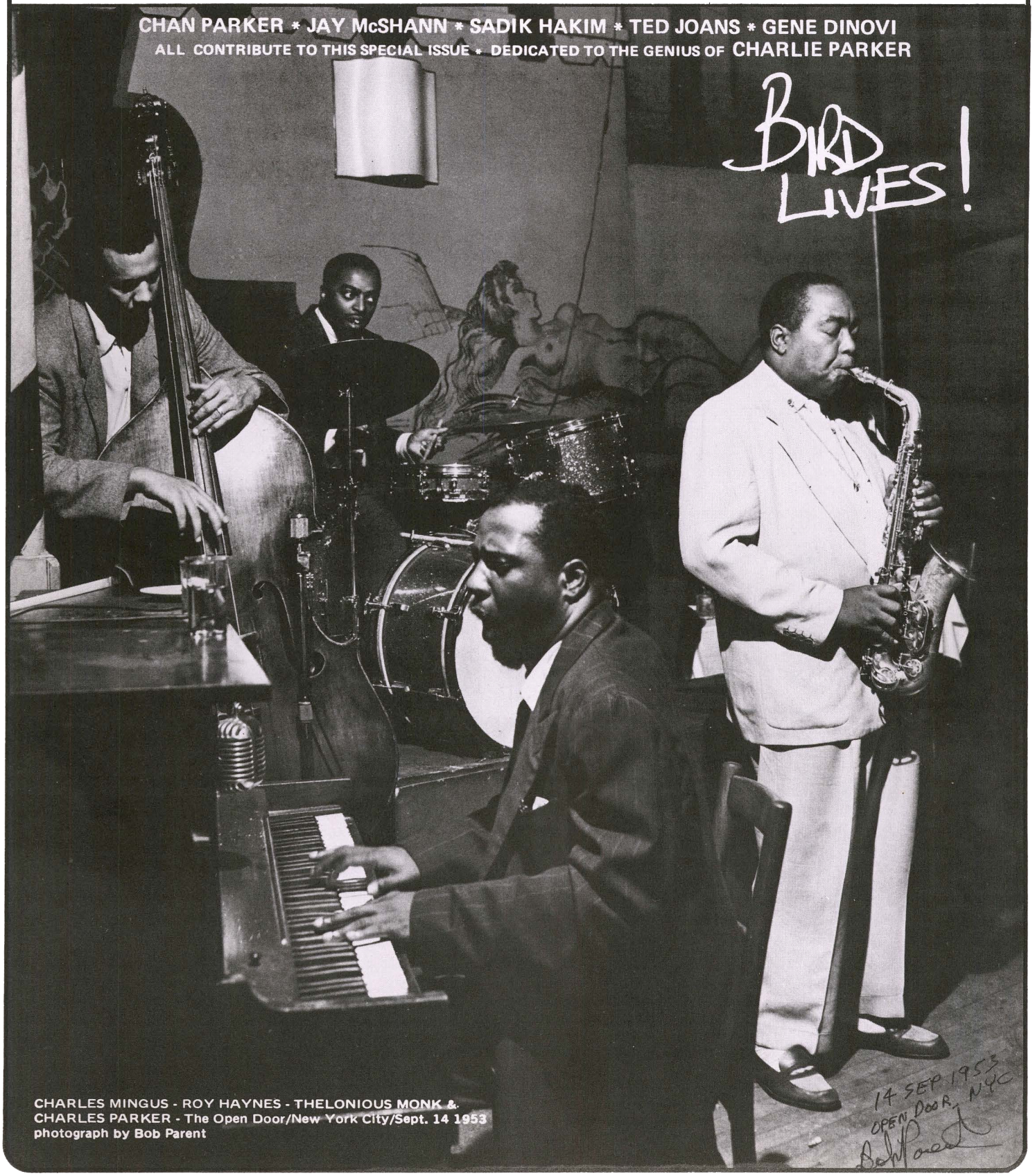
CODA MAGAZINE

THE JAZZ MAGAZINE * ISSUE NUMBER 181 (1981) * TWO DOLLARS

CHAN PARKER * JAY McSHANN * SADIK HAKIM * TED JOANS * GENE DINOVI
ALL CONTRIBUTE TO THIS SPECIAL ISSUE * DEDICATED TO THE GENIUS OF CHARLIE PARKER



CHARLES MINGUS - ROY HAYNES - THELONIOUS MONK &
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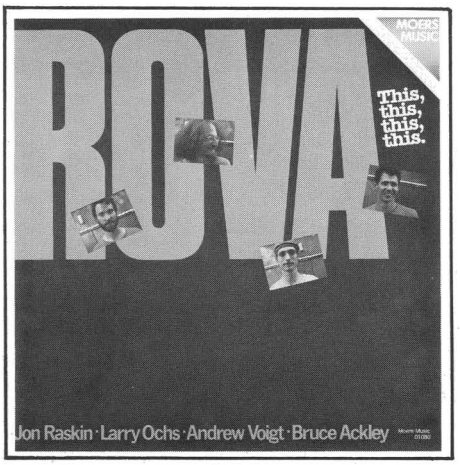

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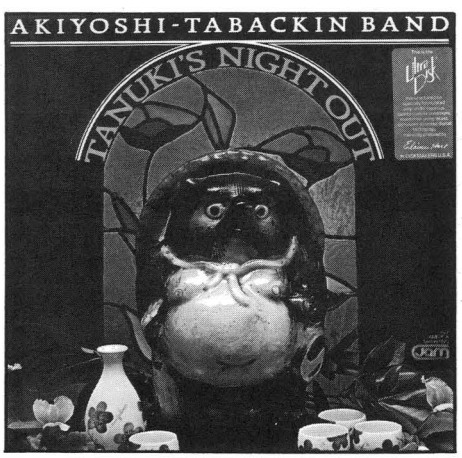

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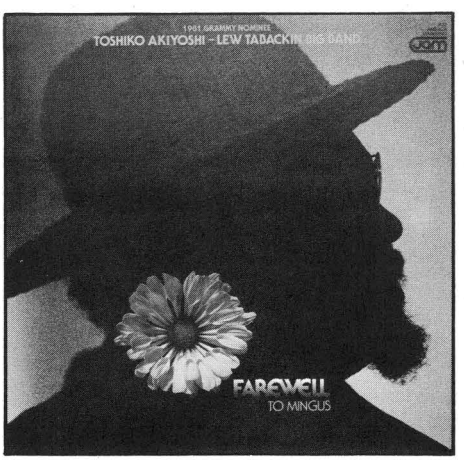

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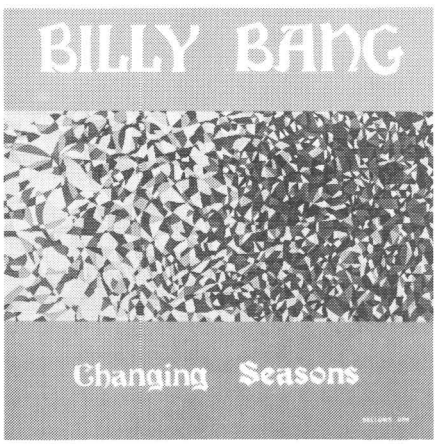

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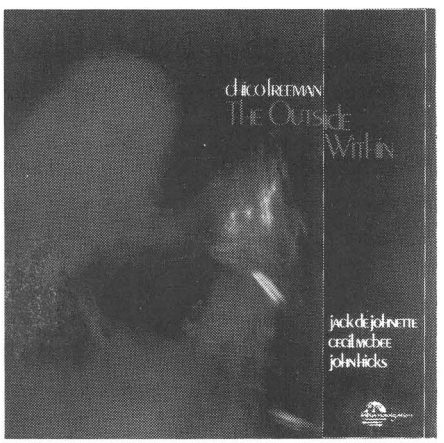

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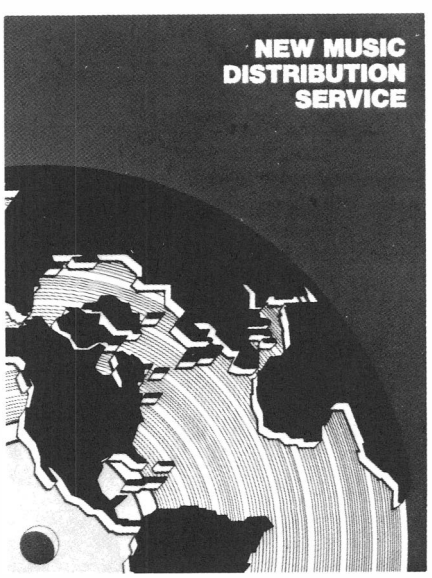

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Coda

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CONTENTS

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P.J. PERRY
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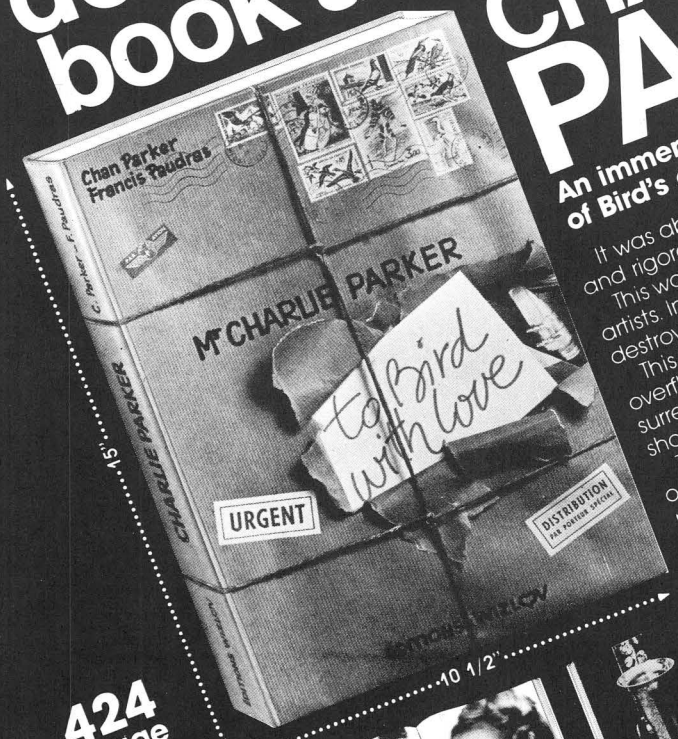
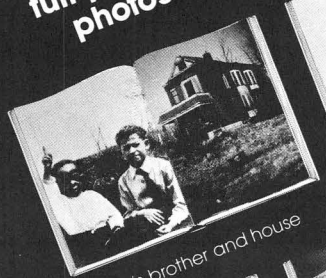
The definitive book about CHARLIE PARKER

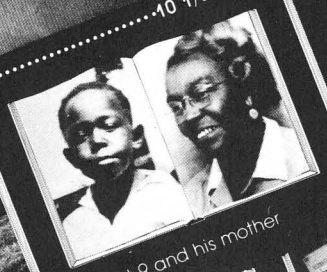
An immense art book, in the dimension of Bird's genius and personality.



424 full page photos

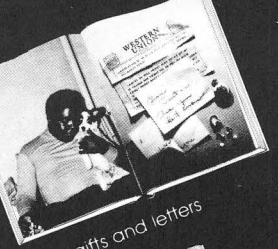
It was absolutely necessary to realize this comprehensively documented and rigorously authentic book about Bird.
This work has been realized by a passionate and talented team of graphic artists. In order to present the touching personality of Bird, it was necessary to destroy the myth and discover the man.
This book presents the child and his origins, the fiery adolescent, the artist overflowing with life and enthusiasm, the often sought friend, the poet, the surrealist, the designer and painter, the humorist, the father and husband. In short, the hurt and persecuted genius.
This book gives evidence of one of the most brilliantly spirited creators of our era, in a constant struggle to find acceptance for the most important musical revolution of his time.
It was necessary to render justice to the man and to the genius who, by his spirit, brought so many talents to bloom.

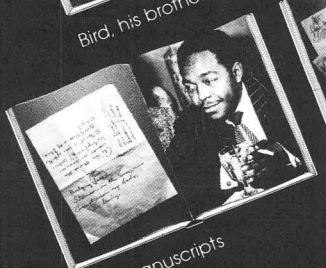

Bird, his brother and house

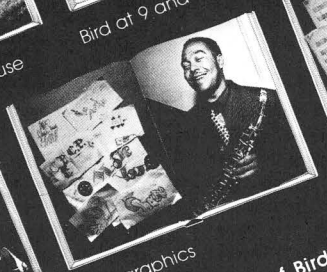

Bird at 9 and his mother

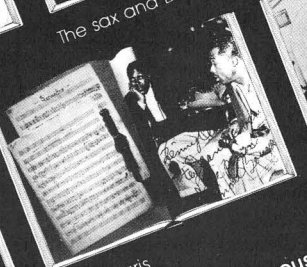

The sax and Bird at 16


Bird with family 1952

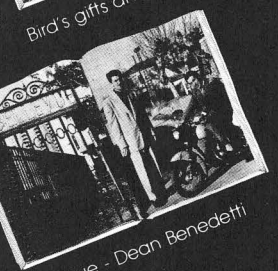

Bird's gifts and letters


Bird's manuscripts


Bird's graphics


Bird in Paris


Bird in Sweden


Bellevue - Dean Benedetti

A work of 424 pages, with:

1) Photos of Bird's childhood private collection of his first son LEON PARKER

2) Archives on Kansas City personal collection of Mr. Carroll Jenkins of the MUTUAL MUSICIANS' FOUNDATION in K.C.

3) Letters, contracts, manuscripts, drawings, paintings, poems, graphics, musical scores and instruments, extracts from law suits and photos of Bird's family, as well as numerous documents: proofs of affection from all over the world. Unpublished archives kept religiously to this day, in the private collection of his wife CHAN PARKER.

4) Fantastic original photos (never before published) by great American and European photographers of the time: J.-P. Charbonnier, Herve Derrien, Bill Gottlieb, Clax-ton Lang, Bob Parent, J.-M. Ploton, etc.

5) Private collections and archives of: Jean Berdin, Maurice Cullaz, Charles Delaunay, Michel Delorme, Down Beat, Don Lanphere, Francis Paudras, Max Roach, Ross Russell, Duncan Shiedt, Tony Williams, Marcel Zanini, etc.

6) The research of Francis Paudras: in Kansas City, New Hope and New York

7) Reportage of Camarillo by Carolyn White

All texts are written by CHAN PARKER in french and english.

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To BIRD with love..

I've never told anybody anything about Bird until this year, because first of all I think that everything that has been written is pornography. Bob Reisner wanted to write a book with me when Bird was alive. I told Bird and he said, "If you want to write a book about me, write your own book." Because he really wasn't that fond of Bob Reisner. So when Reisner was writing his book he got in touch with me and I said no.

Also, Andre Hodeir was putting together an eight-hour program on Bird for French radio, and he wrote to me and asked if I would be interviewed on it. I said yes because Bird had great respect for France. I felt that if I was going to talk about him with anybody, that would be who I would talk to. When we had the meeting about it, Andre said that he was basing the program on Reisner's book! So I said no, I'm sorry, I can't do it. Bird was very private, and I've always tried to guard his privacy. When he was alive he didn't let anybody close to him, and I felt it would be betraying something to discuss him with anybody, so I never did. But since all this horrible scandal has come out, I think it's important to set the record straight.

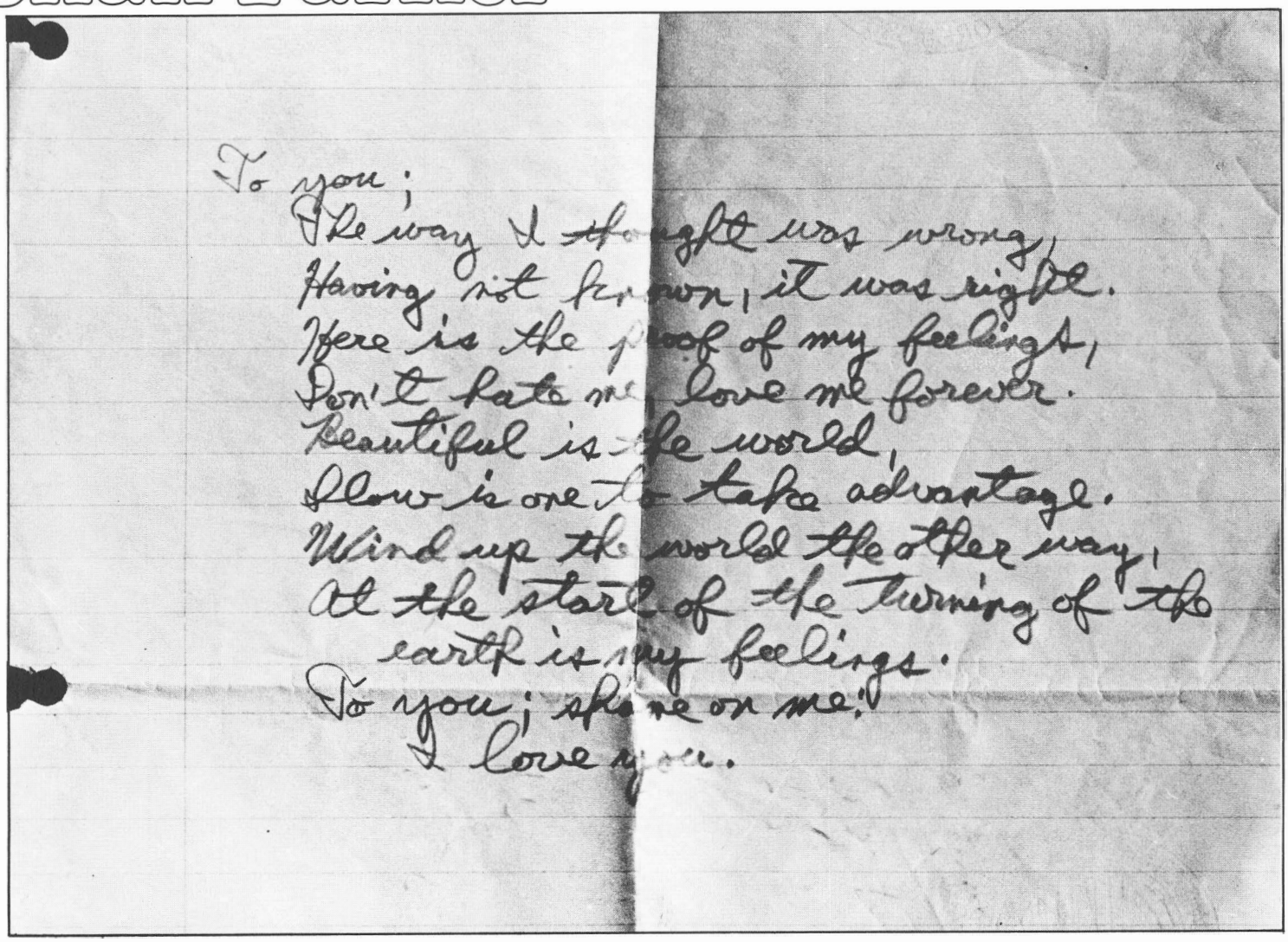
The book that has come out ("To Bird With Love") is mostly Francis (Paudras) idea, and his work. It's made up of all the documents I have of Bird - graphics, little notes, my photo collection plus all the photographs that Francis has dug up. It's going to be very special, it's not going to be like the other books that have come out in the past, which I never would allow in my house because I didn't want my children to read them.

I've also written a book of my own, it's not only about Bird, it's about the era. My mother was a dancer with the Ziegfeld Follies and then she worked at the Cotton Club, so when I was a child I knew Duke's band and all the people who worked at the Cotton Club, and she knew all the people in silent movies, she worked with W.C. Fields. I felt that this was important to explain me, so I started with my mother, I taped her one night and tried to keep it in her words, her story. Then it involves when I was a dancer, 52nd Street, Bird, and Phil (Woods), France, the Quincy Jones tour. It started as a book that Phil and I were writing together; it came in three weeks, it was a flow that didn't stop. It was about us and our family, but a few publishers read it and felt that it should be my book, it should be a woman's book.

So I re-wrote it, and it took me three years, not three weeks. It was tedious, and after living with it for so many years I got bored with it, relating the same story over and over. A lot of the re-writing was done during the breakup of my marriage, which probably saved me a lot of money with an analyst, because it really felt like I poured it all out. The end of the book is called "Alto Ego" and the book itself is called "Life In E Flat". Everybody said, "Oh, you should have more in it about Bird", which is maybe a third of the book, but I had a life beyond that, and the book is about the times, the era, the history of the music. I'd love to publish it, if someone is interested. It needs a lot of work, it needs some editing, and I suppose I should do another re-write, but I haven't the courage.

I saved a lot of documents about Bird, because I knew how important he was... and I loved him; when you love somebody you save things, right? I have portfolios at home marked "keepers" and "savers", and the things that he wrote were "keepers". I have the birth announcement of Mingus's baby, I have the death announcement of Fats Navarro... those things were a part of my history. I was a jazz baby anyway, and a keeper, so I kept things. I threw a lot out when we sold our house in America, but I have contracts, and letters from everybody: Kenny Clarke, Joe Maini, Milt Jackson, Sarah Vaughan, even Boyd Raeburn.

Chan Parker



To you;
The way I thought was wrong,
Having not known, it was right.
Here is the proof of my feelings,
Don't hate me love me forever.
Beautiful is the world,
How is one to take advantage.
Wind up the world the other way,
At the start of the turning of the
earth is my feelings.
To you; shame on me!
I love you.

But Bird was very private; we never had visitors at home. My friends sometimes, but not "the cats". In fact, Joe Albany used to come by the house. We lived on the ground floor and you entered by a big iron gate into a sort of tiny little court, and I used to put Pree in a carriage outside where I could watch her through the window. Joe used to come and stand outside the fence and talk to Pree. She couldn't talk because she was a baby, but he would stand there and talk for two hours, and never come to the door. Nobody came to the door.

When Baird was born he brought a few people to see him: "Look, it's mine!" But although he loved Max and Diz and the cats, they didn't hang out together. His home was his home, and he didn't let anything come into it. It was his retreat. I think a lot of musicians are like that.

Nobody knows Bird as a father and as a family man. He was very childlike himself. He loved toys and magic games, and bringing presents to the kids, bringing me ice cream, things like that. He liked television - westerns. He liked to hang out in the local bars. We lived in an area, now it's very chic, the Lower East Side. Now it's the East Village, but then it was the Lower East Side. There were gypsies, and Orthodox Jews, with the braided locks, and a lot of Russians. Bird liked to go in the little bars and talk to all these square people. He much preferred to have friends who weren't "hip". They called him "Charlie", and nobody knew what he was, and he liked that, because that guarded his privacy also. We didn't have problems there about being a mixed couple, because it was first-generation immigrants, so we weren't surrounded by middle-class white people, although there weren't a lot of blacks. A mixed couple at the time was very unusual — but Bird never let racism touch him; he never saw it, he carried himself above it. Mingus used to go ranting and raving about racism killing Bird, but I don't think Bird let it touch him. I think probably it was more a reaction against his music that contributed than his colour. I think he thought more about his music than his skin. If he went to, say, Chicago, he stayed at the best hotel, and he carried himself in such a way that it didn't touch him like it touched other people. He was much more affected by the reactions of critics and people like that — that's why he ended up in Camarillo. Because at that time, they banned bebop from the radio in California. It wasn't allowed to be played, they called it "degenerate" music. The reaction to his music in California was incredible; of course he also had many fans.

Actually, Ross Russell's book I don't object to. There are errors in it, but the content is more or less true, and it's well-written, it's literate. The objection I have to Reisner's book is that it's not ***written***; it's people telling anecdotes, all the little scandals. Also I think that people should respect a certain privacy, such as when a man is sleeping or when a man is dead. I think he deserves enough respect not to be photographed in certain circumstances. I think that it's irresponsible for anybody to write about any incident without knowing the circumstances around that incident. A lot of the time Bird was sick, he wasn't in good health. When he would fall asleep on the stand it wasn't because he was drugged or drunk, it was because he had insomnia. He would stay up for days at a time without sleeping at all; then when he would sleep he would sleep. Things like that are not taken into account. Before you relate a scandalous incident I think you have the responsibility to find out the facts behind it.

Also I object to the whole content of that book; they never speak of the man — his feelings, his problems, his tenderness, his love for children, his joy of life, his capacity — he had a tremendous capacity, he did everything

big. He didn't only drink a lot or dope a lot, he loved hard, he played hard. Even if he drank milk, he'd drink a whole bottle!

Or the fact that he was in pain, that he had a bleeding ulcer. Nobody ever speaks about the fact that he was in constant pain for a long time. When he got off the plane from Sweden, in 1950, he went straight to the hospital. He was bleeding internally.

When I began to live with him he was living on 11th Street and then as we started having children we had to find a bigger place. It was certainly better than Harlem, and the building we lived in was very nice, it was five stories and everybody had a whole floor, it was a big apartment. We had a court in the back and it was across the street from Tompkins Park, which is now, I suppose, a needle park, but at the time it was all the old peasants, so it wasn't bad. I liked it.

