts as well on August 27, and Keith Jarrett is tentatively booked for August 29. — *Peter Danson*

AMERICA

NEW YORK — Making a long awaited appearance, Joe Albany performed at the West End Cafe in April. The pianist - who has gained his



formidable reputation largely from playing with Lester Young and Charlie Parker in the 1940's - demonstrated that the years have not robbed his bebop-based work of its fire and passion. Albany's talents were best displayed in two solo medleys of George Gershwin and Duke Ellington/Billy Strayhorn tunes, in which he didn't have to contend with his young, inexperienced accompanists. He produced a full sound with his left hand's bass lines and chordal jabs providing a rich counterpoint to his right hand's melodic flights. In addition, the pianist's rhythmically-charged conception gave his work vitality and momentum.

Recent attractions at the Public Theater have included the Barry Altschul Quartet/Andrew Hill on March 10 and Old And New Dreams on March 23-24. Altschul's set (Altschul, drums; Ray Anderson, trombones; Jay Hoggard, vibes; Fred Hopkins, bass) was especially provocative. The drummer exhibited a sensitivity to nuance and color, creating many interesting textures. Altschul's fellow musicians also contributed to the music's impact. Hoggard, in particular, demonstrated a personal and refreshing instrumental approach. His percussive, dissonant lines and clusters imaginatively explored the music's structural elements.

Andrew Hill - in a rare New York appearance - reaffirmed his considerable, but often overlooked compositional and pianistic talents. Performing three pieces, he utilized a free, rhapsodic approach that used both metered and free sections. Yet, his work was logical and moving. Various interludes were woven into a unified structure through the employment of repeated rhythmic and melodic motifs.

Old And New Dreams' performance (Don Cherry, trumpet; Dewey Redman, tenor saxophone and musette; Charlie Haden, bass; Edward Blackwell, drums) showcased four important musicians who have been associated with Ornette Coleman. While all are currently involved in their own individual musical experiments, the band provides them with an opportunity to explore some of their common aesthetic interests. Together, they exhibited a compelling empathy that infused their work with verve and spirit. Haden was superb on *Lonely Woman*, playing haunting melodic lines as well as strumming his instrument in a guitar-like fashion. He was effectively complemented in the rhythm section by Blackwell, who propelled the music through various moods and colors.

A benefit concert for the late Polish violinist Zbigniew Seifert was held at Seventh Avenue South on April 23. One of the evening's musical highlights was a rivetting set by Kenny Barron (piano), Ron Carter (bass), and Jack

DeJohnette (drums). Although all three musicians played numerous solos, Barron was featured most extensively. His lyrical improvisations were characterized by a dancing, darting quality. On *Autumn Leaves*, for example, the pianist began the piece in an abstract manner, producing a fragmented and pointillistic melodic statement, before settling into a more flowing style.

Jane Ira Bloom and Outline (Bloom, soprano and alto saxophones; Jay Clayton, voice; Mark Hellas, bass and cello; Paul Sullivan, piano; Gerry Hemingway, drums) performed at the Third Street Music School on April 30. (The concert was part of the Universal Jazz Coalition's Monday night series.) Including in the performance selection from her work "The First Suite", the saxophonist employed a warm, melodic approach. She and Clayton engaged in many intertwining musical dialogues that blended their instrumental and vocal work into a single continuous sound. The two musicians were supported by a sensitive rhythm section whose members also delivered some effective solo work.

Briefs: *The Grackle's* current issue (available for \$1.50 from Ron Welburn, P.O. Box 244, Vanderveer Station, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11210) features interviews with Hamiet Bluiett, James Newton, Anthony Davis, and Jerome Cooper as well as essays and reviews.... Ornette Coleman and Prime Time were the musical guests on the April 14 edition of NBC-TV's "Saturday Night Live"... India Navigation has signed Chico Freeman, Anthony Davis and James Newton to exclusive recording contracts... WKCR presented a Cecil Taylor Festival from March 24-26. The 48-hour event featured all of Taylor's recorded work, a live studio performance by the pianist and his group, and various interviews. The radio station also sponsored a benefit concert at Carnegie Hall on April 1 spotlighting such New Music innovators as Leroy Jenkins, Philip Glass, and Steve Reich.... The Public Theater's Jazz Series will receive grants for the 1979-80 season from both the National Endowment for the Art and the New York State Council on the Arts as well as a corporate contribution from Warner Communications, Inc.... The World Saxophone Quartet (Julius Hemphill, Oliver Lake, David Murray and Hamiet Bluiett) were featured on WNET-TV's program "Skyline" on April 17. ... The 6th Annual Ramapo Summer Jazz Festival and Workshop - with Gerry Mulligan and his Concert Big Band plus various jazz educators - will be held at Westfield State College, Westfield, Ma. (July 2-6) and Ramapo College, Mahwah, N.J. (July 16-28). Further information can be obtained by calling 201-825-2800 (Ex. 231) or writing Ramapo College, Summer Session Office, 505 Ramapo Valley Rd., Mahwah, N.J. 07430.

New Music Distribution Service has moved to 500 Broadway, 4th floor, New York, N.Y. 10012 (tel. no. 212-925-2121). Recent recordings available from the organization are Baikida Carroll's "The Spoken Word" (Hat Hut), Jane Ira Bloom/Kent McLagan's "We Are Outline" (Outline Records, Prince Lawsha's "Firebirds: Vol. I" and "Vol. III", and Steve Nelson-Raney's "Some Piano Music" (Cody Records).

