CODA MAGAZINE

THE JAZZ MAGAZINE * ISSUE NUMBER 177 (1981) * TWO DOLLARS

MILT JACKSON · SHEILA JORDAN · KESHAVAN MASLAK · JAZZ LITERATURE · RECORD REVIEWS · AROUND THE WORLD

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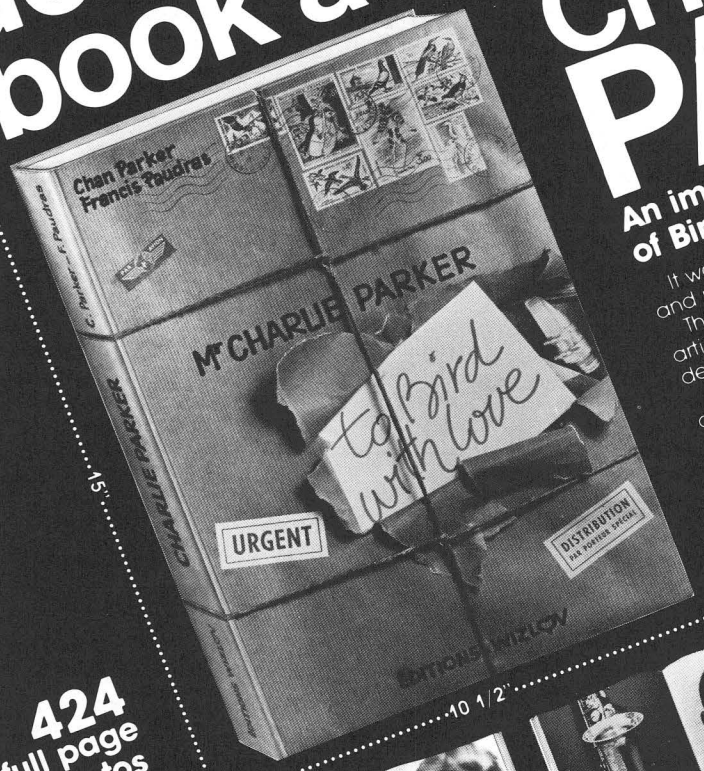

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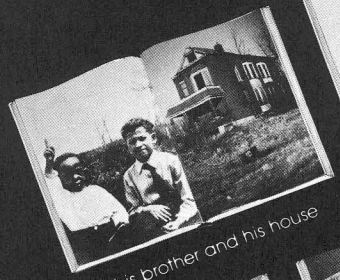
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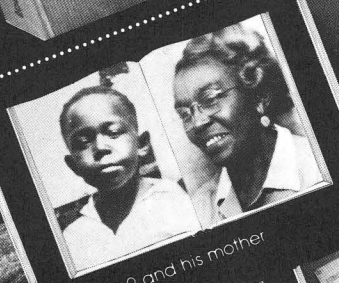
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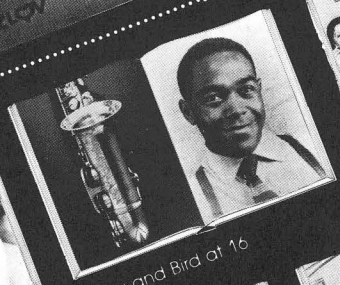
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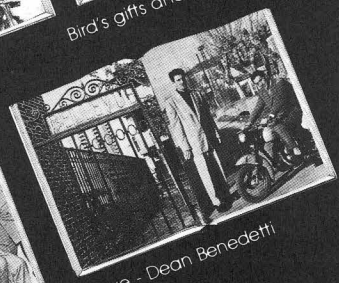
Bird's gifts and letters


Bird in Sweden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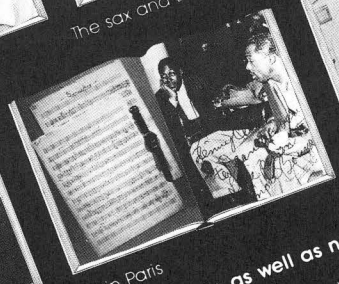
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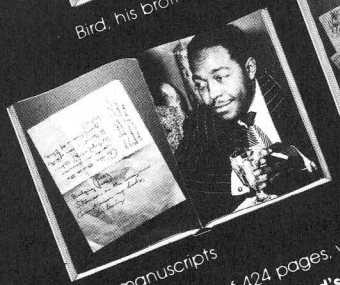
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CONTENTS

MILT JACKSON
An interview by Peter Danson..... page 4
SHEILA JORDAN
An interview by Roger Riggins..... page 8
KESHAVAN MASLAK
An interview by George Coppens..... page 10
JAZZ LITERATURE..... page 14
RECORD REVIEWS..... page 18
AROUND THE WORLD..... page 29

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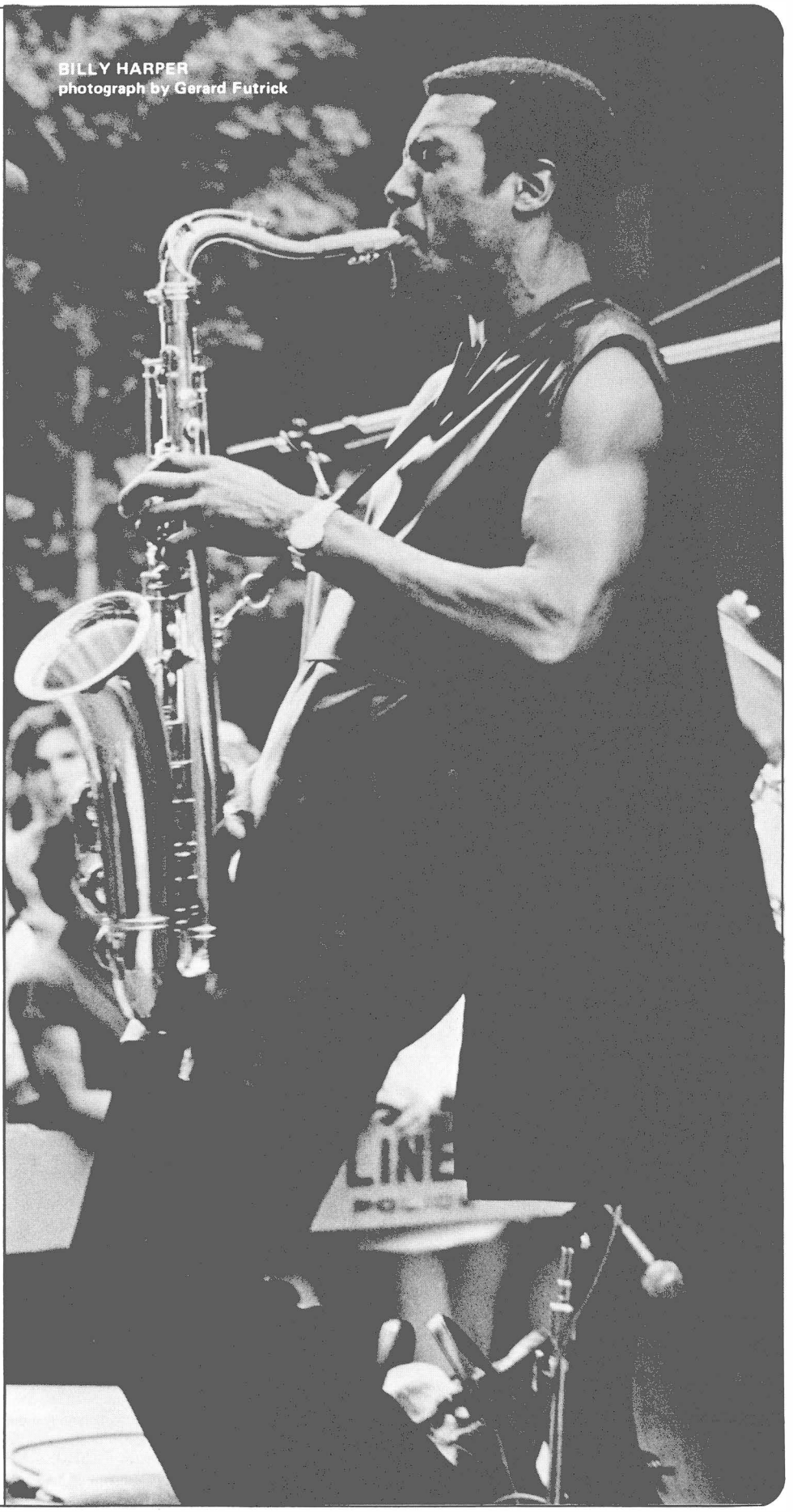


BILLY HARPER
photograph by Gerard Futrick

MILT JACKSON

MILT JACKSON: The first instrument that I ever played was guitar. Then I moved to the piano and to other instruments later.

PETER DANSON: When you were growing up did you hear Lionel Hampton? Was that before you started to play vibes?

M.J.: Yes, or right about the time I started. Which was in school, I guess in 1938.

P.D.: So Hampton wasn't necessarily an influence.

M.J.: No, because I started with the xylophone anyway. Then moved to the marimba. Then in 1939 I got interested in playing the vibraharp. I got my father to split with enough money for a down payment, which was $5.00 — can you dig that?

Anyway in 1940 Lionel Hampton came to Detroit and played at the Michigan State Fair. At that time he had some greats in the band, like Howard McGhee, Joe Newman. All the youngsters right out of college themselves. Dexter Gordon, Illinois Jacquet, Charlie Mingus. I was very impressed by the band that night and with Hamp. At that point I decided to play the instrument for a living.

P.D.: One thing about your playing is that your sound has a horn-like quality.

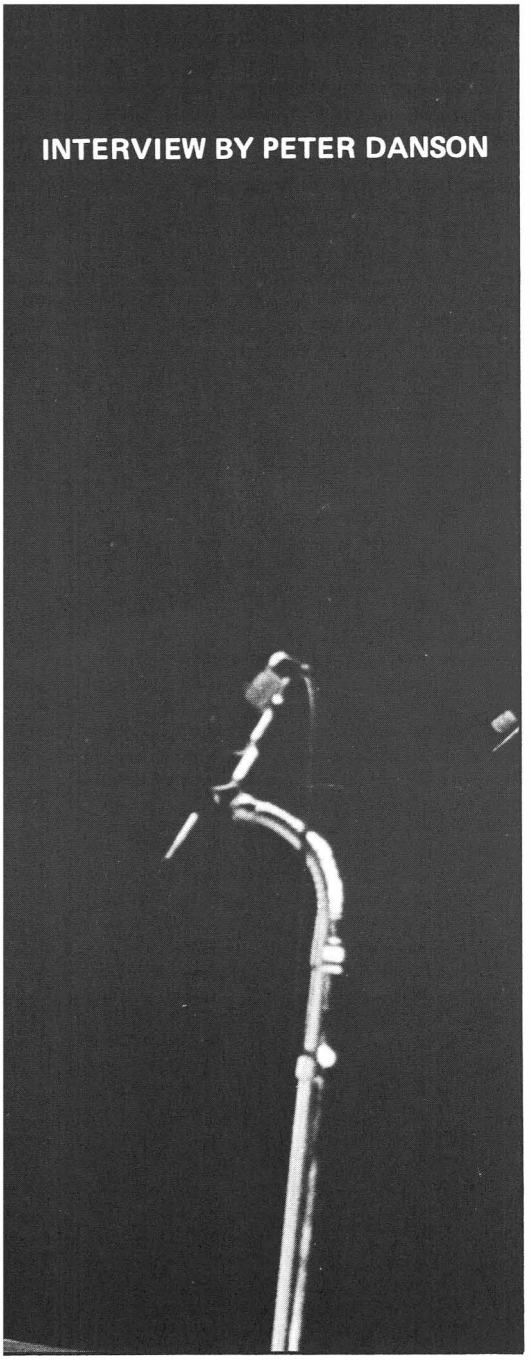
M.J.: It sings. Well, in terms of playing this was always the difference between my style and Lionel's. His influence was only in the influence of the instrument itself; I was very heavily and immediately influenced by the style of Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, as soon as I heard their music. My goal was to incorporate the same style of playing into that instrument.

In that time, Detroit was a very good town for music. Quite a number of good musicians came through Detroit. A number of them even came from other places and settled in Detroit. And many of them were born and raised there: Barry Harris, Kenny Burrell, Tommy Flanagan, Yusef Lateef, Lucky Thompson, Curtis Fuller, all of the Jones brothers. There was a musical scene similar to New York, where there were a lot of night clubs and most of the musicians were working.

P.D.: Art Blakey pointed out to me that in that period the music wasn't really thought of as "bebop". That name came afterwards. The music was changing, it was a continuing process. Dizzy and Bird were leading it and they just freed everybody....

M.J.: Another word... development, okay, any time something is developed, musically or otherwise, there is a new name for it. Because it's established as something new. I would really like to know the one person or persons responsible for the name. I've heard several rumours, but I don't know which one is correct. I think the one most likely to be responsible for it would be Kenny Clarke, because he revolutionized the music in terms of the time structure. Where it was a strict 4/4 beat, he changed it around and accented certain notes to make the feeling different. He definitely gets the credit for that, because he

INTERVIEW BY PETER DANSON



was the best and in fact still is — one of the few. Art Blakey is another who can still play 4/4 on the bass drum. Something very different. Most musicians don't even think about that today, let alone do it. These are really the master innovators. This is what I preach about all the time, because most of them are dead and gone and the youngsters will never get to learn about them first hand, only on records. That's tragic, and that's the reason for some of these other directions appearing in music: fusion or crossover or whatever else you have. You wouldn't have that if most of those musicians were still alive. I'm not saying you wouldn't have fusion; you'd have it, but it wouldn't be as popular. Jazz would be more popular and have more influence. Today you can't encourage a 16 or 17-year-old kid to come out here and play this music like I did. First of all, there are no short cuts, it's not easy and then they're not even interested. If they're looking at peers their own age, they're the ones that are making all the money, riding around in big limousines, not the jazz musicians. Most jazz musicians starve to death.

P.D.: The other thing that Art Blakey was saying was that revolution freed his playing. That's what it really meant to him; rather than any specific technique, bebop meant that he could play in the music more freely.

M.J.: Well, now we have to define the meaning of "freedom" in terms of the music. Your conception and my conception of freedom. Charlie Parker's music was freedom to my way of thinking, because that took him from one structure to another. The music they call freedom now is quite different.

Let's take Louis Armstrong through Roy Eldridge into Dizzy Gillespie. That music was a natural transition. Once we get to fusion or crossover, there's a separation there somewhere. There's a reason for that separation, and I say that it's musical quality. Ninety percent of the musicians playing this music don't have the musical quality that that music had. I tell them all that!

So I don't follow most of the young cats because most of them are not interested in the basic jazz feeling, as I would call it. Most of them are into another kind of area, I find value in everything; it's not to say that it's not valuable. To me there's not that much. I still go out of my way to find young musicians who are interested in jazz. Like that young pianist I have now, Johnny O'Neal. It's really amazing to find a piano player, 23 years old playing that type of music.

P.D.: But there are a lot of young musicians who aren't playing fusion music. There are a whole group of young musicians from Chicago; Anthony Braxton, the Art Ensemble, who to my mind take the tradition and play it as they hear it today. They're playing their own thing, but playing it with a great deal of respect for the past.

M.J.: Some of the music I have heard does have some value to it. I'm not saying it's all garbage. The little of it that's good stands out, because there's not that much of it. You can't substitute noise for musical quality. So many musicians turn the volume up and think they've got it. Musical quality has to be the most prominent thing.

P.D.: How did you come about exploring the subtleties of the vibes? You didn't play it like Hampton, you wanted to explore other possibilities. You have this rich vibrato sound....

M.J.: It is the vibrato. That comes from the fact that I approach it as a horn — and as a singer, which isn't by the way the style of singing I did when I started out singing jazz. The vibrato comes from the voice. It was just a question of exploring and finding the sound I wanted.

P.D.: I see you still have the Deagan — is that the old one?

M.J.: Yes, 1937. They don't make instruments like that today. They're like automobiles: if you had a 1937 Cadillac that was still in good shape, you could get five hundred thousand dollars for it, and you still wouldn't sell it.

P.D.: When you were with Kenny Clarke, John Lewis and Dizzy Gillespie in the late '40s, did you think that in the future you might form a group....

M.J.: Yes — in the big band, there were two writers, Tadd Dameron and Gil Fuller. Tadd wrote the more melodic, lyrical pieces, and all of the pretty stuff. Gil wrote the dynamic music, what was called the "hard-bop" stuff, which was pretty hard for the brass section: trumpet and trombone players will know what I mean. So one night Dizzy decided to give the brass a rest and just let the four of us play together. That gave me the chance to play as more than just a featured soloist with the band. It was such an instant success that it became a regular part of the program. So we decided that when we left that band we would form that same quartet, with Ray Brown on bass, John Lewis on piano, Kenny Clarke on drums and myself. However Ray was with Ella at the time so we couldn't hire him — we couldn't afford him, he was making too much money! So then we got Percy Heath. After the first year and a half Kenny left and was replaced by Connie Kay. The group remained like that for twenty of the twenty-two years, which is a record. By the way, someone's doing some research and it seems that I'm one of the five most-recorded artists in the business; that is, with different people — which is another record!

P.D.: What were your goals in forming the Modern Jazz Quartet?

M.J.: A level of quality, in the music and in several things related to the music. Being well-dressed, being on time, not taking care of these things were working against jazz musicians getting jobs. Ralph Gleason wrote in the ***San Francisco Chronicle*** the first time we appeared at The Blackhawk that the club owner was amazed: it was the first group he had ever booked that he didn't have to go look for between sets. That's an impression about jazz musicians that I go out of my way to disperse. Most people think we're all sex maniacs, alcoholics, dope addicts, but that has nothing to do with us. You can't judge the rest of us by the examples of one or of a few musicians.

P.D.: Did you resent the labels that developed? Like "chamber jazz", "third stream"...?

M.J.: No, there was no resentment on my part about that because it just proved that they really had no particular category they could put the music in. So they just found a name and stuck it there. The name doesn't matter; if you enjoy the music that's what counts. The critics are largely responsible for this. They've said, "This music is sophisticated, so therefore it isn't emotional." If you come in that night club tonight and I don't create some emotion with the music, you'll tell me not to come back again — because that's what I'm there for. For me to communicate with you, to stir up some emotion through the music, that's what it's about.

P.D.: One of the features of the Modern Jazz Quartet was its very flexible interplay, a spontaneous unity. How was that worked out in rehearsal?

M.J.: John (Lewis) worked that out; he was the musical director. He believed in a lot of the music being written. That helped me get my eyes together, because I wasn't a reader for many years. When I was a kid I could hear the music faster than the other kids in school could read it. Therefore it was like a handicap to me, to have to sit there watching them look at the paper while I had it in my head and could play it. In fact, a lot of times the teacher would have to get me to play it for them so they could figure out what it was they were reading. But I had to go back to that later on, because you have to know how to do that technically in order to compose or arrange.

P.D.: When Connie Kay replaced Kenny Clarke in the group, did that shift the musical balance?

M.J.: Not really. What the music basically

MILT JACKSON (photograph by Bill Smith/Onari)

needed was someone who kept good time. Connie was the closest to the kind of swing that Kenny had. That's why we hired Connie. We tried a lot of drummers before him.

The main difference was that Kenny was a lot up front. Connie is one of the few musicians content with staying in the background. He doesn't care much about solos at all, he just wants to sit back and swing, which is really important. As a drummer, you put a terrible limit on yourself — after that drum solo is played there's nothing left for you as far as jazz music is concerned except time. Once you've played your solo, that's it! I'm sure Art Blakey told you that too. If he didn't, he should have!

P.D.: Is there any musical project you would like to get together in the future?

M.J.: Not so much a musical project as a social project. I have the ambition to make enough money to buy my own television station, or buy time on a network station and make them play jazz music. The only reason they don't play it now is that the sponsors don't like jazz. But if I'm the sponsor, and I stress that it's got to be played, it will be played. That's how it happens. The same thing with radio. There has never been any network jazz on radio in the United States. There is in Canada, even, but never in the States; only at night. We had two coast-to-coast jazz shows, Symphony Sid and Sid McCoy from Chicago, but once they were gone, there were no others. There have never been any, in the history of the music, in the daytime. That would bring the music to kids. The only reason kids buy records is that they're conditioned by the music they hear during the day.

P.D.: You recently went on a tour of Japan with Canadian guitarist Ed Bickert. How did that come about — was it from your experiences playing with him in Toronto?

M.J.: Absolutely. His playing knocked me out so much that I decided to take him to Japan. People loved him over there — they'd love him anywhere.

People don't know about Ed Bickert because he's another one like Connie Kay — very quiet, not aggressive. If you're not aggressive people mistake what you do. He's one. He just sits there all night and plays but you've got to ***listen*** to what he's doing. Which is another thing that confuses our music: people in America are geared to go by what they see rather than what they hear. Going back to the minstrel days, that's something that has worked to destroy the music. You pay to come in to hear me play, not to see what I look like. To hell with what I look like! It has nothing to do with it — if you came in and enjoyed the music, you got your money's worth. A lot of people turn me off because they say, why don't you smile. I get real upset over that. You're not paying to see me smile. If there's a serious look on my face, there's a reason for it being there. People think that if you're not acting the fool and looking silly then you're not doing anything. In 1948, one of our greatest musicians was rated as such, but not for his playing. The only hint I'll give you was that he was a saxophone player. The reason was that he laid down on stage on his back, wearing a white suit, and people thought he was great. That had nothing to do with the music. It's the music that counts.

— Montreal, April 1980

Tape transcribed by George Hornaday.

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SHEILA JORDAN

INTERVIEW BY ROGER RIGGINS

SHEILA JORDAN (photograph by Nina Melis)

Sheila Jordan is another one of those artists who has a substantial underground reputation among her colleagues but is relatively little known by the general public. This is unfortunate, for aside from Jeanne Lee, she represents one of the most distinctive sounds in "Jazz."

Singer Jordan first came to prominence over eighteen years ago with a seminal recording on the Blue Note label entitled "Portrait of Sheila." It was this LP and her rendition of ***You Are My Sunshine*** on composer-theoretician George Russell's album "The Outer View" (done around the same time as the Blue Note date) which put her on the map as a force to be reckoned with in the then-blossoming cadre of New Stars making their way in the bohemia of over twenty years ago. Jordan has worked infrequently in the States since the dawn of the 60s when she was a regular participant on the coffeehouse circuit in the Village along with people like Cecil Taylor, Bill Dixon, Jimmy Giuffre and Paul Bley among others; but of late, partially due to the fine recording with pianist Steve Kuhn on ECM Records, "Playground," and somewhat due, too, to increased interest in the historical ramifications of the improvised form itself, the singer has been getting more American gigs and people seem to really enjoy and accept her brand of music.

This inter/view was done after the Steve Kuhn/Sheila Jordan Band (minus drummer Moses) had just worked the new New York supperclub, Greene Street.

ROGER RIGGINS: ***You came of age during the musical revolution of the 40s and 50s — what influence did the Bop Era have on your way of phrasing your music? Could it be said that the period was a crucial one in terms of your musical development?***

SHEILA JORDAN: Absolutely, everything about it was crucial to my development. Charlie Parker was it for me. I mean if I had never heard of Charlie Parker I doubt very seriously if I would have ever gotten into 'jazz' music. Perhaps I shouldn't say I wouldn't have gotten into it...that's the wrong way of saying it...I probably would have just gone another route. It would have taken me a longer time to really get into it...but Bird turned me right on to 'jazz.'

You see, I always sang. I've sung ever since I was three years old. I've always been a singer... I just love to sing. And I would say that Charlie Parker turned me on to all the musics but he really turned me on to bebop. Those are my roots.