When Billy Shaw was managing him Bird would work a lot. He would go out for a week or two weeks to clubs in Philadelphia or Detroit and then come home, but with the Norman Granz tour I think he was out for six weeks, and that was the longest that I remember — and the most money we ever had. I'm still wearing clothes I bought from that tour! His relationship with Norman was very good, because Bird was always seeking legitimacy, which is understandable, and Norman gave him that sense of legitimacy. He allowed him to record with strings. Everybody thinks that was a commercial idea, but it was Bird who wanted it. Also Norman gave him fifty dollars a week in advance, so we would count on that. We never had money, never. We had a Cadillac and we had a maid, but never any money. In America they call Cadillacs "black peoples' coffins"; the reason that so many black people bought Cadillacs during that era was that for years taxi drivers wouldn't stop. They wouldn't pick up a black person because they didn't want to go to Harlem, they were afraid to. After treatment like that, for years whenever somebody could afford a car, they got a Cadillac. Bird's was charcoal grey, very sober. He loved that car, but he sold it to buy Kim a bicycle for Christmas.

His attitude towards Kim was very tender. One day we were in a taxicab, and there were a lot of people, it was really crowded. I was sitting on Bird's lap, and Kim was sitting on my lap, so Kim said, "Look Daddy, we're a sandwich, have a bite!" And Bird said, "No thank you darling, Bird doesn't eat sweets."

I think his mother pampered him; he was brought up with a lot of tenderness and special care. And perhaps because of his father dying — he was murdered — when he was very young, I think that influenced his feeling for a family. His mother was old fashioned and I think because of her, he was very old-fashioned too. After Baird was born, I couldn't walk naked in the house, in front of Baird — even when he was a baby.

Bird had old-fashioned ideas, but he wasn't a religious person at all, not in the sense of believing in a supreme being or going to church. And he had an incredible sense of humour, very dry. He would leave me little notes, like "Was by your house. You weren't." With me he was always extremely considerate, and always overflowing with imagination. He often spelled his name the same way he heard me pronounce it: "Bhurd", or he would write an entire page in reverse, so that you had to hold it up to a mirror to read what he'd written. He often expressed himself in an old-fashioned kind of English, on purpose.

He never read, never. The only book I ever saw him read was a book on yoga. He had knowledge of very obscure things. He had a very retentive memory, but I don't know where he picked up some of it. I said something once about being a Leo and he said, "I'm a Virgo, you know," which would astound me, that he knew his astrological sign, because in those days it wasn't chic like now. He had little bits of obscure knowledge which would always amaze me.

Once, during the Korean war, he said that he wouldn't go to war. In those days there were very few conscientious objectors; if you were drafted you went. Bird said, "I would never go to war. If they came here and invaded I would fight to protect you and the children, but I would never fight for Rockefeller's oil." Now, people didn't think of that in those days. It was patriotism, getting the bad guys; nobody realized that wars were fought for economics. But Bird did. So he was never in the army... and he never killed a man, as they said somewhere. And he was never in prison.

It's very funny, although I've lived among musicians ever since I was a child, I have never had a good piano — with Bird we had no piano. I have never had a good sound system. I see all these people who don't know anything about music who have thousand-dollar stereos and I have this knobby little thing. Finally, when I was with Bird I bought one. It was all together

HAD HE LIVED UNTIL NOW, CHARLIE PARKER WOULD STILL ONLY BE 61 YEARS OLD. AS ALWAYS WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE MUSICIANS, WRITERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS FOR CONTRIBUTING TO THIS ISSUE OF CODA, DEDICATED TO HIS MEMORY - AND TO HIS MUSIC, WHICH LIVES ON.

in one cabinet, not an expensive one and that was after maybe three years with no music in the house. But he did buy me a tape recorder.

After I bought the record player... it was automatic, so he would put one record on and it would play over and over. He had some strange choices in music too. ***Lover*** by Peggy Lee, with a big band, really loud and swinging. He'd play it over and over. My mother was spending the night there once, and after it had been played thirty times, she got up and got dressed and said, "I can't stand it any more!" and left. Kay Kaiser's ***Slow Boat To China*** and Mario Lanza's ***Be My Love*** — Bird used to go around the house singing "Beee my luuuvvve...", he loved to do it. He listened to classical music as well; he never listened to jazz. Bartok and Stravinsky were his favourites, and Hindemith's ***Kammermusiken***. He knew composers too, he'd met Edgar Varese, and Stefan Volpe.

Besides the alto, Bird played an old-fashioned Albert-system clarinet, with the different fingering. But he never played the saxophone at home, never took it out of the case, except on a gig. It's hard to explain, because in Europe music is more academic, more pedagogical. For Bird, of course he practiced when he was young, it had become like eating or sleeping. I did hear him practice once; that was in California, before Camarillo. After that I never heard him play outside of a gig. If he had a record date at ten o'clock in the morning, at nine o'clock he would sit on the edge of the bed and write the tunes, or in a cab going to the date. It was natural, of course it was a big part of his life, but not of his day-to-day life. He would compose out of necessity; not sitting at home being inspired, but because he needed five tunes in an hour! I think for him the music was always happening, he didn't have to put his fingers on the keys.

Before he came to Sweden, in 1950, he kicked his habit because he wanted to come to Europe clean, out of respect. And that's the last habit he had, in 1950. If he'd used heroin, those last five years, and not whiskey, he might be alive today. I was furious, when he died there was a column in the newspaper in New York, by Bob Sylvester, who said, you know: "Dead Of Drugs". And I wrote to them, I said, "Dead of alcohol, not drugs." If he had been using drugs, he wouldn't be dead, because the only hardship on the body with drugs is having to spend eight hours a day looking for your next shot. If it had been legalized, as it was in England, a lot of guys might be alive today. Wardell Gray, Fats Navarro — if it had been given medically instead of by pushers on the street. If you have to score for it, you never know the quality of what you're going to get — that's why people died of overdoses.

When Bird was alive I was still very much an innocent. When I would ask him about something that had happened on the street he'd say, "No, no, that's dirty" — as if to say, that's for the street, that doesn't come in the house. I didn't know anything, I was like a child. I knew nothing about... the viciousness out there. He never allowed me to know that other world, and to me what happened after he died was very shocking.

Even now I feel very protected by Bird. And my daughter by Phil, who of course wasn't born then and never knew Bird, tells me all the time "Bird takes care of me". She knows Bird and has some fantastic stories. She said she had a dream one night: we were living on a very tiny road and she had to walk up to the corner to get the bus for school. She was walking up, and a car came out of a lane, and a man said, "Amy, get in the car." And she said, "Are you crazy? I'm not getting in the car with you. I don't know you." He said, "Didn't your mother tell you about me?" It was Bird, and she got in the car and they went up, he was driving her to the bus. Another car came towards them, they were going to crash and she said Bird made a gesture with his hand and the other car stopped. And he had that power. When he died and I went in where his body was, I almost fainted, and it was like he was there and he made me strong. I feel his strength all the time. Sometimes I think, what am I going to do?, for money or things like that, and the phone will ring. It happened once, it was so weird. I said, "All right Bird, what are you going to do now?", because I talk to him all the time. And the phone rang and this guy said, "Hello, I'm calling from Hollywood. We're going to do a film on Charlie Parker. Would you like...." It's always like that. If I say, "What's going to happen now Bird?", something happens.

I have a lot of tapes of Bird which I'm trying to sell. I'm having a lot of problems, because the estate has a vendetta against me for some reason. I received nothing from Bird's estate, because we were never married. Not only do I receive nothing, but they want my tapes.

Bird never thought of all this happening. He would tell me, "Oh, Norman will take care of you." "The agency will take care of you." And so on.

He started a divorce action; it was so complicated and costly, the papers were all signed, but it just never happened and for me it wasn't important. He was my husband as much as anybody could be, we had children together. When he died his first wife, who had remarried, got some money from the estate. Two women who had never had children or a life with him got a piece of the estate. Bird never thought that would happen. The companies that could afford to buy the tapes, to pay what they're worth, are big companies. They have big legal departments that don't want problems. Yes, of course I would like to sell them; I need money to live, and Bird would tell me that was my inheritance. I made the tapes myself, on the machine that Bird bought for me, and he taped my microphone to his, so the quality is excellent. He used to say "You'll be a rich woman when I'm dead, Chan." After he died I was working as a waitress, and I used to lean against the greasy pillar in the kitchen, hearing him say, "You'll be a rich woman when I'm dead, Chan." But that's all right, because he takes care of me now.

Kim summed it up a few years ago when Bird won a Grammy award. Kim accepted it and she's used to being on the stage, so she's very dramatic. She's very tiny, and the microphone was really high, and everyone who had accepted awards so far had talked up to it. Kim went up to get the Grammy, fixed the microphone, and said, "Wow, it's really weird, you know. Bird's still getting the awards, and somebody else is still getting the money." The whole audience gasped, it was a scandal. In ***Rolling Stone*** they said that, aside from Stevie Wonder presenting Mercer Ellington with the award for Duke, the only other moment of dignity in the whole proceedings was when Kim accepted that award.

I can never understand why, with jazz musicians, they acknowledge the anniversary of their death rather than of their birth. They don't do that with classical composers. Bird would have been sixty years old in August of 1980, and it seems to me more fitting to celebrate his birth than his death. I'd like that very much to be included in this interview; that jazz is surrounded by necrophilia; all the darkness of life instead of the light. That's one reason that, in the book, we included some of the notes from the children about Bird, to keep it child-like, to keep it innocent, because that's how I feel about Bird — that he was an innocent.

This article is adapted from an interview by Laurent Goddet which originally appeared, in French, in issue 373 (May 1980) of ***Jazz Hot.***

JAY McSHANN

Jay McShann spoke expansively to John Norris and Bill Smith about Charlie Parker and his early days in Kansas City in June of 1981 while performing at Toronto's Chick'n Deli with Jim Galloway. The material has been edited togeth- to give the reader an uninterrupted view of McShann's thoughts on Charlie Parker. All of Charlie Parker's Decca recordings with Jay McShann's band are not available at the present time. They were last collated together in the Decca Jazz Heritage Series as "New York — 1208 Miles" (DL 9236). This lp was subsequently issued in France as "The Early Bird Charlie Parker" (MCA 510037) but this, too, has been deleted. The Wichita broadcasts are part of Spotlite 120 "Charlie Parker - Early Bird".

It was appropriate that Jay McShann was present for the Toronto premiere of Bruce Ricker's movie "The Last of the Blue Devils" in which McShann plays a prominent part - even though he was never a Blue Devil! Jim Galloway deserves the thanks of us all for this presentation. He was totally responsible for the conception, organisation and eventual presentation of one of the most successful evenings of jazz Toronto has seen in a while.

The first time I met Bird was in 1937. I had just been in Kansas City a couple of months, and when you first hit town you make all the spots where you think the cats are. I figured I'd made all the spots, but this particular night I was passing by a club called Bar Le Duc. I heard someone blowing in there — they always piped the music outside, so that in most of the clubs you could hear the music outside as well as inside. I heard this cat blowing and I thought, I haven't heard anyone blowing like that in town, who can that be? So I stopped in to see who it was. After he quit blowing I walked up to him and said hey man, where are you from? — "I'm from Kansas City." I asked him his name and he told me and I said, "Where have you been? I thought I knew all the cats in town." He said, "Well I've been out of town, that's probably why you haven't seen me."

It's hard to get cats to go out of town, especially to the Ozarks where it's so quiet. Musicians want to be around where there's something happening. He said, "I wanted to get off to myself to do some woodshedding, so I went down there with George Lee's band." I said, "Well, I like the way you blow."

About four or five months after that I got a chance to take a small group into a club on the Plaza, Martin's 210 Club. I asked Bird if he'd like to make it and he said he'd be glad to, but actually I didn't take Bird in with the first group to Martin's. I had a guy named Popeye on alto, who had been playing with Lee Stewart's band, and a trumpeter named Gates; they were the two oldest fellows in the band; Gene Ramey on bass, and Pete McShann on drums. Two or three weeks after the gig started, Gus Johnson joined the band on drums. I just took a group in there to get the gig, and after we got started I would get who I wanted. A month or six weeks after the gig started, Bird came in the band. We must have stayed on that gig about four months. After we closed there, Bird told me, "Man, I want to go see New York." New York was definitely on his mind, and I think he sort of hoboed there. Naturally he went through Chicago, so the cats in Chicago had a chance to hear him blow, and he got to New York and he said he just stood there and folded his arms and looked at the big sign on the Savoy: The Savoy Ballroom, Home Of Happy Feet. He just loved that sign. He told me about this after he got back, I hadn't been to New York yet at that time.

When he came back to town he went to work with Harlan Leonard's big band. Harlan had been to New York, but they didn't do too well there.

At this time I had Earl Jackson playing saxophone with the group. He was in college and I'd get him every chance I had. One morning Ramey and I were driving down to Jefferson City to get Earl. When we got there, he was just getting kicked out of school! It all worked pretty good, he said, "Yeah man, I'm ready to leave." We brought him back, and I got Piggy Minor in the band on trumpet, and Bob Mabane on tenor saxophone; he was one of the first to stay straight on through. We were playing the College Inn, at 12th and Wyandotte, then we went back to the Plaza and stayed there until I got an offer to work at a dance hall called the Century Room. John Tumino had the Century Room, he used to bring in bands like Charlie Barnet, and he had Harlan Leonard in there until Harlan went out on the road again, then he hired me.

I knew that if I went into the Century Room I would need a bigger group. Dave Dexter had always told me, "I hope you never change the small band, because I've never heard a small band in my life like this — keep it as you've got it." Anyway Dave left — he went to Chicago to work for Down Beat — so I got the urge to change the band! I figured I would get some more musicians. There were still a lot of musicians in Kansas City, but there are so many things you have to take into consideration when you're picking out guys for a band. To finish out what I wanted, I had to go to Omaha and catch some of the musicians there.

There was a guy in town who had a lot of money: Walter Bales, who had helped Basie along when Goodman and John Hammond were also helping Basie. Incidentally, Walter Bales had tried to contact me. He had called down to the union for me to give him a call, come out to his house some night, but the union had sent some other guy out there. He called them again and gave them hell. It turned out that the reason they'd done that was because I wasn't in the union. Finally I joined, and Walter Bales called again and this time they sent me out there. He had a little recorder that he would set up while we were playing and we'd play it back and listen to it. He played piano, and he'd play a couple of choruses and I'd play a couple. Sometimes he'd call me during the day and say, "If you're not doing anything, meet me down at the Jenkins. They've got a room there with two pianos and I kind of feel like playing a little piano." I'd meet him down there at one or two o'clock and we'd play maybe twenty, thirty, forty minutes; he'd lay a little bread on me and everything was fine.

So I told him, "I'm going on another job and I have to hire some musicians, but I don't have the money to get them. I think I can get the rest of what I want in Omaha." He gave me a cheque and I went on up to Omaha. In those days, you had to make a big splash in front of the cats to move them. There were a lot of musicians around in Omaha, and two or three, maybe four big bands.

The funniest thing, all the musicians I got were all out of one band, Nat Towles' band. I walked in the club where they were playing this particular night, and every time I'd see a cat whose blowing I liked, I'd send him up a couple of drinks. Then the word got around: "There's some cat in here from Kansas City spending ALL kind of money!" So gradually, every time a cat came off the stand I'd tell the waitress to bring him over. Somebody told Nat: "There's some cat in town trying to steal your musicians." That same night, while all this is happening. Nat said, "He can't steal my musicians, they all owe me money. They ain't goin' nowhere."

I was big-timing that night and didn't realize how fast I was spending this money. I wasn't thinking that the cats were going to come back the next morning and tell me they needed so much to leave. So I had everybody ready to leave at eight o'clock in the morning, but from about seven o'clock cats were calling me and saying, "Look, I need eight dollars to pay my rent up before I leave", or "I've got to have seven dollars to get my stuff out of the cleaners and I probably owe Nat a couple or three dollars..." I looked in my pocket and said, "Well now, look here, I spent more than I thought I did last night."

I called Walter Bales right away, and I was lucky I did. He says, "I'll tell you what to do. I'm also with Travellers Insurance. Go down there and tell the guy to give you whatever you want and tell him Walter Bales sent you." I went into Travellers and told the guy what I wanted. There was a policeman in there. I saw him talk to the policeman. I knew he figured that I was putting down a hype and I thought, oh my goodness, why didn't I get Walter Bales to call this guy. So the cop came up to me and said, "What do you want?" I said, "Well I was just talking to this guy here. I guess he told you what I wanted didn't he?" He started putting me through all the degrees and then he was ready to take me down. "What do you know about Walter Bales?" I said, "I know him very well...." and by that time the phone rang. Walter Bales had figured he would call them, so just as this guy was getting ready to take me out the door this fellow answers the phone and says, "Wait a minute, hold it hold it hold it!" Then everything was all right. He said, "I'm sorry, but you run into so many people doing this and that... Walter says give you what you want. What do you want?" I said, "Well... you'd better give me a hundred dollars." He gave me a hundred dollars, that was a lot of money in those days. So I went down, the cats were still there, and I gave everybody what they had to have, and put them all in a car and came on back to Kansas City. Nat says "What?!" when he found out that his cats had actually left!

So I brought them back into Kansas City that night. That was our first night at the Century Room, and we had some music, but we just set up and played heads that night, and the next day we started rehearsing.

We were there two or three weeks before another gig came up, what they call a Walkathon, at the Claymore Arena. That was where I got the chance to really get the band together. Willie Scott was writing for us. I would play there, just piano alone, from four to six, the band would come on from six to eight, there would be a break, then the band would come back on from about nine or nine-thirty to twelve-thirty or one. So while they were all walking on the floor, I'd let Willie take the reed section up to the attic and rehearse the reeds, then he'd bring them down and I'd have the rhythm section and the reeds playing for the walkathon. Then Willie would take the brass up and rehearse them. This would go on every day, and the walkathon lasted from about the middle of February to June, 1939. So then we had a book, and the walkathon got better and better, because the band was getting better all the time. Every day or every other day we had a new piece, and when the walkathon was over, the band was ***together.***

Charlie Parker joined the band right after the walkathon. We had a battle with Harlan's band one night, and afterwards Bird came over and said, "I want to play with you cats. I'm ready to start tomorrow." I said, "You can't do that, you've got to give Harlan some kind of notice!" He said, "If I can work it out for tomorrow, is it all right with you?" I said, "Well, I've got to give this guy some kind of notice." He said, "Whenever you get rid of this guy, I'll be ready." So that's what I did. So now Bird was back with a big group. I used to use Bird lots of times to rehearse the reeds, and he was very conscientious about it, he had them working out. If some cat didn't show he'd say, "Man you have to talk to this cat." Finally he said, "If you want me to, I'll tell them that you'll fine them if they don't make time." I said, "Well, put the fine on them." So Bird had those cats making time! I could always depend on him.

One day Tadd Dameron came in with some new music. Tadd was living in Kansas City at the time, and writing steadily for Harlan Leonard. Tadd came over and said, "I can't understand it. When you cats play this it sounds like a different number than when Harlan plays it. I've got to find out what the difference is." The difference was only a matter of phrasing. Harlan was very technical — too on top of everything. Our reeds were phrasing like they were overplaying, but they weren't overplaying. You'd think they were way back behind; but when you got there, they were there too, and that was the difference. Harlan's band was phrasing too close. It was not only Bird, it was the other cats in there, because we were always open to ideas. We'd take anybody's idea if it was good. If we didn't like it one way, we would phrase it

another way, until we found out which was the correct phrasing for the type of tune that it was. The brass followed the same pattern of phrasing.

We had some new music one day, and Bird said he couldn't make the rehearsal. He said it was because of the first alto player, J.J. (John Jackson): "That cat's reading rings around me, he's making me look sick. I've got to go woodshed for a couple of days. When I come back, when we do this gig at 'K' State, if I don't play the music, you can fine me." Sure enough, we rehearsed that stuff, and on the night that we played it Bird played it better than anybody. And he hadn't even looked at it before! He just went right through it. So he laughed and had that old funny grin, he said, "Do I get fined?" That was one of the things you think about: when he decided he wanted to do something, he could do it. He decided to polish up on his reading and he did, just like overnight.

Everybody knew that Bird was Bird, but there were a lot of independent guys in that band. They didn't try to play like Bird, they played like they felt ***they*** should be playing. Every chance they got they would reach and get something out of what he was doing to season up their own playing. But they didn't want to just try to ape Bird. Except that John Jackson was sitting right with Bird, day in and day out, night in and night out. We had no idea that J.J. had him down until Bird didn't show up one night and J.J. had to take his solos. When J.J. took his solos, everybody in the band knew! Bird when he came in said, "Look man, I'm sorry I'm late, but don't ever give that cat my solos again."

You take guys like Buddy Anderson and Piggy Minor, they were both individualists. Later on when Jimmy Forrest came in the band, he was an individualist too, but he would use some of Bird's things, just to put a little salt and pepper in, to give what he was doing a little taste.

Bird at that time was about as harmonically advanced as he was ever going to be. Just like his reading ability. He was reading at that time about as well as he ever did. But when he went out there, it took the people so long to find out what Bird was doing. I used to get sick in the stomach sometimes. We would have arrangements where it was written on the paper that Bird would solo, then Jimmy Forrest. Bird would play and people would never open their mouths, never say a word. When Jimmy Forrest followed Bird, after only two choruses the house would break up. He was a house-breaker, Jimmy Forrest! And I always used to wonder what the people were thinking about. I even used to wonder what some of the musicians were thinking about.

In Kansas City, Bird had a following: really, people who just followed him around. Some were musicians, some weren't, but they were all people who understood and felt what he was doing. He never had that in those other towns. If he was seen in the street about eight o'clock at night with his horn, some night that we weren't doing anything, people would follow him around for fifteen or twenty minutes because they knew he was going to blow, so when he got through moving through the streets he had twenty or twenty-five people with him!

So people followed Bird around, and people liked him too. He might have ripped a few people off; he did that with Jesse Price, I guess, probably because Jesse would do it to him too. He'd ride around in a cab all day and tell the driver to go to Jesse's place. He'd tell him, "Look man, go upstairs to 1200, ask for Jesse Price and Jesse Price will take care of my cab fare." Then Bird was gone and Jesse would be saying, "What do you want, man?" — "Charlie Parker's in my cab and he owes a seven-dollar cab bill." — "Seven-dollar cab bill! I'm not going to pay no bill!" — "Well, somebody's got to pay it." — "Well, come on inside." If Jesse didn't have enough he'd get somebody to lend him the money until tomorrow. And he'd pay him, because Jesse always loved to blow with Bird.

Besides all the music that was there, a lot of the travelling bands used to come to Kansas City. Sometimes they didn't know who they were going to be up against!

I know that every time Count Basie was doing a broadcast, Bird knew about it. He'd say, "man, what time are you going to be having intermission tonight? Basie's going to be broadcasting at such-and-such a time. I want to catch Lester." So we'd arrange to take the intermission at such-and-such a time. We'd go out in the car or wherever and listen to them for thirty minutes or so. Bird would listen close, but he would also listen close to this alto player in Kansas City, Buster Smith. Buster used to play at a place called Lucille's. One particular night I happened to tune into the broadcast from Lucille's and I thought, Buster sure sounds good tonight. The next day I found out it was Bird. I said, "Wait a minute. Bird, did you make that gig at Lucille's last night?" He said, "Yeah, that was a good gig." I said, "Man, you sure sound like Prof!" I couldn't tell the difference, because I'd heard Prof's broadcasts before (we called him Prof, Buster Smith). He was also a hell of a clarinet player. It's a shame that he was never recognized for what he could do on a clarinet, because to me he was just the greatest I'd ever heard.

I remember one night, we were playing at a club with Dee Stewart's band and Benny Goodman was in town for one night at the Auditorium. When they finished there, they came up to the club where we were playing. Prof was blowing on his clarinet, and he was one of those cats who you've got to make blow. He wasn't a complete introvert but he had all this energy and stuff stored up there and you had to ***make*** him blow. So we made him take a second chorus, we made him take a third chorus. He didn't know Goodman was in the house, but he decided to get these cats off his back, so he went on blowing three or four more choruses. Benny Goodman just got up and shook his head.

Buster Smith and Bird were two of a kind, but Bird played music because he loved to play. Prof played because he loved music, but you had to get it ***out*** of him.

Another guy around Kansas City who was something awful on the alto was a guy named Tommy Douglas.

When Bird got to New York, a lot of cats there didn't know what he was doing, and I'm talking about musicians. The exception was Ben Webster. Ben Webster was a big man on 52nd Street. He liked to agitate and talk too, but he wasn't shucking these cats. They thought he was shucking him when he told them: "You saxophone players and you trumpet players too — you'd better go uptown there to the Savoy Ballroom and go back to school on your instrument." Tab Smith told him, "What are you talking about?" Ben says, "Yeah, all of you — that includes you, and you and you!" He was talking to all the greats, and he got them worried!

So Ben Webster told me what he would do. When he came up to the Savoy Ballroom, he would go in the corner and hide, and listen to Bird, because he was afraid some of the cats would see ***him*** up there listening! Then he went the next night, and he caught ALL these cats, hidden in different parts of the ballroom! He'd say, "Man what are you doing here?" They'd answer, "Man, what are ***you*** doing here?" He caught five or six of them hidden, playing incognito, there every night all around the club listening to Bird. It took a while for it to sink in, a lot of cats who were supposed to be top cats just scoffed and shook their heads at first. But guys like Ben Webster, and Basie and the cats in the Basie band, realized what Bird was doing.