Peters International, Inc. (619 West 54th St., New York, N.Y. 10019) has inaugurated a new jazz label, called West 54. The first four releases include Red Richards' "Soft Buns" and Slide Hampton's "World of Trombones"....

New from Gryphon (157 W. 57th St., New York, N.Y. 10019) are Phil Woods' "I Remember" and Bob Brookmeyer's "The Bob Brookmeyer Small Band".... Columbia Records has released Don Byas/Bud Powell's "A Tribute to Cannonball" and Charles Mingus' "Nostalgia in Times Square" as part of their Contemporary Masters Series. Also available from the company is Arthur Blythe's "Lenox Avenue Breakdown"....

The 26th annual Newport Jazz Festival will be held from June 22 to July 1 in New York City, Saratoga Springs, N.Y., and Waterloo Village, N.J. Among the New York City events are "New Music in the Jazz Tradition" (with Anthony Braxton, Leroy Jenkins and Oliver Lake) at Alice Tully Hall on June 27, "An Evening with Lionel Hampton" at Avery Fisher Hall on June 29, and a solo piano series (featuring Al Haig, Roland Hanna, Muhal Richard Abrams, Barry Harris, Patti Brown, and Barbara Carroll) at Carnegie Recital Hall throughout the Festival's duration. Information about all concerts can be obtained by calling 212-787-2020. In conjunction with Newport, Rigmor Newman will present Cecil Taylor/Sun Ra and his Arkestra and The Art Ensemble of Chicago/The World Saxophone Quartet at Symphony Space on June 22 and respectively. For further information, call 212-222-3431.... Cobi Narita and the Universal Jazz Coalition will present the "2nd Annual Salute to Women in Jazz" from June 22-July 1. For further information, call the U.J.C. at 212-924-5026. — *Clifford Jay Safane*

SAN FRANCISCO — On April 21 there was a forum sponsored by Music By The Bay and the City College of San Francisco entitled "Jazz Scene '79". This all-afternoon event brought together several of the more prominent local musicians and other individuals interested or active in the music scene, as well as the members of the Old And New Dreams Quartet: Charlie Haden, who is a San Francisco resident, Don Cherry, Ed Blackwell and Dewey Redman. The purpose of the forum was to openly discuss some of the problems facing the jazz artist, and how to deal with solutions to these problems (There was an involved discussion about the use of the word "jazz", and the terms new music, creative music, great black music, black classical music, free music and free jazz. This seemed inevitable given the diversity of the people present at the forum, and reminds me of Lester Bowie's extensive letter writing to the Chicago Reader in 1977. Anyway, I have used "jazz" to mean the music easily identifiable as such - with the terms "new" and "creative" music meaning those players who are essentially concerned with extending the traditional forms. Obviously all this music is highly CREATIVE and has its roots in the black cultural experience).

The first portion of this "seminar" was a lecture-demonstration by the Old And New Dreams Quartet who had been playing the week of April 17-22 at San Francisco's Keystone Korner. Don Cherry, acting as spokesman for the group, explained how, because each of them loved Ornette Coleman's music, they had wanted to reunite and play this music on a national tour. For the Quartet there was a great benefit to playing this familiar music as it created a situation in which it was absolutely necessary to listen to the other members in new ways and with complete attention.

When the group played *Happy House* for the audience, the astute listening and silences were definitely heard as part of the music. Cherry went on to elaborate how the music is a meditation, the "music plays you". The environment — a large bright room with a view of the San Francisco Bay and Oakland hills, also had an effect on the audience, accustomed to hearing such music in dark smoky clubs with cash registers jingling in the background.

One of the most germane questions asked by a member of the audience was, "Why can't I hear this music all the time?" and the answers to this question brought us right into the major issues of the forum. Charlie Haden's point of view was that creative music has always been a minority art form, that the goal of creative musicians is to reach as wide an audience as possible, that the music is a celebration of the people and that the audience is also an element of the music. Further answers from other members of the band had to do with the fact that the music is *freeing*, is anarchy, and that certain powers that exist in the United States do not wish for the popularity of this music as it is not "mind control" music.

After a masterly demonstration of poly-rhythms by Ed Blackwell, the forum adjourned briefly, and then two panels successively opened up discussions on the main problem faced by the artist - survival. The first panel included the members of the Quartet, a local "jazz" critic, and a promoter who works with the University of California's Berkeley campus. The second panel was more representative of the Bay Area. Headed by Bari Scott of radio station KPFA-FM, who, media-wise, has done more than any other individual in the Bay Area to expose new music to the public, the panel included saxophonist John Handy; Ed Kelly, pianist and teacher at Oakland's Laney College; David Hardiman, trumpeter and teacher at San Francisco City College and leader of his own Big Band; George M'Lely, piano; and saxophonist Idris Ackamoor and composer and trumpeter Mohammed Tsofiotom Kaal, leaders of the East Oakland Youth Development Center Orchestra.

A primary source of irritation expressed by local musicians ("local" only in the sense that these musicians live here - their musical bases are quite broad) is that San Francisco in 1979 has for the most part become a one-club town, the club being the Keystone Korner. Of all the profound music that has flowed through the Bay Area since January: Don Moye and Joseph Jarman, Martial Solal and Lee Konitz, Don Pullen and Charlie Haden, Air, Randy Weston, Oliver Lake with Michael Gregory Jackson and Pheeroan ak Laff, Muhal Richard Abrams, the Carla Bley Band, Ted Curson, Max Roach, Tony Williams, Dexter Gordon, Airtio and Flora Purim, Art Blakey, Leroy Jenkins, the Art Ensemble of Chicago, Douglas Ewart and George Lewis, all except Jenkins, Ewart/Lewis and the Art Ensemble performed at the Keystone Korner - these latter appearing in Berkeley. So it's obvious that when one is going to hear "jazz" or creative music, the question that comes to mind is "Who is playing the Keystone?" These out of town groups usually play the Keystone for six nights of the week. Monday night is the only night when "local" musicians are featured, and until quite recently the James Leary Big Band was the only group that appeared often. The other major club in San Francisco, the Great American Music

Hall, uses local musicians even less than the Keystone, so it is quite a sore point to the many excellent musicians who live here to have such limited opportunities for club appearances.