You recorded a classic version of You Are My Sunshine on the seminal recording "The Outer View" with composer/theorist George Russell during the early sixties. How did that come about and just what was your working situation with Russell like at that time?

I met George at the Page Three, a coffee house that I was working at in the Village a couple of nights a week. He came in to see Steve Swallow, the bassist, and also to hear me because I think Steve and this pianist, Jack Reilly, had told George about me...I think that's how it went down although I'm not absolutely sure. Anyway, we met each other and went out and he wanted to know where I came from...he said, "I have to know where you came from to sing like that." So I took him back home to the coal mines, introduced him to my grandmother and he got to meet all the miners. We went into this one beer garden and this old miner asked me if I still sang ***You Are My Sunshine*** and I said, "No, I don't sing that anymore." I didn't mean that that's corny or anything, just that I hadn't sung it in a long time. So my grandmother suggested we should sit down and do it - so George played it and she didn't like the way he played it...so she told him to get up and she played it and we started to sing it. And then George said, "I've seen the miners...I've seen how poor everybody is, I've seen their struggle and I really feel I want to write something about this." But that's George Russell anyway, he's really into life and people and that's what his music is all about. I didn't hear from George for awhile and then all of a sudden he called me up and asked me to come down to his place on Bank Street and he played his arrangement of ***You Are My Sunshine*** and said all right "...you've got it..." And like I said, "I do" and there was no music or anything so I was singing completely a cappella. But I was used to singing without music because a lot of times when I was younger there was no piano or anything, so I didn't think this was so strange or difficult. But when the horns came in...I was sort of thrown by listening to them so that it took me a while to get the arrangement — but not too bad. I just sort of fell into it and I was

touched that he thought my background and where I came from was important enough to write something about.

I just wrote a review of your new release on ECM Records, "Playground," where I said: "Jordan's primary gift and point of development is how she is able to caress and fit 'the word' into her own highly distinct musical frame of reference...When she gets into the song she 'predicts' where the stresses and tonal centers will settle; allowing her work to exist as if in a constant state of unfolding, ultimately far beyond words and text and striving toward a heartfelt and immensely gratifying* unnegotiable *artistic refinement which is one hundred per cent accountable to the vocalist's personal methods of* soundual selectivity.*" How do you feel about the above assessment of your work in a more-or-less process-conscious sense?

Was that me you were talking about? (much laughter)...that's great. The only thing I would say about that is that I really feel everything I sing. I know that I have a lot against me. I've always been original and it's going to take people quite a while to feel that it's "O.K." so to speak.

What is the relationship of the 'word' to the whole of the text and how do you fit it into the musical scheme of things? Is there a process that happens between the vocalizing and the text itself?

The words mean a lot to me, they have a lot of meaning. A few people who have written about me say that I don't have any regard for lyrics... and this is not true. I have all regards for lyrics. It's just that everybody doesn't say the word the same way, everyone has accents, if you're speaking in the English language. I feel the music and 'the word' differently when I sing it so I'm going to, quite naturally, sing it differently than if I would just be speaking that same word. It's a whole other world from speech.

What were the circumstances surrounding that important set recorded for Blue Note Records during the early sixties?

Well, Russell — as I said earlier — came down to the Page Three and he really felt I should be recorded and I was just shocked. I mean I was really flattered...he said, "I feel you should be recorded and I'm going to make a tape...Why don't you do a tape for me?" He suggested guitar and bass and the original demo tape was guitar and bass. He paid for the tape and took it to a couple of places. He took it to Mercury, where Quincy Jones was the A & R man at the time, and then to Blue Note — Blue Note liked it...Al Lions liked it. As a matter of fact a friend of his was already working down at the Page Three, so he already knew about me...he was already thinking of the possibility of recording me...but it just took this demo that George laid on him for him to say, "Yeah, I think we'll record her." When George told me the news I was really surprised. I couldn't believe it.

Remember a man by the name of Tom Wilson who had a record company called Transition? Well, he originally wanted to record me with Duke Jordan when I was married to Duke, when my daughter was first born. Now Duke had been doing an album with people like Doug Watkins, Arthur Taylor...all these kinds of people were recording with Tom Wilson. But the day I was to record with Duke I had a very bad cold and laryngitis. Now, of course, I've learned how to control things like this but then...I was very sick. If it weren't for that I would have had an album out on Transition.

How was Blue Note financially, were they — let us say — sympathetic?

Yes. And they had a wonderful way of recording you. It was very relaxed, they had food and drinks and, of course, at that time they were using Rudy Van Gelder who was right on the sound. He really records beautifully.

There's a funny thing...that at the time I did the Blue Note album I was extremely sick and I didn't realize how sick I was. About three days after I did that album I had a major operation. But I pulled through that record date. I never have any feelings of grandeur like I'm going to become a big star or something, I don't even think that way — but what I think is that I'm giving something to give and if I can put it on record and leave it, that's wonderful...or a gig in a club or concerts or something. It's always a pleasure for me to sing for people, especially if they like what we're doing.

How long has the Steve Kuhn/Sheila Jordan Band been together and how did it happen?

Well, I worked with Steve Kuhn about 17 years ago...I used to do a bass and voice thing with Steve Swallow at the Take Three. And Swallow — we had already done the Blue Note album — was working with Jimmy Giuffre. So we felt if it was O.K. with Giuffre we'd do a duo opposite him. That's how I got into bass and voice — 1962, 1963. One night they had a little bit more money so we decided to do other instrumentation instead of just bass and voice, so Steve brought the late Sam Brown in. Then Steve Kuhn worked a week or two weeks. I got to know him almost twenty years ago and we have a very wonderful friendship going. I admire his music, I think he's an absolutely marvelous player...beautiful, sensitive, he's got everything happening in his music. One just has to relax and check out where he's coming from and you'll get everything he's trying to do.

Steve had recorded lyrics that he'd written at some point in his life. He recorded on Cobblestone or Buddha — I can't remember which one, one of those labels. Anyway, they were his lyrics and he was playing and singing. And I just loved these tunes. I called him up and told him I really loved his album and he laughed. He said not many people get a feeling from his singing and I said I get a feeling from your songs, "I love it..." I tried to really get to these lyrics but for some reason I felt they were just too personal, I felt I was treading on a very private life, almost eavesdropping. So I waited awhile and these tunes kept coming back to me. And they're not the easiest songs to sing, there's a different time thing and there's a whole special way you have to approach them. The really strange thing about them is that they're so free. There's so much freedom in them and yet once you get to learn them you find out how much freedom you really have and how that freedom actually controls you.

Some of the songs were recorded by a wonderful singer in Sweden, Monica Zetterlund, and I think that Karin Krog, in Norway, recorded some of Steve's songs. But no one was doing his songs in this country and I just felt that a "jazz musician's" songs should be heard so that, perhaps, other singers would start to sing them. I felt they were good songs, that they were different and everybody could put their own little 'thing' into them. I'd been thinking about this for a long time, so with a National Endowment of the Arts grant I got a tape together. Originally it was like, just a singer with a trio. After we did the tape we presented it to Manfred (Eicher) and he liked it and felt we should change the format a bit and that's what we did do. I notice that I get more of a oneness, anyway, when there are just four musicians trying to communicate musically... it doesn't put a lot of weight on me...and the concept of this group is that.

Work has been scarce in the States up until quite recently — why do you think this is?

I have never done anything in my own country as far as a 'jazz' festival. I have only sung in two festivals in the United States, except for the Women's Jazz Festival which was put on by the Universal Jazz Coalition in New York City. But I'm talking about years ago, the only time I ever did anything at Newport was with George Russell when I did ***Sunshine***. And the second thing I did, which wasn't even a major festival, was when I was invited by a doctor down to Florida to do a 'jazz' festival for mentally retarded children. He had heard my Blue Note album and liked it and asked me to be a part of this festival.

I've never been invited to Newport on my own or Monterey or any of those festivals until this year. John Lewis, God bless him, has asked me through Jay Foster, to be in the Wolftrap International Jazz Festival in July. I was delighted when they asked me and I asked them the date and I said "...oh my God, I'll be in Europe." (much laughter) Here I am asked to do a major festival in my own country and I'll be in Europe.

I think it's always hard for an original, unique group of any kind to get bookings. It goes back to that same thing again — if people can identify with you or compare you to somebody. It's hard for someone to say, "I love the way she sings, she's very unusual." Concertgoers, club owners, promoters and all the rest of the people who could do something for me musically are always a little skeptical in the beginning because they don't know what we'll do.

Jordan says about the sources of her inspiration that: "Most of my learning is from the mountains, the coal mines, and the city streets." and that she sings "...out of the need to express and share my life's experiences." For the lady from Summerhill, Pennsylvania (better known as Scoopytown) it's been a long slow progression to a knowable reality about her own worth in the world. With increased work in the States, recording opportunities and interviews increasing, Jordan seems to be finally, at 52, on her way to some type of 'wider recognition.' As critic Don Heckman said many years ago, Jordan "...has the rare ability to draw her audience into a world that is completely her own..." Look into this world and receive the gifts of ***knowing.***

A SHEILA JORDAN DISCOGRAPHY

under her own name:

'Portrait of Sheila'	Blue Note 9002
'Confirmation'	East Wind EW-8024
'Sheila'	SteepleChase SCS 1018
'Playground' (with Steve Kuhn)	ECM-1-1159

with others:

GEORGE RUSSELL

'Outer Thoughts'	Milestone M-47027

CARLA BLEY

'Escalator over the Hill'	JCOA EOTH

ROSWELL RUDD

'Flexible Flier'	Arista

KESHAVAN MASLAK

AN INTERVIEW BY GEORGE COPPENS

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I'm thirty-three years old and I was born in Detroit. My family are Ukrainian Americans and they arrived in the United States around the time of the Russian revolution. They left Russia because they were very poor. They were peasants. In the Ukraine there are just peasants and they don't really have any money. They still don't now, as far as I understand. There were too many children in the house and they were kicked out to go and make some money. My grandparents always heard about the streets paved with gold in America, so they went there. Everyone believes that until you get there. So there were financial reasons to leave. They were thinking of going back to Russia after a few years, but Stalin later decided that all the people who left could not return, so they got stuck in the States. They ended up in Detroit because Henry Ford's motorcar company was starting with a mass-producing assembly line in the twenties and he would hire anybody regardless of what language you spoke. They got a job with him.

Were the Russian customs upheld in your family?

Totally. In our house in the earlier days all we spoke was Ukrainian. They spoke Russian and Polish also. I spoke Ukrainian as my first language, we ate Ukrainian food, we adhered to the Orthodox calendar which is different from the Christian calendar. It was pretty much like Little Eastern Europe there. They had their own organisation for Russian-American people and their own picnics in the summertime. It was a very tight community. My grandfather plays the mandolin and sings Ukrainian folk songs. He calls himself a baritone-bass, a very low resonant Slavic voice. He bought me a saxophone when I was seven and we played together for a few years. He taught me the basics of the music, theory and playing scales and all that.

Why a saxophone? That's not the instrument you would expect a Ukrainian grandfather to buy for his grandson.

He had an old friend who played the saxophone and this man was selling it for fifty dollars. It was an old 1922 Conn. It just happened to be a saxophone. I was seven at that time and that's how I got into the music scene. I was interested in other instruments before that. I started with trumpet and trombone but I didn't feel anything for them. I took lessons for a little while in school but the saxophone felt much better to me. Around that time also I got into the clarinet. For about two years my grandfather was teaching me. He had a pretty good knowledge of music. He would write me exercises, chords and scales and all that. After that they decided that maybe I should get a saxophone teacher because my grandfather was mainly a singer.

Was this teacher a classical musician?

He was kind of an allround musician. He played all kinds of gigs around Detroit. He was familiar with Charlie Parker and bebop. I remember he told me his favorite saxophone player was Harold Land, so he would talk about him and play me his records when I was about ten. He was a well-versed musician. He had classical training and he also knew jazz. Of course at that age I didn't really have any exposure to jazz music myself. I was mostly interested in the classical thing. I was just like every other little kid, I played football and basketball. No one had to push me, I had an interest for music. My family never cared if I played or didn't play. They just thought it was nice for a little kid to play in the school band. Only afterwards did they start wondering if that was the right profession for me to pursue, but I was so obsessed with it, there was nothing they could have done anyway.

Like I said, this first teacher was involved in different things and I stayed with him for only one or two years. Then I got into high school. It was a very special kind of high school in that they specialized in the field you wanted to take, just like at the university. It was an advanced school for select people. I was recommended in the lower grade because they thought I had talent or something. You could major in music per se. I was taking theory, piano and string bass lessons. At that time they recommended me to get the best teacher in the area. I got really heavily into classical music at that time. I learned the classical techniques on the clarinet and the saxophones. The reputation of the saxophone in classical music has never really been established. At that time in the late fifties and early sixties it was still kind of a freak instrument in classical music, so they didn't have a defined concept of classical saxophone. The instrument was always known for jazz but the people I was studying with were trying to break down that stereotype, making it more of a respected classical instrument. It was good for me to learn this at that time because it gave me a strong foundation to branch off from. I have vague remembrances of my teacher playing some bop tunes. He would play me songs and say, this is one style that can be played on the saxophone. He was trying to educate me in different styles of music.

Did you feel an attraction toward a certain kind or style of music?

Not at that time. Later when I was older I started making my heroes, the people who became a big influence on me. But then my heroes were the heavy classical musicians and composers like Isaac Stern, Vladimir Horowitz, Paul Hindemith and Stravinsky.

Did you perform in public during your early teens?

Yes, I started very young. The first performance I did was after I had taken saxophone lessons for two weeks. They had the boy scouts then, you go camping and hiking and you wear these funny little uniforms. They always had these boy scout get-togethers with the family and the children, every couple of months and the children who had talent went on stage to perform. I went up there and just played what I knew. I was about seven. Afterwards when I was about eleven, twelve years old I had a little bit of knowledge and I became involved in a local band. I was the youngest, most of the boys were fifteen or sixteen. They were getting gigs at that time playing local weddings, anniversary parties and dances, foxtrots and early swing music. That was my first professional experience. We worked pretty much every weekend and made money. The Russian organisation in the area had a lot of banquets and parties and my father was president of the organisation, so he would always hire me, ha, ha! I formed a band with my brother Mike on drums plus an accordion player and a trumpeter. That was my group for playing for the Russian folks, polkas and mazurkas, that kind of music, and also swing like Glenn Miller tunes. I learned many songs at that time, standard tunes. It was very good for me because it taught me the other side of music. I didn't really know how to improvise at that time.

You probably didn't know about improvisation as such at all?

Not really. Of course you hear things on the radio, especially at that time in the fifties there were more jazz stations, and jazz programs on television. You would hear this and try to emulate it, you would try to pick it up. I tried to incorporate this into my gigs on the weekends. I didn't know too much what to do, but I always had good technique. I could always play the melody and the written music. The unwritten music took me a while to get into.

Detroit had a heavy jazz scene at that time, did you get in touch with that at a certain point?

I was somewhat isolated. I lived in a white neighborhood and most of the jazz existed in the black neighborhood. That's just the way it was. When I went to high school some of my close friends came from the ghetto and some of them were very good musicians and they would expose me to Coltrane, Cannonball, Sonny Stitt and Miles Davis. I would go to their house and they would try to explain improvised music to me. One friend would play chords on the piano and tried to get me interested. And I wanted to learn. I was really turned on to it, but I didn't know where to start. My friend would play chords on the piano and make me improvise, just trying to work it out. He was very encouraging to me. His name was Al Crawford. He was an excellent saxophonist, but he committed suicide some ten years ago. Many musicians in Detroit know about him. It was his influence that got me to improvised music. He gave me Coltrane and Cannonball records and I flipped out with it. I couldn't understand how they could play all this without reading it. For someone not to read and sound that good was amazing to me. I was getting more and more frustrated by the classical scene, with the prima donna attitude that all these musicians have, the head-up-their-ass thing. I wasn't really expressing myself as much as I wanted to. I came into jazz just at the right time. It opened my ears. I liked Coltrane, Dolphy, Cannonball and Sonny Stitt. That was a thing I understood, their very good saxophone technique. They were involved in this sort of music and that attracted me to it.

In that period jazz music advanced a couple of giant steps, was it difficult for you, conceptually speaking, to get into it at that point?

Coltrane came from bop but wasn't typically bop. He was exploring more, so I was mostly attracted to his concept. Stitt and Cannonball were still too restrictive for me. Coltrane had the more emotional thing that I related to, a unique kind of feeling. His concept was the starting point for me and when he started to be more exploratory I kind of followed that direction. People like Ornette Coleman were coming

around and things were in the air that you would just pick up. That was kind of my starting point.

Did you ever ask yourself the question, where does all this music come from?

To me it reflected a rebellion of the individual. I always related to being rebellious, maybe because of my Russian background or something. I grew up being rebellious, not in a negative way like a tough kid getting into fights, but my spirit was rebellious. As long as I can remember I wanted to be myself. I didn't go with the masses.

That whole kind of music, though, was surprising to me, a shock at that time. I didn't know if it was avant-garde or not. I had no conception of that. I wasn't experienced enough to know. The ones who had unique voices were my influence, whoever they were.

When did you become independent of your parents and your home in Detroit?

When I went to university in Texas. At the end of high school I was getting more involved with improvised music. I made some friends who told me about this school in Texas, the North Texas State University, that specialised in jazz. That started another kind of thing. This school drew quite a lot of musicians from all over the country, who were excellent talents. It was my first exposure to heavy competition. They had many small groups and there were seven big band rehearsals a day, they had that many musicians. I don't know how it got started there. Stan Kenton knew the musical director and he influenced the scene there. He gave them all his music, so they had a repertoire of all Kenton music. It got me into playing with other jazz musicians of my age. A lot of them were better than I was at that time. I had good chops and I could read but the improvising thing I wasn't too sure of.

I started doing gigs in Texas with blues bands and I learned about the Texas tenor style, like Arnett Cobb and Booker Ervin. I really got into that southern United States feeling, the bluesy, earthy, gutsy, funky thing. I never had that until I lived there. I got into that fat sound that I still use in my tenor playing. I played mostly tenor at that time, but also alto and baritone. I never went back to Detroit. After Texas I got some tours with various groups and that got me to San Francisco. I just stayed there. I dug it there, especially at that time, the late sixties. Everybody was taking drugs and spacing out.

Did you find anything there, a music scene of some sort that you could relate to?

I was doing a lot of bebop gigs there, working four, five nights every week, just for survival. I could always work because I can play all the different styles of music, but I met some musicians there who were involved in other things. You will always find that, no matter where you go. That's where I first met Phillip Wilson, in San Francisco. I started playing with him. We had a group together, in fact. Phillip used to live in Marin County, across the Golden Gate Bridge, with all these hills, mountains and trees. He had a beautiful house out there because he had some money from working with the Paul Butterfield Blues Band. I used to go to this place and play all day long, eight hours a day until we couldn't walk anymore.

There were other people happening too like drummer Buddy Toscano, a Mexican guy. He was excellent and so was a tenor player named Gabriel Stern. They had a house that was sound proof. We used to lock ourselves up and play all

KESHAVAN MASLAK (photograph by Bill Smith/Onari)

day. We did some performances in a loft that they had there and that's where I met Ray Anderson. We started playing together. Ray knew David Murray and they were playing quite a lot together. Ray and I played quite a lot so Ray said, this is David Murray, a new young tenor player, we can jam with him. So David and Ray would come over and the three of us would be blowing for hours. We were all striving for the same direction, David, Ray, myself and Philip Palumbo, a very excellent bass player who stopped playing and got into films and video. Charles Moffett was a big influence on me at that time. He had already a reputation from New York and he had moved to California with his family. I sat in with him once and started working with him. He had gigs around the Bay Area. We played for two years and I went with him to New York and played the Newport Festival in 1972, the first year it happened in New York, with him and a bass player from Israel named Emil Ram. I stayed there for eight months or so, hung out and met people like Frank Lowe and Rashied Ali. I dug it. I said, well, of course you have to live in New York. But it got very heavy for me, I got so broke! I started hanging out at Studio Rivbea. Sam Rivers gave me one of my first gigs there with his Wind Ensemble. Ornette Coleman was also very helpful. He heard me play with Moffett. I would go to his house and he would try to encourage me. I found this house on the Lower East Side, on the corner of 11th Street and Avenue C, the heart of the pits, death city, but that was the only place I could find. It had bars on all the windows and the whole building was filled with junkies and faggots. It was totally depressing. You could hear gunshots out of your window. I lived there and I was going crazy. I had a girlfriend with me from California and she left, she couldn't take it, so I was in this little weird apartment with all these cockroaches and rats running around and trying to practise. Then I got in contact with Moffett again who had some gigs in California. I went back there to try to make some money. Then I told Ray and David and all these cats about New York. I went back and Ray went at about the same time. David went to Los Angeles to Stanley Crouch.

Did you find the musical politics in New York different from other cities?

It was like total anarchy. There were so many musicians and there was no semblance of unity. There were so many cliques happening that it was impossible to really tie in with them. You try to get into your own small clique and if that has some connection with a loft you work a little bit but if you're in a group that doesn't have any connections you just rehearse a lot! My clique were the white musicians because I wasn't allowed into the black clique for obvious reasons. This was a disappointing factor. In other cities there's not so much racial tension amongst the musicians. New York is more divided, it could be the politics involved, I guess, but there's a rather strict division between black and white. I couldn't really play with the black musicians that were my friends before that. As a white musician you could get lots of gigs playing Mickey Mouse music, you could play all these stupid bar-mitzvah gigs and all that shit, but you weren't gonna play no real music, heavy improvised music.

Was New York changing the way you played?

I wanted another direction and New York helped me emphasize that. New York is an environment that either makes you work on yourself, makes you develop a voice for yourself or it destroys you. There's no in-between ground there. It's a good environment for a musician. If it's too easy it's not good. You need that tension there.

I tried to organise my own concerts. I had to perform, I couldn't stay in the house all the time. Anything that was happening was the lofts, so I would rent my own loft space for thirty or forty dollars. You would have to make the advertisements yourself, your own posters and run around to paste them up all around town. You would hope that at least thirty or forty people would come, so you could break even on it. The press didn't support it. They supported the hipsters, whoever they thought was hip this week. Politically it was very heavy there. I was getting very frustrated, but I still tried to push myself and organize my own concerts in spite of the fact that all the odds were against me. I was driving a taxicab for a while, doing construction work, and painting apartments. A musician who is not well known has to do something else. You've got to accept that to get established you're going to have to take some side jobs.

You play all these different reed instruments today, which makes you a multi-instrumentalist. Are you trying to bring a different concept to each one of them?

I try to use each instrument for its own unique personality. When I play the alto it's an alto personality and when I play the tenor it's a tenor personality. I work very hard to not sound similar on them. I want each one to sound like I'm only playing that instrument. I think that I'm successful at it for the reason that I've been working on these instruments for a while now, since my early years. When I'm playing alto I play just alto. I'm not thinking of playing tenor on the alto or vice versa. It's pulling different switches. Playing one instrument exclusively doesn't express my total personality, it's not fulfilling enough. The other instruments bring out different aspects of myself. Composition is another side of it also. Composing is a whole different personality, that I feel is unrelated to playing an instrument, so I try to work on the composition personality of me. I like to think of myself as a composer also. People like Ornette Coleman or Anthony Braxton consider themselves composers as much as instrumentalists. I've always related to this. I've studied composition at the university, that was my major subject. I used to write contemporary piano pieces. I want to be known as a writer also.

About a year and a half ago you felt the call to go to Europe. Did you expect to find more opportunities there and maybe less frustrating conditions?