It's a shame that none of my small groups with Bird were ever recorded. That broadcast from Wichita happened when I had a big band. A lot of times I would throw together a small group out of the big band. That particular day we went out to Wichita University and we fixed ourselves some kind of drink we called Purple Passion and we were having ourselves a little session out there, with a couple of the guys who were out there at school. All of a sudden one of the guys says, "Let's go down to the radio station. I don't think there's anyone down there, I'll call them and see if we can record something." And you know, recording facilities were bad in those days. So that's what we did. Everybody was high and feeling good, so we just went down there and did it. We never thought about it again until after Bird died and everybody was trying to find whatever they could on him. So some guy got in touch with one of these boys who still had the tape of it.

Another shame is that we never recorded all that stuff that he and Diz did in later years. We had all that stuff in our book, but the music was stolen when I went into the service. So I lost that whole book, about three hundred tunes. Plus we had a whole lot of head arrangements too; probably about three hundred and fifty. Of course you've got to have that nucleus of players that we had set up to play those heads. To this day I still wonder how they managed to retain all those heads; how they remembered them, because every one was different. I guess that if one man forgot, the other one didn't. And in a way the big band was like a small band, because I would always pull a small group out of the big group. Sometimes I would pull J.J. and Buddy out, and maybe one trombone, and the next time I would maybe pull Bird and Piggy and somebody out, with the rhythm section.

When we made our first big band record we played all blues tunes because the producer, Dave Kapp, wouldn't accept the other ones. We came in and played everything we knew and he said, "Fellows, I know this stuff is good, and I personally like it, but I've come down here to record something that's going to sell." The band still wasn't happy with that, so finally he said, "Fellows, I'll tell you what you do. Do another blues tune, then I'll take one of those other tunes." He called them "other tunes." When he said that, the cats felt better.

Then we kind of got labelled as a blues band — until we played a town. After we had played there, they would wonder, they'd say, "Man, we thought you just had a small blues

band."

On our first tour of the South, we ran into Milton Larkin's band in Texas, they had a tough big band there. I had a guy playing tenor with me called Harry "Moll" Ferguson. Moll thought he was a pretty good tenor player but we told him, "Moll, be careful of these Texas tenor players, they'll hem you up."

The day after we played they were jamming someplace in town. Walter Brown called me up and said, "Hootie, you'd better come down here and see about Moll. Moll's going crazy down here!" A couple of these Milton Larkin cats had him hemmed up, and Moll had a glass of whiskey in his hand and Moll broke the glass! It sounded like the funniest thing the way Brown explained it. So he said, "Where's Bird?" I said, "I'll see if he's around." Sure enough, Bird was in his room. I said, "Bird, you'd better go down and see what's going on. They've got Moll going crazy down there."

Well you just say "a session" and Bird was ready. He just threw his alto in the sack he carried it in and threw on his hat, let's go.

We went down there and walked in, we stood back by the door. Arnett [Cobb] and all that bunch was down there; Cleanhead [Eddie Vinson] was there. The first chance Bird got to blow, he just started blowing from the door when one of the cats finished soloing. The rhythm was still going and Bird just started blowing from the door and walked over to where the band was. By the time he got over to the band, everybody had their horn out of their mouth. That's true!

— Toronto, June 15, 1981

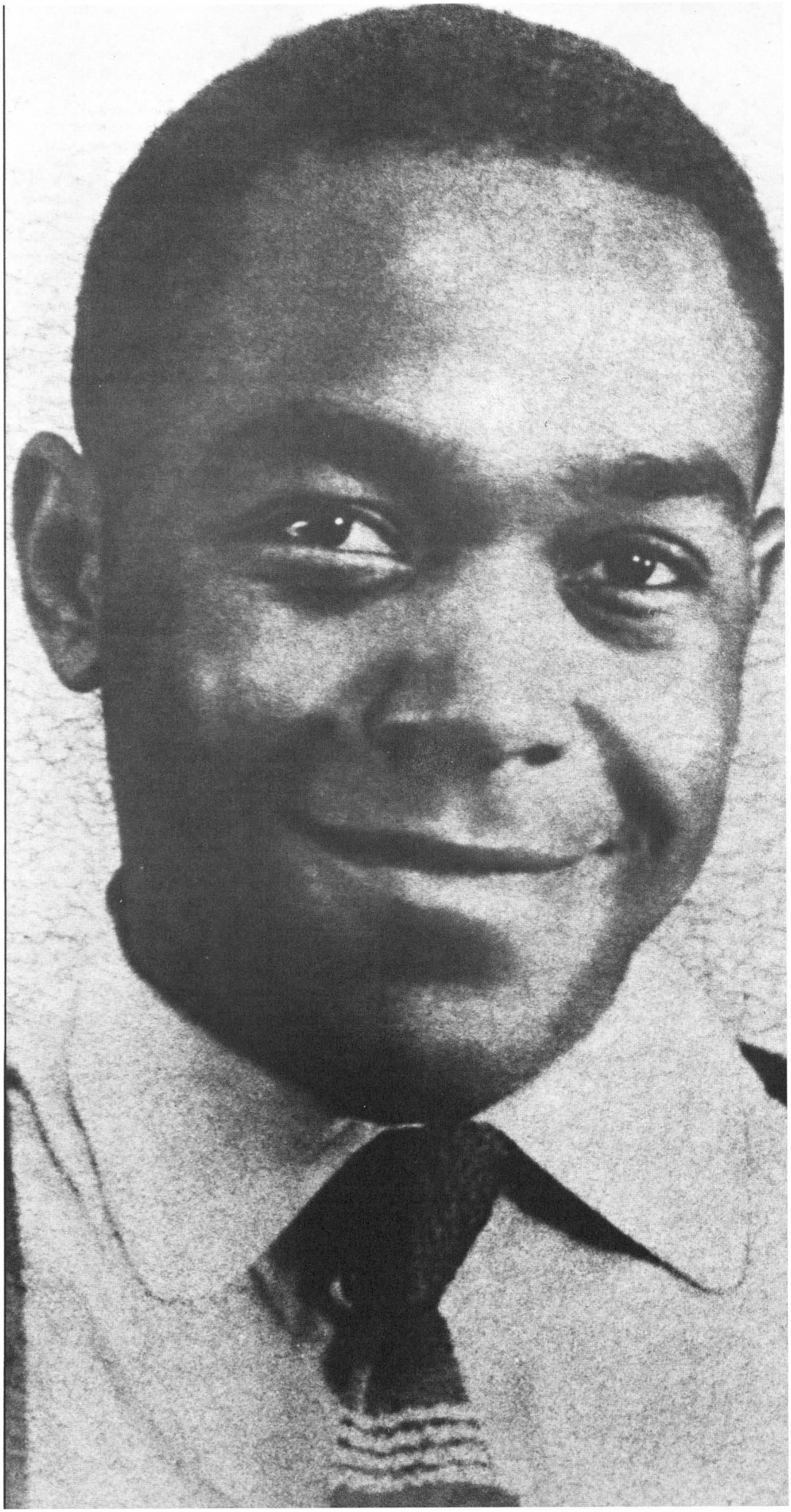
THE LAST OF THE BLUE DEVILS IS A FILM BY BRUCE RICKER WHICH STARS JAY McSHANN · COUNT BASIE AND JOE TURNER AND WAS FILMED ON LOCATION IN KANSAS CITY. THE FOLLOWING REVIEWS ARE BY BRUCE LITTELJOHN.

Jim Galloway came to Toronto via Scotland and, at least in spirit, Kansas City. Bruce Ricker lived in K.C. for five years and put its musicians on film. Jay McShann came direct from the source.

On Monday, June 22, 1981, these three converged on Toronto's Crest Theatre to produce an evening of music and film inspired by the legendary figures and seminal musical influences of the Missouri city. Together they reminded us of the many superlative jazzmen who made their names or cut their teeth in Kansas City: Lester Young, Charlie Parker, Bill Basie, Joe Turner, Jay McShann, Benny Moten, and the like.

The evening began with the Toronto premiere of Bruce Ricker's film "The Last of the Blue Devils". Roughly crafted visually, but rich in reminiscence, character, and music, it has the flavour and sense of immediacy of a spur-of-the-moment party thrown together by old friends. And, as is the case with any really good bash, the music is a key element. No ordinary music this — not with Joe Turner singing, and Jo Jones, Jay McShann, Jimmy Forrest, Count Basie, and the shades of Prez and Bird playing!

In fact, much of what is on film ***is*** a party, a gathering of aging musical comrades, including the last of the Oklahoma City Blue Devils — a group which disbanded about half a century ago and whose members by-and-large settled in



Kansas City to play with the bands of Bennie Moten and Count Basie. This extraordinary party actually spans several weekends during which Ricker drew together some of the prime voices of the K.C. sound to banter, sing and play, and relate tales of old times in wide-open Kansas City.

While some younger local musicians are involved, essentially this is a gathering of the alumni of an older and singularly influential school of music. Old men now — some fading from the scene, others still highly successful practitioners — they bring the richness of their experience to the screen. In this company, Basie is just one of the old crowd who went a little farther than some.

The film successfully conveys a sense of time and place. It also gives us the humour, and the essentially happy, swinging and blues-rooted music that flourished in Kansas City during the 1920s and '30s. McShann's band (assembled for the film) plays with rough conviction; Turner shouts the blues almost as he did decades ago and with the enriching overtones of the passage of time; and there are some fine piano and horn solos. Still, it is a welcome interlude when Ricker's cameramen film Count Basie in concert at the University of Kansas — footage that is cut into the longer segments produced at the Musicians' Hall party. The Basie band brings more fire, polish and dynamic range than we would otherwise hear. A contemporary refinement of the Kansas City beginnings.

While there is much that is fine and valuable about the film (including the quality of sound), the camera work appears to have been done by reasonably talented amateurs who dropped in almost by accident. Ricker may not have wanted slick or contrived camera work, and probably wisely avoided it, but he might have done better than much of the footage presented here. Frequently the camera angles are poor — obscuring rather than revealing — and the cuts from shot to shot too abrupt.

Yet the feeling is right, and the personalities and music are compelling. Ricker ***has*** captured much of the essence of Kansas City jazz. In the process he has made an important contribution to the history of American music. For afficionados, the limitations of "The Last of the Blue Devils" will be secondary to the thrill of rediscovering men and music of lasting influence. Certainly, as a ***jazz*** film (of which there are not a great deal), Ricker's work is very fine.

The second part of the Crest Theatre presentation brought Jay McShann off the screen and onto the stage in company with Jim Galloway's 17-piece big band. This segment of the program included arrangements from Galloway's book, charts played by McShann's Kansas City band of yesteryear, and a few small group selections (which showed both McShann and Galloway to best advantage). The re-creation of McShann's material was interesting and well-played despite brief rehearsal time and a bit of laboured dragging in the rhythm section. The Galloway big band material was fine and featured outstanding solos by altoist Bobby Brough, tenor saxophonist Alex Dean and (all too briefly) trumpeter Ken Dean. The sections played well; in fact both the solos and the ensemble playing suggested that McShann's filmed Kansas City band would be hard put to match the Galloway crew. The "wee big band", especially when doing its own thing, effectively demonstrates both the longevity and capacity for growth of the music developed long ago in Kansas City.

Again, the interlude of small group selections was welcome. Galloway (who gives most of the solo work to others in the big band) played some beautiful soprano sax, demonstrating both his mastery of the horn and the genre. McShann was able to stretch out to play more sensitively and with that marvellously loose, easy-swinging style of which he is a prime and time-honoured exemplar.

It was a good, and long evening for jazz lovers — perhaps a little too long, given the static theatre setting. The audience on film in "The Last of the Blue Devils" had the advantage of a few drinks and an easier atmosphere. We could have used that too; small point, and probably one not taken by the audience that filled the Crest Theatre to witness Kansas City come to Toronto.

Slight, intense, and given to speaking at roughly the speed of light, Bruce Ricker is a 38-year-old New Yorker who "wouldn't know how to get around anywhere else". Nonetheless, as he puts it, "I did my time in K.C." Doing time in Kansas City included listening to jazz at the Musicians' Union Hall where many of the black players gathered after hours. From childhood an avid collector of rhythm and blues, and later jazz records, Ricker grew up to become a regular at Birdland, listening to the likes of Coltrane and Monk. Solid schooling.

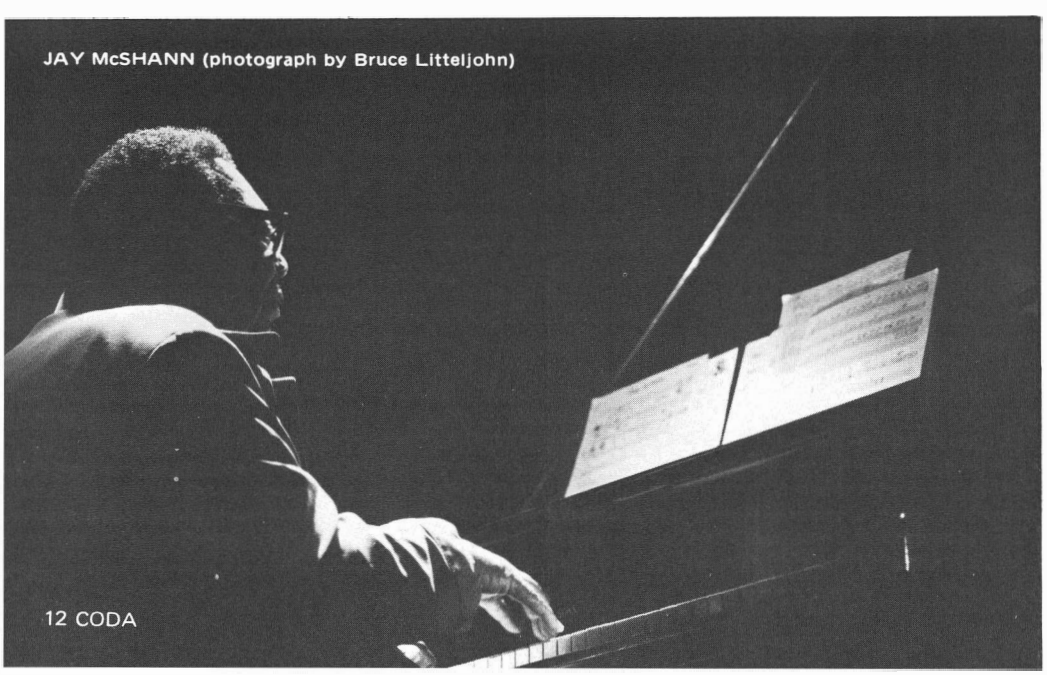
Other schooling followed, including American Studies at university and some years at the Brooklyn Law School. Then came five years of practicing and teaching law in Kansas City which included a bit of dabbling in short-lived literary magazines, and much late night immersion in jazz — a vital element in the history of that town. During the early '70s Ricker became known to, and accepted by, a number of black Kansas City musicians. The stage was set for the fusion of two great, and peculiarly American, art forms: film and jazz (it is amazing how seldom these two have been successfully melded). The fusion took place in Ricker's mind. From there the idea of "The Last of the Blue Devils" — a film celebrating the rich legacy of Kansas City jazz — slowly moved towards fruition.

Completely untried and with a tiny purse of about twelve thousand dollars (a major Hollywood production would get less than an hour of raw filming for that), but with complete production control, Ricker set forth to put Kansas City jazz in the can and then on the screen. How to capture on film the sense of a time and a place and a musical efflorescence that formed young Charlie Parker, and sometimes saw the likes of Lester Young, Coleman Hawkins, and Ben Webster together on the same stand? Only vestiges of those halcyon days of legend remained in Ricker's Kansas City.

But some of the men were around. And others could be found, and maybe induced to participate. Pianist and sometime bandleader Jay McShann — a gifted player and key figure in K.C. jazz — put out the call to distant veterans such as Jesse Price and Joe Turner. Under Ricker's organization the old Union Hall was festooned with eighteen microphones for the several weekend sessions that the clan gathered: players, singers, dancers, wives, and friends.

Into this crowded and happy club atmosphere two cameramen were placed, with instructions to stay in the background. It was Ricker's intention to "bring the camera to the people, not the people to the camera." There were no elaborate Hollywood setups, with cast and crew working for hours or days to make the perfect shot. Instead, one envisions the cameramen hanging on by their toenails with little opportunity to move about or select angles or arrange lighting. With all the virtues and disabilities of such a ***cinema verité*** approach, the sound — music, anecdotes, conversation, shouted greetings — also had the immediacy of being mixed right on the spot. In this manner, with one Basie concert date and a bit of historical footage later added, "The Last of the Blue Devils" was made. It is a movie of black people, many of them old and accomplished, and their relaxed, swinging, joyous music.

The film has now been shown on Swedish and Japanese television as well as playing some major U.S. cities. It has met with considerable success, including some rave reviews. As a result, Ricker now practices law only sporadically as he works towards the production of several more films. While making "Devils" he learned about the frustrations of finding money. Very slowly he managed to build his original $12,000 to almost $250,000 in order to complete the job. Now Bruce Ricker has better access to the people with money. As he puts it, "I can get a 'no' within 24 hours instead of waiting months". Having produced one of the best of the few decent films about jazz, Ricker will have his "yeses" too.



JAY McSHANN (photograph by Bruce Litteljohn)

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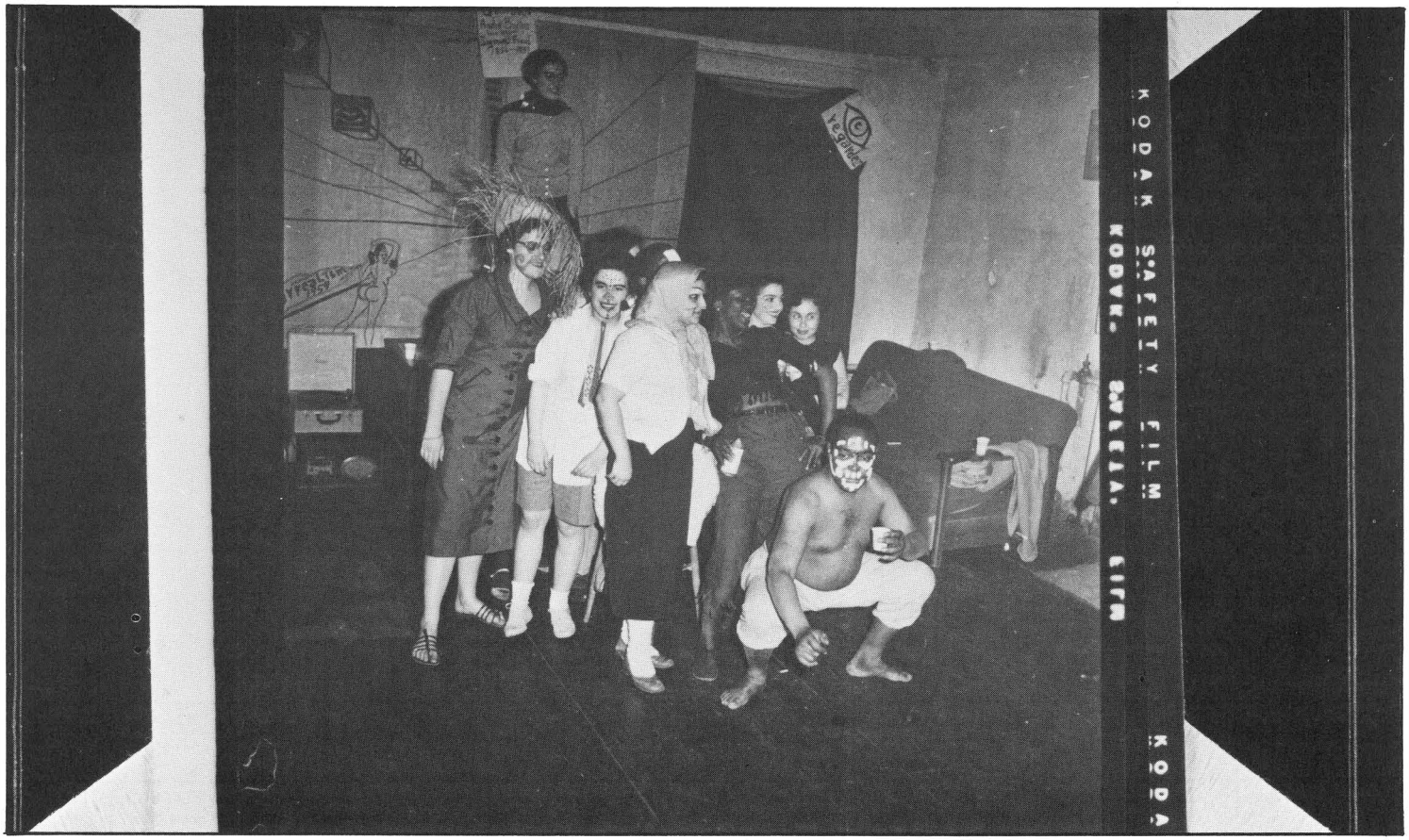
BIRD and the BEATS - Ted Joans



Dear Coda readers
This is a bit about the Beats and The Bird. It is not my total recall of all that happened during my street schooling nights and days (1951-1961) in New York City, especially the fabulous borough of Manhattan's Greenwich Village. When I arrived in that "madhattan" scene it was on the eve of a revolution, Bird was an important part (if not THE most important part) of that united stated American fine art revolution. His followers were musicians and legions of hipsters. I "enrolled" first year in Harlem, the streets of that highly active district were swinging then, also it was not dangerous. Thus Jack Kerouac and other white hipsters who sought first hand knowledge of true Blues People (read Leroi Jones' book) could pay some dues in the night and day street classes of Harlem with a certain amount of impunity. There were black cats on the scene then that should have been given PhD's in Hipsterism. These men (and women) knew more about the how/ who/ what/ where/ why/ and when of the human condition than all the four square walled university professors on earth. Babs Gonzales should have been so awarded and rewarded, plus seriously listened to and published. Cats like Babs taught me and many others. Those hip ladies and hipper-than-thou gents were often seen in all the jazz clubs, jazz concerts, and hip parties. Some made their living by hustling, others had offensive "jobs" downtown. Pool halls were class rooms often frequented, so were barber shops (and "beauty salon" parlors). I sold used records that I obtained from juke box companies and made all the Harlem rounds, met some of the best minds of yesteryears and my generation. These people taught me the genius of survival, after all I had just graduated from Indiana University with a B.A. in the Fine Art of painting, but that hadn't prepared me for taking a bite of the Apple!

After a year in Harlem I "graduated" to further my studies elsewhere, I being a painter (by academic schooling) chose Greenwich Village U.S.A. The vileness of The Village that prevails nowadays did not exist so openly. There were "real" giants of the Fine Arts down there wayback in them Fifties. My second week in the Village I met Jackson Pollock, the Abe Lincoln of American painting. He dug jazz. Writer Robert G. Reisner befriended me because my complete devotion to Charlie Parker could naturally match his. Reisner had one of the most complete bop record collections. He introduced me to Marshall Stearns who at that time was teaching a course in Jazz History at the New School For Social Research. I also heard W.E.B. Dubois lecture at the now defunct Jefferson School of Social Science. Edgar Varese introduced me to the great sculptor Alexander Calder. I gave him a copy of my book of Beat poems. The jazz clubs in the Village were flourishing, but there were not as many as there are now. Harlem had more Black music in those years.

Now, I better backtrack a bit, and hip you to my first time of live-ear-hear Bird. It was in Louisville Kentucky at a skating rink for Black people (although some hip whites frequented the place). Bird was playing with Jay McShann's orchestra. If I remember well, I do believe that Don DeMichael (former DownBeat ed) was in the small intense group of "ofays" on hand that crowded night. I am positive that he did witness Dizz's big band starring Chano Pozo at that Black skating rink way back down south in Dixieland where I spent some dues years before migrating a bit farther north to Indiana. All the great Black bands came through Indianapolis and Louisville, and many of the bop giants and other jazz giants were working in those On The Road orchestras. When I met Miles Davis he was with Billy Eckstine, when I met Fats Navarro he was with Lionel Hampton, when I met Kenny Dorham he was with, when I met, when I met, ad infinitum. That was my early jazz schooling, ask Dexter Gordon (he calls me "the last of the great hipsters"), Lee Konitz, or Dizzy Gillespie, the latter I attempted to imitate during a brief period of bopping around on the trumpet. Nuff said about my side of the fence, the time has come to deal with ***the Beat Generation and its indebtedness to Bird.***

The young people who became what Time-Life pronounced "the beat generation" grew up with contemporary jazz. Of course there was schmaltzy pop corn music nightly and daily being dished out for white America's consumption, but wise ofays fished around in the deep dark waters of jazz. At the beginning there was only a small minority interested in poetry, jazz, and contemporary painting. But the hipsters spread the contagious words about what was really happening that had positive values. Some of the poets often "preached" their poems, or attempted to "blow" the poem as though they were playing a sax or trumpet. All these poets were on Bird or Prez. The latter was the bridge that many poets crossed into Bird's land, thus arriving hip. I for one, made

Photograph by Reggin Nam

"blowing" my poems into a profession, thanks to Langston Hughes, who was jazz poetry founder. Old Kenneth Rexroth was like the Paul Whiteman of jazz poetry and Kenneth Patchen was the Bix Beiderbecke. Patchen was hip enough to do an album with Charlie Mingus' early group.