In the past few months the Bay Area has also seen the death of two alternative spots where one might go hear creative music: The Jazz Loft, a new and very promising environment was closed down due to greed on the part of the land developers, and the Sunday open sessions at Jack's, a bar in the Fillmore District in San Francisco which has been a music spot for almost twenty years. Also the Metropolitan Arts Center, which last year hosted many concerts by local creative musicians as well as solo concerts by Don Moye, Henry Threadgill, George Lewis and Michele Rosewoman, has gone into a state of dormancy that may or may not be temporary. The airwaves are not much better off - KRE-FM, a black owned and operated jazz station has gone disco, and Bari Scott's landmark show "The Secret's Out" has been preempted by punk-rockers.

However new outlets for the music consistently arise, among them the Hotel Utah which has been featuring the Rova Saxophone Quartet and the collaboration of City Celebration (a group sponsoring outdoor concerts), the Fort Mason Foundation (an arts center developed on former army territory) and the Keystone Korner, which has been sponsoring a series of Sunday afternoon concerts of Bay Area musicians. These new exposures of the music are beginning to catch on, but again the question: how can a professional jazz artist survive in this limited setting? And how can it be possible to educate the younger generations in the music when all around them the media are spewing out commercially oriented music, pre-packaged and watered-down forms, electrified "fusions" and punk mentalities. "Why can't I hear this music all the time?"

Another point which is important to note in viewing the "scene" in the Bay Area, is that a number of nationally and internationally prominent jazz artists (such as Andrew Hill, Bobby Hutcherson, Pharoah Sanders, John Handy, Michael White, Tony Williams and Charlie Haden) live in the Bay Area but only rarely appear here in the community. Again, Don Cherry had some relevant comments on the importance of a community consciousness. Although the center of the music world is thought to be New York City, and countless musicians have uprooted to head for that mecca, Cherry pointed out that the center is the individuals, each community can be a center and the real center is the community itself. The major thrust of the whole seminar is in this statement, as this was the overall goal of the afternoon — to bridge the gaps, to achieve a commonness of purpose among the music people present in order to validate and organize their strengths in the face of the "gangsterism" of the recording companies, booking agents, no places to play - and the underlying causes of these phenomena: racism, classism, an ignorant and dubious press, prejudice, etc.; for the musicians themselves and others who can contribute needed skills to take responsibility for the future of creative music in the Bay Area and establish a strong base here. Well, what happened? A committee was formed to meet further and begin to deal with the situation in a concrete and realistic fashion which



includes developing counter-propaganda; and a potential alliance of two currently operative groups - Music By The Bay (an organization set up primarily for the purpose of helping musicians get work) and the East Oakland Youth Development Center.

The philosophy of self-determination has its model in the now 13 year-old Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians founded in Chicago. Idris Ackamoor, a brilliant saxophonist, and composer Mohammed Tsfoitsom Kaal have set up the East Oakland Youth Development Center with the principles of the AACM in mind. The Center has a large building in Oakland's black community leased to them by the city for a nominal sum. A whole training program in musicianship and composition as well as performance is underway. The EOYDC Orchestra is filled with professional musicians of a range of ages, and serves a purpose similar to that of the AACM Big Band under the leadership of Muhal Richard Abrams in the late '60s and '70s. There are also student ensembles which performed at the EOYDC's most recent concert, New World Marketplace of the Arts, on April 8. The evening's performance also featured the Center's Jazz Orchestra playing compositions and arrangements by Kaal, the Omsemble, George Sams and Lewis Jordan Duet, the Tony Smith Ensemble with Ackamoor, dancers, poets and the EOYDC's drama company. Such a concert setting illustrates the scope of their approach. The East Oakland Youth Development Center along with Laney College's jazz-oriented music department guided by Ed Kelly provide the Bay Area with exactly what is needed for the growth of a musical community that can reach people where they live as well as inside of a club.

Hopefully this article has served its purpose - to expose some of the thinkings and happenings of the "jazz scene" to a larger

public and to create an awareness in the minds of others that a community does exist and that it needs support. This piece has only briefly touched upon the music and names of only a very few of the musicians who are creating in the Bay Area. This region, especially San Francisco, is a place of world musics - we are influenced by working groups who come from Brazil, Cuba, Africa, Jamaica, Indonesia, Morocco, China and Japan. The climate of the Bay Area is at the present time completely right for the music to be heard. — Elaine Cohen

AL HAIG

Al Haig/ John Wilmeth
One Fifth Avenue, New York City
May 1, 1979

One Fifth Avenue has classy decor combined with an intimate atmosphere. During intermissions they feature a potpourri of vintage swing recordings.

Pianist Al Haig, veteran of the forties and fifties with such musicians as Charlie Parker and Stan Getz, showed that he is still a formidable musical force despite the limitations here of an unapplauding, unlistening audience.