Europe has always been looked up to as *the* place. You hear the stories of so and so finally getting respect and acknowledgement there and of people treating you real well. That's what happened to me. I could play exactly the way I wanted to and people were really listening. Because of that I continued to stay. I feel more European than American anyway. I was born in America but English was my second language. The whole culture of my family is European, Eastern European all the way. I was always an alien in a strange land. I was living there but I never felt totally American. For me living here is not an adjustment.

Could you relate to the musicians and the music over here?

I found a number of musicians who wanted to play with me and I also wanted to play with them. I want to learn from different sources. I don't feel there's any one area in the world that has the dominant scene. The music, the blues is everywhere, it doesn't matter where you are, where you come from or what your economic level is. I want to play with as many musicians as I can, no matter where they are from. Basically I prefer to be the only horn player. I do gigs with other horn players at times, but I'm most comfortable when I'm the only horn player. I need a lot of space to project my expression. I did a concert with a tuba player, Lari Fishkind and drummer Sunny Murray. The tuba is a horn but the nature of the instrument is very unlike the saxophone, so this worked out fine. Sunny was on tour in Europe, but I played with him some seven years ago. I sat in with his group when he played Sam Rivers's place. This time we did a gig at the BIM-Huis in Amsterdam. His style has changed somewhat but he is still basically his innovative self. Since the concert went so well Sunny approached me and said, let's do a recording. I talked with Waterland Records, we got together, Sunny, pianist Loek Dikker, bassist Mark Miller and myself and we just did it. We recorded two of my compositions, two of Loek's and one of Sunny's. It's quite an unusual recording in that it has different styles of music and you hear Sunny play things you would never have thought. We did one and a half records, one as a quartet and a trio record, half of which is Sunny, Loek and myself, the other half is Sunny's trio with David Murray and bass player Wilbur Morris. Sunny is never giving you what you expect to hear. He constantly creates new rhythmic forms and that really keeps you on your toes and keeps the music fresh all the time. That's how Misha Mengelberg is for me also. Every time I play a composition with him it's totally different. A new fresh experience each

LOEK DIKKER and KESHAVAN MASLAK (photograph by Bill Smith/Onari)

time you perform, instead of that same mundane crap all the time.

Did you expect as many recording opportunities as you got, when you came to Europe?

I didn't plan on it. It just sort of happened. I did quite a few recordings this year and I'm very happy about that. I want to get many records out in a short time, after that I'll be more selective. But you have to establish your name first. Once you get to the point where people know about you, you can relax a little bit. I've got a lot of compositions in the book that I've written in the past that I want to record. There's a record out now on Leo Records, a new company in London. They've released a tape that I did with Misha Mengelberg and Han Bennink. I did do some recording in the States, though, some five or six years ago, for India Navigation, just at the time the company started. It was a trio with Abdul Wadud on cello and Sadiq Abdu Shahid on drums. I did another for Bernard Stollman of ESP Records, a quartet with Sadiq, a Californian bass player, I forgot his name, and Garrett List on trombone...

I'd like to get back to the States eventually, probably in a few years. I don't think I'd like to live in New York again, maybe upstate New York or in New Jersey, but close enough to the musical environment to be in touch.

What are you working on presently and what are your plans for the future?

Well, to answer that question I must proceed from two different directions. As a human being, I continue to be involved in my search and development as a human being. Meaning, working on the concept of "Basic Humanplexity Sanity," which is the direction of relating to the diversity of life just as it is without needless speculation and manipulation of experience. I find that there is much ignorance in the world and especially in the musical world. Many musicians and artists are really sick people, caught up in their own personal gratification hustles. They really think that it is enough to just play good, allowing themselves that rationale to fuck over the rest of society. I'm sorry, it doesn't make it! That attitude, which exists frequently, is totally barbaric. So, it always is more important for me to be a human being first and only afterwards to experience the joy of performing and composing music.

Musically speaking, I continue to work on the integration of my Eastern European background into the concept of improvised music. For me, it is the natural expression of my personal history, which is the most valid and honest thing that I can do.. After all, everyone has a story to tell. Mine happens to be unique unto me. ***(December 1979)***

A KESHAVAN MASLAK DISCOGRAPHY

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KESHAVAN MASLAK Trio with Mark Miller and Sadiq Abdu Shahid.
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Buddha's Hand — Circle 16

BURTON GREENE:
Variations — Kharma PK 6

WATERLAND Ensemble with Loek Dikker, Mark Miller and Sunny Murray.
Mayhem In Our Streets — Waterland WM 005

LOEK DIKKER
The Waterland Big Band Is Hot! Vol. 1 " 008
" " " " " " Vol. 2 " 009

KESHAVAN MASLAK with Misha Mengelberg and Han Bennink:
Humanplexity — Leo 101
(also upcoming on Leo: a trio record with John Lindberg and Sunny Murray).

JAZZ LITERATURE

JAZZ MASTERS....

JAZZ MASTERS OF THE FIFTIES
by Joe Goldberg

JAZZ MASTERS IN TRANSITION, 1957-1969
by Martin Williams

Da Capo Press, New York

These two re-issues from the Da Capo historical series will provide listeners of all stripes and ages with some intelligent observations and commentary on the second and third decades of the modern jazz era. The Goldberg book was first published in 1965, while the Williams volume was originally released in 1970. Whereas the former generally follows the format of previous editions like Gitler's valuable "Jazz Masters of the Forties", the latter is similar to Balliett's more recent "New York Notes". Together they are essential reading alongside such works as Spellman's "Four Lives in the Bebop Business", Jones' "Black Music" and Balliett's "The Sound of Surprise".

Goldberg's review of the '50s includes chapters on all the major post-bop figures: Gerry Mulligan, Thelonious Monk, Art Blakey, Miles Davis, Sonny Rollins, Modern Jazz Quartet, Charles Mingus, Paul Desmond, Ray Charles, John Coltrane, Cecil Taylor and Ornette Coleman. All of these artists made key contributions to the changes in modern jazz, from the "cool" and "funk" styles to the "third stream" and "free" forms.

The author approaches his subject matter from a multidisciplinary perspective. Each musician is considered in musical, biographical, historical and sociological terms. A good deal of the source material is oral, comprised of direct quotes from the musicians and their colleagues and friends. There is also extensive use of the writings of Nat Hentoff and Martin Williams (without any footnotes, I might add). Each chapter ends with a short selected discography.

Given the original date of publication, the discographies, as well as the commentaries, are not complete. But as an account of the masters *in the '50s*, their lives and music, and the changes they affected, Goldberg provides a very sympathetic and balanced overview.

The Williams book is largely a compilation of numerous record and concert reviews, rehearsal, video-tape, recording, and club scene observations, plus some interviews, short essays, and tributes. Most of the articles were originally published in ***Down Beat*** and ***Saturday Review*** between 1957 and 1969.

Whereas many jazz critics at the time exhibited a whole host of philistine prejudices, Williams remained an enthusiastic, albeit judiciously discriminating, chronicler of jazz. His accounts here successfully communicate the vitality and diversity of the period, not only in terms of historical continuity, (from delta blues and gospel to Duke and Miles), but also in terms of revolutionary developments (from Trane to Taylor).

I think the many record reviews are particularly valuable. Presently, with the booming re-issuing business (in books even!), a plethora of disques are pouring into the market. Therefore, Williams' recommendations on the original releases will assist many newcomers in their record collecting endeavours.

The current innovators in the music were deeply inspired by much of the music covered in these two volumes. So in addition to providing the older jazz buff with an opportunity to check out areas s/he missed or ignored, together they present the younger fan with a solid introduction and guide to the foundations of the contemporary scene. — ***Peter Danson***

IMPROVISATION

by Derek Bailey
Moorland Publishing, London 6.95 pounds
(also available from Coda, $21.00 postpaid)

This volume by English improvising guitarist Derek Bailey is an important study into the nature of improvisational practice within the World Music context. The guitarist deals with the improvising imagination in Indian music, Flamenco music, Baroque music, currents of improvisation in Organ music (from the 14th century to the present), Rock, Jazz, and contemporary classical music. Aside from the guitarist himself providing extremely informative commentary, most of the various sections in the book include interview sessions with prominent composers and instrumentalists working in the area of music under examination: Viram Jasani, representing Indian music; Paco Pena, Flamenco; Lionel Salter, Baroque; Stephen Hicks, Organ; Steve Howe, Rock; Ronnie Scott and Steve Lacy, Jazz; Earle Brown, "Classical" Composition; and Anthony Pay for the "Classical" Instrumentalist. Such English-based musicians as Tony Oxley, John Stevens, Evan Parker, Gavin Bryars and Hugh Davies are also quoted and briefly interviewed in the volume. The sole American voice represented, aside from Steve Lacy, is AACM trumpeter/composer Leo Smith, who is briefly quoted at various points throughout the book. Additionally, there are sections devoted to the work of such English-based groups as Joseph Holbrooke (named for an English composer active in the first half of the 20th century, who was sometimes referred to as the "cockney Wagner"); the group consisted of Bailey, bassist Gavin Bryars and percussionist Tony Oxley) and the Music Improvisation Company (active from 1968 to 1971, comprised of Evan Parker, reeds; Hugh Davies, live electronics; Jamie Muir, percussion; Bailey, and in the last year of its existence, Christine Jeffrey, voice).

In the introduction Bailey sets the tone and bent of his study when referring to the "how" of Persian music. The guitarist says:

> **At the actual time of performance, the musician does not calculate the procedures that will guide his playing. Rather he plays from a level of consciousness somewhat removed from the purely rational... Under these conditions the player performs not according to the "theory of practice", but intuitively, according to the "practice of practice", wherein the dictates of traditional procedures are integrated with his immediate mood and emotional needs.**

This is a significant observation and one which has a very real connection to what is happening now on the international "free improvisation" music scene. It seems that latter-day improvisors are developing beyond purely "idiomatic" concerns in terms of their music — and are working towards refining the procedures and methods stemming from the "Jazz" tradition (as well as the music of other cultures throughout the world) in hopes of bringing about a "non-idiomatic" World Music order — which could eventually broaden the contextual frame in which the music now exists. As Bailey says in the chapter "Limits And Freedom 2":

> **All improvisation takes place in relation to the known whether the known is traditional or newly acquired. The only real difference lies in the opportunities in free improvisation to renew or change the known and so provoke an open-endedness which by definition is not possible in idiomatic improvisation.**

It should be said here, too, that this volume brings out the very important fact that although many feel that "free improvisation" is, by definition, decidedly "avant-garde", it — in reality — retrieves a much older and more basic musical order. Idiomatic improvising, for example, seems to have reached a dead end, creatively speaking, for many of those musicians still aligned with the idea of "Jazz". Not so much because the form itself is uncreative, but because forms evolve, and many of the present players in "Jazz" have allowed themselves to become "frozen" in a particular period of this music's history (i.e. the creative currents in the music have developed it beyond the "idiomatic" designation we have come to know as "Jazz" music). Creative musicians, thusly, are forced to look elsewhere for a musical frame of reference that will continue to allow them to break new ground. As Steve Lacy says in the chapter "Jazz 2":

> **The changes which began in the late '50's and were probably completed by the middle '60's came about because in the '50's jazz was no longer on the edge. When you reach what was called "hard bop" there was no mystery any more. It was like — mechanical — some kind of gymnastics. The patterns are well-known and everybody is playing them.**

One should also consider the role of the industry — especially when discussing the improvised music scene in the Americas — and its influence on the unhealthy "stability" of the form.

Bailey is not just concerned with the ancient and Old World "folk traditions" of Western and non-Western musics, but also examines and sheds light on the influence and usability of improvisation in contemporary classical music. His chapter "The Composer" focuses on an interview session the guitarist did with American composer Earle Brown. In the beginning of the chapter, before Bailey talks with the composer, he quotes Jacques Charpentier in re-

gard to the "static" nature of Western notation:

> When, at the end of the Middle Ages, the Occident attempted to notate musical discourse, it was actually only a sort of shorthand to guide an accomplished performer, who was otherwise a musician of oral and traditional training. These graphic signs were sufficiently imprecise to be read only by an expert performer and sufficiently precise to help him find his place if, by mishap, he had a slip of memory. Consequently, as we see, it was not a question of precise notation but rather a mnemonic device in written symbols. Later on, the appearance of the musical staff on the one hand, and symbols of time duration on the other, made it possible to move on to a real notation which reflects with exactitude the whole of the musical material presented in this manner. At this point in history it does not seem as if the contemporaries of that time fully realised the consequences of their discovery.
>
> Consequently the analytical qualities of musical discourse took precedence in the course of centuries over its qualities of synthesis and the musical work ceased to be, little by little, the expression of an experienced psycho-physiological continuum — on the spot and at the moment it is experienced; and instead became what is more and more prevalent today in the Occident — that is a wilful, formal and explicative construction which finds in itself alone its substance and its justification.

Composer Earle Brown reacted to this dilemma of Western music by devising what he calls his "time notation". This notational method uses "selectable" visual relationships to allow intuitively felt pulse junctions to manifest themselves in the musical proceedings — where the environment that the music exists in is oriented so as to "make" the players respond in a certain way. As Brown explains:

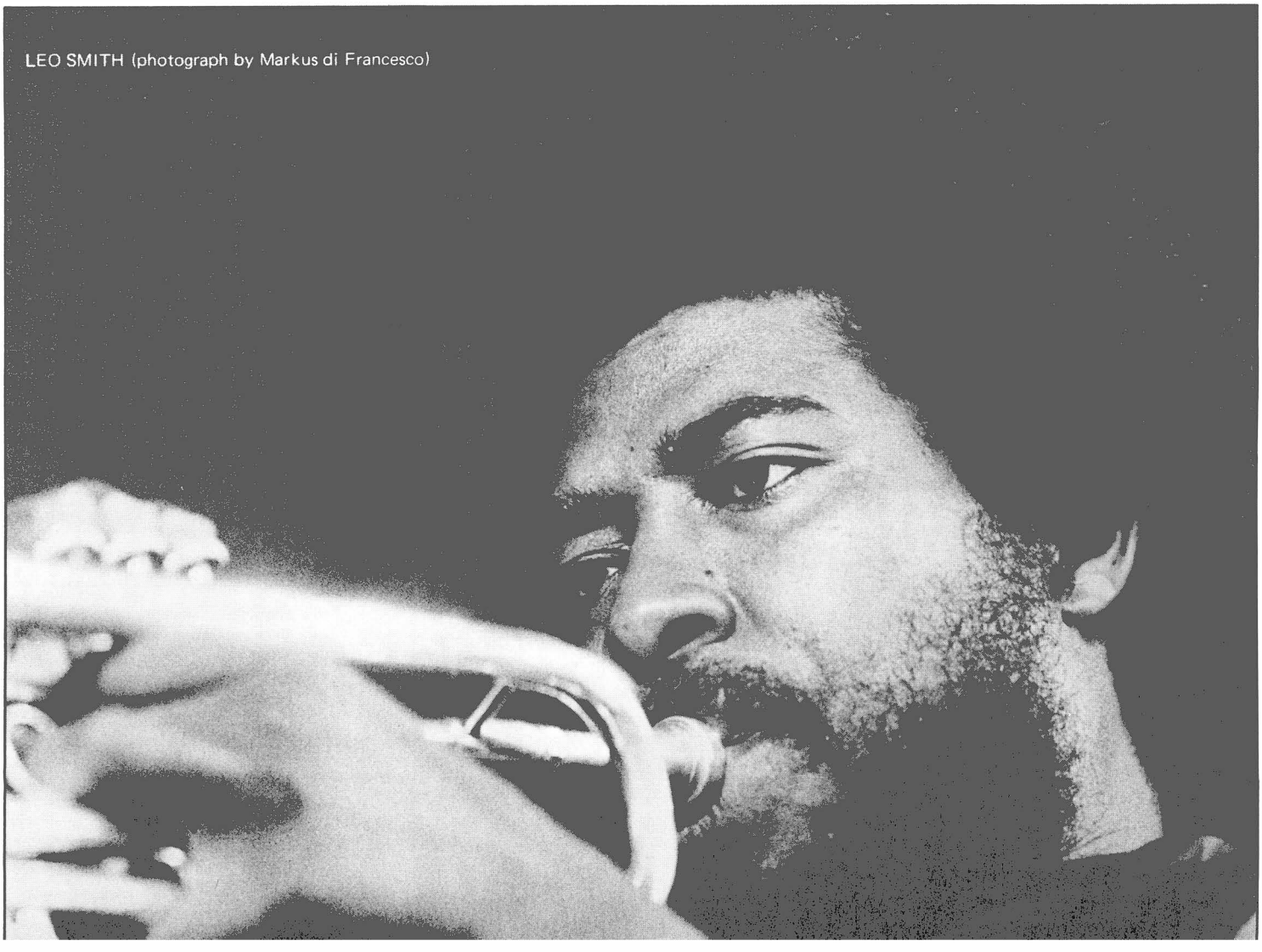
> ...the writing of music involves an aspect of projection. I would say, projecting your imagination into a situation you are not going to be present in, and in that sense it's not so strange for me to try to project one stage further, which is to project the conditions that I hope, with good will, the musician will enter into.

This interview with Brown brings out the fact that many contemporary classical composers are "re-investigating" the significance of improvisation as a primal tool for the realization of new compositional forms. Contemporary composers as diverse as John Cage, Penderecki and Christian Woolf, just to name three, have all been investigating the nature of the improvisatory instinct and its relationship to various self-devised notational systems for several years now. What Brown said at the close of his interview is clearly indicative of the new mood among contemporary Western composer: "... I believe affirmatively that improvisation is a musical art which passed out of Western usage for a time but is certainly back now."

Bailey has attempted to give a partial picture of the significant role improvisation has played in all musics throughout the world. Although this volume was "...not intended as a history of improvisation..." (those, for example, looking for a discussion of the importance of improvisation in Islamic, Turkish or African musics will not find it here), it does provide a good compendium of ideas and referents to the "how" and perhaps the "why" of improvisatory practice. I must add, too, that I think the guitarist was successful in his aim to look at the improvising imagination "characteristically"; as he was obviously concerned with citing important differences and distinctions in terms of approaches to improvisation depending on the region in which the musical idiom was nurtured. This, in itself, is quite an admirable accomplishment, since many writers and researchers in the past have tended to view the improvisatory instinct as essentially a "non-differential" way of doing music.

In conclusion, let me say that this volume seems to bear honorable witness to the statements made by E.T. Ferand in his book "Improvisation in Nine Centuries of Western Music", from which Bailey quotes in his introduction. Ferand proclaims that "...there is scarcely a single field in music that has remained unaffected by improvisation, scarcely a single musical technique or form of composition that did not originate in improvisatory practice or was not essentially influenced by it. The whole history of the development of music is accompanied by manifestations of the drive to improvise." Anyone who is even remotely interested in music of almost any type should read this book; highly recommended. ***— Roger Riggins***

LEO SMITH (photograph by Markus di Francesco)



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135	**Claude Williams**	Fiddler's Dream
136	**Lionel Hampton**	Jazz Giants '77
138	**Joe Turner**	Effervescent
139	**Carrie Smith**	Do Your Duty
141	**Milt Buckner**	Green Onions
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ALBERT AYLER

The Hilversum Session
Osmosis 6001

Ayler, tenor saxophone; Don Cherry, cornet; Gary Peacock, bass; Sunny Murray, drums.

Angels; C.A.C.; Ghosts; Infant Happiness; Spirits; No Name.

Recorded on November 9, 1964 — the period Michael Cuscuna and others believe produced Ayler's "purest and most creative" work — in the Netherlands, scene of the unique saxophonist's earliest musical triumphs, in collaboration with those musicians who served him best, this posthumous release has all the makings of an instant classic. And beyond its documentational importance, there is some truly excellent music here — music which has stood the test of time. This is vintage Ayler: robust and rollicking, cajoling and caressing, with his steel-belted vibrato firmly in tow, and in the company of instrumentalists who could match his extravagant musical stride step-by-step.

Though the material consists for the most part of familiar Ayler standards — ***Angels, Ghosts, Spirits*** all pop up for the umpteenth time on record — the performances are anything but jaded, and there is a special electricity evident in the exchanges between Ayler and Cherry — notice their contrasting metrical approaches in ***Angels***, their complementary stances on ***C.A.C.***, and the dovetailing of their nearly neo-Bop phrasing of ***Ghosts***. Cherry is his usual deft, witty self (especially pungent on his own composition ***Infant Happiness***, which was to reappear as ***Awake Nu*** on Cherry's "Where is Brooklyn?" album, Blue Note 84311), though he reveals a surprisingly impassioned side to his nature on ***No Name***.

As in the best of Ayler's creations, the sounds here evoke the gospel strains of the Sanctified Church, the sparse, haunting timelessness of the Orient, the propulsion and swagger of New Orleans marching bands, the vigor and precision of Bebop, and the continual surprise of the Cosmos. Since so little of Ayler's atomized output remains readily available today, this is an album to cherish.

— Art Lange

This session was recorded in Hilversum, Holland in 1964 and finds Ayler and company in a rather uneven musical mood. Undisputedly the best unit tenorist Ayler ever assembled, the music found on this particular session lacks an essential textural focus that was always the source point for the oftentimes earth-shattering improvisations this band was capable of at its height.

The trouble here seems to stem from the oscillating rhythmic ambiguity of bassist Peacock and percussionist Murray — somehow they never seem to achieve the binary movement and textural flux that was so important for the rhythmic background of this music. Peacock, especially, is not performing at his usual high standard on this date.

Ayler's conception was to use churchy New Orleans styled lead motifs that intervallically predicted the rhythmic patterning of the improvisations that followed. In this regard it was crucial that he have a "sound partner" who understood the importance of pitch and its relationship to rhythmic oscillation — in cornetist Cherry he had found his man. Yet this LP fails because, for some strange reason, bassist Peacock and finally percussionist Murray were unable to adequately embellish the rhythmic patterning of the music. Ayler's contribution, too, is lacking on this session as he attempts to unconvincingly manipulate the constantly shifting rhythmic densities brought to the fore by the suspecting work of bassist Peacock and percussionist Murray. While threads of conquest come through on the beautifully conceived opening selection ***Angels*** and the rhythmically swaying ***Spirits*** (cornetist Cherry is simply exquisite here) — this set is, generally speaking, not up to the level of what we all know this band was capable of on better days.

— Roger Riggins

ADAMS * RICHMOND

GEORGE ADAMS/DANNIE RICHMOND
Hand To Hand
Soul Note 1007

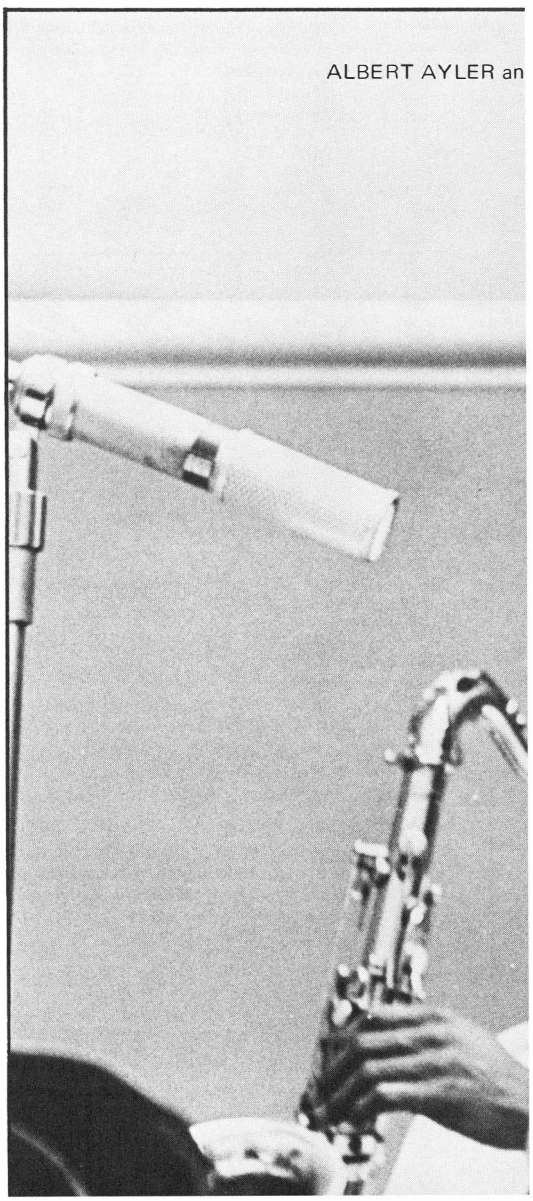
George Adams - tenor saxophone, flute; Jimmy Knepper - trombone; Hugh Lawson - piano; Mike Richmond - bass; Dannie Richmond - drums.