San Francisco was the first place that the Beat Generation started doing great poetry readings in clubs and coffee shops. It was in Frisco that Allen Ginsberg first exploded his masterpiece Howl on the world. That long hard dues paid poem was influenced by Lester Young's tenor sax solos. Ginsberg, a great poet is not a jazz poet. He is influenced by jazz in certain poems and often in the way that he reads his poetry. Todays he has started On The Road to blues. In fact John Hammond has cut an album of Ginsberg's blues poetry. He reads well but his singing is terrible. The album has yet to be released.

Back in the good/ole-bad/old days we often read our poems with jazz recordings. It wasn't rare to see a poet walking to his coffee shop reading gig carrying a portable phonograph and an attache case full of poetry and a few records. Bird was our main man of music, and many of us used his recordings to fly on. Jack Kerouac was the first white poet that I met that was hip to Bird, and Stanley Gould, a New York born hipster knew Bird personally before any of us. These two white cats along with poet Gregory Corso (who published in his first book of poems The Vestal Lady On Brattle, perhaps the greatest poem yet dedicated to Charlie Parker) were the true Bird watchers in the Village at that time. Allen Ginsberg, like early Leroi Jones (Amiri Baraka) didn't consistently fly on Bird swinging wings. Poets Steve Tropp and his wife Gloria were religiously into jazz. Bird was divine to them, and Bird could do no wrong. Other poets that were influenced by Bird were: Jim Lyons, Donald Brandt, Joel Axelrod, Tom Postell, Dan Propper, Howard Hart, Jack Micheline, Philip Lamantia, Robert Cordier, and badass Ray Bremser who was the fastest word slinger/swinger in the Village. There were of course some square poets on the scene at that time, for example William Morris from London. This turkey read and pretended poetry backed by recordings of Dave Brubeck. Dick Woods from Mississippi was sorta jazzabilly poet, and a living stereotype of Life-Time beatnik. Mixed in with the Beat Generation poets were the conventional poets, most of their poetry was still kissing Europe's flabby dead ass. These poets didn't dig Bird or any kind of jazz. They fucked their fingers academically instead of getting into something with soul. But many of these stone head hyenas are now editors in the lofty toilets of the publishing world.

"Jazz got along without the sax for 25 years, spent the next 15 years trying to get along with it, and took 10 years deciding to discard it altogether. It's clear now that, except on extraordinary occasions involving extraordinary musicians, there's no place in hot jazz for the saxophone". This perfidious piece of shit was written by John Lucas in Jazz Record 1947. This earless dude perhaps was blind also, for couldn't he see the shadows of The Hawk, Prez, Ben, and Bird swooping all of the place in 1947 and years before that??

It was the job of the poets to counterattack all this dumb dumbness. If this john John Lucas is still on earth, will he please read Leroi Jones' 1963 prose bit titled "Three Ways to Play the Saxophone". Here dear reader I shall scatter some riffs at random, full of facts and feathers: James Dean, hip movie actor sat digging Bird blowing at the Montmartre Club on West 4th Street in the Village, accompanied by the lovely hipstress Stella P., both completely caught up in ornithological travels, all the while new-comer-to-the-actor-world Steve McQueen sat digging Bird and Dean whilst photographer WeeGee attempted to photograph the entire hip happening. August 1979 in San Francisco, poets Nancy Joyce Peters, Philip Lamantia, and tedjoans do a homage reading to Charles Parker. The private affair was packed with poets and hipsters. Bird Lives presentations have also happened in Holland, Germany and France, even a few times in Africa. The poets take the words for homage to Bird. If there be a Bird of the spoken word, then we must place the hip laurel on the poet Bob Kaufman. He is the poet who consistently writes about Bird in his poetry, and he lives Birdlore (but no junk!). Bob gave his first son the name Parker. The other Bobs who indulged wisely in the flaming feathers of Charlie Parker back in those Beat G days were: Bob Parent, a very good photographer and hipster, unlike Fred MacDarrah who wasn't hip at all to jazz or Bird, but Fred did produce two valid books: The Beat Scene and The Artists World, plus started a lucrative business of Rent-A Beatnik. Another Bob was Robert G. Reisner, a hipster who taught jazz at Brooklyn College and ran the hippest weekend jazz club in New York at that Beat G time: The Open Door, at the corner of West Broadway and 4th Street, in the Village. Gilbert Milstein for being hip enough to recognize the merits and the avant garde living conditions Kerouac's On The Road warned America. He reviewed the book for the N.Y. Times Book Review 1957. Max Gordon who allowed Jack Kerouac to do an automatic happening down there in his Holy hollow of jazz: The Village Vanguard.

Here I advise the reader to place Manhattan Transfer's "Birdland" on their machine and dig it while reading the following. 1951, we dug Bird and his group playing nightly at Birdland, opposite was Lee Konitz and his group. We dug, wrote poems and some did paintings, and others like Bob Reisner wrote serious articles in Playboy and Esquire on Bird much later. Many of the Beats would only leave the Village to go to hear Bird or to score for soulfood in Harlem. Bird was the personification of many things for poets and hipsters of the Beat G. The hipsters knew that America extracts great prices from its mythical figures, therefore the heavy dues Bird paid. We, especially myself personally, attempted to alleviate some of the hassles for Bird by at least giving him a key to my # 4 Barrow Street (one room cold water) flat, where Basheer, a saintly hip philosopher (later Bird's road manager) dwelled. I also gave big costume balls to raise money for rent. At one such party Bird attended, it was dedicated to surrealism, Dada, and the Mau Mau. Bird arrived late but he hastily improvised his own Mau Mau image, plus aided other hipsters. He insisted that we play no recordings of his, or Dizzy Gillespie "his worthy constituent". So we played other hip things even popular stuff of Slim Gaillard, Harry The Hipster Gibson and Louis Jordan. Life magazine cover girl Vicki Dugan was the Queen of the affair. Montgomery Clift took invitations at the door for awhile. It was held in a photographer's studio and we earned enough money to pay rent for a year.

A few years before I'd seen Bird coming to Washington Square Park with his family. Chan was a very hip woman and was envied by many hipper-than-thou chicks, black and white. Bird seemed to be happier during that time.

The Beat G.'s indebtedness to Bird was, shall we say, enormously underrated by many writers, such as Norman Mailer in his White Negro, a book that was needed (for squares) and heeded. But Mailer was not hip, although he surrounded himself with hipsters like Bill Walker, Dick Dabney, and Lester Blackston. Mailer's book of poetry is perhaps the worst to ever be published by a bigtime publishing house. We laughed before his face. Hipster Sy Krim was hipper than Mailer, he therefore wrote some very wise bits on the Beat G., plus he put out the very first Beat anthology that became a "Beat-Seller". Herbert Gold was typical of the misunderstanding of what the Beat scene was all about, he too, perhaps never heard or deeply dug Bird. Gold wrote in his "Beat Mystique" 1958 for Playboy: "Hipsterism began in a complex effort of the Negro to escape his self-imposed role of happy-go-lucky animal. A few highly self-conscious urban Negro men sought to imitate 'white' diffidence, or coolness, or beatness". For gold Gold was dumber than Lucas of 1947.

No one who was ever touched by Bird was ever the same. Too bad that many of America's top pop writers at the Bird time never deeply dug the man and his music. Painters Harvey Cropper and Walter Williams tried to turn Bird onto the art of painting, but his efforts are nowhere near his genius in music. I once asked him to write some poems, but he had no eyes for writing poetry. He dug all the arts and I never heard him put anybody down, no matter what scene they were into. He gladly had time for beggars as well as young idolizing musicians. He took from those he loved as well as from those he only had just met. Bird shared his great music with the world, so the world owed him, and he never really collected. He understood what the Beat G. was about at the core, that we wanted to be a swinging group of NEW people, like his music, intent on international joy. We broke out of America's squareness just as Bird had done. We as an unorganized movement of individuals freed ourselves of the sickness of mass consumerism and pop culture conformity. We were a bit luckier than the Woodstock hippies (who followed one decade later) for the mass media was ready and waiting for them, this evil international business steered them into a fashionable vogue, and have controlled every direction that youth has turned ever since, with few exceptions. An international conspiracy was pulled on the hippies' ears musically. They all got cheated aesthetically (excluding the Beatles and Bob Dylan) and they have yet to recover. Jazz is the only music (in its pure unadulterated form, therefore no Con-fusion) that can save them from violent stress-filled future, and jazz could restore their audio senses. Bird was a bringer of beautiful music, an alto saxophone poetry. Spontaneous poetry, the essential of that poetry was to share it by living it, not in disrespect of self and others, but in complete active state of embracing the marvelous. Live like a Bird solo, which is an audio cyclical surreality. "Bird Lives", we wrote on the walls of New York City wayback when we learned that he had gone-on/flown on. But he had turned an entire generation of poets and hipsters all over the earth ON to SOMETHING OF GREAT VALUE: To freedom!!

tedjoans june 1981 Paris

SADIK HAKIM (photograph by Bill Smith)

SADIK HAKIM..My Experiences with Bird and Prez

MY EXPERIENCES WITH BIRD AND PREZ

I didn't get serious about playing until I went to Los Angeles, after my high school graduation. There I met Dexter Gordon, Illinois Jacquet and other fine young players. When I went back to the Midwest to go to the University of Minnesota (only one year) I also played with Oscar Pettiford's family band. The whole family, his father, even his sisters, played great on several instruments.

In 1938 I went to Peoria to play with Fats Dudley, a 300-pound trumpet player and singer who played and sang like Louis Armstrong. Morris Lane, the noted tenor player, was also there at that time. He had to leave town not long after I came because of his involvement with a white girl. In 1940, I myself was run out of Kankakee, Illinois for the same reason – the daughter of the president of Kresge's department store. These were very prejudiced times and places.

Fortunately, Chicago was only fifty miles away. I remember playing with many great musicians there, including the young Wilbur Ware and a tenor player named Buster Brown who accompanied himself on sock cymbal with his foot. I went to work with Jesse Miller, a trumpeter who had been with Earl Hines. A.K. Atkinson, the arranger who later became A.K. Salim and who introduced me to Islam, was on alto; Goon Gardner was the other alto. The drummer was Ike Day, a kid, only 15. Ike Day was playing two bass drums then; out of sight; a big influence on Max Roach and others (he died of an O.D. in New York a few years later).

This group was playing at a club on 63rd and Cottage Grove called Joe Hughes' Deluxe. The featured acts were a female impersonator backed by (real) chorus girls. One night we were playing ***Stompin' At The Savoy*** for the chorus girls when, out of the blue, we heard this horn from the front of the club playing over the top of the band. I looked up and saw Charlie Parker. He never stopped playing, just walked right through the chorus girls and came and stood over by the piano. Jesse Miller, who had played with Bird when Bird played second tenor for Earl Hines, had told me that Bird's ability drove Hines' first tenor (Bob Crump) to quit playing. A.K. and Goon had also been telling me about Charlie Parker. At that time, of course, Benny Carter and Johnny Hodges were my main men on alto. After hearing Bird that night I forgot about all other alto players.

I started hanging out with Bird in Chicago. (This was years before I recorded with him in New York). Bird got a gig at the Rum-Boogie, a club on 55th Street and Central Parkway (now Martin Luther King Drive). As my gig with Jesse Miller started later than Bird's, I would go with him to hear his first set. The band, about ten pieces, was led by an old man who played violin. Marl Young, the pianist, wrote the music for this band – very, very hard but good music (Marl Young lives in Los Angeles now and writes for the movies). Eddie Johnson, a great tenor player, was in the band; Gale Brockman and Billy Orr were on trumpet.

Anyway, Bird was never there for rehearsals. The band would rehearse all afternoon, Bird was never there, and the other members of the band were mad and didn't like Bird. But the leader, the old man, did like Bird, which is why he never got fired. I remember this incident like it was yesterday: I went by with Bird to hear his first set. He always came about two or three minutes before the show hit. He'd look at the third alto part, glance at his part (he was playing lead). When the curtain came up, Bird was playing that music like he owned it plus adding things to the part. Well this night, Jimmy Dorsey (a white altoist, a famous bandleader, who also made movies) was playing at the Sherman Hotel in The Loop, and he came down to hear Bird. The old man, Bird's bandleader, knew what was happening. He called ***Cherokee***, which featured Bird. Bird, of course, played like a man possessed. Jimmy Dorsey came back to the dressing room, introduced himself, and said to Bird, "Here man, you need this much more than I do" and gave Bird his brand-new Padless Selmer. I was with Bird the next day when he ***put it in pawn***. I begged him not to. His own horn was a wreck, held together with tape, gummed paper, etc. This didn't matter to him.

At that time there was a great club on the South Side, the Club de Lisa. The leader of their twelve piece band was a great show drummer, Red Saunders. Chicago was wide open then. You could buy liquor in drugstores, and clubs were open 24 hours. On Saturday night and Sunday morning, everyone would go to the De Lisa – all the biggest sportsmen (pimps), the top whores, top Mafia hoods who would make the all-time Mafia list, if I could remember names (I guess it's better that I can't). Well, I'd get off my gig around 4:30 and with Bird and other cats go to the De Lisa. Bird would sit in with Red Saunders' band, which included altoist Nat Jones, a great player in the tradition of Johnny Hodges. Also playing was a great tenor player from Texas, Tom Archie. Billy Eckstine was on the show; this was before he formed his first band. Also the tap dancer "Baby" Laurence, who I heard trade fours with Bird on a ***Limehouse Blues***, way up-tempo. This was taken down on a wire-recorder, a classic. I don't know who has this wire recording, which must be worth many thousands of dollars by now. Incidentally, the great comedian George Kirby was a busboy in the De Lisa and got his start there by filling in with comedy.

I remember hearing Art Tatum with Bird in Chicago. After his gig in The Loop, Tatum would come down to a club on the South Side, drinking beer after beer and playing for five or six hours. All piano players in the city would be there. I remember Bird telling me then, "I wish I could play like Tatum's right hand."

I did work a gig with Bird in Chicago. For a while we played at the Sherman Hotel with Oran "Hot Lips" Page opposite Boyd Raeburn's Big Band. The second day of the gig, we couldn't find Bird at all for the second set. We went up to our suite in the hotel where we found Bird out cold in the bathtub. We got him together, he came down, and his playing just scared everyone to death. Charlie Ventura was with Raeburn's band. The more Bird played, the paler he got.

When Bird left Chicago I rejoined Jesse Miller at the Downbeat Club. Red Allen was playing there, with J.C. Higginbotham on trombone. Ben Webster came in from New York to play as a guest artist with Red Allen. But he liked our rhythm section better. We'd play on the radio one hour, six nights a week (it was very hip then). Well, when Ben left to go back to New York, he told our rhythm section (Rail Wilson, bass; Hillard Brown, drums) he would send for us to come and play with him at the Onyx Club on 52nd Street. We thought he was kidding, but in about a month he sent us first-class sleeping train tickets.

This was in 1944. I was with Ben for fifteen months on 52nd Street. Brown and Wilson went back to Chicago when the brownouts came in 1945. New York was it for me. The rhythm section at the Onyx Club became Eddie Nicholson (drums), Gene Ramey (bass) and myself. Many times Roy Eldridge would play with us, or Stuff Smith, or Bob Dorsey, a great tenor player. Then it was Bird – always late. Mike Weston, the Onyx Club owner, would be frowning as Bird came in late, but after a couple of Bird's choruses, he'd be smiling. One night Bird was very, very late. Bird came in while Ben Webster was drinking at the bar; the rest of us were trioing. Bird picked up Ben's tenor and said, "***Cherokee***". He played that tenor like he owned it, and Ben was shook. He just kept saying "Give me another double". The thing about this was that nobody could get a sound out of Ben's tenor but Ben himself, due to the thickness of the reed, etc. I saw many great tenor players try – Prez, Buddy Tate, Ike Quebec; no good.

During this time I played the ***Ko-Ko*** date with Bird as I was living with him at 117th Street and Manhattan Avenue, in Harlem. I was sent to the landlady, Doris Schneider, because we were both from Chicago. I introduced Bird to Doris, and a week later he was living there. Later, for a while, they were married. Billie Holiday and her man, trumpeter Joe Guy, also lived in this eight-room pad. Bird drew people like Thelonious Monk, Miles, and Dexter Gordon to the scene. Why this place didn't get busted, I'll never know. Everything was happening there.

About the record date, Bud Powell was supposed to be the pianist, but he was hung up in Pennsylvania and didn't get back. Incidentally, the first pianist I heard playing like Bird was not Bud, but Elmo Hope. But Bud played so ***strong***, he just took that style over. Bud was not easy to get along with, kind of a ferocious guy. He'd throw shoes at his little brother, Richie, when Richie tried to listen to us playing. He'd say things like, "Get off that piano stool, you blind motherf....." to people like Tatum and Shearing. He and Bird, despite their mutual love and respect, did not get along; their personalities clashed. But I hung out a lot with Bud. I think he liked me because I didn't try to copy him. Naturally, I learned his tunes, but I didn't slavishly imitate his solos.

With Bud, as I said, in Pennsylvania, Bird

brought me to the record date, and I played on all the tunes except ***Now's The Time*** and ***Billie's Bounce***. That was Dizzy (who happened to be recording with another group in the same building). For many years I didn't get credit for this date on the liner notes, which now have been straightened out. Nor did I ever get paid for it. This is because I was still on transfer from the union in Chicago. The union delegate at the studio said that I couldn't play, but as soon as he left, Bird told me to come out and play. My first paying record date was with Dexter Gordon. At this time (1945) I also recorded with Ben Webster, Big Sid Catlett, Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis, and Bill DeArango.

My association with Bird and Bud helped to bring the new music to 52nd Street. Bud would sit in at the Onyx Club while I worked there. Most of the musicians there didn't understand Bud or Bird. Roy Eldridge would take me outside to smoke (everyone smoked then, we called it "gage") and ask me about what Bird and Bud Powell were doing. I couldn't tell him, all I knew was that it sounded great, made musical sense, and swung like no other music I'd heard. It made all the other music sound stiff and un-swinging. This is what I'd tell Roy. The one exception was "Prez", Lester Young.

I had always dug Prez. He used to come to Minneapolis with Count Basie before I left that area. I first heard Prez with his own group at the Spotlite Club on 52nd Street. He had just come from L.A. after his stint in D.B. (the army's disciplinary barracks, thus the tune ***D.B. Blues***). He had Kenny Kersey on piano. When Prez decided to revamp, I got the gig. Shadow Wilson was on drums (Lyndell Marshall on the road), Prez's friend Rodney Richardson on bass, Benny Harris on trumpet. Benny brought Bud Powell to Prez as we were boarding the plane for our first road gig, but Prez said, "I've already got Lady Dense."

That was me. My name at the time was Argonne "Dense" Thornton, and Prez called everybody "Lady" (most famously, "Lady Day"). He had, incidentally, his own lingo for everything, and it took me several months to understand him. But it was all appropriate. The police he called ***Bob Crosbys***. If something was a real drag, he called it a ***von Hangman***. His most famous expression, ***I feel a draft***, could mean that he detected racial discrimination or that he felt bad since you wouldn't drink and smoke with him. Reefer he called ***Ettuce***. Whites he called ***grey boys*** (I don't know if he originated that term). Blacks were ***oxford greys***. The bridge of a tune he'd call a ***George Washington***. When we hit a new town and Prez would go looking for an old girlfriend, he'd say he was going to see a ***wayback***.

This gives me a chance to correct two entirely false rumours about Prez. One, he was not a homosexual; not at all. Two, he was not into heroin or cocaine; he just smoked and drank. He was a great human being as well as one of the greatest jazz soloists of all time: responsible about money, generous with his possessions, natural, friendly, gentle, as well as creative.

With Prez I recorded the famous hit ***Jumpin' With Symphony Sid*** which in fact is my composition. The studio man came in and asked us, as we were warming up, to do something with Symphony Sid's name in it, as we were going back to the Three Deuces on 52nd Street and the disc jockey had his radio show from there. Meanwhile I was playing this blues melody off the top of my head. Prez said, "We'll play that" and we did it in one take. The A&R man just assumed that the tune was Prez's.

While I was with Prez, the drummer, Lyndell Marshall, had a nervous breakdown. At my suggestion, the great Roy Haynes came into the band.

I remember a couple of things about Bird that happened while I was with Prez. Prez and I were in D.C., a club called Caverns, and Bird was also in town with Duke Jordan on piano. Bird asked me to join the band (not, I'm sure, because he didn't like Duke's playing, but for personal reasons which my reply explains). I told Bird, "I love you, but I can't put up with your not paying people and leaving them stranded in different places. If you did that to me I'd have to hurt you or ***try*** to, and I'd hate to have that happen because I love you. I'd rather be your friend and listen."

Another time when I was with Prez, we had a week off before a gig in Chicago, so I went to Chicago ahead of time to hear Bird and Miles. The saxophonist who had the house band at the club Bird was at was named Eddie Wiggins. Wiggins had a long line of reed instruments up on the bandstand — clarinet, flute, bassoon, alto, tenor, English horn. Bird came in, early for once — no one else in his band was there. He had left his horn at the club. Now Bird had very good connections in Chicago, but this time he apparently forgot to pay them. He opened his horn case to find all the keys torn off or broken. Without blinking an eye, Bird asked Wiggins if he could play the first set with Wiggins' group. Then he proceeded to play all those instruments, a few choruses on each one, even the bassoon. Of course, I was dumbfounded; Bird never ceased to amaze me. I remember him astounding some Afrikaaner mathematicians by suddenly solving a problem they were discussing; they couldn't believe that Bird didn't have an advanced degree in math. Same thing with chess. Tadd Dameron and Max Roach would be playing up at Dizzy's, Bird and I would come in, Bird would walk over to the board, make a move and say "checkmate". And Bird is the ***only*** person who knew me before I became a Muslim and changed my name who ***never***, after I told him my new name, called me anything but Sadik Hakim.

One thing Bird and Prez had in common; I remember both of them cutting Benny Goodman and embarrassing him. When I was with Ben Webster at the Onyx Club and Bird was across the street at the Spotlite Club, I'd go over to hear Bird as soon as our set ended. One night Benny sat at a front table as Bird began his set with ***Dizzy Atmosphere*** — way up-tempo. When he looked over and saw Benny, he changed to ***Dizzy Fingers*** (a feature of Benny's). In the first eight bars, Benny turned red, green and all kinds of colors. Later, with Prez on tour in Los Angeles, we played opposite Benny at the L.A. Auditorium (Frankie Laine was the between-sets act). Funny thing, Prez played his silver metal clarinet all night, never touching the tenor. He blew Benny away. All of us broke up as Benny turned red and a few more colors once again.

I used to play Sunday afternoon gigs with Bird in Philly. The house band at this club had John Coltrane playing alto. At that time the very young Trane was probably the second best altoist in the world. I also played with Sonny Rollins back in the '40s. We both worked in a group led by trumpeter Louis Metcalfe, an older man who had played with Ellington. I used to marvel at how Rollins would get such great solos out of the corny tunes we had to play. He was playing tenor then, but I had known him even earlier, when he was playing alto (and in 1961, I closed Birdland with Sonny). I also remember some great, unknown saxophonists whose careers were tragically cut short. Like Henry Pryor, an alto player in the style of Bird, who got killed by police in Chicago while breaking into a church to get money for dope. A great waste. Or "Lank" Keyes, a tenor player influenced by Prez, also very great, who O.D.'d in Chicago.

There have been and still are many great saxophonists — Coleman Hawkins, Benny Carter, Johnny Hodges, Sonny Stitt, and today, George Coleman, Junior Cook, Clifford Jordan, Johnny Griffin. Still, no one has had a story to say like Bird and Prez. When I was working at the Onyx with Ben Webster, and Prez was across the street at the Spotlite Club, Dexter Gordon would march up and down in front of the Spotlite with a huge sign saying, "GO IN AND HEAR THE TRUTH". Maybe "THE TRUTH" is what we should have called it. (Bird hated the name "Be-Bop", which was Dizzy's concoction).

I will take this opportunity to get one other thing straightened out. The tune ***Eronel***, attributed to Monk, is another composition for which I should have gotten credit. When I was at the Onyx Club with Webster, I met a beautiful 17-year-old lady from Kansas City named Lenore. We were together about a year. The tune I wrote for her (***Eronel***) was her name spelled backwards. Monk came over to my house one day, saw the music on the piano, played it and liked it, even suggested a chord change (which I rejected). I went to Montreal for a year in 1949 and when I returned, I heard the same exact tune, credited to Monk, on a record he made with Milt Jackson. Monk told me he just forgot to tell the record company the tune was mine. Incidentally, anyone should be able to tell that ***Eronel*** does not sound like a Monk composition.

Monk is, of course, a great genius, and he showed me many of his tunes. Earl Hines and Nat Cole were among the first pianists I really dug. Then Elmo Hope and Bud Powell. My favorites in the last two decades: Hank Jones and Tommy Flanagan — they're even in my book. In the new breed I like Cedar Walton, Mickey Tucker, John Hicks, for sure Kenny Barron, and Herbie Hancock — when he was playing ***piano***. Electronic music is garbage to me. Everything is too loud to swing and, as Duke said fifty years ago, "It don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing." Among women pianists, I like Boo Pleasant, Shirley Scott, Terry Pollard. Among the less well-known pianists, Willie Anderson from Detroit, without Peer, and Charles Fox from St. Louis (whatever happened to him?). But don't let me forget Barry Harris, Walter Davis, Walter Bishop, Bill Evans, Horace Silver, Oscar Denard, McCoy Tyner, Chick Corea, Oscar Peterson — so many great players I can't name them all.