Haig's style owes a great deal to bebop pianist Bud Powell. This evening, he managed to show how thoroughly he has assimilated all aspects of the Powell style. Besides the Powell concept of improvising by getting inside the chords such as he presented on *Love For Sale*, Haig displayed his fondness for Bill Evans' close chord voicings on the bossa nova *Invitation*, a capable interpretation of Thelonious Monk's obsessive musical ideas on *Epistrophy*, his awareness of George Shearingesque voicings on *Autumn In New York* and his own idea of putting latin vamps into *Epistrophy*. He also displayed an affection for the voluptuous,

octave-laden style of Errol Garner on *Misty*, as well as Art Tatum chromatic runs and tenths on up-tempo and romantic ballads such as *Lush Life*. Not unaware of the jazz innovations of the sixties, he played a very Herbie Hancock-like solo on *Seven Steps To Heaven*.

The laid back style which he fused with Powell's techniques makes a delightful mixture and produces a style which is all his own.

Another of Haig's talents is his ability to quote: throughout the evening interspersed into other tunes we heard *I Wonder Why*, Dizzy's ending to *Groovin' High*, *Woody n' You*, *Salt Peanuts*, *Clair De Lune*, *Bahia* and *Willow Weep For Me*. There was even the inclusion of *Au Privave* inside another Charlie Parker tune, *Buzzy*. Other exciting features were the groove-producing riff he played on an uptempo modal tune, the unorthodox bebop intervals on *Get Out Of Town*, his tasteful comping behind bassist John Wilmeth on *Buzzy*, his ethereal phrases on *Lush Life*, the symmetry of his phrasing on all the romantic ballads, and the intense, Rachmaninoff-sounding octaves ending to *Invitation*.

Haig was in excellent company with John Wilmeth, who is from Iowa. Wilmeth's array of abilities include good intonation, a sense of swing, and steady time. He has no inhibition about playing the melody or melodic improvisations; which shows a musician with roots. And he can play the blues, as on *Buzzy*. Although Paul Chambers sounds like a chief influence among many and the talking of the crowd drowned out much of his playing, Wilmeth's ability to make exciting and beautiful music came through clearly.

Even with influenza and without a drummer, Al Haig proved that he is a vastly underrated creator of jazz piano. — Tom Grund

BENNY WATERS

The West End, New York City
April 17-19, 1979.

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JAZZ



tenor, alto sax, clarinet (besides singing) in a three-night unscheduled gig at The West End, Waters conjured up glowing images of Hawkins (whom he replaced in Fletcher Henderson's band in 1935); fellow expatriate Ben Webster, Johnny Hodges (a Boston Conservatory colleague) and Benny Carter, with whom he played and arranged for Charlie Johnson's Paradise Band in the mid '20s and early '30s. Though influenced by these giants, Benny had his own mellow sound, as he wailed up a storm.

His accompanists — old friends — besides contributing to make this a memorable date musically, represented with Ben a cross section of jazz history: Tommy Benford, best known for his Jelly Roll Morton sides, who started drumming on the eve of World War I (which makes him possibly the longest-playing jazz drummer in the world); Johnny Williams, bassist with Armstrong, Lucky Millinder, etc., in the '40s, and pianist Ram Ramirez, a Swing Era giant whose composition *Lover Man* Ben turned into an evocative showpiece that made

Lester Boone (of those Armstrong '30s sides), seeing Waters after forty years, exclaim: "Ben Webster!"

As for Benny Waters, whose musical roots extend to King Oliver, Clarence Williams, Henderson, Jimmy Lunceford, etc., his totally unjustified musical oblivion in America was, for three nights at least, rectified. Pleased with his reception, Benny Waters (he's here to visit relatives before returning to Paris) hopes to come back next year. Record companies please note. — *Al Van Starrex*

AL COHN/SONNY STITT

Lulu White's, Boston, Massachusetts
April 7, 1979

The two-tenor setup has been with jazz as a functioning entity since the 1940s but its origins probably go back at least to the time

when Count Basie featured the contrasting sounds of Lester Young and Herschel Evans.

Both Al Cohn and Sonny Stitt have been members of important two-tenor teams in the past so their pairing was not as strange as it might seem. In fact they collaborated so effectively as to belie the fact that they were working in an ad-lib situation. They built their repertoire around standards, a couple of blues and some jazz lines which suited them both. Both Cohn and Stitt have a direct, no-nonsense approach to their music and their mutual respect enabled them to collaborate in sparkling fashion. In fact, it was a joy to hear Stitt in such fine fettle. He was up for the engagement and his solo work on both alto and tenor was a model of consistency as well as flowing grace. Al Cohn showed that he was just as agile and the good vibrations emanating from the stand caught the mood of the listeners to create a warmly glowing ambience which was enhanced by the possibilities of dancing to the music.

The Boston rhythm section of pianist Ray Santisi, bassist Witt Brown and drummer Alan Dawson was an important contribution to the success of the music. Well-oiled rhythm sections are not that plentiful today, and they provided just the right amount of rhythmic and musical comment to lift the horn players to greater heights. Santisi is a tasty yet economical pianist, Witt Brown is unspectacular but his choice of notes is accurate, while Alan Dawson is one of the great time percussionists of jazz.

While both the concept and approach of Sonny Stitt and Al Cohn are totally predictable the grace, skill and energy of this performance turned the music into something special.

— *John Norris*

CECIL TAYLOR UNIT

Boston, Massachusetts
April 7 1979

Unfortunately it is not possible for me to remember the name of this marvelous old theatre, long and narrow, a balcony suspended high in the air, the gods they were always called. What an apt explanation, seeing this quartet in such array, the privilege of viewing the physical motion of the performance. A theatre affair, in two time zones.