The Cloocker; Yamani's Passion; For Dee J.; Joobubie.

George Adams and Dannie Richmond lead this quintet of seasoned, stylistically flexible players through a palatable program with fluency and verve. Because of each player's association with Charles Mingus and/or the Mingus Dynasty, the strengths of "Hand To Hand" could be hinged on a Mingus-connection thesis, which would rope a few Mingusophiles into buying the album. However, the point would become irrelevant upon the first listening to the album, as it stands on its own merits and its creators are in clear possession of their respective voices.

Adams, Richmond, et al, push their reliable resources to the limits. Rhythms surge with an athletic swing, ensemble passages balance gritty tension and relaxed cooking, and solos storm and sting in a well-directed manner, providing a last-set ambience that is too infrequently heard on current studio sessions. Beyond the well-chronicled abilities of Richmond and Adams' straddling of inside and outside sensibilities, it is the all-stops-pulled performances of Jimmy Knepper, Hugh Lawson, and Mike Richmond that account for the album's extra margin of success. There isn't a weak link in the group and everyone is fastidious in increasing the voltage of each piece.

Hugh Lawson's ***The Cloocker*** is a perfect opener, as its hard-driving, sharply accented theme catapults a round of feverish solos. Adams quickly revs the intensity of his solo into a spectrum of visceral, yet finely gauged, growls and high register wails. Lawson drops the pressure a notch while displaying a limber right hand, allowing Jimmy Knepper's viscous stream of notes a greater impact. Mike Richmond and Dannie Richmond's respective solos keep the rafters raised, sustaining the energy into and through the closing theme. Juxtaposing a lusciously svelte melody and a taut modal bridge, ***Yamani's Passion*** affords the quintet a balladic context demanding both lyricism and rhythmic force from soloists and accompanists alike. Adams and Knepper handle the voicings of the theme convincingly and Lawson, Richmond, and Richmond engineer shifting rhythms throughout the piece. Lawson again relies on his right hand, though he employs his left here for shading and nuance rather than for metric definition. Adams leaps through registers and textures with ease and cogency, occasionally flashing a Coltranish persona. Knepper wraps things up in a mellow, tuneful vein that maximizes the lustre of his tone and the economy of his ideas. ***For Dee J*** stokes the


ALBERT AYLER an

REVIEWS

quintet with a markedly latin fuel. While there are popping solos by Knepper, Lawson, and Adams, on flute, it is Dannie Richmond's tasty pulse and Mike Richmond's strong solo that give the piece its brawn. ***Joobubie*** was originally recorded when Lawson was a member of The Piano Choir. It is taken here at an effectively slower pace so that the quintet can roll up their sleeves and get down to business. Knepper is forceful and dramatic, Lawson is more orchestral than anywhere else on the date, Adams is tough and bluesy, and Richmond and Richmond come close to sending smoke out through the speakers. — ***Bill Shoemaker***

MAARTEN ALTENA QUARTET

Op Stap
Claxon 80.5

Maarten van Regteren Altena - bass, cello, cigar box; Maurice Horsthuis - viola; Maud Sauer - oboe, alto oboe, soprano saxophone; Paul Termos - alto saxophone.

Op Stap; 36; A Dutch Triptych; Klomp; Verloren Klomp, Hendrik-Jan; Mier; Vivace; The Young Cigar; Modern Tango; 7-Over; Alva; Spreeuw; Backyard Desert; Henri V.D. Vuyst; Je Reviens.

While the music on this album is very much in keeping with the pervasive sensibility in new European music, where the spontaneity of improvisation is matched, if not surpassed, by contextual concerns, the reliance on composition on "Op Stap" indicates Altena's priorities lie with what is created, instead of the sole act of creation. "Op Stap" is painstakingly constructed to present composed and improvised materials in isolated and integrated formats that are fanciful and quick-witted. As such, the album has the impact of the incidental music for a film, as it is meticulously crafted to leave the listener with his senses perked, but unsated. The configuration of strings and reeds aids this end and Altena's quartet is comprised of players with a solid sense of ensemble and the ability to step to the forefront and make impressive contributions. If any complaint can be registered against this striking album, it would be that the quartet does not linger long enough on much of the album — all but two of the thirteen pieces run less than four minutes — for the material to sink in on the first listening.

In addition to providing a welcome forum for Altena's incisive bass stylings and wry compositions, "Op Stap" also introduces three musicians capable of further impact in Europe in the near future. A player of marked expressive and technical abilities, Maurice Horsthuis may perhaps do for the viola what Abdul Wadud and Tristan Honsinger have done for the cello. Maud Sauer is very much in command of the oboe's ability to pierce the fabric of the music and to project warmth and character. An altoist who can muster intensity without strain, Paul Termos has the requisites to operate in a more open-ended situation with the effectiveness he has here. Together, they have a tightly-laced presence, whether the issue at hand is the oompah lunacy of ***A Dutch Triptych***, the full-out furor of ***Alva***, or the subtle mixing of composition and improvisation of the title piece.

While their respective orientations differ, Altena's music could be likened to that of Leo Smith, in that both composer/improvisers succeed in bringing improvisation into realms where it would be seemingly incompatible to the source materials. On "Op Stap", each of Altena's attempts to do so adds to the music but does not transfigure it. This results in a program of tart vignettes that this gifted quartet shines with their own polishes.

— ***Bill Shoemaker***

(Claxon Records, Alex Boersstraat 16, Amsterdam, Holland).

)ON CHERRY (photograph by Ton von Wageningen)

BARRY ALTSCHUL

Brahma
Sackville 3023

Barry Altschul, drums, bowed cymbals, quica, waterphone, percussion; Ray Anderson, tenor trombone, alto trombone, sousaphone, percussion; Mark Helias, bass, cello, collegno battuto.

Con Alma de Noche; Irina; Be Out S'Cool; Brahma; Lism.

Barry Altschul has been a progenitive exponent of melodic and coloristic percussion since his tenure with Paul Bley in the sixties. Successive associations in the seventies with Chick Corea, Anthony Braxton, and Sam Rivers sharpened Altschul's rhythmic drive to the enhancement of his sense of detail and depth of feeling. Extensive free-lance activity with diverse personae, including Julius Hemphill, Gato Barbieri, Hampton Hawes, and Buddy Guy, has added to Altschul's ability to be immensely compatible in any context while maintaining a high individual profile. As demonstrated on two star-studded albums on the Muse label, Altschul has the compositional and organizational skills required to make the successful transition from hired hand to leader — a transition fully realized

on "Brahma."

"Brahma" brings Altschul's body of experience into the focused light of his working trio. Much to Altschul's credit, the trio has the finely integrated ensemble presence of a cooperative such as Air or Cyrille, Lee, and Lyons. The trio maintains this solid identity throughout the exceptionally varied program on "Brahma," whether the matter at hand is a rarely traversed terrain of textures, a supple ballad, or a driving vamp. Altschul, Ray Anderson, and Mark Helias bring to complex materials an unobscurant sence of craft that infuses the title piece and ***Lism*** with a savory immediacy found in overtly populist jazz modes. To familiar modes of improvisation, Altschul, Anderson, and Helias consistently demonstrate that a synoptic overview of tradition can be forwarded, as in ***Con Alma*** and ***Irina***, without an absence of emotional vibrancy or injections of originality.

Sparks fly throughout the album. A short riveting staccato burst opens ***Con Alma*** and segues into a Ruddish Anderson cadenza. Altschul and Helias then lay down an infectious pulse and Anderson continues the course in a boisterous manner but never succumbs to bluster. The latinate percussion interlude finds Altschul shining on a turf that demands close-order capacities that are apart from his usual action-painting, setting up the staccato figure which ends the piece with a bang. ***Irina*** is a lovely ballad that the trio elongates and compresses with a beguiling, almost Keatonesque, deadpan. Anderson's warmth and wit in interpolating Lawrence Brown's lyricism is especially effective. The ballad proves to be a poignant eye of the storm, as it is sandwiched between ***Con Alma*** and the freebop melt-down of ***Be Out S'Cool***. Again, Anderson's mercurial flow of ideas is staggering. Altschul's work teems with rapid-fire crossrhythms and flairs of color. Mark Helias alternately anchors and springs the action before taking a well-constructed solo that has a bite far worse than its bark.

The bristling interplay of the trio takes on expansive proportions on the title piece and ***Lism***. The atom-splitting resumes after a prickly cadenced theme, with Anderson sliding long smears, growling, and feathering the edge of Helias's ritards and Altschul's arcing rolls and cymbal crashes. A momentary simmering is marked by arco bass, bowed cymbals, and an economic palette of peripheral percussion, before Anderson introduces variants of the opening material that Altschul and Helias eventually offset with a heavy two-beat. The ensuing free section forgoes pyrotechnics for a sparser landscape, allowing Helias's cello to wash the music with a tenuously austere lyricism that forwards Helias's timbral and registral command of the instrument. The shadowing of Anderson's vocalizations by Altschul's quica cuts to loony martial musings spliced with rambunctious polyphony. Altschul's single extended solo is a miniature retrospect of his activity that binds the title piece and ***Lism***, a brief statement that frames equally strong unaccompanied solos by Anderson and Helias.

"Brahma" stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the work of any of Altschul's former employers. Make room for Barry Altschul.

— Bill Shoemaker

BILLY BANG

Sweet Space
Anima 12741

Billy Bang, violin; Butch Morris, cornet; Frank Lowe, tenor saxophone; Luther Thomas, alto saxophone; Curtis Clark, piano; Wilber Morris, bass; Steve McCall, drums.

A Pebble Is A Small Rock/Sweet Space/Loweski For Frank (T.F.R.)/Music For The Love Of It.

Of the emerging generation of violinists, Billy Bang is the most likely to synthesise the fiddler's art and the structuralism of Leroy Jenkins. Equally a player and an artist, Bang produces a music of uncompromising spirit and immediate sensual appeal. His second recording as a leader documents a November 1979 concert at New York University that has very few turgid moments but only an adequate amount of exceptionally fresh music. That "Sweet Space" is not the record that distances Bang from the relatively small pack of young violinists stems not from his performance or his program, which are respectively vigorous and well-rounded. It is due more to an overcrowded bandstand that occasionally prevents the diverse energies of the participants from coalescing.

Unfortunately, most of the problems occur on the first side. Despite the propulsion of McCall and Wilber Morris, only Bang solos in a thoroughly convincing manner on ***A Pebble***, the buoyant opener. The saxophonists are uneven in their lacing together of textures and development of an engaging dynamic with the ensemble. Clark is neither lyrically or percussively cogent. Still, Bang's gliding phrases and Lowe's rollicking energy yields a split decision and the proceedings are generally uphill, thereafter. While the duets by Bang and Butch Morris that open and close the title piece contain some of the most substantial ideas on the album, the gruff ensemble passage is barely three dimensional. The piece is distinguished, however, by Bang and Morris, who shadow each other's chromatic runs and textural shadings. Their rapport and experience with each other is fully conveyed in this performance.

Though ***Loweski*** is mainly a vehicle for Frank Lowe, there is an excellent opening solo by McCall and fine, though brief, excursions by Butch Morris over the head and in a free trio section. Lowe's finesse in working off the linked riffs that comprise the piece to forward his delightfully raw and abrasively sly persona makes this the most enjoyable performance I've

heard from Lowe since "The Flam" (Black Saint BSR 0005). Bang also turns in his strongest solo of the album, accenting intensity without the loss of articulation. ***Music*** closes the set with a sparse, supple melody that the ensemble stretches in a relaxed manner.

While "Sweet Space" does not establish Bang as a major voice, it marks the considerable distance that he has come to date. It also suggests that Bang will not stay in the pack for long.

— Bill Shoemaker

RUBY BRAFF

With the Ed Bickert Trio featuring Don Thompson and Terry Clarke
Sackville 3022

True Love/I've Got A Feeling I'm Falling/This Year's Kisses/The World Is Waiting for the Sunrise/The Very Thought of You/After Awhile/What Is There to Say?/My Funny Valentine/The Song Is Ended/When I Fall In Love.

The usual phrases spring to mind to describe Ruby Braff's playing on this album: the full, brassy tone, the leaping, clear articulation, the sprightly phrasing with the occasional stretched interval, the melodic inventiveness, the refusal to grandstand but the lift to the high note or the dip to the lower register placed for full effect. And all this is here, yet there is more.

Braff's playing is slightly thicker, denser than usual, as he indulges in some politely dirty smears. He also breathes and slurs through some of his phrasing rather like a Ben Webster of the trumpet — and even once or twice he hangs onto a note and repeats it in the manner of Lester Young honks.

But of course Braff is still a trumpet man and this album is full of delicious examples of that tuneful approach to standards for which he is famous. ***After Awhile*** is exemplary with clear trumpet that edges Ed Bickert's guitar into a very bluesy feeling which also crops up on ***The Song Is Ended***. This latter song has a beautifully long-shaped bridge by Braff on his first solo chorus.

Little gem-like phrases shine in all the pieces, particularly the little curlicues and stabs that embellish the endings of Braff's solos.

Nothing gimmicky happens and there is no hectic capering. The tempos are all medium, varying only from slower to faster. But that doesn't mean there's no variation in the music — opening statements are played in duet, Don Thompson's bass (splendid throughout) opens ***The World Is Waiting for the Sunrise***, there are exchanges of fours, ***My Funny Valentine*** is set at a sparklingly bouncy and faster tempo than seems right, and ***The Very Thought of You*** is speeded up a little.

There are melody, inventiveness, wit (at one point Braff half-valves like Rex Stewart, and that reminds him of Ellington, so he dips into a quote from ***Cottontail***, and Thompson's bass makes fairly free with quotes in his solos) and plenty of clever interplay between the players.

The rhythm section is fine with Terry Clarke quietly fluttery on brushes or gently driving Braff along on slithery cymbals and nicely-placed snare punctuations. Ed Bickert (while I don't agree with John Norris's assertion in the liner notes that he necessarily plays with a harder edge here) certainly plays well — those bluesy solos I've mentioned are his best and his comping is flawless: listen particularly to his sparse rhythmic reshaping behind Braff on ***This Year's Kisses***.

So this is a marvellously creative, playful, tuneful album of standards with Braff sailing through on a wave of softly prancing ideas with a loosely pulsing rhythm behind him.

— Peter Stevens

BETTY CARTER

The Audience With Betty Carter
Bet-Car MK-1003

Betty Carter, vocals; John Hicks, piano; Curtis Lundy, bass; Kenneth Washington, drums.

Sounds/I Think I Got It Now/Caribbean Sun/The Trolley Song/Everything I Have Is Yours/I'll Buy You A Star/I Could Write A Book/Can't We Talk It Over/Either It's Love or It Isn't/Deep Night/Spring Can Really Hang You Up the Most/Tight/Fake/So..../My Favorite Things/Open the Door (theme song).

Betty Carter is an embodiment of jazz magic. Carter's unique sense of phrasing and timing with swinging scat vehicles, patter songs, and torchy ballads has been steadily refined over the past twenty-five years. Matched with a magnetic presence, Carter's vocal style is an exquisite sleight-of-hand that unfailingly coaxes a smile or a tear from her listeners. "The Audience With Betty Carter," a two-record set culled from December 1979 concerts at San Francisco's Great American Music Hall, is a comprehensive document of Carter's rare interpretive and communicative abilities.

The program is evenly split between Carter originals and staples of the standard repertoire. Of the originals, the twenty-five minute ***Sounds*** is the album's tour de force and a mesmerising marathon for Carter's vast repository of scat techniques. Shifting between variously paced strolls and dizzying sprints, Carter teases and squeezes the cyclical chord changes, pushing her trio to sterling accompaniment and the crowd into a clockwork frenzy. In terms of sustained energy and idea flow, this is a performance of the order of Paul Gonsalves's twenty-seven immortal choruses at Newport. In her other compositions, Carter is a piquant storyteller as well as an authoritative tunesmith. A delicious melody that pivots on well-placed pauses, ***Tight*** offers a traditional vein of advice to women who have to scour drinking holes all over town to find their errant men. ***Fake*** is a mellifluous waltz that addresses the checkered results of the exigent tactics of personal attraction. With a mid-tempo, Latin-tinged line of sufficiently muted drama, Carter most effectively captures the bittersweetness of a fated affair with a married man in ***So....***

Carter has established her own conventions in interpreting the popular song; the eerie, sometimes stinging, pianissimo; the abrupt rise and fall through registers; the elastic phrases; the always dramatic ritards; and they amply garnish this material. Carter is obviously playing to the local crowd by including ***The Trolley Song***, but her handling of the story line, especially her usage of onomatopoeia, makes it a showstopper. Of the remaining uptempo material, ***I'll Buy You a Star*** soars with economic grace and ***My Favorite Things*** is likely to scorch the unsuspecting ear. The ballads, as always, hit home. While ***Everything I Have Is Yours*** and ***Spring Can Really Hang You Up the Most*** are superlative examples of Carter's delicate handling of a lyric, it is the medley of ***Can't We Talk It Over*** and ***Either It's Love or It Isn't*** that will put the most callous listener into a swoon.

One of the finest pleasures of this album is that Betty Carter is a singer ***with a band.*** Pianist John Hicks's performance throughout the album reinforces my earlier impressions of him as one of the finest accompanists active today. He has ample solo space as well and maximizes each opportunity. Bassist Curtis Lundy and drummer Kenny Washington supply more than the necessary fire and sensitivity and buttress the momentum in a consistently impressive manner.

"The Audience With Betty Carter" is a super album. I recommend joining the audience.

— Bill Shoemaker

CASSETTES

Bristol Musicians Co-op has two new issues. Zyzzle 5 (C60) is an anthology of music from their 1978 Unpopular Music Festival. Side A carries two large ensembles: first some rather amateurish meandering improvisation from a sextet called Heuristic Music — it has its moments but is self-consciously "free" without any supportive vocabulary. Then a more energetic and together session of 20 minutes from a workshop octet. There's an impressive clarity and deliberateness in this improvisation, in spite of the size of the group. But I find the other side of the cassette more exciting as a whole. It has three duos with saxes. Gary Todd (tenor) and Roger Turner (percussion) play a fast, energetic, but not at all heavy music of continuously shifting tensions. Then in contrast the slow, singing tenor of Brett Hornby (plus raucous outbursts) is paired with the equally thoughtful guitar of Jean-Francois Minjard. The last item is listed as Ian Menter (alto sax, etc.) with Bob Helson (percussion) and if they say so I suppose that's what it is; a good deal of the noise is percussion, but an alto sax is hard to find among it. There are also some strange things going on in or near the background, including what sounds to me like the saxophonist's brother intervening to say could they have a discussion or try to explain what's going on in this music because he can't stand any more of it. I couldn't possibly describe the music on this track.

Zyzzle 3 (C45) is entitled "Noise Reduction (Three Preliminary Exercises by Someone Who is Not Very Good At It)". Bob Helson plays percussion solos on a quite large but not outlandish kit. He's a precise and inventive player who really uses the pitches of the various drums and cymbals, so that these improvisations are not simply exercises in free rhythm. He avoids emotive climaxes and shapes the music mainly according to the speed of the playing, extending from a basis of drumkit-noises into episodes of strange sounds of unknown origin. In all the deployment of swift and sure technique there's no element of egotistic display — indeed there's no time for it in the constant awareness of tension. One of his specialities is to modulate the pitch of a drum with the heel of his naked foot while playing, though on the cassette you can't see this. He's very good at it. These BMC cassettes cost 3 pounds each plus postage, from 36 York Road, Montpelier, Bristol, BS6 5QE, England.

Jack Wright of 3321 Spring Garden Street,

Philadelphia, PA 19104, issues C30 cassettes of himself solo, each unique, mainly in order to contact other musicians, but they can be bought at $3.00 each. He plays alto sax - free - centre of the instrument - quite intense - fast - creative - subtle - other adjectives. The tape I have also includes a weird and fascinating episode on clarinet and disarticulated piano, though I don't know if he does this regularly. Also, how do you sing and play the clarinet at the same time? Anyway, Mr. Wright is an accomplished musician who deserves better than to be sitting there in Philadelphia hoping to find kindred spirits. Write to him.

A C60 cassette without label-name or number can be got for 3 pounds (including postage) from Phil Durrant, 3 Clifton Place, Courts Rd., Banstead, Surrey, England. It contains four duets by Durrant himself on violin, with John Russell guitar, and is one of the best issues of recorded improvisation on tape disc or anything else that I've heard for some time. Durrant's violin is "scratchy" and Russell's guitar is "grating"; i.e. in both cases the physical resistance of the instrument to sounding is brought to the centre of the music, forming a new tension, a new medium across which, when you listen properly, the vibrancy and lyric twists of the music are starkly clarified. Restless, insistent, headlong friction. Harsh, succulent, and highly entertaining. How many more adjectives do you need? — *Peter Riley*

C C M C

CCMC Volume 4: Free Soap
Music Gallery Editions MGE 22

A.K.A. February 13th; Noal; Free Soap

CCMC Volume 5: Without A Song
Music Gallery Editions MGE 31

Downtown Toronto/ Without A Song/ Low Blow/ Umlaut Semicolon Dipthong.

Casey Sokol, piano, electric piano, organ, synthesizer, steel drum, harmonica; Al Mattes, bass, electric bass, synthesizer, marimba, steel drum, percussion; Michael Snow, trumpet, marimba, electric piano, piano, synthesizer, percussion; Nobuo Kubota, alto saxophone, marimba, percussion; Peter Anson, synthesizer on ***Noal.***

CCMC is a Canadian improvising ensemble whose assets - a daring conceptual sense and assertive personnel - are not conveyed by these two albums. The lack of hardnosed editing of these live performances leaves one with the sense that CCMC is an ensemble whose reach often excedes its grasp: combining a penchant for chance operations with a tendency towards A.A.C.M.-like usage of "little instruments", they generally fall short of engendering their material with startling vivacity. The material included in "Free Soap" and "Without a Song" may have provided for satisfying concerts and the albums may be thorough as performance documentation, but, as they are, the occasional passages of merit are obscured by a prevailing verism.

Noal is the only complete work on the two discs with any staying power, as it gathers steam from sparse beginnings in a well-focused manner rather than meander through a succession of textural backdrops. It is also the ensemble's finest integration of electronics on the two albums. The interplay between Nobuo Kubota's flailing alto and Michael Snow's angular trumpet lines during portions of ***A.K.A. February the 13th*** and ***Low Blow*** is skillfully underlined by Casey Sokol's jagged chords and arpeggios, revealing the ensemble as being capable of credible free music pyrotechnics. There are colorful moments splashed throughout the remaining material that whet the appetite as well, but their impact is minimized by their isolation.

If the material on these two albums had been whittled down to fit on one disc, the results could have been recommendable.