Although I once watched Prez and Coleman Hawkins drink next to each other at a bar (the Spotlite Club, owned by the late Clarke Monroe) for two weeks without speaking, it seems like the musicians were closer in those days. Playing with Prez for those two or three years was one of the best times in my career. And I've had many good ones.

(This is an excerpt from Sadik's upcoming book)

A PROFILE

Sadik Hakim was born on July 15, 1919, in Duluth, Minnesota. His maternal grandfather, Henry Williams, was a violinist, composer, professor of his own school of music, and was the first and only Black musician to conduct his own compositions with the Duluth Symphony Orchestra. His grandmother was a cellist, his mother a violinist, and his aunt a pianist and violinist, and they performed together as a chamber music group.

He graduated from high school in 1939. In 1937 he went to Los Angeles to visit his father, where he met Dexter Gordon and Illinois Jacquet. He returned to Minnesota to attend the University of Minnesota for one year, until he was called to Peoria for his first professional gig. In 1940 he went to Chicago to play with trumpeter Jesse Miller at the Downbeat Club. He left for New York in 1944 for a 15-month engagement at the Onyx Club on 52nd Street with Ben Webster. During this time he recorded with Dexter Gordon on Dexter's first session, made the "*Ko-Ko*" record date with Charlie Parker, who he was sharing an apartment with at the time, and also recorded with Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis. From 1946 to 1948 he toured with Lester "Prez" Young and recorded with him the jazz hit *Jumping With Symphony Sid*. He then worked with Slam Stewart's quartet for six months before leaving for Montreal in 1949.

He returned to the U.S. to join James Moody, and played and recorded with him until 1954. During 1955-61 he gigged around New York, then played and recorded with Buddy Tate. In 1961 he made his first record as a leader (in conjunction with Duke Jordan). He played around New York with his own trio, then returned to Canada from 1966 to '76 and made records for the CBC. He left Canada to tour Europe for a year, taking a trio back to his native Duluth to play in the Bi-Centennial Festival in 1976.

Since returning to New York he has made several recordings on the Progressive, Steeple-Chase and CBS labels. Only the latter two are available in the United States, but all are available in Japan, where he toured in 1979-80 and hopes to return. While there he also played an extended engagement at the "Lofe 6" club in Osaka. At this writing Sadik is currently appearing at the West Boondocks in New York City from July 24 to mid-August, 1981.

PARTIAL DISCOGRAPHY

As Leader:	
Witches, Goblins, etc.	SteepleChase
Resurgence	Progressive
Piano Conceptions	"
Memories	"
A Bit Of Monk	"
With Other Pianists:	
I Remember Bebop	CBS/Columbia
Jazz Pianos (w. Duke Jordan)	Charlie Parker
With Sonny Stitt:	
Deep Roots	Progressive
with Lester Young	Blue Note
with Charlie Parker	Milestone
with L. Young, J. Moody, B. Tate.	Prestige

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LESTER YOUNG (photograph by Robert Parent)

GENE
BEBOP FOREVER
DiNOVI

PHOTOGRAPH BY BOB PARENT

Pianist/composer Gene DiNovi has been a Toronto resident for more than a decade, where he has pursued a successful career as an elegant solo performer in the refined settings of several restaurants (his solo album "Softly, As I Leave You" on Pedimega 1 is still available for $7.98 postpaid).

He established his credentials as a jazz musician during the volatile post war years in New York when he recorded with Brew Moore, Lester Young and Benny Goodman and worked with many of the top names. He was Lena Horne's accompanist for more than five years in the 1950s before settling in Los Angeles.

DiNovi's lively wit, excellent memory and sharp perception of the qualities of the American popular song has resulted in several television productions profiling the great composers and lyricists of twentieth century American popular music.

While Gene DiNovi did get to play with Charlie Parker on several occasions, there are no issued recordings of the two performing together.

The first time I saw Charlie Parker I was at the piano, sitting in at an afternoon session at the Spotlite Club on 52nd Street (the clubs that were on 52nd no longer exist. They gave way to parking lots and finally - tall office buildings. You can now see a sign with the words "Swing Street" above the regular 52nd Street signs on 6th and 7th Avenues; the last visual clues of the great sounds of "The Street"). I was about sixteen years old at the time. It was a period in jazz where you were either for or against BeBop. Since it was a very natural expression for me I came to the attention of one John Birks Gillespie. At this point in time there were about six piano players who could even get close to what Diz was doing! (this is remarkable in view of the profuse amount of fantastic keyboard youngbloods emerging from the woodwork these days). The person I have to thank for playing with Bird was a fine piano player named Nat Jaffe.

This was wartime New York (W.W. II) and the sessions went from 5:00 P.M. to 12:00 because of a midnight curfew. Erroll Garner was what was called a relief piano down the street at a place called Tondelayo's. Miles Davis had just arrived from East St. Louis and Monte Kay (later to marry Diahann Carroll and manage Flip Wilson) was at the door collecting admissions! I paid my two bucks and sat down. I could hear Diz warming up in the

room behind the bandstand — the very same bandstand that his big band squeezed onto for ***Things To Come*** a year or so later. Max Roach was setting up while talking to two other drummers in Naval uniforms: Kansas Fields and Shelly Manne. As they spoke, Harry Edison (the man called Sweets, who took all the mystery out of jazz for me), Dexter Gordon, Buck Clayton and a bass player named Lloyd Buchanan sauntered onto the stand. Diz came round the corner and as he is wont to do sort of got things ready to go. The piano bench was empty. Nat was late. Remember this was pre-Mulligan pianoless days and not to have a piano player meant not to start! Diz looked out in the audience and spotted me: youngblood of the day, Brooklyn Italian American BeBop piano player. He crooked his first valve finger and said come up here and play! That was the first time I realized I would always have a 16-year-old heart. The Pope had summoned the parish priest to preside over Musical Mass. I had to play the first intro for these giants! Diz called ***All The Things You Are*** which I knew since it was one of the anthems. On one of my choruses I got so nervous I went to the end of the tune right off but Diz was kind and didn't send me back to me seat. He then called ***Lover Come Back To Me*** and tapping his foot faster than I've ever seen anyone tap their foot, he counted it off. I had a very hunched and intense position at the piano for years — I think that moment did it. I was in deep, deep water and I had to swim; fast! Now everything is cooking along; Max has those lovely cymbals singing including the Chinese one that Dizzy still loves; Buck plays three choruses, Dexter, then Sweets and Holy Christ we all hear an alto saxophone break from around the corner and here comes this cat with cap and dark glasses shaking everything in sight including the rhythm section. That is how I laid eyes and ears on Bird for the first time. We finished the set and Nat finally arrived, looking very much the hip, tall, well-groomed Brooklyn, Jewish-American piano player. I thought to myself, this is the way somebody hip is supposed to look and sound.

Being on the bandstand that afternoon, the sound of the music — the rhythm section, Max's cymbals sizzled into my being forever, was being in another glorious dimension. It was my first great ***live*** musical experience. Before this it was the records of Mel Powell, Teddy Wilson and Art Tatum that did it.

To tell of Charlie Parker in that period I have to tell more about 52nd Street. On a summer night you could hear Diz, Bird, Lady Day, Tatum, Red Norvo while you stood on the street watching Lester Young in his white linen suit and black pork pie hat walking to his gig or Don Byas walking from Broadway carrying his horn in his hand en route from an onstage gig in "The Seven Lively Arts" to the Onyx Club for his late night gig with Max and Diz and Oscar Pettiford and George Wallington.

When Bird wasn't working he'd be on the street sitting in and the word was getting around that a god was in our midst. I don't say that facetiously: there was deity in his sound as well as humour. A lot of funny things would happen.

Leo Guarnieri — bass playing brother of Johnny — was working with Ben Webster at the Onyx Club. Leo was about 98 pounds soaking wet and was crazy enough to play ***Nola*** on his head with his knuckles. He was also crazy enough to bait big Ben with lines like: "Why don't you go across the street and listen to Charlie Parker and learn something you big brute." Ben would simply glare at Leo and say: "It's a shame that one so young has to die." Finally one night Leo dragged Bird in to sit in with Ben's group. Bird started to play; Ben said play another chorus, and another one. After Bird played about five choruses Ben picked Bird up and carried him to the door saying, "I'm not ready for you."

One of the times that Bird was playing at The Three Deuces I got to sit in with him because of the tardiness of Al Haig (like Ellington I praise lateness. Wonderful things can happen because of it!). In the course of the night a drunk kept bugging Bird to play something completely outside. He was usually pretty gracious as was Tatum about playing anything from ***Alice Blue Gown*** to ***Melancholy Baby*** but this request was unfulfillable, plus the guy was just a polyester-panted, white wall-shoed drag. After a bit of time this nonsense came to the attention of one of the waiters (musicians always wonder why everybody else in a joint never sees these incursions before they do) who gallantly picked up this cat and dumped him on the sidewalk to return to the land of the round haircut. As he did this Bird interpolated "Thanks A Million, a million Thanks To You" right into the tune he was blowing on!

Gil Evans lived in a large one-room basement apartment on 55th Street behind a Chinese laundry. Everybody visited Gil to learn from being there. Some guys would stop at the laundry and lay a joint on the proprietor. He would take it and say illegal Ho! Ho! Bird used to come to Gil's place with the rest of us which made it a haven for double sure! More about that later.

There are other beautiful learning memories, like George Wallington slogging through the snow from The Hickory House and saying c'mon man, don't you know Bird is blowing, and standing with Al Cohn in a spot in the Village and Bird emerging from a juke box playing ***Lady Be Good*** and Al looking at me and saying listen to what he's playing here, as he sang along.

Bird and Diz coming down to Child's Paramount, a restaurant in the bowels of 43rd Street, where I worked with Henry Jerome's band with Al and John Mandel and Tiny Kahn or Stan Levey and where every good player sat in.

Bird was starting to exercise his place in music. He'd say hey I dig your watch, lay it on me. So you gave it to him; he was Bird.

One of the turning points in my musical education came about through something Bird said and I got it second hand from a fine composer and trumpet player named John Carisi:

One night Bird arrived at the door of Gil's place and asked for five dollars for a cat he had to take uptown. Everybody in the room put $5 together and gave it to him. Gil had the "Scythian Suite" of Prokofiev on the turntable. Bird took the $5, paused, listened to a bit of it and said: "I don't even scratch the surface". Hearing this line even second hand was what made me aware of the fact that I had to start giving to music by studying it! It in fact took me away from jazz for a while, but anything I ever do in music will always have Bird at the heart of it. Bird played with every necessary element of great music: humour, passion, drive, technique, gentility, sensitivity, finesse, taste. ***Love***. I'm eternally grateful that I was there when he was BE-BOP FOREVER.

RECORD REVIEWS

INTRODUCTION TO RECORD REVIEWS

Because this issue of Coda is dedicated to Charlie Parker, we have decided, in this section, to emphasize reviews of records by Parker and his associates; records by saxophonists; and records which in some way refer to the great legacy of Charlie Parker's music. We hope you enjoy the results.

JOHNNY GRIFFIN

NYC Underground
Galaxy GXY-5132

SONNY STITT

Sonny's Back
Muse MR 5204

Johnny Griffin and Sonny Stitt are surely two of the strongest saxophonists. Each is noted for musical battles with other reed men, and each has recorded frequently since the 1940s. They have performed less satisfactorily during the last decade than one would like, however. Griffin has had relatively few recordings released in North America because of his years abroad, and Stitt has been the very model of inconsistency. Like the little girl with the curl, when he is good he is very, very good, but when he is bad he is horrid. Luckily, these two new albums — recorded within a year of each other — reveal that Griffin and Stitt can, when the spirit moves them, play masterfully.

Griffin has recorded several albums since his return to the United States in 1978, and "NYC Underground" is the best of them. Recorded in 1979 at the Village Vanguard (hence the title), Griffin's program consists of ***Yours Is My Heart Alone, Sophisticated Lady, Rhythm-A-Ning*** and two originals. The tempi range from way down to way up.

Griffin is best known as a shouter, as a no-nonsense instrumentalist who goes directly to a tune's essence. Such is the case on ***Rhythm-A-Ning***, where he frames his fiery solo with squeaking and honking statements of the melody. Unlike his fellow former expatriate Dexter Gordon, Griffin does not engage in excessive quoting from other compositions, but on Monk's line he works ***The Song Is You*** into his solo with perfect naturalness and effectiveness. This is Griffin at his muscular best.

Griffin can also play an attractive ballad, as he does twice on this album. In fact, on his own ***Alone Again*** he solos so engagingly that he sustains the listener's interest in a slow piece for almost twelve minutes. Further, on ***Sophisticated Lady*** this man who is possibly the fastest of all tenor saxophonists plays so sensitively that one wonders why his ballad playing has been overlooked for so long.

Griffin is ably backed throughout by pianist Ron Mathews, bassist Ray Drummond, and drummer Idris Muhammad, all of whom solo. Mathews is especially impressive, primarily on Griffin's ***Let Me Touch It*** and ***Rhythm-A-Ning***. This is a splendid, well-paced album by one of the substantial veteran tenor saxophonists.

So is Stitt's. He plays tenor on six of the seven tracks, and he proves that, unlike many, he can play that instrument as well as he can his primary horn, the alto. Generally speaking, his solos on tenor benefit from his inability or reluctance to play the deeper horn with the great speed that he regularly exhibits on alto. What results is a mellowness that one does not often hear from Stitt, and it serves him well. On ***Canadian Sunset***, for example, his tenor technique is perfectly suited to Eddie Heywood's gently swinging composition. And even on ***Sonny's Bounce***, which is taken at a brisk tempo, Stitt does not overindulge his technique and therefore restrains his obvious passion so as so suggest a master successfully treading the

SONNY STITT - Montreal 1963 (photograph by Len Dobbin)

delicate line between emotion and intellect.

As good as Stitt is on tenor, he is at his absolute best on alto on ***It Might As Well Be Spring***. This three-and-one-half minute performance is the album's shortest, and it is essentially all Stitt; George Duvivier supports him on bass, but he is more felt than heard. The reason for Stitt's effectiveness is, I feel, that he applies to the alto the same quality of restraint he exhibits on tenor throughout the rest of the album. Nowhere is Stitt more lyrical than he is here. This is a wonderful example of unspectacular yet totally appealing loveliness.

Ricky Ford joins Stitt on three tunes, and while he plays well, the two never engage in significant dialogue and the stylistic differences between them are not as instructive as one would like. Ford is one of the outstanding young tenor saxophonists, but his presence here is largely gratuitous.

I recommend these albums. They present two often ignored or taken-for-granted saxophonists at their mature best.

— Benjamin Franklin V

VINNY GOLIA

Solo
Nine Winds 0104

Vinny Golia - soprano, tenor, baritone and bass saxophones, Bb clarinet, bamboo flutes.

Thoughts/ "for the dancers"/ The Cave... part II/ Improvisation #4/ Improvisation #3/ The Navanack/Attunement... dedicated to John Coltrane, the members of my trio and their ladies.

Unless a musician has strong ideas and the sense to program them to their best advantage, a solo album can be as dry as a dissertation on the lead levels in various brands of bone meal. Vinny Golia admirably avoids these pitfalls on a first solo outing that was inevitable given the warm reception of his first three ensemble recordings. Golia's affinity for the Asian lyricism that was an outgrowth of the Coltrane period and his visceral adaptation of the structuralism pioneered by Mitchell, Braxton, et al, has resulted in a hybrid aesthetic that is conducive to the deft programming that contributes to this album. Although Golia is not an overwhelming virtuoso, his chops are maximized by the strength of his ideas and an unjaded will to surpass previous limits in each performance.

On other recordings, Golia's ability with the low-register saxophones has been impressive, but their use here, except the impassioned, Coltrane-inspired tenor on ***Attunement***, is overshadowed by the poignant lyricism of his pieces for Bb clarinet, bamboo flutes, and soprano saxophone. Expecting their function to be one of perfunctory coloration in preludes or transitions, the fully-developed material for bamboo-twig flute and the richly evocative bass bamboo flute was a satisfying surprise. The three introspective pieces for soprano saxophone are grounded in a subtle yet intricate harmonic framework. Unobtrusively tucked into the program is a four-minute improvisation for Bb clarinet that thoroughly surveys the instrument's immense timbral variety while logically explicating the source material.

Now with a substantive solo album under his belt, possible next steps for Golia include chamber configurations or a large ensemble. If Golia realizes such projects in the manner he has approached this solo album he will be another step closer to major stature.

— Bill Shoemaker

(Nine Winds Records, 11609 West Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, California 90064 USA)

TUBBY HAYES

A Tribute — Tubbs
Spotlite SPJ 902

Tubby Hayes - tenor and flute/ Jimmy Deuchar - trumpet and mellophonium/ Terry Shannon - piano/ Freddy Logan - bass/ Alan Ganley - drums.
Dancing Slipper Club, Nottingham, England, December 1963.
Side One: ***All Of You*** (16:09) - ***Don't Fall Off The Bridge*** (10:20).
Side Two: ***Modes And Blues*** (13:53) - ***Blue Flues*** (15:30).

Mexican Green
Mole Jazz #2

Tubby Hayes - tenor and flute/ Mike Pyne - piano/ Ron Matthewson - bass/ Tony Levin - drums.
London, England, February 2 and March 7, 1967.

Side One: ***Dear Johnny B*** (7:07) - ***Off The Wagon*** (8:27) - ***Trenton Place*** (5:12) - ***The Second City Steamer*** (5:20).
Side Two: ***Blues In Orbit*** (3:19) - ***A Dedication To Joy*** (7:04) - ***Mexican Green*** (13:45).

When jazz music has been something more than casual, has in fact been part of the essence of one's life, then the memories of youthful adventure linger like ancestral ghosts. Of course, often, the memories are only substantial in the most abstract manner; like a love remembered, a delight of untruth. So, to hear two recordings of a player out of my past joy, and to find him to be as clear as the wonderful thoughts that that period of my life produces for my mind, makes me realise that much of what is often considered dreams, is indeed the truth. As teenagers growing up in England, most of the music that we heard was on recordings, and there was little possibility to experience American music first hand, but this did not create a negative situation, quite the contrary, it made us appreciate our local players on an elevated plane. London in the middle and late 1950s was filled with music, the clubs that were our hangouts, such as the Club M, the Marquee, the Flamingo, the old Ronnie Scott club, the Tally Ho and Studio 51 on Greater Newport Street, gave us the equivalent social environment to the legendary American clubs that we read about in the jazz magazines. In particular, that little basement on Greater Newport Street holds many memories, for there was my first encounter with the then teenage prodigy, Tubby Hayes.

By 1956 Tubby had become a public figure, with fellow tenorist Ronnie Scott, in a quintet that called itself the "Jazz Couriers", and if recommendation is needed for Tubby's music, then the following quote by Ronnie Scott will suffice:

"I think, that Tubby was probably the best jazz musician this country has produced. Even as a teenager he played with great maturity and startling technical ability and towards the end of his career, when his physical disability required him to play more

sparingly the heart and the soul of the man seemed to shine through. There has yet to be another like him."

Both of these recordings of Tubby Hayes, are not however produced under any duress, and capture him in two periods of his short life when he was singing with the exuberance that made him an English jazz legend. The first recording, from 1963, is a live performance in a club that was considered part of the "provincial" circuit, and captures beautifully the ambience and purity of "real" jazz performance. Because of the live club situation the pieces are extended in length and show this band to be musically an equal to its American counterparts. The second recording, from 1967, presents him as a fully matured player performing in the controlled studio situation, allowing all of his great abilities to be captured with good quality sound reproduction. Also by this period, his rhythm section had changed to suit his new creative needs, and no longer is there any thought that he is a "good local" player, but indeed a jazz musician of world stature.

I find it unnecessary to "review" Tubby's music, for if you like creative music based in the bebop tradition you should just simply purchase these two recordings. If the choice is to be only one, then "Mexican Green" presents him on a higher level, but only relative to his own personal standards.

Tubby Hayes died at the age of 38, in June of 1973, because he lived the "jazz" life. There has yet to be another like him. — ***Bill Smith***

OLIVER LAKE QUINTET

Prophet
Black Saint 0044

Oliver Lake, alto saxophone; Baikida Carroll, trumpet and flugelhorn; Donald Smith, piano; Jerry Harris, electric bass; Pheeroan Ak Laff, drums.

Hat And Beard/ Something Sweet, Something Tender/ Poster/ The Prophet/ Cotton IV/ Firm And Ripe.

The generation of saxophonists who came after Eric Dolphy and extended the tradition of his music — Roscoe Mitchell, Anthony Braxton, Julius Hemphill, Oliver Lake and others — have still not filled the gap left by his absence. This is not to disparage the considerable body of work each of these men is giving to us, but to emphasize the terrible sense of loss one feels with regard to Dolphy, who died in 1964, and who if he had lived until now would almost certainly have achieved a degree of popular success which was denied to him in his lifetime. One speculates that it was his death, along with those of so many major figures in the following years — Coltrane, Ayler, Mingus, Roland Kirk and others, along with the smothering popularity of rock music, which prevented the synthesis of "bebop" and "free" which Dolphy presented from being accepted more naturally into the jazz tradition. If not for this terrible attrition among leading artists in the music (even Armstrong and Ellington although they certainly cannot be said to have died before their times) we might have a much healthier and creative jazz mainstream now. As it is someone like Oliver Lake is forwarding his art in what looks to be an even less hospitable milieu for improvised music, in terms of employment, than the difficult conditions Dolphy faced (conditions that were forcing his decision to move to Europe at the time of his death). What I am trying to say here, which is after all concerned with Oliver Lake, is that a record such as this has been a long time coming, especially from him. Perhaps the contemporary saxophonist who brings Dolphy most readily to mind, in every aspect of his art Lake embraces a warm and humanistic outlook, coupled with an aggressive declamatory style, broad enough to encompass many different elements. Some of his recorded efforts, however, have seemed somewhat jumbled and misdirected, those same elements which Lake at his best synthesizes so neatly seeming at odds with one another.

With "Prophet", by making direct contact through the overt homage to Eric Dolphy, with his own roots (***Hat And Beard, The Prophet,*** and ***Something Sweet...*** are all by Dolphy), Oliver Lake has given us one of his most moving personal statements to date. He proves that direct musical acknowledgement of one's sources need not be a step backwards. This is not "in the tradition" because tragically, Eric Dolphy's music never had much chance to become part of the tradition; therefore this record is welcome and moreso, necessary. Although I feel that an acoustic bass would have contributed more to the music than the more limited tone and dynamics of the electric, the group's playing is on a very high level, the compositions are beautiful, the music is lyrical, dynamic, sensitive and — a value that "punk jazz", "funk jazz", "fusion" and "fake jazz" players often totally overlook — sophisticated. A music that is a most vital part of improvisation today.

— ***David Lee***

JIMMY LYONS/SUNNY MURRAY

Jump Up/What To Do About
Hat Hut 2R 21

Jimmy Lyons, alto saxophone; John Lindberg, string bass; Sunny Murray, drums.

Without consigning Jimmy Lyons to the category of "clearly influenced by" or "drew his style from", it is clear that long association with pianist Cecil Taylor compelled Lyons to create an appropriate style on the alto saxophone. In Lyons' playing, Taylor's sweeping keyboard runs are met, grammatically, with statements that sing out, all the way from the bottom to the top of his horn; Taylor's chord clusters of ten close-voiced notes Lyons meets with short, staccato bursts of phrases, as if he was trying to arpeggiate all ten notes out of his alto at once; or with a rich choir of harmonics through immaculately-controlled overblowing.

Lyons has had the advantage for twenty years, of working with Cecil Taylor. With Taylor he made his name, and has generally been able to play before appreciative audiences; but exposure with such a powerful figure has possibly distracted attention from Lyons' own importance as an instrumentalist.

Jimmy Lyons' recorded efforts under his own name, however, have not contributed much to his image as a bandleader — until this present set, recorded at Willisau Switzerland in 1980, in delightful and extended live performance. In the company of bass and drums, without the massed voices of Taylor's piano, Lyons clearly directs the music to a greater extent, although he seems perfectly willing to lay out frequently while the others perform duo or solos. The trio has a lighter, less urgent feel to its music, although occasionally, as a result, it has to scramble to produce orchestrations of interest, at moments in the music where the Cecil Taylor Unit would have amassed enough momentum to carry itself through. John Lindberg — just a baby in the very early 'sixties when the other two members of the band were helping to invent the avant garde in New York City — seems to work the hardest to make things happen, especially since this format features extended bass solos. To his credit he succeeds most of the time. As one of the best bassists to appear in the last few years, Lindberg manages to create interesting solos even when the information being presented to him — compositionally (the attractive, short "heads" serve mostly as rhythmic offshoots for the improvisations) and improvisationally, that is when Lyons and Murray lay out — fades to nil.