The Cecil Taylor Quartet
 Jimmy Lyons alto saxophone
 Ramsey Ameen violin
 Kenneth Tyler percussion
 Cecil Taylor grand piano

Of course, grand piano music, but with new movement, a looseness into more spacial blues and moods. The layers now breathe in a freer sense with the absence of Malik trumpet. Another release as Cecil moves into other thoughts.

Remove staccato. Now the historic claims become, in this one instance, very clear. The love. Monk - Duke and all. Thunderous applause ensues, for this rarefied occasion, my privilege again allowed.

— *Bill Smith*

STRIDES III

Marriott Hotel, Somerset, N.J.
March 23-24, 1979

photograph of Al Cohn by Gerard Futrick

Jazz parties have become an established part of the scene in the 1970s. Dick Gibson's is the most exclusive and, reputedly, the most illustrious. The Blue Angel affairs in Pasadena have been well documented and, in retrospect, offered a satisfying mix of music. The New Jersey Jazz Society have become involved in this concept and the 1979 weekend was their third presentation.

The musicians hired for the event were a blend of stylists covering the traditional and swing periods — which is what appeals to the society's membership. Three sessions were spread over the two days and a variety of combinations were presented. Ostensibly each musician took it in turns to act as leader but the music and, sometimes, the tunes were choreographed by the program director and the overall impact was of a glorified Condon jam session with a few individual nuggets of medium-grade gold in between.

Musicians such as Doc Cheatham, Buddy Tate, Zoot Sims, Bob Wilber, Kenny Davern, Vic Dickenson, Derek Smith and Dick Wellstood are far from their best in a dixieland jam setting but all too often that is what they ended up doing. Their competence was never doubted but the ensembles were often a shambles and the repertoire was usually uninspired. This is the inherent danger when ad hoc bands are thrown together without preparation or imagination.

Perhaps because of this the organisational genius of Dick Hyman made his sets stand out in sharp relief. His final set on the opening night made everything which preceded it seem ordinary. Pee Wee Erwin, Bob Wilber, Milt Hinton and Bobby Rosengarden joined the pianist in a set of music from their Michael's Pub collaborations. The charts were intriguing and the performance was tasty. Gershwin's *I'll Build A Stairway To Paradise* was a delight, as were the remaining numbers.

Hyman also collaborated successfully with the two other pianists — Dick Wellstood and Derek Smith — and the intricate interweaving between Hyman and Smith contrasted nicely with the more casual interplay when Wellstood shared the stand.

The dependability and resourcefulness of Zoot Sims and Bob Wilber gave an added dimension to every set in which they participated. Wilber and Buddy Tate ran down some of the selections from their Sackville "Sherman Shuffle" collaboration, and Zoot continues to express the most fundamental principals of jazz music.

Ruby Braff was often a catalyst in the development of warm, intimate musical conversations which did their best to transcend the circumstances. He was eloquent as a soloist in front of a smooth rhythm section of Smith, Michael Moore and Rosengarden but he also managed to circumvent the strictures of the larger ensembles by breaking the groups down into smaller combinations. Especially rewarding was his collaboration with Sims and Dickenson on Sunday night.

Kenny Davern's will-o-the-wisp clarinet gave a spikey texture to many of the ensembles within which he was featured. However, he is best heard within a more organised framework. His collaboration with Dick Wellstood was probably the high point of the weekend, despite the pedestrian percussion backdrop by Rosengarden. The elan with which Davern and Wellstood worked their way through the

parameters of such tunes as *Shimme Sha Wabble* was a pleasurable reminder of just how attractive this repertoire can still sound under the right circumstances. It was also left to Davern and Wellstood to present the only blues of the weekend — a strange circumstance at such a gathering of jazz musicians.

Also on hand were the guitar giants from Concord — Herb Ellis and Remo Palmieri — as well as Jake Hanna, the label's resident drummer and the most effective of the three percussionists. Cliff Leeman's dependability gave strength to the groups in which he participated.

In general, the music fitted perfectly the boundaries prescribed by the sponsors but there was always the feeling it could have been far more stimulating if the musicians had been given a freer rein and if the setting had been less formal. A good idea for the future would

be to incorporate an area for dancing and encourage more intermingling among both guests and musicians.
— John Norris

ROLAND HANNA

**The Knickerbocker, New York City
March 22, 1979**

The Knickerbocker, disappointingly, is a typical New York saloon which is unsympathetic to the subtleties of a pianist such as Roland Hanna. Even sitting close to the piano does not guarantee clarity of sound. This situation is frustrating for the listener as well as degrading to an artist of Hanna's calibre.

Hanna, in many ways, could be described as a post-jazz improviser. He utilises the techniques and phrasing of jazz but the romanticism