— *Bill Shoemaker*

LARRY DUBIN and C C M C

Larry Dubin and CCMC
Music Gallery Editions MGE 15

Larry Dubin, percussion, drums; Allan Mattes, bass, percussion; Michael Snow, synthesizer, percussion, trumpet, piano; Casey Sokol, piano, percussion; Peter Anson, guitar, kettle harp, piano, vegematic; Nobuo Kubota, saxophones, percussion.

Larry's Listening/Upon Arriving/A Postponement/Circuitry/Down the Street/Yourself Elsewhere/Radio in a Stolen Car/Uncalledforness/ Silky Times/Back to Timmons/Leaves Shed Their Trees/One of Your Lips/Qui ne sert qu'a nous faire trembler.

This three record set is packaged as a memorial tribute to the late Canadian drummer Larry Dubin, who died on April 24, 1978 (one month to the day after ***Silky Times*** was recorded).

Dubin was one of the founders of CCMC, and it is a gallant gesture on his friends' part to dedicate this set of performances to him. However, it would be a serious mistake to consider this a showcase for Dubin, or indeed, ***any*** individual, since that would be absolutely contrary to everything the CCMC stands for. Theirs is a thoroughly ensemble conception, playing a freely improvised music in totally spontaneous situations, and as the extremely varied musical statements on this album show, they are remarkably and often stunningly successful at creating a music which can be experienced strictly as a group sensibility.

The single exception to this rule is the three minute cut called ***Upon Arriving***, which is basically a solo example of Dubin's drumming (though it may be an edited excerpt from a longer group performance). ***Upon Arriving*** is a superb illustration of Dubin's approach to drumming; his highly tuned, tight drums were capable of a great deal of melodic variance, and as this piece shows he was adept at constructing episodes that are not only rhythmically engaging, but equally concerned with melody (pitches and intervals) and timbre in a way that favorably calls to mind Max Roach — not necessarily as an influence, but as a drummer who has traversed a similar path.

The remaining cuts, documenting performances from 1976-78, are full of a fresh, invigorating spirit. These people have played together for years, and their familiarity and single-mindedness of purpose — completely spontaneous improvisation — allows them a control of their materials, a subtlety of interaction, and a flexibility of moods resulting from a wide

palette of colors, textures, and effects. You won't hear any solos here; even at their most conventional sounding – that is, when you hear faint echoes of something you think you might have heard before – they never fall into a dangerous "lead voice plus accompaniment" because each of the instruments is an equal voice, in precisely the way each card is an equally supportive, decorative, and self-defining component of a house built of playing cards.

This is not a band in which one can hear imitations of other bands, or one which wears its influences (and, consciously or subconsciously, they have influences, though they might not necessarily be of a musical nature) on its collective sleeve. Like all aspects of life, CCMC's music has low and high points (and I certainly hope they don't misunderstand what I'm about to say), but at its most successful the music has an inevitability and drama which seems composed, beyond the wonderfully tense edge of invention one feels in improvised music at its best. For me, this quality is especially evident in the last two pieces – ***One of Your Lips*** and ***Qui ne sert qu'a nous faire trembler*** – which do for me what such composers as Feldman and Dlugoszewski do. But everywhere in their music, for better or worse, one can hear what poet Philip Whalen and critic Whitney Balliett call "the sound of surprise."

– Art Lange

(Available from The Music Gallery, 30 Saint Patrick Street, Toronto, Ontario M5T 1V1 Canada).

ORNETTE COLEMAN

Soapsuds, Soapsuds
Artists House 6

Coleman, tenor saxophone; Charlie Haden, bass.

Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman/Human Being/ Soapsuds/Sex Spy/Some Day.

Though the seed behind the conception of this album of duets was planted the first time Coleman and Haden ever played together, at an informal get-together at Ornette's house in 1957, it took twenty years to bear vinyl fruit. Perhaps not surprisingly, the results have a comfortable ripeness, matured and mellowed over years of creative interaction. Much of this feeling is the product of a familiarity of minds accustomed to working closely over a long period; however, Ornette's choice of instrument here plays an important part in the mood created.

Except for ***Some Day***, on which he explores the spiky, metallic timbre of the trumpet, "Soapsuds, Soapsuds" documents Coleman's first return to the tenor saxophone since his 1961 Atlantic album "Ornette on Tenor." Why the change? Well, it's possible that he felt that since the musical assumptions underlying this duet were to be so radically removed from the rhythmic layering and electric effects he has been investigating with his recent "guitar" bands, he would alter his voice to emphasize those differences in tone and structure. Certainly, Coleman's phrasing, attack, and tonal properties are remarkably dissimilar on the larger horn, adopting an eloquent reserve and lush sound far from the fervent bite and tang of his sole alto duet with Haden, ***O.C.***, recorded a year prior to this and heard on Haden's "Closeness" (A&M Horizon SP-710). On tenor, Ornette concentrates on pensive, introspective ***melody***, with only a trace of the rhythmic calisthenics audible in his alto performances.

The choice of material echoes these instrumental traits. ***Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman*** is a surprisingly straight statement of the TV theme song, edged with more than a touch of melancholy in Coleman's broad tone, which ultimately segues into a rollicking, almost Illinois Jacquet-like blues. ***Sex Spy*** features a sweet-and-sour, yearning tenor plea, and Haden's composition ***Human Being*** is an arching, aching theme which the duo invests with humanity and humor. Speaking of Haden, his work here is as luxurious and capable as we have come to expect from him. All-in-all, from the contributions of the musicians to the richly engineered sound, the word for this album is ***warmth.***

(A brief aside: as usual with Artists House recordings, this album contains a full discography in the accompanying booklet; and brings to our attention some particularly mouth-watering personnel descriptions of unreleased recordings and privately-owned tapes, such as an Impulse session Coleman recorded with the San Francisco Symphony, three Columbia LP's worth of Ornette jamming with Moroccan joujouka musicians, and a 1963 meeting between Coleman and Albert Ayler. Will we ever get to hear these, I wonder?)

– Art Lange

JACK DeJOHNETTE

Special Edition
ECM 1-1152

DeJohnette, drums, piano, melodica; David Murray, tenor saxophone, bass clarinet; Arthur Blythe, alto saxophone; Peter Warren, bass, cello.

One for Eric/Zoot Suite/Central Park West/ India/Journey to the Twin Planet.

While many of us weren't looking, Jack DeJohnette crept up behind our backs and became one of the most engaging and entertaining musicians active today. Oh, we all recognized his ability as functioning cog in a number of flexible rhythm sections (the underrated ***early*** Charles Lloyd band, Miles, et al.), and there was one cut (***Neophilia***) on a Milestone album under his own name ("Have You Heard?", MSP 9029) where he and pianist Hideo Ichikawa, bassist Gary Peacock, and Bennie Maupin on bass clarinet created a haunting, sinister classic worthy of any film noir. But a close look at his total ECM output reveals the blossoming of talents we had only previously guessed at. From evocatively melodic, finely etched drum solos (heard to best advantage on "Pictures," ECM 1-1079) to sensitive, stylistically apt accompanying in duo situations (with John Abercrombie on "Pictures" and Keith Jarrett on "Ruta and Daitya," ECM 1021), to vital, propulsive, colorful goosing of his Directions and New Directions groups on three excellent, highly recommendable albums. And now, with the premiere of his Special Edition band, DeJohnette has put the cap on what might just be the most impressive string of albums of any ECM artist.

It's important to remember that both New Directions (with Abercrombie, Lester Bowie, and Eddie Gomez) and Special Edition (with

the above personnel occasionally augmented by the reeds of Chico Freeman and John Purcell) are not ad hoc aggregations thrown together for recording purposes, but rather ***working bands***, which bring to DeJohnette's intriguing, structurally variegated compositions familiarity and spontaneity. This entire album is a case in point. The level of writing (all by DeJohnette except for Coltrane's ***India*** and ***Central Park West***) is extremely high, and the arranging is fresh and unpredictable. ***Central Park West***, for example, is built upon lush overlapping harmonies in the theme statements; moreover, this is entirely an ensemble performance — there are melodica and horn obbligatos but no solos per se. Elsewhere, DeJohnette the arranger has allowed soloists to alter the rhythmic or atmospheric design of individual pieces; notice how, after DeJohnette's piano and the complementary horn phrasings set ***India***'s mood, Murray turns the proceedings into a down-home ***stomp*** with his vibrant bass clarinet entry. Similarly, on ***One for Eric***, DeJohnette allows his horn men to suggest (not imitate!) styles identifiable with that of the music's dedicatee (Dolphy), with Blythe's alto echoing his unique intervallic sense and searing vibrato at a quicker tempo than Murray's musky bass clarinet musings.

Both ***Journey to the Twin Planet*** and ***Zoot Suite*** utilize multi-sectional designs, with the former alternating strained, disjointed horn harmonies, loose-limbed high energy romps, and a contrapuntal fabric based on an ostinato. ***Zoot Suite*** (beyond the double or triple pun embedded in its title) is a true suite, with episodes in rondo form evoking Swing Era mannerisms in wide horn vibratos, infectious, jaunty riffs and contrasting cool and raucous horn solos — all taken to unpredictable, often near-surrealistic lengths through repetition and juxtaposition of mood, texture, and color between segments. David Murray should transcribe ***Zoot Suite*** for the World Saxophone Quartet — it would make a marvelously witty and adventurous vehicle for them. Until they do, make sure you hear Special Edition — and check out the rest of DeJohnette's recorded work for similar musical successes.

— Art Lange

ANTHONY DAVIS

Past Lives
Red Records VPA134

With this solo piano outing, the talented composer/instrumentalist Anthony Davis reveals a number of nearly orchestral implications in both his music and his keyboard technique. In his performances of ***Crepuscule*** (a deft suite-like reworking of three Monk themes, whereby Davis acknowledges his structural and pianistic debt to Thelonious) and ***Past Lives***, both of which were previously recorded with larger ensembles, he ably suggests a wide range of instrumental colors and shadings without sounding sketchy or skeletal. Similarly, much of ***Past Lives*** and ***On an Azure Plane*** are built around sheer instrumental gesture rather than absolute pitch intervals or melodic or rhythmic contour, and the composer's piano is equal to the task, without loss of drama or tension.

Basically, Davis takes a Romantic approach to his material, firmly rooted in his classical studies, but tempered with a jazzy staggered rhythmic attack and an acidic quality to his harmonies, which manifests itself in a piece like ***Locomotif No. 1***, where the variations in phrasing and modulations of mood occur quickly — at times from one bar to another. Then there is ***Of Blues and Dreams*** (heard in a more concise version on Davis's intriguing Sackville recording of the same name), where the Ravelian reveries of the opening theme take on a taste of Tatumesque stride in its lilting passages, only to ultimately remain true to the composition's ripe, Romantic atmosphere.

All things considered, this is a completely satisfying series of performances from one of the most engaging voices of the music's younger generation.

— Art Lange

WALT DICKERSON (photograph by Maurizio Brenzoni)

WALT DICKERSON/SUN RA

Visions
SteepleChase SCS 1126

This is a tremendous record. It ought to become one of the records of the year. Just the cover photograph of Sun Ra in mufti (or as near as you'll get him) is worth half the price.

Everybody today knows Sun Ra, who made his splash in obscurity on ESP records and his own Saturn label with such effect that he came to be recognised as one of the makers of the avant-garde and his music was reissued on Impulse. Much less well known is Walt Dickerson. He was one of three outstanding vibraphone players to appear around 1960 — all of them admirers of Milt Jackson, then just past the height of his creative achievement with the Modern Jazz Quartet. They were Bobby Hutcherson, who went on to minor fame but less achievement; Lem Winchester, who died, leaving in "Another Opus" (Prestige) a magnificent tribute to Jackson; and Walt Dickerson, who made several highly praised records for Prestige, but then virtually disappeared from the recording scene for fifteen years. Those early records were outstanding — notably "To My Queen," with Andrew Hill, George Tucker and Andrew Cyrille. They have not had the lasting recognition they deserved as minor

classics, and it is good to see Dickerson lately back on the recording scene in such magisterial form.

Dickerson and Ra play beautifully together, getting a rich spectrum of effects from the combination of their two instruments. They begin their programme with a lyrical piece, ***Astro***, very sedate and thoughtful, in which both players confine themselves to the classical potentialities of their instruments. Dickerson allows himself an unusual sonority (with the Jacksonian "wow," produced by slowing the motor). He generally plays with amplification low, getting a clean metallic sound. This sound is dominant on the contrasting ***Utopia***, where they really take things apart. Dickerson skates over the plates with the mallets to get an eerie, electronic effect, while Sun Ra is inside the piano, at times weirdly ethereal, at others so like a string bass that I thought for a moment that it was Percy Heath coming in behind Milt Jackson.

There are some outstanding collaborations throughout this beautiful record, as well as some gloriously sustained solo passages. You don't need to cook your brains to love this album, even though it is an outstanding contribution to contemporary music: its texture is immediately winning. It is not on the frontier of new music; but it is the work of two masters in the full certainty of their powers.

— Trevor Tolley

WALT DICKERSON / RICHARD DAVIS

Divine Gemini
SteepleChase SCS-1089

Dickerson, vibes; Davis, bass.

Lucille/Divine Gemini/Always Positive/Her Intuition.

SteepleChase seems to be making up for vibist extraordinaire Walt Dickerson's years of neglect by record companies with a vengeance — and the results have been all to our good. This 1977 duet with the remarkable bassist Richard Davis, though lacking the complementary conceptual sensibilities of Dickerson's duet with Sun Ra on SteepleChase SCS-1126, is nevertheless quite an achievement, balancing fantasy and friction with grace as a fulcrum.

Dickerson injects a toughness into his mallet-work which carries the instrument away from its "pretty," ethereal associations, manipulating pastel and ebony colors, echo effects, dynamic levels, and rhythmic articulation (from shimmering sustained chords to clusters of dazzling staccato runs) in ways unlike any vibist I've ever heard. Davis, too, is particularly intriguing here; not content to accompany the vibes' lead, the bassist extemporizes in unexpected directions — his choice of notes and his placement of those notes in the spaces Dickerson provides is unpredictable and fresh. Together the two approach a number of stylistic stances — call and response, simultaneous dialogue, contrapuntal weaving of melodies — and plot their courses in fascinating fashion.

The music on "Divine Gemini" is dedicated to Walt Dickerson's mother, and if it can be assumed that the sounds created reflect that lady's personality, then she must be full of surprises, and a calm, lucid, colorful, and captivating presence.

— Art Lange

LOEK DIKKER

And the Waterland Big Band
The Waterland Big Band is Hot!
(Live, Vol. 1 and Vol. 2)
Waterland WM 008 and 009

For once, anyway, the title holds true — the Waterland Big Band *is* Hot! Consisting of ten instrumentalists from Holland, four from the U.S. and one from Sweden, everyone gets a chance to solo (each album contains a single composition) and one hears a parade of perpetually scorching statements. framed by some of the most eclectic and quizzically engaging orchestral textures and themes imaginable. Something like a cross between the Willem Breuker Kollektief and Sun Ra, with a bit of Gil Evans blended in for respite.

Volume 1 is pianist Dikker's ***Health Food and Bug Spray***, an expressionistic extravaganza which sounds like a soundtrack for a Looney Tunes Film Festival -- circus marches, electrically charged ***Ascension***-like figures of ensemble polyphony, ruthlessly savage honest-to-goodness saccharine swing riffs (including that puckishly lame wide reed vibrato), moaning brass a la Ellington's Cotton Club 'Jungle Music,' Ivesian contrapuntal "Columbia Gem of the Ocean" in three keys simultaneously, Maynard Ferguson-rejected 1960s style blastoffs, shadowy film noir episodes, a humorous Reich/Glass shimmering four-note background motif, and a real live samba.

Volume 2, ***Little Tommy Lost Concentration for a While***, is more serious (if you can believe that!), more dramatic, direct, and impressionistic. Less spontaneity and surrealism, heavier into moody pools of color and ballad tempos. Solos from everyone coming from everywhere. Loek Dikker is ***not*** your typical composer/arranger, and this is definitely ***not*** your typical big band, even though there are echoes here of every band you've ever heard. Now hear this.

— Art Lange

CLARE FISCHER

Jazz Song (solo piano)
Revelation 31

Spring is Here/Suerte/Here's That Rainy Day/Moon Mist/Autumn Lines/Love Locked Out/You've Changed/Serenidade/Just Friends.

Alone Together (solo piano)
MPS 0068.178 (15.500)

Yesterdays/Du, Du, Liegst Mir im Herzen/Tahlia/The Touch of Your Lips/Excerpt from Canonic Passacaglia/Everything Happens to Me/Brunner-Schwerpunkt.

Salsa Picante
MPS 0068.209 (15.539)

David Acuna, flute; Rick Zunigar, guitar; Clare Fischer, electric piano, organ; David Troncoso, electric bass; Pete Riso, drums; Alex Acuna, timbales, latin percussion; Ildefonso (Pancho) Sanchez, congas, bongos, campana.

Bachi/Morning/Guarabe/Descarga - Yema Ya/Cosmic Flight/Inquietacao/Minor Sights.

These three albums indicate the breadth of Fischer's vision. It is many years since he was amongst the first Americans to identify the bossa nova's charm, and Salsa, a piquant blend of many Latin influences, with the Cuban flavour paramount, shows him to have developed that interest. There's proof here that electric instruments need not inhibit swing, and that gaiety does not perforce debar resourcefulness. A committed improviser, he thrives on these complex yet clear-cut rhythms, and his themes too merit attention.

Yet effervescence, however refreshing, is no substitute for unalloyed beauty, and it is in the other two collections that listeners will find enduring satisfaction. "Alone Together" profits from Brunner-Schwer's famed Steinway, and Fischer's dynamic sense allows him to capitalise brilliantly upon its potential. Compare the rollicking final item, essentially a fast boogie, with the subtlety of ***Everything***, or savour the shifts of mood through which this ***Yesterdays*** progresses. His grip on tone and texture, tight even in the plainly emotional ***Herzen***, is exemplary indeed.

In the notes Fischer is said to view this MPS release as a high point in his recorded career, yet "Jazz Song" could surely not be deemed inferior to it. Such feats as the remodelling of ***You've Changed***'s harmonies underlie but cannot altogether explain the appeal of its delicate impressionism. In its eschewal of declarativeness, in its self-imposed confinement to a twilit, evanescent mode, this album breaks with everyday jazz parlance, yet simultaneously draws much of its poetic fibre from that same tradition. Its sensitivity will haunt you.

— Michael James

JOHNNY GRIFFIN

Return of the Griffin
Galaxy GXY-5117

Johnny Griffin, tenor sax; Ronnie Mathews, piano; Ray Drummond, bass; Keith Copeland, drums.

During the two decades which have elapsed since he first came to prominence, Griffin's belief in himself has never wavered. Rather than graft alien methods on to his music, he has broadened his style out from within, so that the jolting, kaleidoscopic polyrhythms he favoured in those halcyon days, often disconcerting, maybe even sinister in their purport, are now complemented by phrasing whose implications are less equivocal - bold emotionalism which finds expression here in the wistful passages of his own ballad, ***When We Were One***, or, quite as fulfilling, in the sensitive assertiveness of ***I Should Care***.

Expostulation, though, is still his forte. How characteristic it is that he disposes so perfunctorily of ***Autumn Leaves***, using its charming melody as a mere springboard for quickfire chordal dissection! Other sorties in this vein comprise the whirlwind ***Fifty-Six***, an elongated variant on the AABA formula, and ***The Way It Is***, reverberating echo of his message to a hardcore congregation.

A Monk's Dream, an attractive pastiche of Thelonious's compositional methods, calls to mind those two remarkable albums done 22 years ago at the Five Spot Cafe. With Monk, as with Coltrane and Blakey, Griffin proved that he could hold his own with the ablest minds in

jazz. His more enduring feat has been to sail, colours at the mast, across the years that intervened. In jazz there are no foolproof havens: the genuine artists, those of Griffin's stamp, carry their gift safe with them.

— Michael James

ITALIAN JAZZ RECORDS

BRUNO BIRIACO's Saxes Machine
Nouami
Edi-Pan NPG 802

ENRICO PIERANUNZI
From Always...To Now!
Edi-Pan NPG 803

FRANCO D'ANDREA
From East To West
Atlantic T 50691

FRANCO D'ANDREA
Dialogues With Super-Ego
Red Record VPA 157

CLAUDIO FASOLI
Hinterland
Edi-Pan NPG 804

GUIDO MANUSARDI
Symbiosis
Atlantic T 60148

CHET BAKER/ENRICO PIERANUNZI
Soft Journey
Edi-Pan NPG 805

No doubt about it; Italian jazz is progressing. It's emerging from a provincial dimension which is turning - thank God - into a pale memory. Well, I'm not going to say that this country is going to be a leader in jazz; probably it will never be. But one gets a nice, strong feeling of evolution thinking of the development of the improvisational art in this country which started so many years ago.

Nor am I going to say that the Italian improvisers are creating a new, fresh, original music (perhaps only Enrico Rava brought some hints of original creativity into this country), but even if the players are working in somebody else's bag, it doesn't mean that their efforts are meaningless.

Here is a package of recordings; having in common the fact that they were made by some of the leading Italian improvisers (apart, obviously, from the alliance between Chet Baker and Enrico Pieranunzi) and played (except the participation of Red Mitchell on the Manusardi record) by Italian musicians. And all have in common a high level of quality.

I'd like to add, even if I'm no literary critic, that all the liner notes of these albums have something in common: sheer gravy, unnecessary schmalz, that in some cases (particularly on Manusardi's record) is so heavy that it becomes simply unbearable. I think it's about time to invite writers and producers to take some more care in this matter: it's becoming really too often the case that liner notes turn into some rotten and empty eulogies. My goodness, this third class literature! — which does a real dis-service to the artists involved.

All said, now let's speak of these recordings, which are mostly bound to quite orthodox fields, although explored with rather an imaginative feeling.

Let's get on the turntable the record of Saxes Machine: these guys (the sax section of the Italian State Radio Orchestra: Gianni Oddi, alto sax; Baldo Maestri, alto and soprano saxes, clarinet; Sal Genovese, Beppe Carriere, tenor sax; Carlo Metallo, baritone sax, plus a rhythm section led by Bruno Biriaco, one of the most appreciated Italian drummers, including pianist Franco D'Andrea and bassist Giovanni Tommaso) are working in no particularly original bag, but their work is quite proficient and turns into a rewarding experience when carefully listened to. Arrangements (all by Biriaco) that hint at the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra and Supersax, and which are worked on with lots of taste and excitement (particularly beautiful is their work on ***Giant Steps*** and on Biriaco's original ***Nouami***). A kind of mini big band assembling some highly professional musicians who do their best and succeed in resolving their nice task.

With Enrico Pieranunzi we are into a less aggressive kind of post-bebop; the pianist (and also leader) is a quite brilliant and efficient soloist deep into a refined, sophisticated harmonic approach that has its models in the work — as Pieranunzi himself explains in the liner notes - "of Wynton Kelly, Bill Evans, Herbie Hancock and Chick Corea." An ambitious project, but quite well planned and thought out. Concerning the musicians involved, apart from the leader, I'd like to mention the elegant and intelligent work of bassist Bruno Tommaso (who is no hard swinger, but has plenty of imagination, refinement and technical chops) and the skills of saxophonist Maurizio Giammarco, a very mature and imaginative player, and drummer Roberto Gatto, an inventive time keeper in this recording debut.