Sunny Murray too (although his playing seems somewhat cymbal-heavy, perhaps the fault of an otherwise excellent recording) is an old hand at creating action and intensity in free, small-group music such as this. To me however, the greatest asset of this valuable record is the exposure it affords to the luminous tone and the brash, vocal alto saxophone statements of Jimmy Lyons. — ***David Lee***

JEMEEL MOONDOC & MUNTU

New York Live
Cadence CJR 1006

Jemeel Moondoc, alto saxophone; Roy Campbell, trumpet; William Parker, bass; Rashid Bakr, drums; (on side 2 only) Ellen Christi, voice.

Salt Peanuts/ Thanks To The Creator/ High Rise

Gradually being brought to light is the music of Ensemble Muntu, which is producing some of the most interesting and engaging improvisations to be heard today. The quartet on this record (which adds a promising improvising vocalist, Ellen Christi, on side two) has been developing its music together since the mid-seventies, and from hearing several of their recordings and live performances I can say that, with great power and consistency, they produce some of the best "jazz" to be heard ***today***.

The emphasis on "today" can immediately be felt in the phrasing of ***Salt Peanuts***. On first hearing something sounds seriously wrong with the way Jemeel Moondoc and Roy Campbell are playing the head; by the time they play it again at the end of the piece (twenty minutes later) the listener realizes that they are simply and directly playing the ***music*** of this Dizzy Gillespie/Kenny Clarke bebop classic, without making any attempt to emulate the masters' phrasing. Moondoc and Campbell have their own phrasing; more strident, with different rhythmic emphases than bebop. From beginning to end, more essentially, the quartet maintains the spirit of ***Salt Peanuts***, not in phrasing or chord changes (William Parker's running bass line quickly discards the chord changes - which after all were never among the great milestones of jazz harmonic structure), but throughout in the joyous intensity of the piece. It is through this intensity, rather than through searching for the obvious references to Cecil Taylor, Ornette Coleman, Charlie Parker, Albert Ayler, et cetera,

that one may identify Muntu so clearly as one of the most fertile flowerings of the jazz continuum.

In addition, like the classic small ensembles which one likes to think of as exemplifying the best of the "jazz" tradition, everyone in this quartet is a disciplined and individual instrumentalist of a very high order. Their personal sounds, I might add, are not especially well-served by the recording quality on these sides; while the more piercing tones of Roy Campbell's trumpet and Rashid Bakr's drums come out all right, Jemeel Moondoc's pungent alto sound becomes nasal in spots, through the lack of presence in the recording, and William Parker is under-recorded (this is true of virtually all the recordings Parker has made to date; one has to be there in person to hear that the bassist actually has an exceptionally "big" sound). Although I realize the expenses that studio recording incurs, especially relative to the modest sales of most new music records, I think it is definitely time for Muntu to enjoy engineering that will do full justice to the quality of their music.

However, "New York Live" does capture the music of a really super band. Incidentally on side two Dennis Charles is heard – not playing drums but in the audience, constantly exhorting and cheering the band. As Jemeel says in the liner notes "We never have any trouble with enthusiasm in terms of audience" – understandably. *– David Lee*

(To obtain this and other Cadence records, see the ad on page 39 of this issue).

CHARLIE PARKER

Apartment Sessions
Spotlite SPJ 146

Back in the heyday of bop some young musicians (Gers Yowell, Bob Stacey, Jimmy Knepper and Joe Maini) secured themselves a soundproof basement room in the William Henry Apartments at 136th Street and Broadway in New York City, where they could live, practice and record to their hearts' content. In time their pad became a meeting place for many aspiring be-boppers including Herb Geller, Joe Albany, Dave Lambert, Gerry Mulligan, Zoot Sims, Warne Marsh, Lee Konitz, Teddy Kotick, plus satirist Lenny Bruce. Jimmy Knepper claims that more often than not it was the worst musicians in New York who frequented the apartment (see ***Coda*** no. 179). Yet on one fine June Sunday afternoon in 1950 Bird himself honoured the inhabitants with a visit and informal blowing session. Fortunately enough tape was on hand to document Parker's solos which are now finally available on this Spotlite recording.

The first two cuts on side one – ***Little Willie Leaps*** and ***All The Things You Are*** – are each six or seven minutes of pure unadulterated Parker with choruses chucked full of speedy runs, exclamatory cries and swinging curly asides. The remainder of side one and all of side two feature shorter solo spots by Bird on ***Donna Lee, Bernie's Tune, Out Of Nowhere, Half Nelson, Fine And Dandy, Cherokee, Scrapple From The Apple***, and ***Star Eyes***, with ensemble introductions or out choruses by the musicians who were on hand for the occasion – John Williams (piano), Buddy Jones (bass), Phil Brown, Frank Isola or Buddy Bridgeford (drums), Norma Carson, Jon Eardley and Jon Neilson (trumpets), Jimmy Knepper (trombone), Joe Maini (alto saxophone), Bob Newman, Gers Yowell and Don Lanphere (tenor saxes).

Parker breathes his magnificent sing song spirit on ***Donna Lee, Fine And Dandy*** is taken at a blistering pace, while ***Out Of Nowhere*** brings Ornette Coleman's early melodic identity to mind.

As home-made recordings these apartment tapes do not represent the best in high fidelity. However they do compare favourably to the many Parker live club date recordings, air checks and the like, and as a historical document the sessions will interest many Bird lovers.

– Peter Danson

PIANO

ANTHONY DAVIS
Lady Of The Mirrors
India Navigation IN 1047

ANDREW HILL
Faces Of Hope
Soul Note SN 1010

Back in 1962 in a booth in a record shop in Melbourne, Australia, I stood listening to an album I had found in the "reduced" browser – "The World Of Cecil Taylor" on Candid. The impression the music made then still stays with me. I knew it was what I had been listening for – waiting for. Those who had set out to explain the "bop" revolution to puzzled listeners had stressed its harmonic "modernity"; but I had discovered Bartok some years before I discovered Parker, and it seemed to me that there were still vast areas of "modernity" to be explored. When I encountered the music of Cecil Taylor, I recognised someone who had listened to Bartok and absorbed the lessons.

Bartok now has the status of a modern classic, just as Taylor has; and from Taylor's example has flowed an increasingly impressive body of black music. Anthony Davis's "Lady of the Mirrors" and Andrew Hill's "Faces of Hope" are instances – even though Hill started recording only a little after Taylor, having his roots in the music of Thelonious Monk, as Taylor did. With the work of Taylor and those who came after him we begin to encounter that aspiration to be viewed as musicians or composers without the attribution "jazz"; and this has been perceived as bringing a lifting of limitations. Hill, we are told in the notes to the current album, has "composed a number of string quartets, brass quartets and even an opera"; while Davis offers us pieces which use, as his own thoughtful liner notes explain, forms taken from the conventional repertoire.

"Lady of the Mirrors" is a very impressive, very attractive record, displaying unusual relaxation and clarity of execution. Its pieces are all the careful products of original conceptions, as Davis explains in the notes. The opening track is ***Beyond Reason***. From the first phrase I found myself saying "Chopin"; and the opening few minutes are uncannily Chopinesque with their lyrical, single noted melody in the right hand. The piece goes on to passages more reminiscent of Chopin's admirer, Debussy, or of Debussy's contemporary, Ravel. Some of the compositions on this record, such as ***Lady Of The Mirrors*** are in the impressionistic mode of Debussy's piano music. ***Under The Double Moon*** is from a suite three parts of which are heard, in instrumental form, as "Suite For An-

other World" on "Of Blues And Dreams" (Sackville 3020). Davis uses certain modern chordings that have their origins in jazz; yet the main musical quality seems to me to derive from Romantic piano music of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is only briefly that one has the sense of a jazz texture or a jazz tonality on this wholly delightful record — until we come to the final ***Man On A Turquoise Cloud***, dedicated to Duke Ellington. Even here there is not the warm amalgam of jazz and modern music that I find in Davis's solo ***Of Blues And Dreams*** on the Sackville record of that title.

Andrew Hill's "Faces of Hope" is, I feel, a weightier record. It comes, in contrast to his recent solo recording for Artists House, with liner notes by Lee Jeske that tell us something about the music. Hill's orientation is certainly the one I have spoken about. He is quoted as saying: "It's all music. I can't see limiting myself to one harmonic or rhythmic conception". At first listening his music seems excessively fragmented and offers a surface apparently uninterrupted by rhythmic emphasis. In fact, with continued listening, one becomes aware of a movement and a texture to Hill's playing that incorporates the basic features of jazz. It is as though he had taken a stylistic trait of his earlier master, Monk — that of hesitation — and exaggerated it to the point that the continuity of the music is all but obscured. When one becomes aware of this, the pattern of Hill's music emerges as one drawing steadily on its jazz heritage. There is a firm stylistic conception: Lee Morgan's ***Ceora*** is no more "jazzy" than Hill's three original compositions, but is subdued to Hill's individual style, sombre, dissonant, meditative.

The contrast between Davis's record and Hill's — and indeed the very territory that both have entered musically — must lead one to ask, at risk of disrespect, in just what sense this type of music is a ***continuation*** of the jazz tradition. In an obvious sense it arises out of the jazz tradition in a way in which Gershwin's piano music in ***Rhapsody In Blue***, for instance, does not. In Gershwin's piece, the "blues" effects are interpolated into a somewhat cheapened version of the classical framework; and I find Artie Shaw's ***Concerto For Clarinet***, so frankly ***ersatz***, a much more delightful venture in this direction. Davis and Hill advance into the stylistic territory of conventional music ***out of*** jazz, and the absorption of both idioms is complete.

Nevertheless, I am still left questioning my enthusiasm of twenty years ago. How much of ***jazz***, that I was so happy to see advancing, is now left? The new music, we are told, is viewed as a part of a rich tradition of improvised music. Nowadays some very doubtful attempts are brought before us under that name by exponents like CCMC (as they empty a table full of rattles on the floor as a climactic sound). Davis and Hill offer us an altogether more serious type of music. They take us into the world of the concert hall; but contemporary concert music has long relinquished the stylistic gestures that Davis adopts or even that we find infusing the jazz idiom of Hill's music. One of the refreshing things about jazz has been that it could discover the possibilities of "modernist" music for itself without the sense that everything had been done — that in fact it did not exist in the world of contrived novelty that seems the domain of many contemporary arts. Yet the discoveries used to be in terms of ***jazz*** and had their ***raison d'etre*** in what they did for ***jazz***.

I don't want to put listeners off these two attractive records: those who like this type of music will know from what I have written that they will enjoy them. Yet the questions seem worth pondering: when our music moves away from its basic blues tonality, does it abandon its reason for existence? And those who do go in this direction — do they not have a responsibility to take us — as Taylor did in his day — into a music more truly contemporary than that inhabited by many exponents of "improvised music"? Stockhausen must be middle-aged by now. There seems to me to be a growing sub-culture of jaded multi-media amateurism that fails to recognise itself for what it is: I don't want "jazz" to become part of it.

— A. T. Tolley

ALTO SAXOPHONE

JOHN TCHICAI
Live In Athens
Praxis CM 101

Saluting Praxis; Freeing Up The Second; Song Of The Islands; That One For Whom?; Frobenius Stomp; Elephants Never Forget.
John Tchicai - alto saxophone and vocal

MARION BROWN QUARTET
Back To Paris
Free Lance FRL 002

Sunshine Road; November Cotton Flower; La Placita; Body And Soul; Sweet Earth Flying.
Marion Brown - alto saxophone; Hilton Ruiz - piano; Jack Gregg - bass; Freddie Waits - drums.

DAVID EYGES with BYARD LANCASTER
The Arrow
Music Unlimited MU 7431

Jumpin' Jenny; Sweetness Is Beauty; Swimming Under The Good Old American Flag; Oasis; Pyramid; The Arrow; The Hill.
David Eyges - cello; Byard Lancaster - alto and soprano saxophones, flute.

John Tchicai, Marion Brown, and Byard Lancaster emerged in the mid-sixties, forwarding altological alternatives to Ornette Coleman's harmolodics. Each has subsequently recorded in numerous contexts, retaining an identifiable voice while intelligently foiling their various associates. Bringing a facet of their respective activities into sharp focus, these recordings reveal the saxophonists' growth to be substantial and directed to areas seemingly far removed from the feverish rites of "the new thing" in which they were initiated.

Since his first recordings with Sunny Murray, where his slashing lines paralleled the drummer's intensity, Byard Lancaster has sculpted an echoic style from various musical traditions, which he has recently applied to — in addition to his own work and his ongoing dialogue with cellist David Eyges — the no-wave infused jazz of Ronald Shannon Jackson and the electric blues of Johnny Copeland. On "The Arrow", Lancaster shows himself to be eclectic in the best sense of the word, due, in part, to Eyges' tasteful, well-programmed compositions. Throughout the album, Lancaster's abilities are at the fore: his supple intonation and dynamic control are pivotal to the cogency of the music, whether the issue at hand is his sanctified

testimony that ***Sweetness Is Beauty*** or the wide, world-weary intervals of ***Oasis***. Lancaster's darting lines on the rollicking ***Jumpin' Jenny*** and the prickly ***Pyramid*** and ***The Hill*** have an innate counterpoise to Eyges, whose linear orientation gravitates the duo towards lead-support and counterpoint roles. As "The Arrow" brims with rigorous interaction, it is a safe assumption that Lancaster's partnership with Eyges has a viable future.

Like his one-time mentor, Archie Shepp, Marion Brown has devoted much of his energies in recent years to a reinvestigation of the jazz tradition. But Brown's transition from experimentalist to traditionalist has not been met with the success Shepp's has. The varied quality of Brown's recordings over the past five years can be traced to Brown's technical limitations and his occasionally specious choice of cohorts. On "Back To Paris", Brown overcomes both obstacles. His playing is in fine form; his intonation holds up on the set's ballads, ***November Cotton Flower*** and ***Sweet Earth Flying***, a Coltranish dirge; he firmly handles ***Body And Soul***; and he sustains a rapidly paced idea flow on ***La Placita***, which Brown has recorded weaker versions of elsewhere. Hilton Ruiz and Freddie Waits are especially spirited, even for their respective high standards, and it is to Brown's credit that he is not swamped as a result. Along with his duets with Gunter Hampel on Improvising Artists, "Back To Paris" gives the most flattering recent portrait of Marion Brown, an artist seemingly in flux.

A member of two of the sixties' most important cooperatives, The New York Contemporary Five and The New York Art Quartet, John Tchicai has refined a tactile sense of propulsion that accomodates the exigencies of emotion and structure. Tchicai also possesses an oboe-like sound that can hover over an ensemble or rummage through the surrounding silence in a solo context. This latter quality is the impetus of "Live In Athens", Tchicai's complete performance at Praxis Jazz '80. The program is a mixture of lively banter and poignant insight, as Tchicai continually takes daring conceptual leaps, jumping from the sing-along giddiness of ***Frobenius Stomp*** to the pinched contours of ***Elephants Never Forget***, bouncing from the happy cadence of ***Saluting Praxis*** to the careening lines of ***Feeling Up The Second***, and floating from the serene ***Song Of The Islands*** to the barbed pulse of ***That One For Whom?*** Like his former associate, Don Cherry, Tchicai forwards an internationalist aesthetic that speaks with cross-cultural sophistication and sings with indigenous strength. On "Live In Athens", Tchicai is in definitive form. — ***Bill Shoemaker***
(Music Unlimited - 310 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10025, USA; FreeLance - no address given; Praxis - 36 Sarantaporou St., Kifissia, Athens, Greece.).

IKE QUEBEC

Congo Lament
Blue Note LT-1089

With a Song in my Heart
Blue Note LT-1052

Ike Quebec's four Blue Note LPs are now sought-after collectors' items ("Heavy Soul" — 4093; "Blue and Sentimental" — 4098; "It Might As Well Be Spring" — 4105; "Bossa Nova Soul Samba" — 4119) so it is somewhat ironic that there are now two previously unissued available for the first time.

"With a Song in My Heart" fits the pattern established at the other sessions — full toned, melodic tenor saxophone solos with an organ filled rhythm section. All in all the kind of music popular in so many clubs during this period (early 1960s). The choice of tunes is good and Quebec's playing is exemplary but the music is unchallenging although very pleasant.

"Congo Lament" is a different story. Besides Quebec it features trombonist Bennie Green, fellow tenor saxophonist Stanley Turrentine and pianist Sonny Clark. Milt Hinton and Art Blakey complete a compatible band. There are three swinging up-tempo originals which showcase the highly ***individual*** solo styles of the participants as well as an "after hours" version of ***See See Rider***. This is joyous music by musicians who totally understand the jazz idiom and execute it with expression. Each solo is a positive statement and the overall group unity makes this recording an outstanding album — even though it has taken 19 years to surface! —— ***John Norris***

ZOOT SIMS

Passion Flower
Pablo Today 2312.120

Sims, tenor sax; Benny Carter, conductor and arranger; Bobby Bryant, Al Aarons, Oscar Brashear, Earl Gardner, trumpets; J.J. Johnson, Britt Woodman, Grover Mitchell, Benny Powell, trombones; Marshal Royal, Frank Wess, Plas Johnson, Buddy Collette, Johnny Williams, saxes; Jimmy Rowles, piano; John Collins, guitar; Andy Simpkins or Michael Moore or John Heard, bass; Grady Tate or John Clay or Shelly Manne, drums.

It Don't Mean a Thing/In a Mellow Tone/I Got It Bad/I Let a Song Go Out of My Heart/Black Butterfly/Do Nothing Till You Hear From Me/ Your Love Has Faded/Bojangles/Passion Flower

A long overdue matching of musician with material, Zoot Sims's tribute to Duke Ellington will probably, in years to come, rank among the highest of such accolades to the master songwriter of all time. Sims, as is well known, has long had the capacity to embrace a far wider range of emotions than the majority of his bebop contemporaries. Even in his earliest years, though still recognized for his superiority in the realm of straight-ahead swinging, Zoot was also praised for a lyricism surpassed only by that of Stan Getz. But where Getz's affection for the melodic turn of phrase found its most compelling voice in fragile vulnerability, Sims's was of a sturdier nature. That incipient heartiness of sound has only enriched itself over the years, and so much so that, by the early and mid 70s, what was originally a tone clearly derived from that of Lester Young was now beginning to show marked touches of Ben Webster as well.

Surprisingly, though, the Websterian spirit can only be faintly perceived in the recordings that constitute this album, for Zoot, in the final analysis, is simply Zoot... a sincere musician just doing his best to play the music the way he thinks it should be played. And if that way occasionally tends to ring other bells, it is only because great minds often think alike. Melody is the thing, and that is something that all of the great jazzmen knew instinctively. And though we all know that youth must have its fling, and that some of the most burning performances in our music's history have been authored by those enjoying their first flush of manhood, maturity also has its voice, quite frequently a less flamboyant one, to be sure, but one nevertheless just as valid, and perhaps even more so.

Recorded in four separate sessions, "Passion Flower" divides itself into two distinct halves. Side One finds Zoot fronting a stellar big band comforted not only by Benny Carter's arrangements but by his artful conducting as well. The

tunes, except for the rarely played ***Black Butterfly***, are all well known and require little comment here, save that additional solo spots are covered by Wess on flute, Rowles, Johnson, and an unidentified trumpeter (note also that baritonist Williams's name was omitted from the credits). As good as this side is, though, I still prefer Side Two, where Zoot has the opportunity to more closely react to Rowles in a quartet setting. These two together constitute a nonpareil team, for both are master melodists, both display an engaging wit, and both have a surpassing appreciation for Ellingtonia. *— Jack Sohmer*

SADAO WATANABE

Bird Of Paradise
Inner City IC 6061

Japanese alto saxophone player Sadao Watanabe is featured here playing eight tunes previously recorded by and associated with Charlie Parker. Right from the first notes of the title tune, which is Bird's line on ***All The Things You Are***, I found this record to be enjoyable. Watanabe is into a variety of styles these days and is by no means a strictly pure bebop player. However, after hearing him on this album it is my view that this is his proper niche. His more contemporarily oriented recordings are hollow shells in comparison with the solid jazz playing he puts forth on this date.

It is a pleasure to hear sincere dedicated musicians play numbers such as ***Embraceable You, Donna Lee, Star Eyes, Dexterity, If I Should Lose You, Yardbird Suite*** and ***K. C. Blues***. These are bop classics that need to be kept alive and nourished in the midst of the many other musical directions taking place within jazz.

Sharing the credit for the success of this L.P. is The Great Jazz Trio composed of Hank Jones, piano; Ron Carter, bass; and drummer Tony Williams. Their contributions are essential. Both as individuals and as a unit they bring musical maturity to the proceedings. Each of them is sympathetic to the music being played and their solos and section work are top flight.

This recording is not a substitute for the timeless originals by Charlie Parker. By all means, go back to them often. However, I find it a satisfying experience to hear living musicians continuing to play Bird's tunes in the bop style over 25 years after his death.

— Peter S. Friedman

BEN WEBSTER

In Hot House
Hot House HH 001

This record, specially issued by the Hot House in Leiden, Holland to mark its tenth anniversary, is one of Ben Webster's last recordings, coming six months before "Did You Call?" (Nessa n-8), his last studio record. It is infectiously attractive: in contrast with the withdrawn, introspective lyricism of "Did You Call?". it gives us Webster in a relaxed, aggressive mood. We are reminded of the searing, epoch-making ***Cotton Tail*** with the Ellington band of 1940 on ***Ben's Blues*** and the closing ***Theme***. ***Our Love is Here to Stay***, taken at the medium tempo in which Webster excelled, is a happy, felicitous reshaping, in which ideas come easily. The tone is startlingly full and hard — again in contrast with "Did You Call?" — and the performance is swaggeringly assured. On ***I Got It Bad***, a Webster perennial, he is again very much at ease.

There are some lovely moments, too, as when he plays ***Without A Song*** across the blues for a whole chorus — a standard routine, evidently, but done here with such panache that it sounds spontaneous. The sound is clear and the sense of presence superb. This is not one of those on-the-spot recordings that come out with the balance of a studio tape: it makes you feel you are at Hot House. The audience is almost as well recorded as the players; and it is a very suitable record to celebrate the anniversary of the club. A folder tucked into the sleeve gives a history of Hot House; but, unfortunately, like the cover notes, it is in Dutch.

My reservations concerning the record have to do with the time for which we hear Ben Webster. On each number, the democracy of the bandstand obtrudes, so that everyone gets solo time on each number. Some people will be happy to hear plenty of pianist Tete Montoliu, but I must confess that I am not. Rob Langereis is a bassist of quality, though not such as to deserve featuring at Webster's expense. Erik Ineke on drums is too loudly recorded, so that his playing comes through as rather unsubtle.

This is not the only "live" recording from Webster's later years. It is interesting, however, to compare it with an earlier on-the-spot performance, "Ben at the Nuway Club," on Marvin Ekers's Jazz Guild label (1011), where the recording is not so good, but Webster gets more time to expand. In 1958, it is the smooth, mellow Webster of the Verve recordings. In 1972, it is, surprisingly, a strident, happy, full-toned Webster, completely at home with his material and with his audience. It is a pity we don't hear more of him here. *— Trevor Tolley*

LESTER YOUNG

In Washington, D.C., 1956 Volume 2
Pablo Live 2308.225

This is the second volume of the Bill Potts tapes of Lester live at Olivia's Patio Lounge in Washington that Norman Granz has been so kind as to make available, ***and*** with the prospect that more will be forthcoming. Late Lester can sometimes be rather disappointing, as many have found, but if you've heard volume one of this series you'll already know that that is emphatically not the case with this particular gig. The resident trio of Bill Potts on piano, Norman Williams on bass, and Jim Lucht on drums is highly competent, and Lester was sober enough and presumably happy enough for his always latent beauty to emerge. And the sound is so good, crystal clear mono with Lester right up front, that one doesn't suffer at all from the amateur recording syndrome that has marred so many records of this type.

It ***is*** obvious that Lester lays back a lot and paces himself, but this is something his style tolerated well, relying as he did on subtlety and relaxation increasingly as his health deteriorated And while he may not sound as robust as he had in his prime he is possibly even more lyrical than ever. This version of ***These Foolish Things*** must surely be as moving as any of his other ballad work — could there be anything more beautiful than the sound of his breath through the horn as he goes into his extended quote from ***Two Sleepy People***? There are moments to treasure here.

Elsewhere, it's mainly straight ahead medium tempo swing full of little gems that only come out when everything is as flowing and relaxed as it is here. All are obviously enjoying themselves, Potts in particular, going so far as to play around with Lester's ***Surrey With the Fringe On Top*** quote, while Lucht positively romps through ***Jumpin' With Symphony Sid***.

It may be that the music contained in this little series is definitive of Lester's later years in a way that studio recordings can never be. This is a very clear document of a major artist, travelling, working as a single, practicing his art in diminished circumstances before a small, insufficiently enthusiastic audience and still coming up with music that is a joy to listen to.

— Julian Yarrow

BUD POWELL

In Paris
Discovery DS-830

Even lesser examples of Bud Powell's playing are superior to those of most other jazz pianists. Bud Powell transcended the circumstances of the occasion in the same way as Lester Young and Charlie Parker. Even when his technique was flawed, his mind unsettled or his accompanists inferior there was the unmistakeable touch of genius.