photograph of Zoot Sims by Gerard Futrick

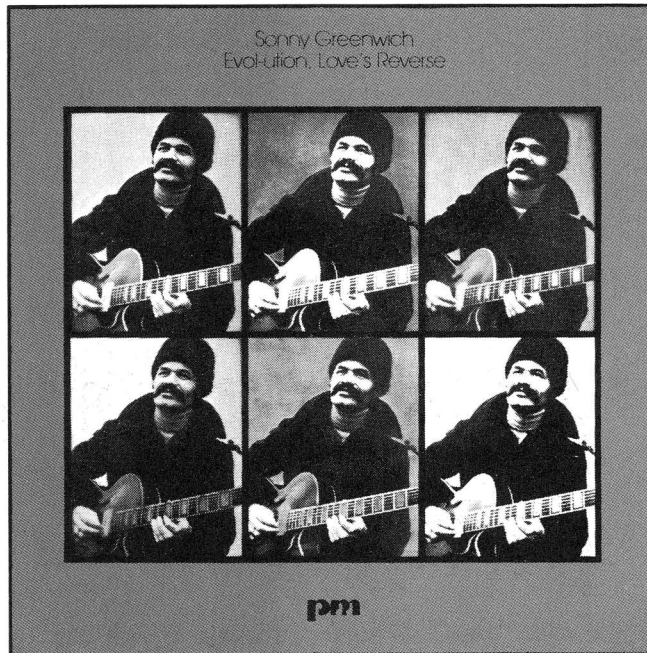
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which is so much a part of his makeup takes his music into areas not usually related to the jazz experience. He is both more incisive and more concise than pianists such as Keith Jarrett and because of this his music has much more body and content. He is a fascinating musician to listen to: he spins a web of delicate textures which can often be shattered abruptly by a return to one or another of the basic devices of the music. He is an embroiderer and like Art Tatum the message of his music is often hidden beneath a veneer of glossy polish.

For this engagement he utilised the steadiness and rhythmic pulsation of bassist Sam Jones as a foil around which he could weave intricate sound patterns which evoked images related to many different musical experiences. It was marvelous to participate in the images created by this tremendously talented musician.

— *John Norris*

OAHSPE

**The Brook, New York City
March 17, 1979**

Improvised music, at this juncture, is an attempt to embody the most fundamental aspects of sound (and/or sound displacement) in order that the music be more clearly actionalized in such a way to allow for a heightened sense of progress throughout the proceedings. It is not so much, then, a question of the particular characteristics of the instrument one plays as it is a question of musical perspective and compositional design and its relationship to tonal manipulation and rhythm.

Oahspe (Ray Anderson, trombone & tuba; Mark Helias, bass & cello; Gerry Hemingway, percussion) is a band aware of these possibilities in music-making. They are basically a chamber music unit that creates fragments and chunks of sound that are wonderfully balanced and "actionalized" as they are progressively polished and elaborated on by the musicians. The sounds that these men produce seem to almost automatically apprehend the already existing sound environment that is the always and the everywhere. Their music imposes a further and more refined naturality on what normally exists in our everyday world.

Brass player Anderson, whom I've heard with percussionist Barry Altschul's band as well as with Braxton, never sounded better than in this unit. It seems that the musical schemata of this group are a bit more suited to his non-linear, scattered way of playing. His method of distorting the shape of the sounds in a highly interesting and coloristic way works well in this band and is the foundation from which Hemingway is able to create and realize his percussive layers and rhythmic densities.

Most of the material was Hemingway's aside from two pieces by Helias. The group opened with a composition entitled *Stole Stroll* which was decidedly "jazzy" yet retained a certain detachment that allowed one the opportunity to concentrate on each individual's contribution to the whole of the music. The thematic motif of roughly three or four notes played with tonal clarity in a blurred sort of way by Anderson set the stage for some pretty earth-shaking musical departures. Helias, who is a member in good standing of Dewey Redman's new band, held the fundamental contours of this piece together exceptionally well... to such

a point where it became inconceivable to imagine anyone else taking over his chores as bassist in the group without radically altering the music. His notes were clear as a bell and carried the harmonic "overtures" of the music brilliantly.

The successive music of this concert was quite fine and in keeping with the characteristics I initially outlined. Throughout the proceedings, and this was especially true of the Helias compositions when the bassist switched to cello, Hemingway's and Anderson's contributions to the musical whirlpool were like splashes of paint on a half-finished canvas. One simply marvelled at the agility and skill by which these men make music, as easily as you or I would drink a glass of water or paint a room.

I would suggest a close investigation of Oahspe (which means earth, air and spirit) for those interested in the sensuous, all-pervasive cycle of the improvised form. The band has thus far recorded two Lp's on their independent Auricle label, Aur-1 "Kwambe" and Aur-2 "Oahspe", both recordings are available from Auricle Records, P.O. Box 1114, New Haven, Conn. 06505 USA.

— *Roger Riggins*

ODDS & SODS

Summer is festival time and we have information on some of them. Berkeley, California is the venue of one of the first - May 25 through 27 with many of today's more popular artists. The final night includes a salute to Charles Mingus.... The Jazz Olympics is the title of a three-day event being held in the Radisson-Muehlebach Hotel in Kansas City. It's a pop-oriented event under the guidance of Ira Gitler. Write Jazz Olympics, 915 Walnut, Kansas City, Missouri 64106 for more information.... Groningen, Holland hosts a three-day jazz festival the same weekend as Moers (June 1-3) and uses some of the same artists. A similar situation occurs later in the summer when some of the musicians will commute from Nice to the weekend marathon called The Northsea Jazz Festival in Holland (July 13-15).... The jazz section of the Montreux Festival takes place July 12-16.... Artpark, on the Niagara Frontier at Lewiston, has announced a week-long festival for the end of the summer. August 28 through September 2 are the dates and the lineup will be announced later.... June 12-17 are Steamboat Days in Burlington, Iowa and the New Orleans Ragtime Orchestra, Sid Dawson's Rhythm Kings, the Queen City Jazz Band, Harold Dejan's Olympia Brass Band and Pee Wee Matese and the Rampart Street Paraders will be featured the last two days.... See the New York column in this issue for details on this year's Newport Festival.