Franco D'Andrea is surely one of the most brilliant and ingenious pianists in Europe today. Two records: a trio (Dodo Goya, bass, and Bruno Biriaco, drums) and a solo date. The first, "From East To West" (half recorded live at the Warsaw Jazz Jamboree, half recorded in Turin) is a good demonstration of the brilliant skill of this pianist (listen carefully to a beautiful reworking of a minor blues like Wayne Shorter's ***Footprints***); but it's the solo date, "Dialogues With Super-Ego," that I really feel like writing about: it*s a real cooker, full of maturity, poetry, lyricism, harmonic sophistication, rhythmic excitement, melodic refinement. I have no hesitation: a masterpiece in today's European jazz scene. I can't add any other word: just listen and you'll realize the presence of an authentic, profound talent at the height of his maturity.

The name of Franco D'Andrea is also hinted in Claudio Fasoli's "Hinterland." This modern and skilled saxophone player has long worked with D'Andrea (perhaps some Canadian jazz fans can remember Perigeo's group — Fasoli, D'Andrea, Tommaso, Biriaco and Sidney — who were in Toronto a few years ago for the recording date that produced "Non e poi cosi lontano" for RCA) who, in this recording, is brilliantly replaced by Enrico Pieranunzi who is not such a talented liner notes writer as he is a player. A saxophone (Fasoli), a piano (Pieranunzi), a trombone (Giancarlo Schiaffini), two basses (Riccardo Del Fra and Bruno Tommaso) and a drummer (Roberto Gatto), build a colourful music, very bound to some post-Coltrane hard bop: Fasoli shows some Shorterian licks, while trombonist Schiaffini — quite accustomed to contemporary improvisation — adds some extra colour with an irregular, complex phrasing that shows how sensitive this intelligent player can be. All in all a recording which adds a new testimony to the definitive growth of the lyrical and sensitive world of Claudio Fasoli, a player who is able to tell his own story with elegant sensitivity.

Guido Manusardi is definitely one of the most original Italian keyboard players; his intelligent work with the magnificent bassist Red Mitchell and his brilliant quartet doesn't deserve these absurd, pathetic liner notes, that seem to pay a tribute to that English literary trend called "nonsense." Gee, boys! Liner notes like these can really distract the listener... and it's a pity, because this double (half only by Manusardi and Mitchell, while the other half is by Manusardi's quartet: Peter Guidi, soprano sax; Lucio Terzano, bass; and Gianni Cazzola, drums) album deserves much attention, especially the part played by the Manusardi-Mitchell duo: standards like ***Autumn Leaves*** and ***If You Could See Me Now*** are reworked with sharp sensitivity and refined tenderness, while Mitchell's work is a real feast for the ear. A real giant of the bass! The duet performance really makes the quartet's brilliant job something banal: the transition is too hard to make, especially if one still has in his ears the magnificence of Mitchell's phrasing and sound.

The last recording I should talk about is co-led by Chet Baker and Enrico Pieranunzi: the trumpet player is backed by Italian musicians (Maurizio Giammarco, tenor sax; Riccardo Del Fra, bass and Roberto Gatto, drums) in a very elegant and intimate way. The partnership with the pianist seems to be absolutely adequate (listen to the beautiful duet on ***My Funny Valentine***, where Chet also sings) for Baker, who expresses himself through his usual tender, sophisticated, moving approach: Baker is simply a genius, and his work reflects his world.

— Mario Luzzi

CLIFFORD JORDAN

The Adventurer
Muse MR 5163

A musician obviously need not be a prime mover in order to fashion a long, rewarding jazz career. Paul Quinichette, Charlie Rouse, and Frank Foster, for example, have each been active for over a quarter century creating valuable music in an established manner. That not one of these men is a Hawkins, a Young, or a Coltrane does not diminish his art. Clifford Jordan is another who falls into the ***substantial*** second rank of jazz performers, by which I mean to compliment, not disparage.

Jordan has been recording sporadically as leader since his auspicious initial date for Blue Note in 1957. His playing has always been characterized by taste — in his choice of material and sidemen and in his own playing — and he has evolved, for want of better terms, from a hard bopper into a modern mainstreamer. All of his recordings have been satisfactory, but the one under review is his best yet.

Backed by Tommy Flanagan, Bill Lee, and Grady Tate, Jordan interprets three originals, Bird's ***Quasimodo***, Wilder's ***I'll Be Around***, and ***No More***, the Camarata/Russell tune that received its most memorable recording by Billie Holiday in 1944. Most of these performances are at medium tempo, and Jordan, the dominant voice, investigates the nuances of each. He is most sensitive on ***No More***, a ballad that he

plays in a manner reminiscent of Lucky Thompson, and he romps through ***Quasimodo*** and his own ***Adventurer***. Even though annotator Zen Stewart is enraptured by Jordan's playing on ***I'll Be Around***, it is, strangely, the album's least successful performance, primarily because Jordan has occasional difficulty in the lower register. The quartet works together perfectly, and Flanagan has a few rewarding solos.

"The Adventurer" is Jordan's best recording and is a solid contribution to the great jazz mainstream tradition. Recommended.

— Benjamin Franklin V

JIMMY KNEPPER

Cunningbird
SteepleChase SCS-1061

Jimmy Knepper, trombone; Al Cohn, tenor saxophone; Roland Hanna, piano; George Mraz, bass; Dannie Richmond, drums.

Figment Fragment/Languid/Just Tonight/Cunningbird/Noche Triste/Spotlight Girl

A large part of trombonist Jimmy Knepper's outstanding reputation is based on the recordings made under Charles Mingus's leadership between 1957 and 1961. These recordings document what is arguably Mingus's most fertile periods and Knepper's presence is one of the prominent threads in the music. The roaring drive evident on ***Haitian Fight Song*** and the elegant Lawrence Brown-like soulfulness showcased on ***Invisible Lady*** has accrued unusual precision in succeeding years with Gil Evans, Thad Jones-Mel Lewis, and the National Jazz Ensemble, honing an economy in Knepper's style that has consummated in a fervent strength. While these qualities are currently well-forwarded in the Mingus Dynasty and Lee Konitz's Nonet, it is in this quintet date — the first session under Knepper's leadership in over twenty years! — that the trombonist's fire, humour, and sensitivity are given the most open forum.

While the empathic interplay on "Cunningbird" is partly attributable to his past associations with Dannie Richmond and Roland Hanna in the Mingus Jazz Workshop and with Hanna and George Mraz in the Jones-Lewis Orchestra, it is Knepper's compositions that provide the added impetus for these six efflorescent performances. Knepper knows how to give standard chord changes and melodies a tangy twist or turn that engages the listener and fuels the solos. He puts a wind-sprinting bop head to the chords of ***The Way You Look Tonight*** for ***Just Tonight***, lays a spidery line for ***Spotlight Girl*** based on ***Stella By Starlight*** changes, and sneaks a snatch of ***Stompin' at the Savoy*** into ***Figment Fragment***. In each case, the tunes are amply garnished with expertly planted hooks that obscure the source materials and propel the quintet into overdrive. Knepper also has a deft touch with ballads and scoring evocative polyphonic passages. Subtle use of ensemble dynamics and chordal resolution distinguishes ***Noche Triste*** from the ordinary latinate vehicle and ***Languid*** from the pedestrian mood piece. The scored trio sections in the title piece are especially striking as there is a constant shifting of echoing and counterpointing voices.

Despite the strengths of the program, this album would not be the success it is if it were not for the compatibility of the fairly diverse personalities involved. Al Cohn's warm and comfortable sound maintains a heft throughout the proceedings that allows him to stay on top of the driving pulse laid down by Richmond but retain his framework of building subtle nuances. A fastidious, listening bassist is required to round out the nimble, facile piano of Roland Hanna and the strengths of Dannie Richmond, a role impeccably filled by George Mraz. Hanna and Richmond again demonstrate that their individuality is an outgrowth of their sensitivity to the entire ensemble. Unfortunately, this is an ad hoc aggregation and its excellence will rarely, if ever, be heard again.

"Cunningbird" is among the first releases manufactured in the U.S. by SteepleChase. The pressings are comparable to the Danish, the discs are sleeved in rice paper, and the jackets seem a tad sturdier.

— Bill Shoemaker

SHEILA JORDAN

Sheila
SteepleChase SCS-1081

Although she is something of an acquired taste, Sheila Jordan is surely a major jazz singer, if by that term one means a vocalist who swings and improvises. She does both, although her melancholy mood, nasal timbre, and medium tempi often conceal her rhythmic pulse. She succeeds most noticeably as an improviser, and as such she is the equal of many instrumentalists. She is as idiosyncratic in rearranging syllables and words as is Betty Carter, although their talents are in other ways quite dissimilar. But as with all good improvisers, Jordan enhances her material; her flights are not empty or self-serving. For example, in the verse to ***Lush Life***, her phrasing of "twelve o'clock-tales" suggests perfectly the lyrics' mood and meaning.

Jordan also excels in selecting songs. Of the eleven on this album, five are standards to which she brings freshness (***Lush Life, What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life, On Green Dolphin Street, Don't Explain,*** and ***Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone***). There are two originals by Steve Kuhn and two performances of Billy Preston's ***Song of Joy***, whose seemingly maudlin lyrics convey accurately the nature of Jordan's art. ***Please Don't Talk*** is possibly the most successful of these effective performances. It appears to be up-tempo but is not. This typifies Jordan's talent for controlled singing that implies more than it states outright.

Jordan does not need much accompaniment,

CLIFFORD JORDAN (photograph by Gerard Futrick)

and here she is backed only by bassist Arild Andersen. He plays well, but his artistry is difficult to assess because he is so subordinate to Jordan throughout. She controls every piece, and he backs her well. He is at his best on ***Please Don't Talk.***

Jordan has recorded infrequently, even though her quality is consistently high. (She is not alone in this, however, Jeanne Lee and Betty Carter are two other major female vocalists who have not recorded often, and Chris Connor has fallen into that company). As a result, she has gained something of an underground following; while this is better than nothing, her singing should be shared by many. This album, recorded in Oslo in 1977, is a welcome addition to Jordan's sparse discography, and it further establishes her as a vocalist of considerable accomplishment.

— Benjamin Franklin V

REISSUES

This column is designed to guide the listener through the maze of LP reissues. Repackaging plays an important role in the schemes of record companies both large and small, and the international ramifications of parallel reissue programs in different countries is often confusing. This column also covers notable sessions from the past which are only now being issued for the first time.

LESTER YOUNG
The Kansas City Six: A Complete Session
Commodore XFL 15352

What wonderful music! This is the March 28, 1944 session featuring Lester Young, Dickie Wells, Bill Coleman, Joe Bushkin, John Simmons and Jo Jones. Four tunes (***Three Little Words, I Got Rhythm, Jo Jo, Four O'Clock Drag***) were recorded and now we are being offered a total of ten extra versions (four of which were also on the Atlantic two record set 2-307) from the vaults. The music is superb and Wells and Young, in particular, offer us considerable variation within their solos. It's fascinating to listen to all the different takes of the tunes in sequence. They are all so good it makes you wonder why it was necessary to repeat them so much and choosing the version for release must have been a challenging experience for Milt Gabler!

EDDIE CONDON
The Liederkranz Sessions
Commodore XFL 15355

Eddie Condon and his friends succeeded so well in stylising their brand of jazz that few attempting it later have been able to break away from their frameworks and repertoire. One of the ironies of this is that it has diminished the impact of many of the original recordings. The brash vigour and energy of so many of Condon's associates — characteristics which were once considered attractive — has been downgraded, in place of the greater subtlety and swing of the more creative players from that time. In retrospect it is Bud Freeman, Pee Wee Russell and Jack Teagarden who consistently hold our attention, for their solos are much more than rhythmic embellishments of the melody line.

This is certainly true of this Commodore reissue. Pee Wee Russell is featured on both sessions (two takes of ***I Ain't Gonna Give Nobody None Of My Jelly Roll, Strut Miss Lizzie, It's Right Here For You, Georgia Grind, Oh Sister Ain't That Hot, Dancing Fool, You're Some Pretty Doll*** and one take of ***Ballin' the Jack***) and he constantly varies his ideas in his solos. On the second session he is joined by Fats Waller, another master musician, and these two musicians make the music glow. Their interaction, especially on ***Pretty Doll***, only hints at what would have been possible if the other horn players (trumpeter Marty Marsala and trombonist George Brunis) had stayed home. Max Kaminsky and Brad Gowans are featured with Pee Wee on side one and play with spirit and energy.

The original takes of these Condon performances were available, long ago, on Commodore 30010 and, more recently, formed part of the English London two LP set. The alternates of the sides with Waller were on RFW as well as Jazz Archives 1 (except ***Georgia Grind***).

These Commodore sessions under Eddie Condon are the source language of so much of the traditional jazz repertoire and style of the past forty years. It says something for Condon's concepts that so much of this sound is still around.

RECENT RELEASES

AFFIRMATION
'Lost Angeles' Inner City 1091
BUNNY BRUNEL
'Touch' " " 1102
ARNETT COBB Quartet
'Arnett Cobb Is Back' Progressive 7037
LARRY CORYELL
'Standing Ovation' (solo) Arista/Novus 3024
JACK DeJOHNETTE w. Bowie, Abercrombie...
'New Directions in Europe' ECM 1157
LAJOS DUDAS
'Detour' Rayna (ger.) 1103
DYANI / TEMIZ / FEZA
'Music for Xaba volume 2' Sonet 824
ART FARMER w. C. Jordan, C. Walton....
'At Boomers' Inner City 6024
SHAMEK FARRAH And Folks
'La Dee La La' Ra 103
CLARE FISCHER
'Salsa Picante' Discovery 817
JAN GARBAREK
'Aftenland' ECM 1169
MEL GRAVES
'Three Worlds' 1750 Arch s1780
GREAT GUITARS (Byrd-Ellis-Kessel)
'At The Winery' Concord 131
PETER CUSACK w. Parker, Altena, etc....
'Groups in Front of People' Volume 1 Bead 14
Volume 2 " 15
LARS GULLIN feat. Rolf Billberg
'With Strings' Sonet 2659
AL HAIG
'Piano Time' Seabreeze 1006
HERBIE HANCOCK
'Mr. Hands' Columbia JC 36578
TED HARRIS w. C. McPherson, B. Harris....
'Introducing Ted Harris' H.D. 628
JOHN HICKS Trio
'Bells' Strata East 8002
JIM HOWARD-PAT SULLIVAN Band
'No Compromise' Seabreeze 2005
(A reissue of HSH 101)
PROGRESSIVE RECORDS All Star Tenor Sax Spectacular Progressive 7019
EDGAR REDMOND & The Modern String Ensemble Essar 5013
(5455 Saturn Street, Los Angeles, CA 90019)
KEITH JARRETT (solo piano)
'G.I. Gurdjieff Sacred Hymns' ECM 1174
DICK JOHNSON w. Dave McKenna, others...
'Spider's Blues' Concord 135
SAM JONES 12-piece band
'Something New' Seabreeze 2004
STEVE KHAN
'Evidence' Arista/Novus 3023
'KILIMANJARO' Philo 9001
MORGANA KING
'Higher Ground' Muse 5224
L.A. FOUR
'Zaca' Concord 130
ELLIS LARKINS / Tony Middleton
'Swingin' For Hamp' Concord 134
HELEN MERRILL
'Chasin' The Bird / Gershwin' Inner City 1080
MICHAEL MOSS / FOUR RIVERS
'Live at Acia' Fourth Stream ERGO 31
NEW YORK BASS VIOLIN CHOIR
'Excerpts from Baby Sweets' Strata East 8003
NORTH TEXAS STATE Jazz Lab Band
'Lab '80' (North Texas Lab Bands, Box 5038 North Texas Stn., Denton, TX 76203)
'NUMA BAND' Ovation 1760
ANITA O'DAY
'Live at the City' Emily 10249
BILL PERKINS
'Many Ways To Go' Seabreeze 2006
STEVE REICH: 'Octet/ Music for a Large Ensemble/ Violin Phase' ECM 1168
REVERIE w. Larry Coryell Encounter 1001
(Distributed by Philly Jazz Records, P.O. Box 8167, Philadelphia, PA 19101 USA).
HOWARD ROBERTS Quartet w. Bill Mays
'Turning To Spring' Discovery 812
RED RODNEY w. Ira Sullivan
'Live at the Village Vanguard' Muse 5209
SONNY ROLLINS w. G. Duke, S. Clarke.....
'Love At First Sight' Milestone 9098
PONCHO SANCHEZ arr. by Clare Fischer....
'Straight Ahead' Discovery 813
JOHN SCOFIELD
'Bar Talk' Arista/Novus 3022
REY SCOTT w. Joe Ford, Nasara Abadey....
'Timbre Tambre' Planetary Lights 0001
(413 E. 9th St., Apt. 20, New York, NY 10009)
CYBILL SHEPHERD w. Stan Getz (1976)
'Mad About The Boy' Inner City 1097
CAROL SLOANE
'Carol Sings' Progressive 7047
SUN RA
'Of Mythic Worlds' Philly Jazz 1007
CLARK TERRY w. J. Wilson, J. Pass....
'Memories Of Duke' Pablo 2312.118
THERMAENIUS (2-record set)
'Live 1979' Pick Up LP 80301/2
(Danish Jazz Academy, Borupvej 66B, 4683 Ronnede, Denmark)
MALACHI THOMPSON
'Seventh Son' Ra 102
STEVE TIBBETTS
'Yr' Frammis 1522-25
(Box 6164, Minneapolis, Minn. 55406 USA).
CAL TJADER
'Gozame! Pero Ya' Concord 133
MICKEY TUCKER
'The Crawl' Muse 5223
McCOY TYNER w. Blythe, Hutcherson, others.
'4 X 4' Milestone 55007
SARAH VAUGHAN Pablo 2312.116
'Duke Ellington Songbook, vol. 2'
WEATHER REPORT
'Night Passage' Columbia JC 36793
RED WOLFE's Port Of Dixie Jazz Band
'Back In School Readin' Writin' and Rhythm'
(P.O.D. Records, 6333 Humboldt Ave., Richfield, MN 55423 USA).

AROUND THE WORLD

WRAY DOWNES (photograph by Paul Hoeffler)

CANADA

TORONTO — Lyte's, Toronto's newest night club dedicated to jazz opened in mid-November in the Royal York Hotel. Its focus follows the routines and philosophies already established at Bourbon Street and the Chick'N Deli. Individual artists from the U.S. are featured with a Toronto rhythm section. The opening attraction was vocalist Joya Sherrill with Russell Procope and Doc Cheatham and the Carol Britto Trio. They were followed by a two-week stint from Ruby Braff and then, to open the New Year, Jimmy Witherspoon was the headliner. The Carol Britto Trio will be house rhythm section for such diverse musicians as Herb Ellis, Buddy de Franco and others. The club definitely operates as a service for the hotel's guests rather than being an attractive alternative for the city's jazz audience, who are still searching for clubs which will satisfy their aural appetites.

Bourbon Street is the closest this city has to a jazz club but it depends on the energy level of its performers for its success. This is why Harry Edison and Lockjaw Davis in October and Art Pepper in December were so outstanding. These musicians all performed at a consistently high level, were in complete control of their music and demanded strong playing from the other musicians. It was a joy to hear Wray Downes in such good shape with Sweets and Jaws. He remains this city's most consistently interesting jazz pianist and his solo work was as enjoyable as that of the two hornmen. Like Sweets and Jaws, Art Pepper plays a high percentage of original material and he used the same rhythm section that he had in 1977, when he last played the club. Bernie Senensky, Dave Piltch and Terry Clarke fitted well with the saxophonist and Pepper's flowing yet angulated lines were executed with a burning intensity. Upcoming at Bourbon Street are Tal Farlow (Feb. 2-14), Richie Cole (Feb. 16-28), Zoot Sims (March 2-14), Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson (March 16-28) and Lennie Breau (March 30-April 11).

Bob Wilber got solid support from Charlie Mountford, Steve Wallace and Jerry Fuller at the Chick'N Deli in early December. The effectiveness of his performances is enhanced by his wide-ranging repertoire and their overall execution benefits from the lead sheets he brings for the other musicians.

Erroll's is a new restaurant/bar at Richmond and Sherbourne. Its decor is turn-of-the-century New York and its ambience is comfortable and relaxed. The excellent music is provided by pianist Joe Sealy, bassist Dave Young and drummer Pete Magadini. There's a good piano and the sound system is first-rate. Its popularity with "beautiful" people who aren't interested in music helps keep the cash register jingling but doesn't assist those who wish to listen.

Toronto is bustling with young musicians anxious to make their mark on the scene. The Music Gallery provides a forum for those whose viewpoint encompasses the contemporary extremities of musical sound while George's Spaghetti House is often a workshop for more conventional voices. Saxophonist Jane Fair is being heard more frequently in various settings

and she recently worked a week at George's with Frank Falco, Neil Swainson and Keith Blackley.

Jane Fair is also part of the reed section of Jim Galloway's Big Band and this section, under Gordon Evans' direction, performed in concert at the Ontario Science Centre for radio station CJRT. Other outstanding concerts in this series have included Ian Bargh's solo recital and a quartet performance by guitarist Peter Leitch.

The rapidly changing attitude towards Canadian jazz musicians is reflected in the number of recordings taking place. This is something which wouldnnot have been possible five years ago. Much of the credit for this new interest in Canadian musicians can be attributed to Jazz Radio Canada, the CBC radio show which was heard coast to coast for several years and served as an important catalyst in the spread of interest in Canadian music. For the past year this focus has disappeared as the CBC has wasted the taxpayers' money in the presentation of a nightly Variety show, which devotes most of its time to capsule glimpses of non-Canadian entertainers and commentary by non-Canadians. "Jazzland" is the only current CBC jazz show which regularly broadcasts tapes of sessions produced in Canada (on its Saturday afternoon FM timeslot — and snippets of this music are sometimes heard on the nightly Variety show) but, as often as not, they are American musicians playing in Canada. The recorded music segment is an unrelated grouping of discs. Rarely do they play records of Canadian musicians, which is a complete reversal of the policy established by Jazz Radio Canada. The CBC has an excellent late night outlet for jazz records of all styles and nationalities on "That Midnight Jazz" — it's time that Jazzland got its act together or else gave its production back to people who know what they are doing.

Several new Canadian records are in production. We wonder if the CBC will find space to play them in between the latest fusion sounds to come out of New York and L.A.! Saxophonist Ron Allen has released his first lp. It's called "Leftovers" and is on Black Silk Records ACR 8045. The music comes from different sessions and features guitarist Joey Goldstein, bassists Dave Field and Dave Piltch and drummers Claude Ranger and Buff Allen.... Ron Rully has released two lps featuring the vocal talents of his wife Aura. "We'll Be Together Again" (Bask 0006) has Gene DiNovi, Steve Wallace and guitarist Bill Bridges accompanying. "A Time For Love" (Bask 0007) has Carol Britto on piano with Steve Wallace (bass), Gary Benson (guitar); Ron Rully is on drums on both lps.... Sackville's long awaited lp of duo and trio performances by Wray Downes, Dave Young and Ed Bickert is called "Au Privave" (Sackville 4003) and will be released in late February.... On December 14, 1980 two recording sessions took place within a short distance of each other. The Michael Stuart-Keith Blackley band (with Mike Lucas on trumpet and Steve Wallace on bass) recorded live at The Edge, while just up the street at McClear Place Ed Bickert and Don Thompson recorded Sackville's first digital lp, with Don playing both piano and bass on this occasion.... Randy Hutton and Peter Moller have released (on Onari 005) an album of their distinctive guitar/percussion music, entitled "Ringside Maisie".... Don Thompson's CTL record with Ed Bickert, Terry Clarke and the Armin Electric Strings is now in circulation on Intercan Records. "Circles" (IC-1008) is a jazz flavored instrumental album for which Don did all the arranging as well as playing vibes, piano and bass.... Guitarist Lorne Lofsky has recorded for Pablo under the supervision of Oscar Peterson. The album should be released soon; whether it will suffer the same fate as Peterson's "Personal Choice" lp and only be released in Canada remains to be seen.... Culminating all this recording activity were the two lps recorded by Rob McConnell's Boss Brass in early December. A group of private investors recorded the band live at El Mocambo. This was recorded digitally for a yet-to-be-negotiated label. There was also a studio production for release by MPS. Phil Sheridan was responsible for the engineering on both occasions.... Edmonton musician Bob Stroup has released two lps of his music. "Live in Jazz City" (Foresee (CCL 33-154) features the multi-instrumentalist (trombone, vibes, sax) working through standard material with bassist George Koller and drummer Tom Foster. "Entre Amis" (Suite 1002) is a studio date with all original material written by Stroup. Tom Doran replaces Foster on this occasion. Both these albums are available from Wilson & Stroup Music Ltd., 25 Amberly Ct., Edmonton, Alberta T5A 2H9.