Bud Powell's piano sound is unique — he is one of the masters of jazz piano playing and he shows it here in the various ways in which he explores such familiar tunes as ***How High The Moon, Satin Doll, Body And Soul*** and ***I Can't Get Started*** as well as in the distinctive sculpturing of such jazz vehicles as ***Dear Old Stockholm, Jordu, Reets And I, Parisian Thoroughfare*** and ***Little Benny.***

Gilbert Rovere and Kansas Fields are supportive but lack the punch and interaction given Powell by other musicians during his years in Europe. The music on this record was originally issued on Reprise and is worth listening to but it lacks the vibrancy of the Delmark session, the concert with Oscar Pettiford, Kenny Clarke and Coleman Hawkins (Fantasy/Black Lion), the Columbia sessions ("Portrait of Thelonious") or the Golden Circle sessions (SteepleChase).

— John Norris

CLIFFORD BROWN

The Paris Collection Volume 2
Inner City 7019

All of the material from Clifford Brown's second sextet session in Paris is included in this reissue. Besides the alternates of ***Minority*** and ***Salute To The Bandbox*** included in Prestige 7794 there are new versions of ***Minority*** and ***Baby*** issued here for the first time.

Guitarist Jimmy Gourley, pianist Henri Renaud and legendary alto saxophonist Gigi Gryce share the solo spotlight with Clifford Brown in these extended performances.

All of the originally issued versions of these tunes form part of Prestige 24020 — a still available collection of Brownie's Paris recordings. Jazz students and Clifford Brown completists

will want the additional takes offered here but most listeners will probably be better pleased with the Prestige set. *— John Norris*

RECENT RELEASES

WALTER THOMPSON w. Vinny Golia....
'Stardate' Dane 002
(Dane Records, 278-A Glasco Turnpike, Woodstock, N.Y. 12498 USA).
DAVID "Fathead" NEWMAN
'Resurgence' Muse 5234
CHET BAKER
Inner City 1120
ERIC DOLPHY
'Stockholm Sessions' " " 3007
SUSANNAH McCORKLE
'Over The Rainbow' " " 1131
THE NEW YORK SAXOPHONE QUARTET
STASH 210
REGAN RYZUK/JOHN VHASTA
'Duologues for Piano & Drums' Happening 102
(Happening Records, P.O. Box 96, Montville, N.J. 07045 USA)
DAVID ESSIG
'In The Tradition' Phonodisc PHE-601
BILL GOODWIN
'Solar Energy' OmniSound 1029
PHIL WOODS / LEW TABACKIN " 1033
JOHN COATES Jr. with Phil Woods, others....
'Pocono Friends' " 1038
CHARLIE EARLAND
'Pleasant Afternoon' Muse 5201
BRUCE FORMAN
'River Journey' Muse 5251
MAARTEN ALTENA
'Papa Oewa' Claxon 81.6
THE DAVID BOND TRIO
'Odyssey' Vineyard 1001
(Vineyard Record Company, 34 Greene Street, New York, N.Y. 10013 USA)
ANNE HAIGIS
'For Here Where The Life Is' MOOD 24800
ZBIGNIEW SEIFERT
'We'll Remember Zbiggy' " 24500
JOHN LEE/ Gerry Brown/ Eef Albers/ Darryl Thompson: 'Brothers' " 24550
MASABUMI KIKUCHI
'Susto' Columbia FC 37372
OSCAR PETERSON
'A Royal Wedding Suite' Pablo 2312.129
JACK SHELDON
'Playin' It Straight' RealTime 303
ALAN TOMLINSON, solo trombones
'Still Outside' BEAD 17
(Bead Records, 1 Chesholm Road, London N16 0DP England)
THE WIDESPREAD DEPRESSION ORCH.
'Time to Jump and Shout' STASH 212
MIKE WOFFORD TRIO
'Plays Jerome Kern volume 3' Discovery 827
BORBETOMAGUS with Hugh Davies
(Agaric Records, 48 White Avenue, South Hyack, N.Y. 10960 USA)
'CURLEW' w. T. Corra, G. Cartwright.....
(Landslide Records, Box 723151, Atlanta, GA 30339 USA).
ALLEN VIZZUTTI
'Rainbow' Four Leaf Clover 5054
MOUNT EVEREST Plays Gilbert Holmstrom
'Latin Doll' " " " 5056
Derek Bailey, Evan Parker, Rova Saxophone Quartet, H. Kaiser, G. Goodman, T. Kondo.
'The Science Set' Metalanguage 117
STANLEY TURRENTINE (1964)
'Mr. Natural' Blue Note LT 1075
SAM PHIPPS
'Animal Sounds' Dream 1001
(Dream Records, 340-B Brooks Avenue, Venice, California 90291 USA).
PAUL McCANDLESS
'Navigator' Landslide 1005
JAY CLAYTON with Jane Ira Bloom
'All-Out' Anima 1J35
(Anima Productions, 231 East 5th Street, New York 10003 USA).
WOODY HERMAN
'Feelin' So Blue' Fantasy 9609
STEVE LACY/STEVE POTTS w. Irene Aebi
'Tips' Hat Hut 1R20
LOREN MAZZACANE
'Listen to the blues' (EP) Daggett 11
JIMMY McGRIFF
'Movin' Upside The Blues' JAM 005
GEORGE LEWIS w. Parran, Ewart, Teitelbaum
'Chicago Slow Dance' Lovely Music 1101
Nels Cline, Eric Von Essen, Jeff Gauthier, Alex Cline (vln/gtr/bs/perc.)
'Quartet Music' Nine Winds 0106
(Nine Winds Records, 11609 Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90064 USA).
AMIRI BARAKA with Steve McCall, D. Murray
'New Music - New Poetry' India Navigation 1048
TURK MAURO
'Heavyweight!' Phoenix Jazz 1004
Jason Hwang/ Will Connell Jr./ William Parker/ Takeshi Zen Matsuura
'Commitment' Flying Panda 1001
(Flying Panda Records, 62 St. John's Place, 1st Floor, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11217 USA).
Dave Holland/ Evan Parker/ George Lewis/ Derek Bailey
'Fables by Company' Incus 36
Misha Mengelberg/ Lol Coxhill/ Steve Bereford/ Derek Bailey/ Ian Croall
'Fables by Company' " 38
(Incus Records, 14 Downs Road, London E5).
CLARE FISCHER & Salsa Picante
'Machaca' Discovery 835
SHEILA LANDIS
'Jazz Rendezvous' SheLan 1001
(SheLan Records, 1305 Concord, Rochester, MI 48063 USA)
MEREDITH
'Another Time' Shiah 109
JOSEPH BONNER
'Impressions of Copenhagen' Theresa 114
ELLA FITZGERALD
'Ella abraca Jobim' Pablo 2630 201
JOE PASS TRIO
'Live at Donte's' 2620 114
JOHN TCHICAI/HARTMUT GEERKEN
'Continent' Praxis CM 102
MIKE BRYAN Sextet w. Georgie Auld
Storyville 4015
ART TATUM
'Solo masterpieces vol. 10' Pablo 2310 862
WALTER MALOSETTI (Django-style quartet)
'Swing 39' (Argentina) RCA AVS-4766
SANTA MARIA JAZZ BAND (Redman-style)
'Swing en Buenos Aires' " " " 4840
(These two records available by trade from Abel Deusebio, Mitre 69, 2400 San Francisco, Prov. de Cordoba, Argentina).
Cheikh Tidiane Fall/Bobby Few/Jo Maka
'Diom Futa' Free Lance 001
GEORGE M'LELY
'Trio' w. Eddie Moore AAM 3t
(Alternatives in American Music, P.O. Box 6127, Albany, CA 94706 USA).
Cedar Walton/ Curtis Fuller/ Bob Berg/ Sam Jones/ Billy Higgins
'Eastern Rebellion 3' Timeless SPJ 143

AROUND THE WORLD

MILES DAVIS

Hill Auditorium, Ann Arbor, Michigan
September 19, 1981

The intense interest generated by Miles Davis's return to public view this year is not at all surprising. Miles has been a major, perhaps even dominant force in the development of the music for over three decades. His five-year silence has (paradoxically) only lengthened the shadow he casts. The return — a June warmup in Boston for a July Newport concert, followed by a series of appearances in the US and Japan — generated the expected flood of hype (Miles even got a "bio" in the supermarket weekly ***People***), along with reviews ranging from stellar to less than fecal.

We missed Miles's Detroit concert in August, but caught him in a September 19 Eclipse production at Ann Arbor's "Hill Auditorium". Davis brought his regular group — Bill Evans, soprano and tenor saxophones; Mike Stern, guitar; Marcus Miller, bass; Al Foster, drums; and Nino Cinelu, congas. They did two sets of about forty minutes each, three compositions per set. Davis now has a radio transmitter on his horn, enabling him to wander about the stage like an obsessed insomniac. The sound system worked perfectly, for once.

I approached the concert with deliberately low expectations — illness after all had kept Miles from touching his horn for almost four years. I was pleasantly surprised — the band is good (although not yet the equal of past groups), the music interesting, the players above average. The style is a sort of jazz-inflected funk, close to the music of the last band Miles led in 1976. Miles can still create moments of greatness — the first set's ***My Man's Gone Now*** had several, in the sparse theme statement (in 4/4) and in Miles's doubletime solo. The unknown title that opened the second set (with an R&B flavor that became straight-ahead swing) had those moments as well, both in Miles's open horn work and in Bill Evans's tenor playing.

Evans (no relation to the late pianist) has an excellent command of both horns. His playing has much of Coltrane about it (a characteristic of Miles's last few saxophonists); his age (23) suggests that greater individuality may come later. He also plays excellent piano (demonstrated at Miles's command on the first tune of the second set), a fact that will complicate future Miles Davis discographies. Foster needs no introduction; he is a valuable asset, at times prodding Miles the way his illustrious predecessors used to do. Miller, a veteran of numberless soul recordings, provides the band with a solid backbone. Stern was appropriately loud and whining on the funk compositions, but showed that he has jazz roots as well in a bop-pish solo on the second set's first tune. Only Cinelu was a disappointment, adequate but nothing special.

I probably enjoyed the performance more because it was by Miles Davis and because it's nice to have him back again (Miles obviously enjoyed it too — he even returned to take a bow). The band's promise may still outweigh its substance, but if Miles is back to stay, that promise may quickly be fulfilled. ***— David Wild***

IMAGINE THE SOUND

A Jazz Film
Produced and directed by Ron Mann and Bill Smith.

Jazz music has had, at best, an uneasy relationship with the world of cinema. The early

MILES DAVIS (photograph by Dac Dang)

films were strictly designed as entertainment and were stereotyped in their attitudes – both musically and racially. "Jammin' The Blues" was probably the first film to present the music visually as art. However, this film and many others from that period were artificial; the music was recorded separately and the performers had to become actors.

It is only in the past decade that some serious attempt has been made to produce films which depict some aspect of the music and the art with any kind of real honesty and integrity. These have been, in general, either nostalgic glimpses into the past ("Born To Swing", "The Last Of The Blue Devils") or simply filmed documentaries of live performances by musicians (and ideally suited for television).

Imagine The Sound is much more profound. It is a brilliantly filmed and edited portrait of both the four musicians (Paul Bley, Bill Dixon, Archie Shepp and Cecil Taylor) and the philosophies of the music as perceived by these people. It combines performance with their clearly articulated ideas in such a smooth manner that there can be no doubt as to the purpose of their music.

In a very subtle way, too, Imagine The Sound confirms the historical importance of the jazz movement of the 1960s and the major contributions of John Coltrane and Ornette Coleman to the developments of that time. It is the period when all four of the musicians portrayed in this movie emerged as artists of major stature – even if their audience was minimal at that time.

This is the historical focus of Imagine The Sound – the starting point from which the film takes off on a kaleidoscopic journey through the widely different psyches and musical ideas of these four musicians. The individuality of the artist is constantly being affirmed by the performances and statements of these men; each one has his own special way of approaching the music. While none of them are in direct communication with each other (each interview and performance was a separate entity originally) there is a tremendous feeling of mutual respect even though there are areas of wide disagreement between the four.

The music played by each of these musicians is mirrored in their dialogue. Paul Bley is cooly clinical as he analyses the steps taken to free the music from the conventions of the past, and this is reflected in the preciseness of his piano style; Bill Dixon blusters and bluffs his way through a torrent of words as he describes his particular nirvana and it seems as if he is struggling for the same plateau every time he plays his trumpet; Archie Shepp is the distiller of the jazz tradition and his clearly articulated concern for the music is crucial to his performances. It is only when he recites one of his graphic poems that he steps over the edge into another emotional dimension; Cecil Taylor's complex sentence structure and thought processes are as precise, positive and meaningful as his virtuosic piano playing.

All of the above would mean nothing if the film's producers were insensitive to the music. Fortunately, though, there is as much care and understanding in the production as there is in the performance. The camera work is breathtaking and the editing is wonderfully apt. The rhythmic pulse of the music flows through the film without interruption.

Ultimately, though, the film belongs to Cecil Taylor. His genius dominates every frame in which he appears. To view his awesome approach to the music at such close quarters is a marvelous experience and the mental, physical and expressive dimensions of his music are laid out before the viewer.

Imagine The Sound is a major film about four major musicians of our time. Historically, jazz music has been a difficult experience to comprehend once it moves forward to another generation. Imagine The Sound is a perfect way to make that entry into a new world. For those who grew up with Paul Bley, Bill Dixon, Archie Shepp and Cecil Taylor in the 1960s this film is an affirmation that their art has survived its time, to become a permanent part of the music's vocabulary. *– John Norris*

AMERICA

BALTIMORE – Pianist Art Tatum, Jr., has been appearing around town since coming to Baltimore in April after seven years in Africa. He played at the Waxter Center on September 15. Like his dad, Art Jr. goes in for rippling arpeggios and ornate decorative fills, but he avoids the elder Tatum's complex reharmonizations and sudden excursions into distant keys. He never wanders far from the melody of whatever standard tune he's playing, embellishing rather than truly improvising. His renditions are invariably short. The 56-year old pianist studied with Fats Waller and Teddy Wilson, but next to his father his main influence seems to be Monk, particularly when he plays scalar runs that leap up the keyboard and then skip back down to end with a bang. Tatum has a repertoire of "thousands" of popular songs and hymns, and plans to record a set of hymns shortly.

Guitarist Johnny Copeland is a Texas bluesman who's been around for awhile, but is suddenly enjoying a surge of popularity. He brought his septet to No Fish Today on September 13. On one solo, Copeland showed he could play superb, stinging guitar, employing extreme dynamic contrasts and vocal inflections, but most of the time he's unspectacularly competent and thoroughly entrenched in the blues mainstream. No matter; blues is a music of feeling, not technique, and Copeland puts his heart into his playing and singing, and into solid songwriting in the best metaphorical blues tradition. His saxophonist, Joe Rigby, is one of the rare players at home in electric blues and the new improvised music – how many blues saxists can you hear standing around discussing the merits of Jimmy Lyons? (Rigby toured Europe with Cecil Taylor in 1977, and has worked with Ted Curson). In his sopranino and soprano playing, one could hear traces of sound-sheets Coltrane (though he could make the smaller horn sound uncannily like a trumpet). Despite episodes of free-jazz squalling, his alto and tenor revealed the influence of Junior Walker, who for good or ill may now be a more widely imitated tenorist than Coltrane himself.

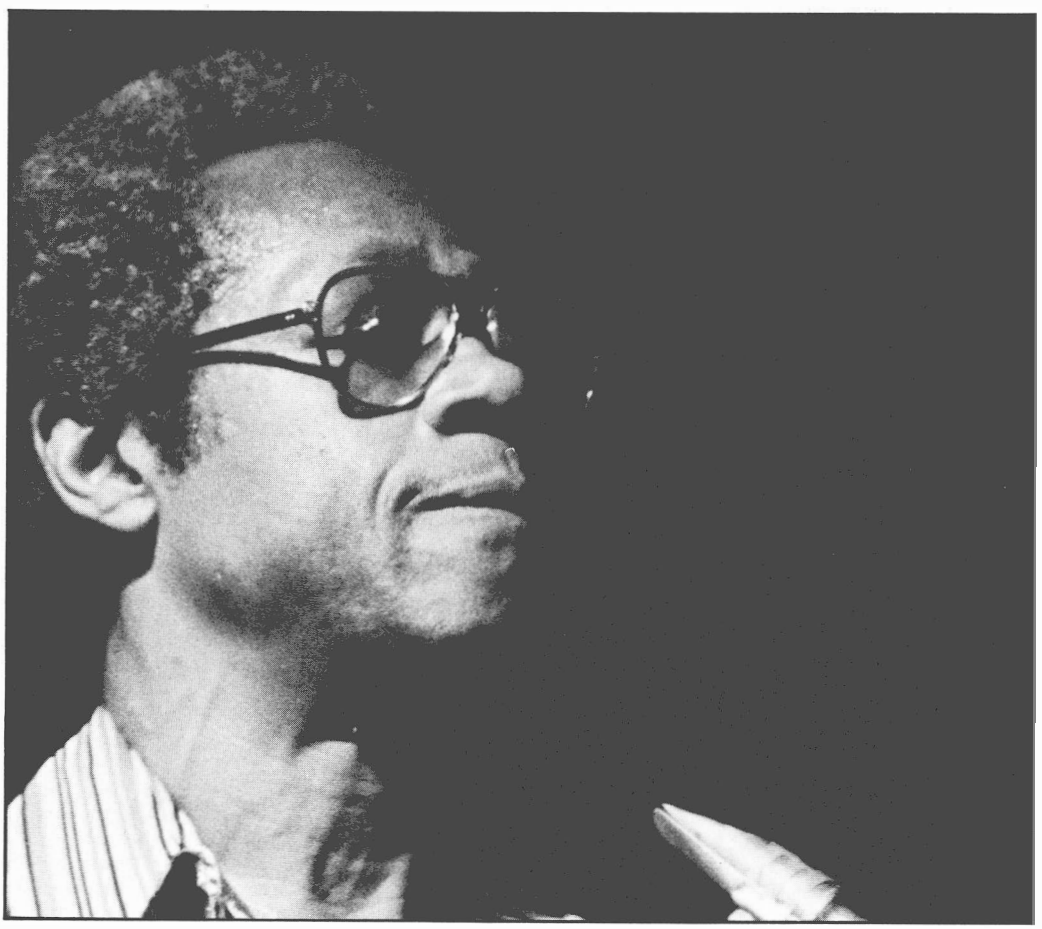
Baltimore got its first look at the German free scene on October 12, when the quartet of guitarist Hans Reichel, reedists Rudiger Carl and Ernst-Ludwig Petrowsky (probably the best-known East German free player) and drummer/anarchist Sven-Ake Johansson played at Johns Hopkins. Carl said it was the worst they'd ever played, owing to travel fatigue. Nevertheless, they sounded great, settling into workable grooves with enviable ease, and always moving on to a new situation before an old one

had been exhausted. Their music was composed of equal parts of passion and whimsy, and ranged from mid-sixties free jazz to Bavarian beer-hall music to melodic lyricism. There was an evocative, strongly visual element to their performance, mostly due to the antics of Johansson, who'd wander from his drum kit to demolish a phone book, or sandpaper the walls, or dump piles of metal hardware from a few feet up onto the polished wood floor. Periodically he'd remember he was the group's drummer, and would return to his kit with an innocent look on his face as if he'd been a good boy all along.

Sign of the times? The Bandstand, formerly a bebop club with ridiculously steep drink prices, is now a successful pool room with 60-cent mixed drinks. — *Kevin Whitehead*

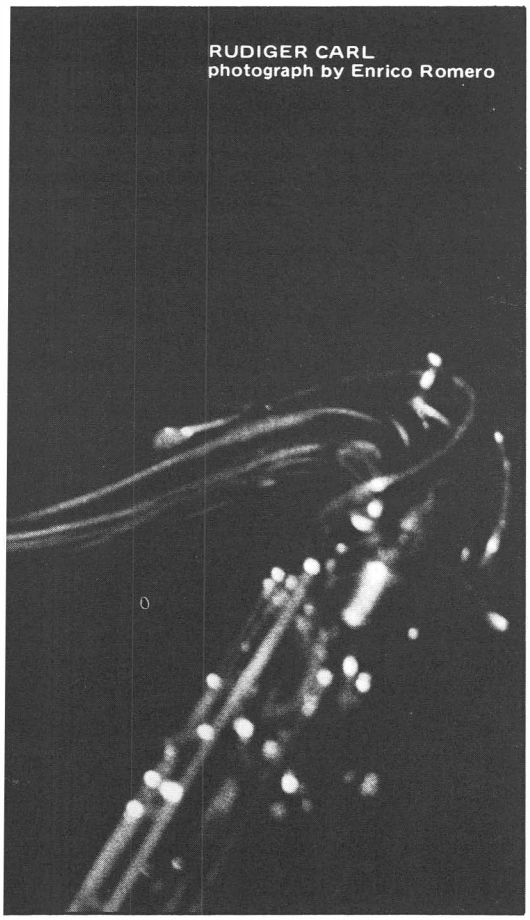
*** BULLETIN ***
AN APPEAL FOR ASSISTANCE

BASSIST DAVE HOLLAND HAS BEEN SERIOUSLY ILL. HE HAS NOW FULLY RECOVERED PHYSICALLY — BUT NOT FINANCIALLY, FROM THE HUGE COSTS OF BEING TREATED BY THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ESTABLISHMENT.
CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DAVE HOLLAND HOSPITAL FUND MAY BE MADE BY CHEQUE OR MONEY ORDER TO
DAVE HOLLAND
P.O. BOX 52 - MT. MARION
N.Y. 12456 - USA

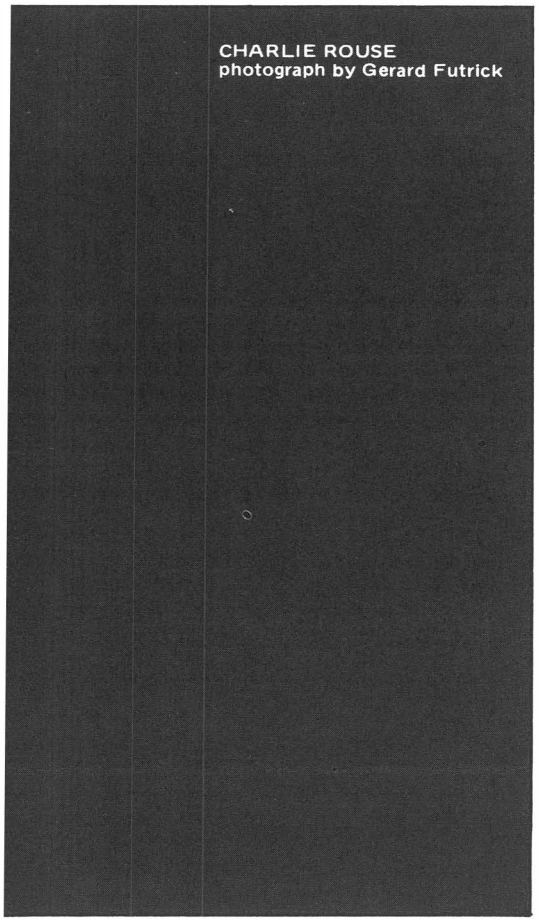


LOS ANGELES — The clarinet obbligato on ***High Society*** comes from a piccolo solo that Alphonse Picou transcribed to the clarinet. And in the Dixieland world if you can't play ***High Society*** well then forget it — this from Joe Darensbourg who I noticed had no trouble with the tricky piece at all, and then went on to knock us out with his mastery of the slap-tongue clarinet (he occasionally does it on the soprano sax) technique of olde, where the notes come popping out of the horn. Joe was quite popular in this city during the '50s with his Dixie Flyers band and even now still flies under that banner in octet groups that include at various times Bill Campbell, Sid Horowitz, or Gideon Honoré, piano; Phil Stevens, bass; Bill Stump or Dick Cary, trumpet; Chuck Conklin, cornet; Ray Hall, Gene Washington or Nick Fatool, drums; Gene Lebeaux, Phil Gray, Abe Lincoln or Al Jenkins, trombone; Red Murphy or Nappy Lamare, banjo; and Joe on clarinet, soprano and vocals. Last year Joe released on his own Red Stick Records an album of radio broadcasts from his days at the Lark during the mid-'50s here in L.A. with the original band, "Joe Darensbourg Remembers His Dixie Flyers". Available from him, along with several other records, at 22233 Avenue San Luis, Woodland Hills, California 91364.

At the Maiden Voyage this summer was an NPR taping of three groups. Charles Moore and The Eternal Wind Orchestra played an atmospheric music similar to Moore's work in Detroit with Kenny Cox on two old Blue Note albums. Trumpeter Moore now resides in L.A. Next was the debut of Noah Young's trio Erotic Zone who performed some of the modern-most music to be heard in this city. With Noah on bass,



RUDIGER CARL
photograph by Enrico Romero



CHARLIE ROUSE
photograph by Gerard Futrick

Fred Stofflet on drums, and Toni Marcus on violin, viola and stoviola. The third act had just arrived in town that afternoon by car from NYC with drummer Clifford Barbaro and hooked up with Tony Dumas, bass and Bill "Sunduza" Henderson, piano, to fill out this hot Charles Tolliver Quartet, whew!

Caught the Teddy Edwards Big Band there at the Maiden Voyage. Teddy's manner of conducting not unlike Dizzy's. His horn has completely become second nature to him, he dances with it, a bebop pas de deux, man and tenor saxophone..... Trombonist Phil Ranelin performed there as well with his quartet of Billy Childs, John B. Williams and Sherman Ferguson.