Michele Rosewoman is being presented in concert June 1 by the Human Arts Association at P.S. 41, 116 11th Street. Abdul Wadud and Baikida Carroll will also perform.... The Woody Shaw Quintet and Harold Mabern's trio were heard May 20 at St. Charles Auditorium, 211 West 141st Street.... Milt Jackson celebrates 40 years in jazz with a Carnegie Hall concert June 9.... Mary Lou Williams performed her Mass April 22 at St. Patrick's Cathedral.... Eddie Gale and Peter Kuhn were featured at Environ on April 21.... Benny Waters was back in the U.S. in April and performed at the

Overseas Jazz Club as well as the West End Cafe.... The Billy Bang Trio performed at Studio W.I.S. April 13 and 14....

Johnny Griffin returns to the U.S. for a short tour beginning in mid-June. He will appear at the Newport Festival as well as playing for a week at the Village Vanguard. The first of Griffin's Galaxy albums is due for release soon.

The Akiyoshi-Tabackin Big Band appeared May 16 at Detroit's Music Hall Centre.... The Tony Williams band was onstage in Ann Arbor April 22 for Showcase Jazz.

The Northeast Ohio Jazz Society presented Bobby Hutcherson's Quartet in concert April 12. They are also organizing a group excursion to the Newport-New York Festival.... Boston's Jazz Week was highlighted by a concert with the Art Ensemble of Chicago May 4.... Berklee College of Music bestowed an honorary Degree of Doctor of Music on Teddy Wilson May 19. ... Lulu White's, the successful Boston club, presented a tribute to Lennie Tristano on April 1 with Warne Marsh, Sal Mosca and Eddie Gomez.

Trombonist Erling Kroner was recipient of the Ben Webster Foundation's Award for 1979. ... A symposium on improvisation is to be held in Stockholm August 10-15 under the heading of "Ad Lib '79". Many prominent European musicians have been invited. More information can be obtained by writing Sams Jazzforening, Box 49072, S-100 28 Stockholm, Sweden.

Jazz Alive, the dynamic weekly live showcase of jazz on National Public Radio features such diverse artists as Louis Cottrell, Anthony Braxton, Stan Getz, Chick Corea, Irene Kral, Chico Freeman, Art Blakey and the Texas Tenors (Cobb, Tate, Hamilton).... Bob Wilber and Pug Horton have started a newsletter to let their fans know what has been happening. Write them at Box 624, Brewster, Ma. 02631.

Byard Lancaster can be reached at 800 Riverside Drive, No. 7E, New York, N.Y. 10032 for engagements, etc.... Roland Young has prepared tapes of some of his music and is looking for an outlet. Write him at 311 Winthrop Road, Teaneck, N.J. 07666.

There's still an unending flow of new records from companies large and small. Byron Morris & Unity have released three LPs on EPI Records, P.O. Box 1723, Weaton, Maryland 20902. Auricle Records second release is "Oahspe" with Ray Anderson, Mark Helias and Gerry Hemingway. Price is \$7.98 postpaid from P.O. Box 1114, New Haven, Conn. 06505.... Kromel Records has released Allan Jaffe's "Soundscape" featuring James Newton, Anthony Davis and Ray Anderson. It's available from P.O. Box 410, New York, N.Y. 10024.... Fantasy/Milestone/Galaxy have a lot of new releases - including albums by Roy Haynes, Dewey Redman, Art Pepper, Cal Tjader and Nat Adderley.... New from MPS (Germany) are albums by Cecil Taylor, Martial Solal, Monty Alexander, George Shearing, Fritz Pauer and the Hi Lo's.... Contemporary Records is back on the scene with the release of new albums by Chico Freeman, Hampton Hawes, Art Pepper, Phineas Newborn and Ray Brown.... Bee Hive Records have albums by Sal Nistico, Curtis Fuller and Ronnie Mathews in the works.... Columbia Special Products has albums by Duke, Garner, Billie Holiday and Harry James ready for release as well as the first ten albums from the Commodore catalog.... SteepleChase Records has terminated its distribution agreement with

Inner City and will revert to independent distribution of the Danish pressings.... GNP Records has been busy recording a follow-up to the highly successful "Pres Conference". This time they've added the voice of Joe Williams.

Polish violinist Zbigniew Seifert died February 15 in Munich of cancer.... Pianist Paul Curry died April 9. He was noted for his Fats Waller stylings. He also the musical director of Hines, Hines and Dad for many years.... Vocalese pioneer Eddie Jefferson was murdered May 8 outside Baker's Keyboard Lounge in Detroit — a tragic loss.

— compiled by John Norris

LETTERS

[Editor's note: The Junos are music awards conferred by the Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, and are comparable to the Grammy Awards in the United States. Nominated for awards in the jazz category this year were Pete Magadini's "Bones Blues" (Sackville), Humber College Jazz Ensemble (Umbrella), Moe Koffman's "Things Are Looking Up" (GRT) and two from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation — Ted Moses' "More Than Ever" and the Tommy Banks Big Band with Big Miller's "Jazz Canada Montreux 1978". The Juno Award was won by the Tommy Banks disc.]

April 5, 1979

Canadian Academy of Recording Arts
and Sciences
89 Bloor St. East
Toronto, Ontario M4W 1A9

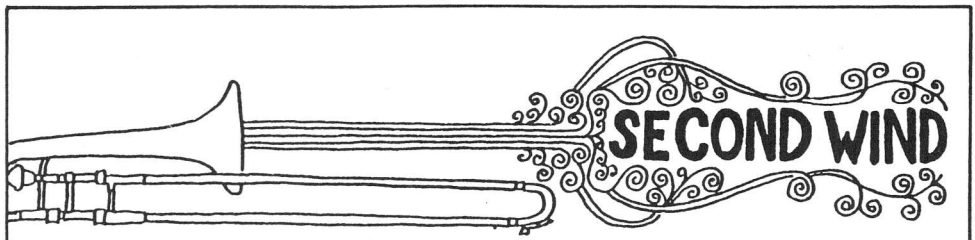
Now that the dust has settled from this year's JUNO awards it seems relevant, to us, to question the validity of CBC recordings being considered for awards.