York University's Music Department in Toronto presented several jazz concerts in the Fall semester with Peter Leitch, Michael Stuart/Keith Blackley and Bobby Brough.... Eric Stach is in residence every Tuesday night at the Embassy Hotel in London, Ontario.... Jazz Calgary continues its efforts to stimulate its listeners with January concerts by the Steve Kuhn/Sheila Jordan band (January 18) and the Billy Harper Quintet (January 25).... The Roy Reynolds Quartet is in residence at Annabelle's, 670 Howe Street, Vancouver. You can also hear jazz in Vancouver at Basin Street (163 E. Hastings) on Friday and Saturday nights from 2 a.m. to 5 a.m. and on Sundays between 8 p.m. and midnight.... Dave Bird and Mary Nelson have prepared a two-part profile of Phil Nimmons entitled "The Making of an Artist: The Life and Times of Phil Nimmons". This will be broadcast on Jazzland sometime in 1981.

— John Norris

SUPPORT LIVE MUSIC

MONTREAL — was the stage for a number of major events and performances this past fall. First of all, three creators of postbop vocals, Nina Simone, Abbey Lincoln and Jeanne Lee appeared within a space of two months. Secondly, Doudou Boicel of the Rising Sun opened another jazz venue with his purchase of Rockhead's Paradise, a 300-seat club which has showcased black variety acts and R&B for 50 years. Doudou also organised an all-star tribute to Charlie Parker at Place des Arts featuring Dizzy Gillespie, Milt Jackson, Hank Jones, James Moody, Ray Brown and Philly Joe Jones. Lastly, the second annual 'Ear It Live festival was held at the Musee des Beaux Arts (see the following review).

Nina Simone opened Rockhead's (now "Doudou Rockhead"), and she seems to have taken up temporary residence here, making numerous midnight appearances at the Bijou in Old Montreal. Other bookings at Rockhead's included Tito Puente, Big Mama Thornton, Eartha Kitt, McCoy Tyner, Mongo Santamaria and Joe Pass.

Abbey Lincoln was one of the Rising Sun's highlights, along with Anthony Braxton, Art Blakey, Dexter Gordon, Sonny Stitt, Teddy Wilson, Paul Horn, Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee, Luther Allison, Willie Dixon and John Lee Hooker.

Abbey brought Los Angeles pianist Phil Wright who worked out a remarkably swinging rapport with Montrealers Michel Donato (bass) and Marvin Jolly (drums). Abbey exuded spiritual grace and resilient determination in her renditions of Billie Holiday's ***God Bless The Child*** and Oscar Brown Jr.'s ***Brother, Where Are You***, as well as her beautiful originals ***Prayer For My Father, Why The Caged-Bird Sings, People In Me*** and ***I'm A Painted Lady On A Stage.***

Anthony Braxton did a week at The Rising Sun with Baikida Carroll (trumpet), Marilyn Crispell (piano), Wes Brown (bass) and Thurman Barker (drums). Braxton had just put the group together for the Montreal gig, so they played free bop on ***Donna Lee, Half Nelson, Ornithology*** and ***Straight, No Chaser*** early in the week, and dug into Braxton's originals by the weekend. Marilyn Crispell was a great surprise for the audience and musicians alike. It was refreshing to hear a talented improvisor in the Cecil Taylor lineage playing with such personal distinction and taste.

Talking about newcomers, it appears that Art Blakey has found yet another great trumpet player, 19-year-old Wynton Marsalis, son of the New Orleans pianist Ellis Marsalis (see ***Coda*** # 173). Wynton has yet to define his own sound, but with the possible exception of Woody Shaw, I have not heard anyone as of late cut so close to Miles' savvy and Brownie's chops.

1980 was the year the jazz world paid tribute to Charlie Parker. Doudou's homage to Bird was billed as "the concert of the century". The cast was certainly first class. Unfortunately sound and programming problems marred the event. The first set was filled with pops and feedback from the sound system. Ironically, there was no mention of Bird. And at times there did not appear to be any clear musical continuity. For instance on one occasion the music came to a complete halt before Hank Jones was informed that it was his turn to solo. Luckily individual solos by Jackson, Brown and Moody (on flute) saved the evening from total disaster.

The Austrian group Neighbours with Dieter Glawischnig (piano), Ewald Oberleitner (bass) and John Preininger (drums) were booked into The Rising Sun for a Monday evening. Their music displayed a wide range of moods, from the folk and rhapsodic to the angular and cacophonous.

Oscar Peterson and Keith Jarrett performed separately at Place des Arts.... Bill Smith presented his jazz and blues films to two full houses at Cinema Parallele. The cinema also showed Les Blank's "Blues Accordin' to Lightnin' Hopkins" and "Always For Pleasure".... The C-Note has terminated its jazz policy.... Local pianist Maury Kaye has recovered from a severe respiratory problem.... And finally, god bless Ray Charles for his magnificent anthem prior to the Leonard/Duran fight. *— Peter Danson*

'EAR IT LIVE

Musée des beaux-arts, Montreal
October 23-26, 1980

This year's version of The Music Gallery's "Ear It Live" festival of improvised music featured some very good Canadian talent and a number of international gems. I caught most of the

"new jazz" presentations which included Gunter Hampel and Jeanne Lee, Misha Mengelberg, the Maury Coles Trio and the Jean Beaudet-Robert LeRiche Duo.

The Steve Lacy Quintet was also tacked on to the program here in Montreal by Patrick Darby of the museum. This move paid off, for Lacy's concert proved to be the most popular, drawing 350 people, while the others did well at 80-150.

Lacy has played and recorded here before, and he did not disappoint his loyal fans nor the uninitiated. Right from the first count, his quintet electrified the hall with vigorous drive and synchronised harmonic humor. With roots in the music of New Orleans, Ellington and Monk, Lacy's improvisations always swung freely with emotion. Quintet members Steve Potts (soprano & alto saxophones), Irene Aebi (violin, cello and vocals), Kent Carter (bass) and Oliver Johnson (drums) cohered with determination and taste, whether the atmosphere was celebratory, demonic or pensive.

The music of Hampel and Lee was equally rewarding. Both are pretty much a part of the same generation of improvisors as Lacy, and like him they are well versed in the Afro-American tradition.

They began their performance with a flute and voice exchange entitled ***Freedom Of The Universe***, which was followed by a very, very soulful bass clarinet and voice duo on ***Funky Get Down***, and then ended with a vibes and voice tribute entitled ***All The Things It Could Be If Charlie Mingus Wasn't Dead***. Not surprisingly, this last number covered the entire spectrum from bebop and scat singing to whispering undercurrents and free forms.

Pianist Misha Mengelberg's performance displayed improvisation of a completely different order. His music consisted more of a Dadaist commentary than aesthetic creations per se. He began by testing all 88 keys, then proceeded to play in a fumbling infantile manner. Periodically he would stop abruptly to light a cigarette, then continue with a ballad, only to dismantle it, or shift into a heavy handed (or elbowed) blues. And as if this were not enough, he employed the piano bench to bang out sounds, and finished with a lovely medley of folk tunes.

The Maury Coles Trio and Jean Beaudet-Robert LeRiche Duo concerts featured the new sounds of current Canadian improvisors. Toronto altoist Coles brought two promising Vancouver students of Cecil Taylor, Paul Plimley (piano) and Lyle Ellis (bass). Plimley and Ellis have played together a lot, and so their duet exchanges coalesced more frequently than those of the entire trio. Coles was characteristically intense and mournful. Plimley exhibited daring brilliance on the keys and strings of the piano. And Ellis, in addition to some amusing poetics, created beautifully rich bass resonances.

Montreal's Jean Beaudet and Robert LeRiche have been active in various EMIM combinations, and their piano-alto sax duo was a refreshing change. Beaudet moved between aggressive brooding and flurries of pointillistic jabs, while LeRiche blew gripping, sweet shrills over the crests of knotted runs.

Overall the performances were well-received, and the festival was definitely better-organised than last year's edition. In this regard Patrick Darby and Al Mattes are to be congratulated. Montreal artist John Heward should also be thanked for his colourful stage backdrop.

— ***Peter Danson***

VANCOUVER — The most exciting event in our fall/winter music season was the appearance of the Steve Lacy Quintet at the Soft Rock Cafe October 18 (the venue was most unlikely, being a hippy-type folk coffee house). The audience was quite large, approximately 200 people, of which perhaps 1/3 were unfamiliar with Lacy's music. The quintet included Lacy (soprano saxophone), Steve Potts (alto, soprano sax), Irene Aebi (violin, cello, voice), Kent Carter (bass) and Oliver Johnson (drums), and the music was electrifying! Lacy's patented quirky heads paid homage to his obvious Monkian roots. The band had certainly worked on the material diligently, thus realizing extremely high levels of precision in executing the music.

The rhythm section maintained the pace accurately, and functioned in mostly a swing-type role. Lacy and Potts developed intertwining complex lines in tandem and solo, both knowing instinctively the right moments to lay out. Lacy spent several minutes developing ideas with total control in the flute register (stratospheric) of his soprano. As great as Lacy is, Potts certainly needn't take the back seat. He was full of surprises throughout the evening. Irene Aebi seemed to be the odd one out, not being fully integrated into the quintet. Nonetheless she made some outstanding contributions in the way of embellishment (especially on violin and cello). Vocally, her best moments were heard on the heads of tunes stated in three-part harmony. Lacy, Potts and Aebi's voice merged magically, producing harmonies of great purity and perfection. The energy level was very intense without being overbearing and the audience was ecstatic in its approval. Records of this group do not really successfully indicate the greatness that they are capable of. I feel that this quintet, in live performance, is one of the best working bands in the music today.

Evan Parker (soprano, tenor saxophones) and Derek Bailey (guitars) appeared at the Western Front October 14. These two founding fathers of the European school of free improvisation presented a typically demanding program of provocative sounds. Certainly both are among the most revolutionary practitioners of their respective instruments. The tension in the music served to stimulate a series of detailed responses between the two. Bailey was rock solid, but unfortunately reduced Parker at certain points to a situation of uncomfortable accompaniment. Perhaps Derek Bailey is best suited to solo performance. The music was razor sharp, however, and it was a revelation to many people to witness first-hand Evan Parker's highly evolved saxophone techniques (circular breathing, split tones, harmonics, drones...) and Derek Bailey's re-definition of the acoustic and electric guitars, not without a certain element of wry humour.

A major event was the 2nd Vancouver Creative Music Festival, presented by the New Orchestra Workshop Society (N.O.W.). The festival ran on various dates at various locales November 7-16.

Nov. 7 kicked off with the solo performance (tenor and soprano saxophones, valve trombone) of Hat Hut recording artist Joe McPhee. Joe's strongest playing was on tenor, where he exhibited an Ayleresque vibrato while employing a great variety of contrasts: quiet-loud, slow-fast, complex development of lines-isolation of held notes. His command of advanced saxophone techniques was impressive and for the most part translated into an individual stance with the resulting music being largely very interesting.

The Bill Smith Ensemble followed: Smith (soprano & sopranino sax, alto clar.); David Lee (bass, cello) and David Prentice (violin). Their pieces included ***A Configuration, Pick A Number*** (also the title of their latest disc on Onari) and two non-Smith compositions, Ornette Coleman's ***Lonely Woman*** and Roscoe Mitchell's ***People In Sorrow.*** Their performance was a pleasant surprise, evoking a quiet intensity and realizing a new level of maturity. The music proceeded through a series of solos, duos and trios with a very sophisticated level of interaction between the two strings and one reed. Smith's debt to Roscoe Mitchell was evident, especially on sopranino, but the clear exposition of lines and the acute sense of pacing of the trio bring to my mind a composed piece of the 2nd Viennese school by Schonberg, his ***Serenade For Septet And Bass Voice Op. 24***, written in 1923 for two clarinets, five strings and voice. A subliminal influence maybe? These three are working in what is a potentially exciting but generally neglected area of music. They have succeeded in fashioning a vital and intricate improvised chamber music.

Vinny Golia continued with a solo format which coincided with his new solo record on Ninewinds (it's very good and should be checked out). Vinny expounded his own personal brand of improvisation on flute, soprano, a Thai cane and reed intrument related to the Japanese sho, baritone, tenor and clarinet. His vibrant saxophone tones were Coltranish, his approach mainly legato with nicely punctuated smears and a great gift for beautiful melodies. And he was fast! Whoa Vinny!

The evening ended with an impromptu horn trio with McPhee, Smith and Golia dealing their wares in a free improvisational context.

The evening of November 8 opened with the living Canadian legend, pianist Al Neil and his quartet. Al's long-awaited LP on Music Gallery Editions is finally available. His band had Lyle Lansall-Ellis (bass), Gregg Simpson (drums) and Howard Broomfield (sound tree). His performance was unpredictable and excellent. Included were visuals by Carol Itter to supplement the tapes, readings, singing and piano of Mr. Neil. The rhythm section was tasty in the jazz-oriented movements (good brushwork by G.S.) which were capped by a splended re-working of Monk's ***Ruby My Dear***. I felt it was the finest and most cohesive concert by Al Neil in many years.

Torontonian, John Oswald followed with a very creative performance channelled through his alto saxophone. John has developed a saxophone language, influenced it seems to me by Evan Parker and early Willem Breuker, and as he insists Danny Davis; in a very personal manner, and his techniques are expanding at a rapid rate.

Vancouver's A-Group finished the evening with their own brand of jazz-rock fusion. Much of the approach was derived from the energy blowing of the '60s in a free improvisational context. I'd heard them play to better advantage in recent months. A-Group is Bob Bell (electric guitar, sax), Paul Cram (reeds), Ralph Eppel (brass) and Gregg Simpson (drums). They have also been playing Sundays at Robert Davidson's Move Gallery and appeared there November 12.

The headliners of the festival appeared Nov. 9 in the form of the Art Ensemble of Chicago. Unfortunately the "Great Black Music" on this occasion was quite uniformly dismal. The music consisted at lame attempts at funk (Malachi

playing ostinato on Fender bass! ad nauseum). How about a steady backbeat Don... Lester over at the bass drum. What trumpet? Jarman and Mitchell both seemed lost in the absolute maze of big and little instruments, with minimal opportunities to stretch out on their primary axes. Disappointing — I should have stayed home and listened to their records.

As part of the Festival, the Contemporary String Quartet (Jeff Ridley, viola, guitar; Don Ogilvie, viola; Kira van Deusen, cello; Karen Oliver, violin) played the Classical Joint Nov. 11, as did the Bill Smith Ensemble Nov. 13.

The festival continued Nov. 14 at the Western Front with the trio of Julie Abbott (voice), Howard Broomfield (percussion) and Don Druick (flute) performing in a chamber music idiom. Next was Canadian composer Udo Kasamets, whose piece ***Zodiacanons & Celestial Timescapes*** was commissioned by the festival with assistance from the Canada Council. It was performed by Abbott, Broomfield, Druick, Diana Kemble, Lyle Lansall-Ellis, Cindi Mellon and Jane Phillips.

One of Canada's original improvising ensembles is the CCMC, who have now reduced their membership to three. On hand Nov. 15 at The Western Front were Michael Snow (tpt, piano), Nobuo Kubota (sax) and Al Mattes (electric & acoustic bass & electronics). I hadn't been enamored with the music of the post-Larry Dubin CCMC: Dubin's excellent drum work seemed to me to be the glue that held their sounds together. This time I was surprised: the seemingly disparate elements in the music seemed to fit together in an uncanny way. Time to reevaluate.

The concluding feature was the Vancouver Creative Music Orchestra directed by Lyle Lansall-Ellis, performing Lyle's ***Sound Flowers For The New Born***, which proved to be difficult and somewhat unwieldy in performance. A myriad of variations were attempted, some successful and some not. Highlights included Paul Cram's saxophone solo and a duet with Paul Plimley (piano) and Lansall-Ellis (bass). The orchestra was twelve pieces and the attempt was valiant.

The final evening was November 16 and began with the Trio Non Troppo. Ken Newby and Paul Cram (reeds), Karen Oliver (violin) were certainly one of the surprises of the week. The writing (mostly by Cram) was excellent and reminded one of certain elements of the World Saxophone Quartet. The lines were alternately interacting and independent. Newby played thoughtful soprano and anchored the music with some downhome bassoon. Cram's tenor was fierce, Newby and Oliver edging him on with dynamic riffs. Oliver's violin work prevented the trio from even threatening to become a polite or boring chamber group.

Next up, the Maury Coles Trio. Maury (alto), Paul Plimley (piano), Lyle Lansall-Ellis (bass). Coles sounds like a cross between Roscoe Mitchell and Jimmy Lyons, but without the same degree of sensitivity. As a result, the trio was not well-integrated. Plimley and Ellis functioned as a duo in a very creative manner while Coles improvised freely over the top. Lack of cohesiveness was a problem here that could probably be worked out with additional rehearsals.

The Composers and Improvisors Sextet from Seattle featured Art Lande (piano), Julian Priester (trombone), Denny Goodhew (alto sax), Dave Peterson (guitar), Chuck Deardorff (bass), Dean Hodges (drums) and Jim Knapp (trumpet). Their music was the most conventional of the festival and made a strange conclusion to it. Despite the presence of such names as Lande and Priester, the music never rose above the level of pure tedium. It all sounded like Miles/Hancock outtakes from the '60s, but with none of the spark. Denny Goodhew's Phil Woodisms on alto were the only redeeming factor of their very boring set: another disappointment.

Other happenings: "The Look Of Music", a major international exhibition of rare musical instruments at the Vancouver Centennial Museum until April 5/81. Included is Adolphe Sax's first-ever instrument. A must-see for any visitors to Van.

Pacific Cinematheque presented The Reel Jazz mini-festival in December at the Centennial Museum. Included were Bruce Ricker's "Last of the Blue Devils"; "On The Road with Duke Ellington" (Richard Drew, 1967); "A Berger To Go" (on Karl Berger); "Music in Progress: Mike Westbrook"; "Joe Albany: A Jazz Life"; "Al Neil" (by David Rimmer); and two Sun Ra flicks, as well as some blues films.

The founder of "Dawg Music", David Grisman & quintet appear at The Queen Elizabeth Theatre Jan. 23.... B.B. King is at the Cave Jan. 6-9.... P.J. Perry and his quartet and the Rudy Petschauer-Herb Besson quartet appeared at the Basin Street after-hours club New Year's Eve.... The Ankor in Gastown has become a classy piano bar. Lafayette Leake appeared in the fall, Jay McShann played Jan. 5-17, and Little Brother Montgomery is slated for a February appearance.

— Ken Pickering

AMERICA

ANN ARBOR — The fall season in southeastern lower Michigan properly began with the Montreux-Detroit International Jazz Festival, back on the Labor Day weekend. With a mix of commercial and/or fairly conservative national talent with a good number of local performers, the festival was evidently a financial success (although the promoters' attendance estimates — which placed most of the population of Detroit at one or another of the concerts — did seem a bit high). The festival seems destined for a repeat performance next year, and one can only hope for a more ambitious (and interesting) program.

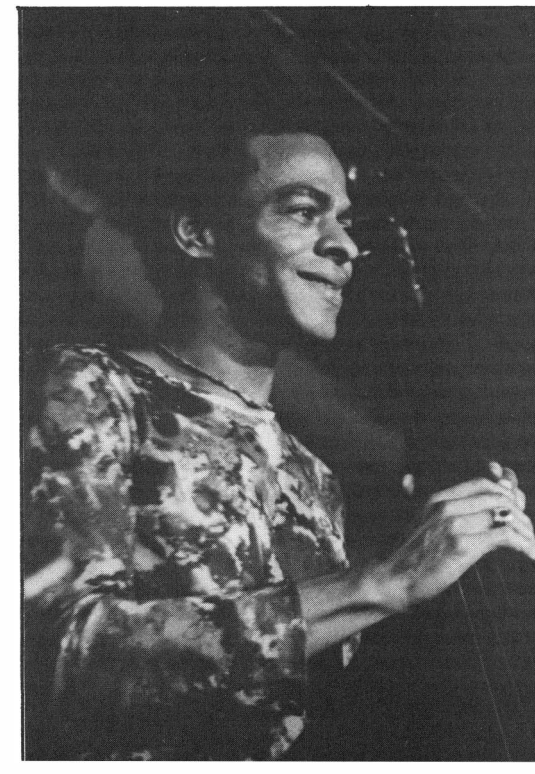
About a month after the Montreux-Detroit affair, Ann Arbor's Eclipse Jazz kicked off its fall season with its third Ann Arbor Jazz Festival. This year's festival, like last year's presented seven performances spread over four concerts. The Friday night opener paired Stephane Grappelli and Oregon (with Oregon, oddly enough, the opening act). The Saturday and Sunday night concerts gave listeners a chance to hear in close succession two of the newer "lights" on the scene, Chico Freeman and Arthur Blythe. There are interesting similarities between them — both are saxophonists whose playing seems to have been molded by the new music of the sixties; both have ties to a more "avant-garde" form of expression than each chose to play here. I preferred Chico's performance (in an ambitious program which mixed several approaches) to Blythe's energetic but narrower-spectrumed set. Incidentally, the Freeman band included Jay Hoggard, vibes; Donald Smith, piano; Cecil McBee, bass; and Billy Hart, drums; Blythe brought John Hicks, piano; Fred Hopkins, bass; and Steve McCall, drums.

Chico was followed by Stanley Turrentine (we left early); Blythe was followed by Sarah Vaughan, who transcended illness with her usual skill and talent. As an introduction to their "Bright Moments" concert series (smaller hall, less-widely-known performers), Eclipse offered Anthony Braxton in solo performances on Sunday afternoon. The festival did not do as well as last year (too much competition?), but there was enough of a financial return to power the rest of the season (Eclipse, despite its University of Michigan affiliation, relies heavily on ticket revenue to support its concerts). That season included Phillip Glass' Ensemble in a difficult-to-characterize performance on November 7, Ray Charles (with Ernie Krivda) on Nov. 12, and Ron Shannon Jackson's Decoding Society (Nov. 21).

Jackson's small Society included Byard Lancaster, on various reeds and flute, Vernon Reed, guitar; and Melvin Gibbs on bass (Jackson is a drummer whose employers have included Ornette Coleman and Cecil Taylor). Their set (at the University Club) was loud but very interesting, making a more than usually viable mixture of jazz and rock. Perhaps my more favorable reaction results from a fusing in which more of the urban black essence of both idioms is retained. Certainly the whole benefits considerably from the polyrhythmic propulsion of Jackson and the fluent power of Lancaster.

If all of Eclipse's proposed (and as of the end of the semester still tentative) schedule for winter is realized, it will be a great cold-chaser. The intimate University Club is to feature Billy Harper (on January 17, tentatively) and Sam Rivers with Dave Holland and drummer Steve Ellington (set for February 19). The schedule also includes Weather Report (February), David Grisman (March) and Pat Metheny (April).