At the L.A. Press Club, 600 N. Vermont was a double bill with the Buddy Collette Quintet which included special guest Fred Katz, cello & piano; Paul Humphrey, drums, Nathan East, bass, Llew Mathews, piano (this is the guy who writes those great string arrangements for Buddy). Tunes by Collette and Mathews, ***My Funny Valentine***, and an involved composition for tenor sax and piano by Katz entitled ***Hy-the-Man***, a recent opus from Fred's ever-flowing pen. The Kenny Burrell Quintet was next using Llew Mathews again on piano; Buck Clarke, congas; Sherman Ferguson, drums; Louis Spears, bass; and later sitting in Buddy Collette and alto saxophonist Hank DeVega, long-time participant in the Gerald Wilson Orchestra. Burrell as ever, and with one of the baddest ***Happy Birthday Blues*** I've ever heard.

New vibist on the local set, Rickey Kelly has self-produced his first album "My Kind of Music" (8312 Beverly Blvd., L.A. Calif. 90048), which has a straight-ahead groove with aesthetics grounded in the hard bop era. Billy Higgins is on the date and has also made a few gigs with Kelly, some with alto sax Bobby Watson. Reedman Charles Owens is to be found here leaving behind some solid blowing. A wholly legitimate offering and document of local affairs.

Over the last couple of years here Russell Jacquet has kept busy releasing albums of his and Illinois' music, mostly live from the last three decades. Four albums are available so far with appearances by Kenny Burrell, Oscar Pettiford, Cecil Payne, Milt Buckner, Gerry Mulligan, and more. JRC Records, 1311 W. 35th Place, L.A. California 90007.

Sutra has released Bobby Shew's second album "Class Reunion" and a related venture with the Shew group saxist Gordon Brisker, "Collective Consciousness", utilizing the first band as personified by the presence of drummer Dick Berk. The third Shew album will have Roy McCurdy who has been with the group since the spring. — ***Mark Weber***

PHILADELPHIA — It seems that just like the economy, the jazz scene in the Philadelphia and south central Pennsylvania area fluctuates with much uncertainty. But unlike the economy, the music scene has been showing very promising signs of recovery.

The Ripley Music Hall in Philadelphia has recently presented Ornette Coleman and Prime Time, following that up with the Guitar Giants (Barney Kessel, Herb Ellis and Charlie Byrd). On the same bill was the Zoot Sims Quartet featuring Jimmy Rowles. Also scheduled at the Ripley for the end of November were Sonny Rollins and Larry Coryell.

Ex Art Blakey-Max Roach bassist Jymie Merritt fronted an excellent quartet at Drexel University in August. The group consisted of

Odean Pope on reeds, Colmar Duncan piano and Newman T. Baker in the percussion department. Charlie Rouse was also on hand with Lonnie Hillyer, a trumpet player this writer hasn't seen since his days at the old Five Spot with Charles Mingus. Rouse's rhythm section had Harry Whitaker on piano, Arthur Harper on bass and Mickey Roker on drums.

The Wilbur Ware Institute, in co-operation with the Painted Bride Art Centre, presented two of Detroit's living legends. Pianists Barry Harris and Tommy Flanagan in duet. It was far and away some of the best piano heard in these parts in a while. They were ably assisted by Lisle Atkinson on bass and Vernell Fournier on drums. Each pianist played solo, in duet and with the rhythm section. It was indeed an evening to remember.

After a long absence, Geno's Empty Fox Hole has been putting some concerts together. They recently presented Sun Ra and plan to have "Drums Inter-Actuel" featuring Ed Blackwell, Dennis Charles, Steve McCall and the fantastic Sunny Murray. As an added bonus, vibist Khan Jamal, bassist Wilbur Morris and reedman Byard Lancaster will be featured. Incidentally, Byard has moved back to Philadelphia and plans on doing some things locally. Khan Jamal, also a local musician, has recently been working with Ronald Shannon Jackson and Jemeel Moondoc.

Mt. Gretna, a small resort area in the mountains southwest of Reading, Pa., presented a great Labor Day weekend festival of music in a lovely but unlikely setting, featuring Helen Merrill, Jack & Roy, and Dave Brubeck.

Speaking of unlikely settings, Egad, a performing space in Allentown, presented guitarists Fred Frith and Hans Reichel. Reichel, from Germany, performed with a quartet including Rudiger Carl and Ernst Ludwig Petrowsky, reeds, and Sven-Ake Johansson on percussion.

Haverford College in Bryn Mawr brought in Sam Rivers and his current quartet on October 31. It's the first time Sam has been heard in these parts in some time. Yes, things are certainly looking up musically in this area but, just like the gloomy world situation, things could change overnight. — ***Gerard Futrick***

SAN FRANCISCO — My deadline this month finds most of the big events a few days in the future, beginning with the culminating events of the SF International KJAZ Festival. Scheduled to appear at the new, spectacular Davies Symphony Hall are Dave Brubeck with Cal Tjader (with Eugene Wright on bass), the Modern Jazz Quartet, the James Leary Orchestra, Mel Torme, Mel Lewis and the Jazz Orchestra with Art Pepper, and Terumasa Hino. An "Evening with Chick Corea" will include Joe Henderson, Miroslav Vitous, Roy Haynes, Gary Burton and possibly others. Afternoon concerts at Herbst Theatre will feature the Cecil Taylor Unit, United Front, Jack DeJohnette's Special Edition (with Chico Freeman), Jessica Williams, and Larry Vuckovich.

Additional Festival events include a series of films at the Pacific Film Archive in Berkeley, workshops at Keystone Korner with such artists as Jerome Richardson and Bobby Hutcherson, and late night jams at the Terrace Room of the Fairmont Hotel with the rhythm section of George Cables, James Leary, and Eddie Marshall. Free concerts throughout October featured such Bay Area artists as Ed Kelly, Bishop Norman Williams, Mary Watkins, Benny Velarde, Rasul Siddik's Now Artet, Eddie Henderson and many others.

Simultaneously the SF International Film Festival is offering several new jazz films, including "Imagine the Sound" and studies of Jackie McLean and Joe Albany, Keystone Korner is presenting Dexter Gordon (with Jessica Williams and John Abercrombie playing duets opposite), and the Great American Music Hall is presenting Ornette Coleman (with his group Prime Time) in his first Bay Area appearance since 1974.

So much activity at one time, if unusual, celebrates the current health of jazz in the Bay Area. Stan Getz has made himself thoroughly at home since moving here several months ago. He's played two two-week engagements at Keystone Korner (the first commemorated in the Concord LP "The Dolphin"), participated in an all-star jam with Art Blakey, and joined his old boss Woody Herman at the Concord Festival. Other recent arrivals in the area are bassist Israel Crosby and guitarist John Abercrombie. Now what was that rumor about Cecil?...

The musical "One Mo' Time" had a successful run at the On Broadway. Featured in the cast, of course, is the legendary trumpeter Jabbo Smith, who also marked his SF stay with a special performance at Earthquake McGoon's with the Turk Murphy band. Cat plays a mighty mean lead.....

The Count Basie Orchestra performed at UC Berkeley on Oct. 16. On the 16th and 17th, Mary Watkins presented a special concert at SF's Herbst Theatre. Partially funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, the concert featured several works for a 40-piece orchestra made up almost entirely of women, including strings and members of the Maiden Voyage Big Band of Los Angeles.

CECIL TAYLOR (photograph by Bill Smith)

Performers at the Great American Music Hall have included Betty Carter, Sonny Rollins, Toots Thielemans, Charles Lloyd with the remarkable young pianist Michel Petrucciani, Herbie Mann and Ransom Wilson in a "Flute Summit," McCoy Tyner, and the indefatigable Max Roach. A "Women in Music" series included a live recording session by the Carla Bley Band, Carmen McRae, Teresa Trull, Alive, and Flora Purim with Airto. A "Tribute to Mary Lou Williams" featured four fine Bay Area pianists, Jessica Williams, Susan Muscarella, Martha Young, and Mary Watkins.

In addition to its usual top-flight programming (Steve Kuhn and Sheila Jordan, Kenny Burrell opposite Dave Liebman with Richie Beirach, the Akiyoshi-Tabackin Big Band, Richie Cole with Big Nick Nicholas, Sonny Stitt with John Handy and Cedar Walton, etc., etc. Keystone Korner has been presenting a Monday Night jam series co-sponsored with Bay Area Loft Jazz. Some people are saying that the music here is the hottest in town.

— J. N. Thomas

TEXAS — In retrospect, 1981 has been the busiest and most rewarding year so far for daagnim (dallas association for avant-garde and neo-impressionistic music). A 3-week residency by Ramsey Ameen (formerly violinist with the Cecil Taylor Unit, now CMS faculty) started off the year, complete with a major concert and videotape by KERA-TV to be distributed to Japanese and European television.

March and April brought a new album by daagnim Records - "Music from Ancient Texts" by Kings In Exile - and nine concerts by the cream of Dallas's creative musicians: Betel Bill Emery and Friends, Chris DeRose-Ed Smith Duo, Tawasakaba Burnett Anderson Trio, poet Tim Seibles, the Arabic Beledi Ensemble, Dennis Gonzalez solo, Bob Ackerman-Alex Camp Duo, Kim Corbet's Predecessor, and the Brian Schober/Dennis Gonzalez Pipe Organ-Trumpet Duo. The series was capped off by a magnificent concert featuring Max Roach with Dennis Gonzalez and friends. The response by the Dallas audience to the 2½ hours of New Jazz was unprecedented and overwhelming. Mr. Roach also presented a workshop for area musicians, and was feted at an open reception at the KERA studios.

July saw (daagnim co-founder) Gonzalez attending the Pori Jazz Festival in Finland to establish contacts for daagnim and daagnim-Records, and to interview Finnish avant-Euro-jazzers Edward Vesala and Juhani Aaltonen, as well as Polish trumpeter Tomasz Stanko for his radio program "Miles Out" which features the "New" side of jazz and The Music in general. October was topped off by daagnim's first excursion into the classical avant-garde with a concert of modern guitar music played by Swami Dev Singh Khalsa at SMU's Caruth Auditorium.

In November, daagnim is releasing its fourth album — "Kukkia" by Dennis Gonzalez and Friends (some of the music was recorded at the Max Roach concert in March) which will be available from daagnim, 1127 N. Clinton, Dallas, TX 75208 or the New Music Distribution Service, 500 Broadway, New York, NY 10012. People interested in contacting daagnim artists for concerts, etc., should write to the Dallas address or call 214-941-2675 preferably after 5 PM CST.

New Jazz/New Music artists interested in having their music played over the airwaves in Dallas (or possible concerts) send all promos and info to Dennis Gonzalez, KERA-FM, 3000 Harry Hines, Dallas, Texas 75201.

— Birk Resendaag

AUSTRALIA

MELBOURNE — Earlier this year, Oscar Peterson toured with Joe Pass, Niels Pedersen and drummer Martin Drew. Their tour enjoyed great success, but was unfortunate in its effect on other tours; in Melbourne, over 4,000 tickets were sold for Peterson, but in adjacent weeks the Dave Brubeck Quartet sold less than 1500, while neither Old And New Dreams nor The New York Jazz Giants could draw 1000.

Old And New Dreams gave only one concert in Melbourne, hampered by jetlag and sound problems, but gave more than a little of their magic on a program of Ornette tunes and a few originals. Charlie Haden's solo on "Song For The Whales" was especially memorable.

The New York Jazz Giants was a group put together especially for the tour, comprised of Nat Adderley, cornet; Frank Foster, tenor; Slide Hampton, trombone; Ted Dunbar, guitar; Mickey Tucker, piano; Walter Booker, bass; and Michael Carvin, drums. I heard them several times, playing mainly original material, with each man's experience in and dedication to his art shining through each performance.

Australia now has its own jazz magazine: ***Jazz*** (The Australasian Contemporary Music Magazine), published by Sidney entrepreneur Peter Brendle's Entertainment Unlimited Pty Ltd. It is published bi-monthly, and is very attractively presented, with a fair amount of information from around Australia and New Zealand, and of course a strong emphasis on the Sydney scene and touring artists. Four issues have been produced; for further information, write to Jazz Magazine, P.O. Box 294, Darlinghurst 2010, Sydney, Australia.

Speaking of Peter Brendle, he recently returned from a trip to the USA, where he says he had a lot of fruitful discussions with people like George Wein and Carl Jefferson; hopefully, that will result in a year-round series of tours here, rather than a new-year saturation followed by often months at a time without any tours.

Greg Quigley of the Australian Jazz Federation has bassist Todd Coolman and drummer Ed Soph here as teachers-in-residence at the Sydney Conservatory's Jazz Studies Course. He took advantage of their presence by touring them with reedman Eddie Daniels and pianist Mike Nock. Their performances were quite good; Daniels was convincing on tenor in a busy, post-Trane style, less interesting on clarinet and flute; Nock was good enough, but immeasurably better when performing his own material or just playing solo. As he later pointed out, "If I only wanted to express myself through bebop, I wouldn't bother writing my own songs."

Horst Liepolt, for so long the only active promoter of Australian jazz, left Sydney for New York in March, hoping to establish himself on the business side of the scene there; no doubt his success with such events as the Sydney Jazz Festivals of the last few years and the Art Ensemble of Chicago's tour here will help his reputation there. Like any businessman, Liepolt will have left at least some enemies behind, but also a lot of respect for the work he did in the '50s, '60s and '70s to promote Australian jazz and jazz in Australia, with ventures including jazz clubs like the legendary Jazz Centre 44,

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the magazine ***Jazz Down Under*** and 44 Records, which produced at least a few of the best jazz LPs in our discography.

Sydney pianist Serge Ermoll has paid tribute to Liepolt with his new LP "Dedication to Horst Liepolt" (JandaJazz 1002).... Vibist/composer John Sangster has signed a deal with EMI, who will distribute his new label, Rain-Forest Records.... Other local LPs that may be of interest are: "Mainly To Monterey" (Seven Records MLM 379) by the Young Northside Big Band, recorded by the group after its reportedly successful appearance at the Monterey Jazz Festival in 1979. The young players acquit themselves quite well, although the music shows more smoothness than character.... "Pyramid" (East 081) features a quartet of Bob Venier, David Hirschfelder, Roger McLachlan and David Jones playing original material in a fast, funky, flashy fusion style. — ***Adrian Jackson***

DENMARK

The Copenhagen Jazz Festival in July presented a host of fine Danish and American jazz musicians all over Copenhagen. Ernie Wilkins Almost Big Band, a rather new band with American and Danish top musicians, the Erling Kroner Tentet, Leif Johansson's Orchestra, the Jesper Thilo Quintet and Jorgen Emborg Quartet, were among the groups that could be heard at outdoor (and free) concerts.

The Montmartre — throughout the ten festival days a natural center of the activities, presented an outstanding program with, among others, Gil Evans' Orchestra, Dollar Brand and his quartet with Carlos Ward on saxophone (to me the highlight of the festival), Bennie Wallace with Eddie Gomez on bass and Alvin Queen on drums, Miroslav Vitous Quartet, Chico Freeman Quartet, Art Pepper Quartet with pianist Duke Jordan, and McCoy Tyner's group.

Chick Corea and Herbie Hancock played with their quartets at the Tivoli. I didn't hear Corea (with Joe Henderson, Gary Peacock and Roy Haynes) but went to hear a very disappointing Hancock (with Wynton Marsalis on trumpet and Ron Carter and Tony Williams).

To me (recently returned after one year in California), the jazz scene in Denmark now looks rather bad. Many clubs have closed or have changed their policies to feature rock or folk music. Another yearly festival, in Holstebro, goes on though, and drew about 2000 people during the last weekend of September. Besides many local bands and musicians, JASS in Holstebro presented Ernie Wilkins Almost Big Band, ragtime pianist Bob Darch, the Norwegian band Soyr with Kenny Wheeler on trumpet and flugelhorn, another Norwegian group, the Arvid Bastiansen Quartet and the fine singer Etta Cameron who performed with her own group (Jesper Thilo on tenor, Horace Parlan on piano, Klavs Hovman on bass and Bjarne Rostvold on drums). — ***Roland Baggenaes***

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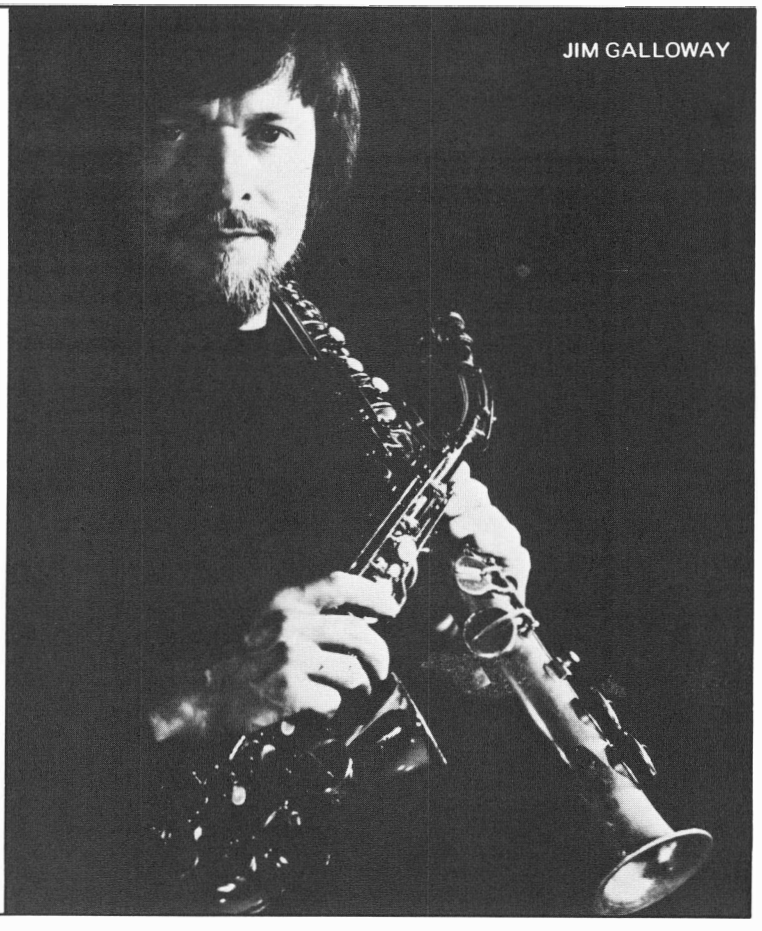

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DR. JAZZ CALENDAR

— *Citizen photo*

CHRIS PORTINARI DR. JAZZ

The Chateau Laurier is about half way through a $10 million renewal program, most of it so far not obvious to us locals because it has been spent on refurbishing rooms and corridors.

The Chateau, it seems, is about to change its image.

Bringing in Cliff Portinari as orchestra leader in the posh Canadian Grill will be regarded by some of the room's older supporters as being something like booking the Rolling Stones into a church.

Heavens Martha, the man doesn't even say: "A one, anna two . . . "

Portinari is jazz. Although he is now the leader of the Canadian Grill Orchestra (if six pieces make an orchestra) he still on Sunday nights fronts a group called Dr. Jazz. The orchestra works

It is all new with brilliant full colour portraits of: COLEMAN HAWKINS, STAN GETZ, JACK TEAGARDEN, TOMMY DORSEY, OSCAR PETERSON, BENNY CARTER, JOHNNY HODGES, BUDDY RICH, DAVE BRUBECK, PAUL DESMOND, COOTIE WILLIAMS, ROY ELDRIDGE, ERROLL GARNER, GERRY MULLIGAN, PEE WEE RUSSELL, SIDNEY BECHET, STAN KENTON, EDDIE LANG & JOE VENUTI. This collector set is representative of some of the influential stylists. and will have twice as much historical information.

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P.S. The above photo and clipping is from the Ottawa Citizen. I take this opportunity to welcome you to Canada's Capital and hope that you drop in to the Chateau Laurier Hotel to say hello

Chris Portinari

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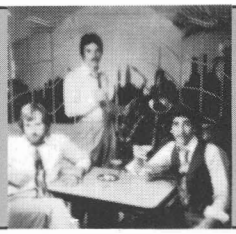

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Abbey Lincoln

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John Neptune

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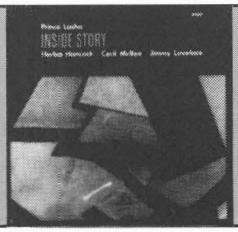

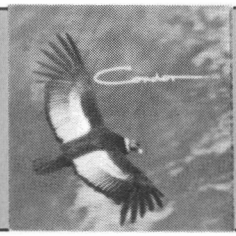

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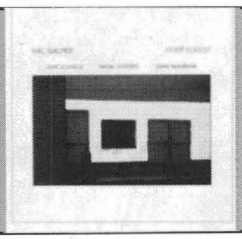

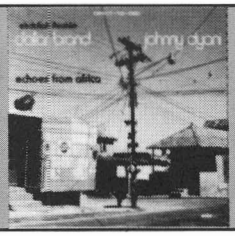

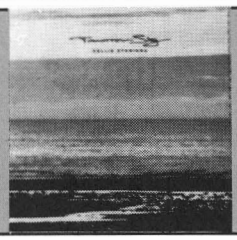

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and two distinctive tributes to Bird . . .

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Live At Boomers IC 6024
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Time in Paris IC 7010
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May Dance IC 6065
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Wail IC 7021
THAD JONES, It Only
Happens Every Time IC 1082
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Live at Antibes IC 3020
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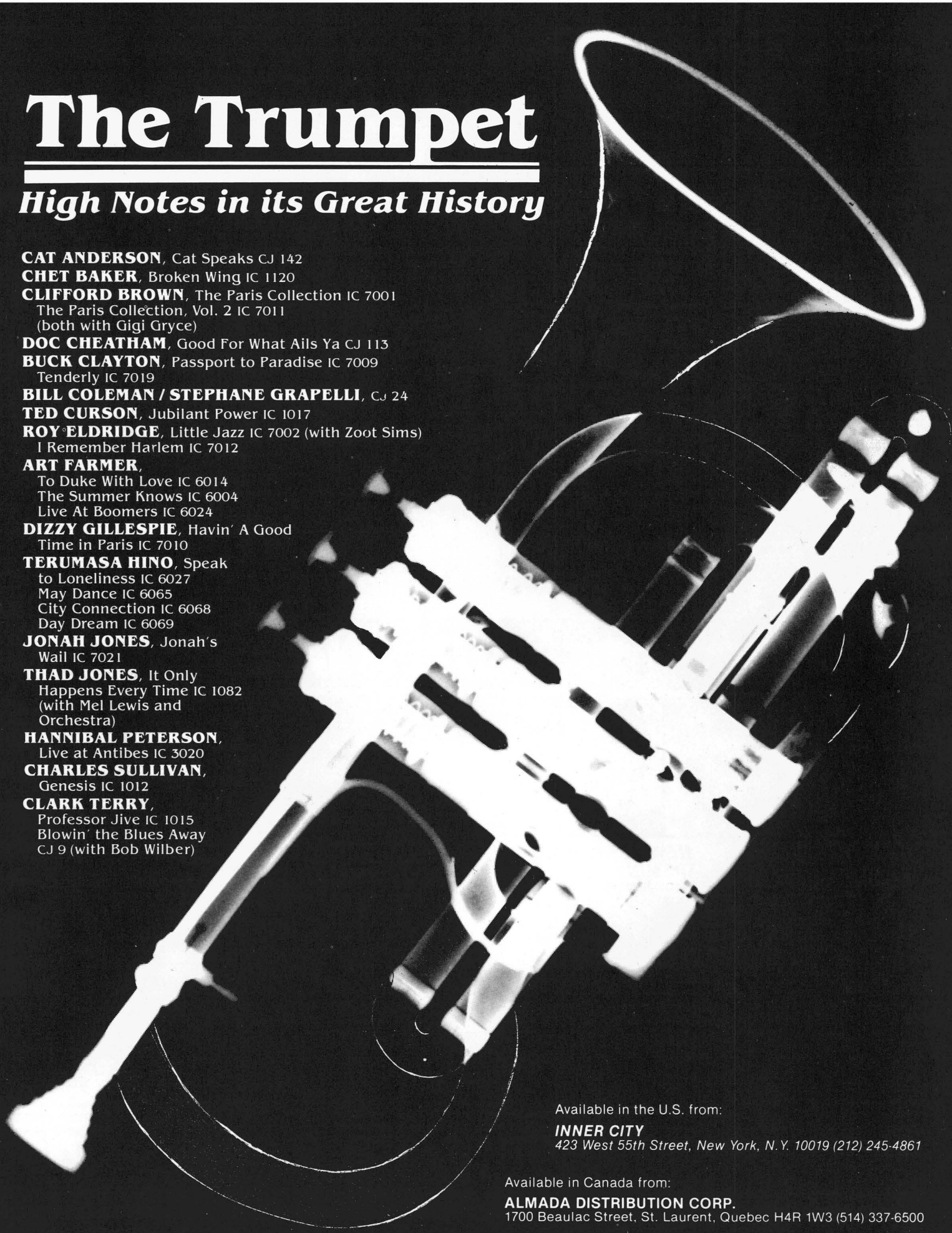
CJ 9 (with Bob Wilber)



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