In the first place the CBC's recordings are not sold in record stores anywhere in Canada and are primarily an extension of the CBC's broadcasting activities. Purchasing a record from the CBC is a most difficult task — one which the Corporation does not actively encourage the public to circumvent.

Secondly, if the purpose of the Juno Awards is to encourage the growth of the Canadian record industry through recognition of its achievements, then the presence of the CBC in this activity constitutes unfair competition. All of the CBC's recordings are produced with public funds and there is no responsibility or accountability to anyone. The growth of Canadian recordings in such fields as jazz, classical music, comedy and children's music is shaky enough without the direct weight of the CBC's funding opposing it. It is significant that only small independent labels are active in these areas in Canada. It obviously has no appeal for major recording companies.

This letter is not written in a fit of depression following the results of the Junos (where one of our records didn't make first place in the jazz category) but is simply to express our concern at a situation which we feel will discourage more people from becoming involved in recording music in the above mentioned categories.

Adjudication of these categories is conducted in camera but we can only presume (hope?) that if any CBC employees participated in the



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voting, they avoided a conflict of interest by ignoring the CBC's nominations.

John Norris - Bill Smith, producers
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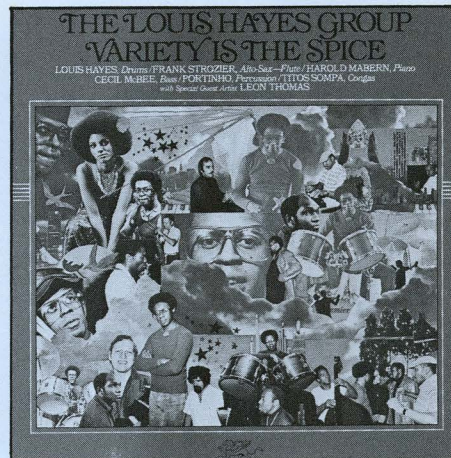
BEN WEBSTER in an informal rehearsal, recorded 1970 in Copenhagen with Denmark's Radio Big Band.

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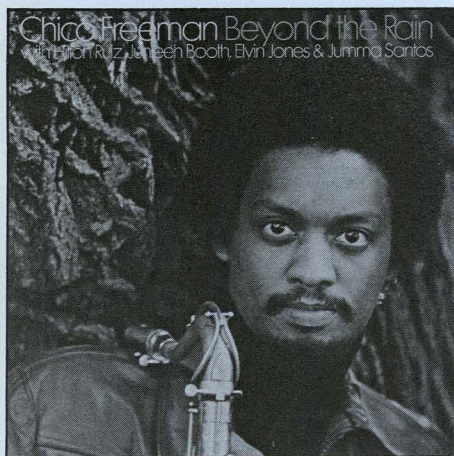
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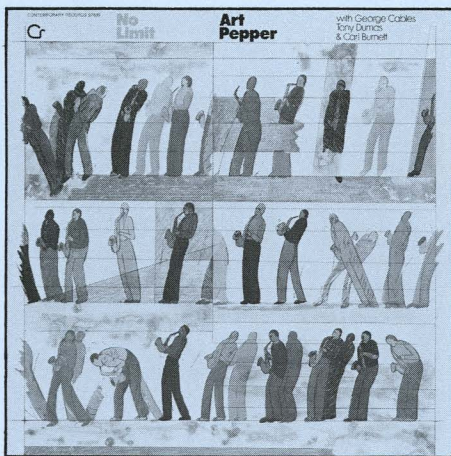
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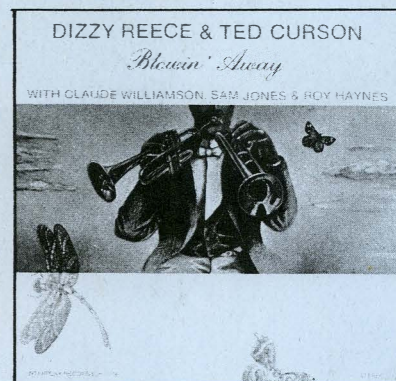
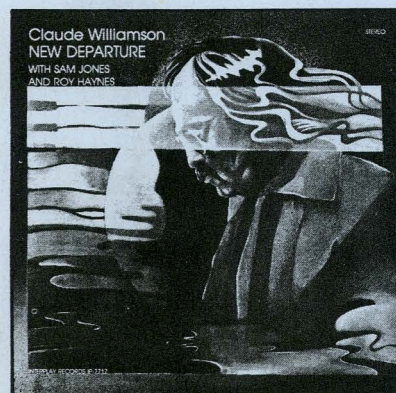
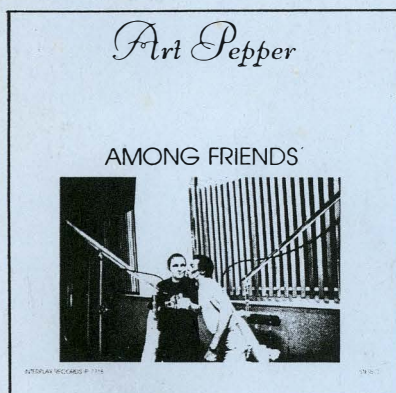


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