Despite greatly reduced staffing and hours and continued problems with its cash-flow situation, the Detroit Jazz Center (at 2110 Park Avenue) continues to present music and instruction. Executive director John Sinclair began presenting performers "in residence" (concerts and workshops over several days) in November, when the Air trio appeared at the Center Nov. 14-16. The Sun Ra Arkestra brought the New



Year to the Jazz Center in intergalactic fashion with a residency December 26-31. The Center's "Jazz Gallery" featured the Motor City Jazz Quartet, the Allan Barnes Band and Sam Sanders and Visions in December. Upcoming performances had not been scheduled at press-time, but you can always call the Center at 964-9044.

Baker's Keyboard Lounge in Detroit closed out the old year with Dexter Gordon's Quartet and Elvin Jones' Quintet (through December 14), and reopened in January with Sonny Stitt. Over at Dummy George's saxophonist Houston Person, vocalist Etta Jones and organist Shirley Scott's Trio contributed a set to National Public Radio's live New Year's Eve broadcast. Teddy Harris Jr. and his sextet play the club on Mondays; Kamau Kenyatta's Sextet follows on Tuesdays.

The Detroit Institute of Art's Recital Hall featured four excellent New Music concerts in December and January, under the weighty title "Creative Music Phase II: Part One: A Series of Contemporary Afro-American Chamber Jazz Concerts". Roscoe Mitchell led a quintet on December 27; A. Spencer Barefield (guitar); Marcus Belgrave (trumpet); Faruq Bey and Anthony Holland (saxophones); Jaribu Shahid (bass); and Tani Tabbal (drums) collectively appeared as the New Chamber Jazz Sextet on January 3. Barefield, Holland and Tabbal returned on January 17 as a trio, and on January 31 Leroy Jenkins was to join Barefield, Bey, Holland, Shahid and Tabbal. The series was produced by Detroit's Creative Arts Collective. *— David Wild*

BALTIMORE/WASHINGTON — The level of new music activity in the Baltimore area rises and falls; for a long time listeners had to satisfy themselves with periodic visits of the Art Ensemble and Sun Ra to the Left Bank Jazz Society. But not since the heyday of the John Hopkins Fine Arts Committee a couple of years ago, which brought to town (among others) Fall Mountain, several appearances by Fred Frith, and most importantly Lol Coxhill (on his first US visit) has there been so much new music to hear. Several groups are responsible.

The Merzaum Collective's ongoing Festival Of The Disappearing Arts (which presents a variety of new aesthetic experiences, from film to conceptual rock) brought Fred Van Hove (Oct. 19) and Trans Museq (Nov. 2) to the Red Door Hall as parts of full programs. The solo piano of Belgian Van Hove, long a stalwart of Europe's "FMP scene", was alternately charming and banal as he combined lifeless free music cliches (elbows on the keys, etc.) with some beautifully glowing overtones produced by close intervals hammered out by crossed hands, and the best inside-the-piano playing I've heard, singing at the strings to make them resonate, scraping them for slide guitar effects, violently plucking the bass strings: a piano tuner's nightmare. At one point, alternately playing and singing, he seemed to be delivering a running commentary on his keyboard work. He's at his best when he's least orthodox.

Tuscaloosa, Alabama's Trans Museq (LaDonna Smith, violin and Davey Williams, electric guitar & banjo) perform a personal music that blends folk music and new jazz, music I found diverting but rarely moving. Williams is the king of the glorified guitar pick, stroking strings with a battery of objects that include wind-up toys and egg beaters. His constant switching from one to another requires that he think a few seconds ahead of what he plays, which poses some obvious problems in free improvisation; immediacy is lost, and he showed some indecision, reaching for one object, changing his mind and selecting another.

New Music Baltimore primarily presents "classical" music, but this season's first concert was Leroy Jenkins solo at Gallery 409 on October 11. Listening to his solo playing one can hear nuances that go undetected in his group work; this was the best I've heard him (substantially better than his solo LP recorded a few years back). His scratching and overbowing would make a violin teacher wince, but his arco has a nice bite to it. Humming on ***Viola Folksong*** (which contained some affecting plain double stops) he provided internal motion to his string lines; his viola sound is beautifully woody. On one piece he explored microtonal intervals. He's still not the perfect violinist — little breaks in his chain of thought were revealed here and there — but he continues to grow. It's good NMB included one jazz performer in this year's schedule (there were none last year) but I wish it were more than token recognition of this improvising tradition.

Newer Music Production, taking its cue from the Merzaum's low cost ($2) concerts, presented its first two shows at the Red Door December 6 (Baltimore bassist Mitchell Pressman, an original stylist who works with repetitive bowed structures — he also opened for Trans — and New York's Elliott Sharp, playing fretless guitar and some superb textural soprano sax) and December 13 (Starship Beer's Pat O'Brien and Kevin Whitehead on various acoustic instruments, and the controversial guitarist Loren Means from Connecticut, playing his deeply personal hypnotic blues which I found quite affecting). Newer Music plans more concerts for the spring, including Joe McPhee's first area appearance.

Washington's DC Space has become somewhat less active recently (for improvised music at least) for financial reasons. The only thing I caught there recently was a mediocre solo set (Nov. 7) by Don Pullen, whose chops and verve weren't up to his usual standard, produced by District Durators who in a continuing series are presenting free funk bands, beginning with James Blood Ulmer's Music Revelation Ensemble (with David Murray, Amin Ali and Ron Jackson) at the sweltering 9:30 club last summer, to a New Year's Eve party at the Space with Oliver Lake's Jump Up, Julius Hemphill guesting. The Smithsonian's Jazz Series hosted Steve Lacy's Quintet on November 2, not a great night for the band (altoist Steve Potts and drummer Oliver Jackson were most consistently strong) but great to see/hear them nonetheless. Many members of the audience seemed to have no idea why they were there.

On the Washington scene the biggest surprise was a four-day engagement for Cecil Taylor's Unit (with Jimmy Lyons, bassist William Parker and drummer Rashid Bakr) in December at Georgetown's posh (read: expensive) Blues Alley. The set we caught on the 18th was far and away the most intense group music this listener has heard live, rip-roaring without being at all forbidding. For those who still aren't into the Unit's music: see them once and then you'll know. Absolutely wonderful, overwhelming music.

Finally, re. my column in #173. Big-toned Washington tenorist Russell Carter is not now nor has he ever been Byard Lancaster.

— Kevin Whitehead

LOS ANGELES — The Nimbus release "At The Crossroads" is a Horace Tapscott duet with Everett Brown Jr., Horace's principal drummer since 1964. It was recorded in October 1979 during one of Everett's visits from Kansas City where he moved in 1975. At The Lighthouse last August 6, Horace presented a trio with bassist Larry Gales and drummer George Goldsmith that absolutely burned. (Vinny Golia gave a solo performance there this eve also). This was Horace in his open-ended hard bop groove where the choruses just split at the seams letting out streams of notes and inward swirling figures. With Larry venturing onward riding a grinding walking bass and George masterfully shifting his polyrhythms with Horace's ever-changing time signatures. Goldsmith has been between L.A. and his hometown Detroit for the last year; beginning in March he will be initiating this city's first jazzmobile. In Motown he is associated with Kenny Cox and Barry Harris (among others), and during Harris' and Clifford Jordan's recent stint out here they all got together, Horace too, and drove over to say hey to Freddie Redd at the Maiden Voyage, where he was holding daily afternoon jam sessions at that time with his trio Donald Dean, drums and Walter Urban, bass, which are now on Mondays.

Tapscott's next presentation at The Lighthouse, December 3, showcased a double-bassed quintet with David Bryant, Roberto Miranda, Fritz Wise and Gary Bias. Gary is notable for his distinct sound on the alto saxophone — very loud, clear and edgy tone, a sort of imminent explosion. He recorded for Nimbus Records last February. On that date were bassists Roberto Miranda and John Heard, pianist Eric Tillman, vibist Rickey Kelly, and drummer Fritz Wise. Fritz of late has been gigging with Harold Land's group of Oscar Brashear, trumpet, George Bohannon, trombone, Larry Gales, bass and Bill "Sunduza" Henderson, piano.

The present Pan Afrikan Peoples' Arkestra consists of Linda Hill, p, vcl; Sabia Matteen, ts; rehearsal leader; Adele Sebastian, fl, vcl; Fundi LeJohn flhn, fr. horn, tpt; Aubrey Hart, fl; David Bryant, Alan Hines, b; Herbert Callise,

CECIL McBEE and CHICO FREEMAN (photograph by William Ellenberg)

alto cl; Juan Jugigra Grey, vcl; Kafi Larry Roberts, ss, fl; Reggie Bullen, tpt; Kamau Daaood, poet; Fritz Wise, George Goldsmith, d; Stefan Brown, tb; Gary Bias, as, ss, fl; Billy Hinton, d; Ufahamu Uweizi, as; and Tapscott, piano and conductor. Performances at their perennial last-Sunday-of-the-month concerts present ensembles ranging from ten to twenty musicians. Concerts at the church are a straight two hours, beginning with Horace and rhythm section bopping some blues and maybe Linda singing some ultra-hip dead-pan adlib blues, followed by renderings of Tapscott's kaleidoscopic orchestrations and other members' charts. The repertoire comprises a tradition in itself, considering the twenty years Horace, Linda and Lester Robinson have held this thing together. Recently the ***Niger Theme*** has been resurrected, and ***Sandy And Niles*** and ***Ballad For Samuel*** from Tapscott's work for Sonny Criss, ***Be Bi McKuu*** (Hines), ***A Nation Rising, D.B.'s Dance***, Charles Tolliver's ***On The Nile***, Randy Weston's ***Little Niles*** lends itself very well and Pharoah's new ***Doktor Pitt*** have been on the menu lately. As always, the concert ends with the benediction of us all singing ***Lift Every Voice.***

There is also a film you might catch, made in 1977 by Larry Clark, entitled "Passing Through", featuring a score by the P.A.P.A. and many cameo appearances by Horace, Adele and David Bryant.

During the month of October the Pasadena Filmforum, headed up by Terry Cannon, held a festival of jazz on film. Most of these Monday nights were comprised of films from the collection of Mark Cantor. There was also my little slide show, an evening of tap dance films and live performance by Foster Johnson with Gildo Mahones on piano, and most exciting was a 1980 half-hour color film of Bobby Bradford and John Carter put together by Alex Gibney, Peter Bull and Bob Wise. In it Bobby and John talk and play two duets, ***Circle*** and ***And She Speaks***. There is also an eight minute film featuring the tune ***Woman***.

October 27 we caught a Bobby Bradford Ensemble at the Claremont Colleges featuring an evening of Bradford compositions, many of them new, like ***Variations On A Theme By Jerome Kern, Snuffy*** and ***Ornate***. The improvising this night was nothing short of miraculous, with Bobby and John spewing out melodies like two volcanoes to the contrapuntal backing of James Newton's new gold flute and the waves of rhythm emanating from the two basses of Noah Young and Roberto Miranda.

James Newton's Wind Quintet has done several Sunday afternoon concerts at Pasquale's in Malibu Beach. This music is remindful of the chamber jazz tradition of Buddy Collette (who attends) and as such is an acknowledgement of that master's work and a solidifying of those concepts with the new harmonies that are in the vanguard today. Not that Buddy is dated though, his concerts lately with strings and jazz soloists have been the absolute finest I've ever heard of jazz in this format. The Wind Quintet features Red Callender, tuba; John Carter, clarinet; John Nunez, bassoon; Charles Owens, oboe & English horn; Allan Iwohara, koto; and James on flutes.

Saxophonist Charles Owens has become increasingly visible here in this city regardless of his group's moniker, The New York Art Ensemble, which includes Teddy Saunders, piano; John B. Williams, bass; Doug Sides, drums; and dance by Attico-o. They've been playing Wednesdays at the Jazz Safari in Long Beach and recently at Onaje's Cultural Tea House. Over the last year I have seen Charles with the Buddy Collette Big Band, Les McCann (acoustic), and with James Newton's Wind Quintet. His latest recorded work is on the Discovery label – two albums of his own as well as two with Lorez Alexandria.

From K2+B2 Records (12308 Gilmore Ave., Los Angeles 90066) comes the first album by Krystal Klear & The Buells: "Ready For The 90's" featuring Marty Krystall, reeds; Buell Neidlinger, bass; Billy Higgins, drums; Warren Gale, trumpet; and a track recorded 20 years ago of Buell, Cecil Taylor and Dennis Charles. At the Lighthouse August 28 Krystal Klear & The Buells included Peter Erskine, drums, and Jerry Peters on piano. Neidlinger has also been heard around town in the string group Buellgrass.

Ray Pizzi's latest work can be found on the Los Angeles-based Discovery label. His compositions easily elicit images of that for which they were written. Tunes about his grandfather, his truck, children and pizzas. The oblique line he wrote to describe his cat astounded me that he could even swing it at all let alone as mightily as he does with his combo: Dave Edelstein, el. b; Frank Zottoli, p; Gary Denton, d; and Ray, fl, bassoon, ss, ts. Pizzi makes it on several levels: he's a highly convincing instrumentalist, a hip composer, and has a definite together ensemble approach.

October 10 & 11 at McCabe's Guitar Store in Santa Monica, Charlie Haden continued his penchant for duets, this time with Nels Cline and Bobby Bradford. Nels played ***Song For Che*** on acoustic guitar, which will give you a pretty good idea of what his and bassist Eric Von Essen's collaboration of the last four years is all about. Their new album "Elegies" is on Nine Winds Records (note new address: 11609 Pico Blvd., Los Angeles 90064). Bear in mind that this is only one facet of their art. I myself can't wait until Nels records some of his electric guitar phantasmagoria.

Buster Cooper has put together one of the most exciting groups in Los Angeles right now. You can catch them at the Memory Lane. Buster on trombone with saxophonists Herman Riley and Curtis Peagler streamlined beside him and Phil Wright, piano, Allen Jackson, bass, and Clarence Johnston playing those melodic choruses on drums. Also at Memory Lane of late has been pianist Gerald Wiggins.

Joe Farrell moved to Southern California in 1978, his new album "Sonic Text" with some of the local musicians is first rate. George Cables, Freddie Hubbard, Tony Dumas and Peter Erskine turn in a straight jazz performance, which is all Contemporary Records will put up with. Wonderful tunes.

Other exceptional happenings: Abbey Lincoln has lately been participating in Ron and Barbara's Jazz In The Classroom, P.O. Box 30735, Los Angeles 90030.... Pianist Gene Russell's re-emergence last April with Henry Franklin, bass and Clarence Johnston, drums. You'll remember Gene as the president of Black Jazz Records.... Vocalist Bill Henderson with pianists Joyce Collins (acoustic) and Dave Mackay (electric) at LeCafe in Sherman Oaks.... Joanne Grauer on Yamaha CP80 electric grand piano with Don Preston on computer-assisted synthesizer August 22 & 23 at $2 Bills.... Richard Grossman solo improvisations for electric piano October 25 in Laguna Beach; Alex Cline and Wayne Peet, percussion and piano have been doing concerts of duo improvisations lately.... Frank Morgan's Sunday afternoon affair has moved over to the Beyond Baroque, 681 Venice Blvd. You will now find the alto saxophonist in an on-going collaboration with pianist Milcho Leviev.

Jay McShann, Paul Gunther and Claude Williams teamed up with Cleanhead and Larry Gales at the Parisian Rm in September; Oct. 13 at Century City Playhouse Toshinori Kondo and Henry Kaiser; Oct. 15 at CCP Evan Parker and Derek Bailey! First time for Derek in L.A., there was a full house in attendance.... FMP artists from Berlin Peter Brotzmann, Harry Miller, Fred Van Hove, Hans Reichel and Louis Moholo did a week's residency at Cal Arts and a concert December 4 at UCLA's Schoenberg Hall.... Great Sunday afternoon concerts at Gilberto's in Cucamonga: we witnessed a very strong and magical performance there Nov. 16

FELTON JONES, GEORGE GOLDSMITH, EDDIE CHAMBLISS (photograph by Barbara Weinberg)

of the Bobby Shew Sextet with Bobby, tpt; Bill Mays, p; Gordon Brisker, ts; Dick Berk, d; Bob Magnusson, b; and David Levine, perc... Reverend Johnny Otis at the Landmark Community Church Sundays.... and Blues Boy Rawlins at the liquor store at Florence and Hoover.

— Mark Weber

NEW YORK — As Coda's New York columnist for the past five years, I have been privileged to witness the continuing vitality of jazz. But now, new responsibilities make it impossible for me to continue writing about the music that has given me so much pleasure and joy.

I would like to thank the many people — especially the musicians — for making this such a stimulating and memorable time.

— Clifford Jay Safane

PHILADELPHIA — The Phillies were not the only news in Philadelphia during October. After a relatively quiescent summer, the creative music scene began to pick up speed at the end of September.

Archie Shepp returned to the city of his youth on September 22nd. He displayed his ever-maturing mastery of the music at Grendel's Lair with a group that included Hilton Ruiz on piano, Santi Debriano on bass and John Betsch on drums. The next day, the 54th anniversary of John Coltrane's birth, was celebrated with special programming on two radio stations. WRTI-FM (90.1), Temple University's all-jazz station, featured 24 hours of music by, for and about Trane plus interviews with Coltrane compatriots Rashied Ali, John Gilmore, et al., and even an astrological profile of JC. WXPN-FM (88.9), the community-supported station based at the University of Pennsylvania, broadcast ten hours of Coltrane's music that included parts of Frank Kofsky's 1966 interview with the musician and many rare and out-of-print recordings. The same day, September 23rd, Jaki Byard performed a solo piano concert at the News Stand, just across from City Hall at 15th and Market Streets. Byard completely captivated the standing-room-only crowd with his avant-stride style and was especially impressive on the version of the "Family Suite" with which he ended his first set. (The News Stand is one of the most "happening" spots in the city at the moment. Over the last five months, they've brought in musicians like Byard, Tommy Flanagan, John Hicks, Hilton Ruiz and Art Davis, while continuing to showcase local musicians including Sumi Tonooka, Monnette Sudler and Philly Joe Jones. Kenny Shaw, who books and promotes the acts at the club, deserves a round of applause for his efforts).

On October 4, Mal Waldron and Cameron Brown played a benefit concert at the Old Pine Street Church for the Painted Bride Art Center. During the concert, the two musicians drifted into and out of focus with each other, but their interaction late in the performance made up for any early disharmony. The Art Ensemble of Chicago's "Full Force" tour rolled onto the campus of Bryn Mawr College on October 25th, drawing a large and appreciative crowd for a wide-ranging evening of Great Black Music.

That same weekend presented the Philadelphia audience with a rare opportunity to view jazz on film. The planetary premiere of "Sun Ra: A Joyful Noise" took place on October 24th at the Neighbourhood Film Project at International House. The 60-minute film by Bob Mugge, whose previous works include "George Crumb: Voice of the Whale" and "Amateur Night at City Hall" (about former-Mayor Frank Rizzo), features concert footage and interviews with Sun Ra and members of his intergalactic troupe. Mugge says he wanted "to capture something of (Sun Ra's) essence for the future."

Happily, some of the essence of Duke Ellington and his Orchestra was captured in the past and was on view at the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania on October 26th. David Chertok brought his two-hour compilation of the film appearances by Duke, including footage of Johnny Hodges and Ben Webster and clips of Duke with Ella Fitzgerald, Yehudi Menuhin and Stan Kenton.

Finally, on October 29th, WXPN's "Library of Jazz" program, which airs from 11 pm to 1 am every Wednesday, began a four-part presentation of the music of Charles Mingus. The first show began with Mingus' first recordings with Illinois Jacquet and the subsequent programs on November 5th, 12th and 19th each examined a different period of his career, concluding with his final work with Lionel Hampton. Upcoming on the "Library of Jazz" are three weeks (January 7th, 14th and 21st) spotlighting Thelonious Monk. *— Russell Woessner*

SAN DIEGO — The local scene is establishing itself as never before — there are now eleven clubs which feature fairly unadulterated jazz on a regular basis (four years ago there were only three). These clubs are giving many San Diego players an opportunity to come into their own. Most prominent are pianist Butch Lacy, who recently toured with Sarah Vaughan, guitarist Peter Sprague who is working on his second Xanadu lp and ex-Mingus altoman Charles McPherson who continues to gig and record, having in recent years definitely solidified a style which qualifies him as something more than a Bird imitator. The brilliant avant garde bassist Mark Dresser, while yet to find club work, manages to get out in public every two or three months and make people wonder what he's doing in such a dead new music launching pad as this (frequently his ensembles feature an intense vocalist named Diamanda Galas, and an interesting hornman named Jim French, who not only uses a wide range of Western woodwinds but bamboo flutes, a sax mouthpiece on a garden hose and bagpipes. When Dresser's old friend James Newton makes it out to the coast their trio with Tylon Barea, Binu, is instantly reformed).

But until very recently, there were no clubs which offered touring jazz talent on a regular basis. Some relief has come from Rob Hagey, who has brought not only some of the world's top jazz talent to town, but some of the most adventurous as well. Hagey first produced the "La Jolla Jazz Festival '79", and last spring presented a series called "New Directions In The '80s", which over a four-month span featured the World Saxophone Quartet, Chico Freeman Quintet, Andrew Hill, Old And New Dreams, and Jack DeJohnette's Special Edition. An additional program, which would have featured a pair of duets; one with James Newton and Anthony Davis, and the other having a smattering of possibilities mentioned — was cancelled due to the limited success of all but the World Sax concert (the culprit for this lies somewhere between publicity and public interest).

Since then Hagey has struck up a sponsorship with the Adolph Coors Company (a Colorado brewery), and worked out the logistics of the "Second Annual La Jolla Jazz Festival". Coors finally made their commitment a month before the three-day event was scheduled. In an attempt to draw a wider cross-section of the jazz community, Hagey offered a wider range of attractions than the previous year's avalanche of avant garde.

Opening night, a Friday, warmed up the weekend with a local big band and the Benny Lagasse Dixieland Sextet. Nothing remarkable, but a nice introduction to the acoustically sound, scenically set, and climatically warm outdoor theatre in Balboa Park.

The next afternoon, pianist Randy Weston and his trio (which featured Big Black on congas) distilled traditional African rhythms and blended them with modern African techniques for exotic, distinctive jazz grooves and splashes. Weston's piano style was characterized by a very percussive sound which often used specific notes for color with little melodic or harmonic function. Two-handed tremelos and strolling bass ostinatos were primary in laying the episodic, high density musical terrain, through which Big Black was fundamental in beating a clean path.

A local steel drum band failed to show and was replaced by a sextet called "Elements of the Sun Ra Arkestra". This set showed both the familiarity within the larger unit and the individual directions which remain sublime in the Arkestra. Trumpeter Michael Ray was a tremendous standout, coming up with the speed and range of a 747, and the ideas found in the ballpark where Leo Smith, Lester Bowie and Don Cherry play.

Woody Shaw closed the afternoon and while he is as much a musical craftsman as those who played before him, he certainly lacked their personality.

Saturday night Sun Ra made a rare West Coast appearance with twelve musicians/dancers/singers/acrobats; this time they were called the Omniverse Arkestra. The entire performance was a lifetime highlight for my ears, heart and adrenal gland. But a few moments: June Tyson leading a call and response extraterrestrial R&B doo-whop; Sun Ra's fingertip composing in which the band responded to his signals; two baritone saxmen (Pat Patrick and Danny Davis) jumping from their seats, screaming through their horns, charging around the stage, and finally taking their rampage through the theatre; Sun Ra's Space Organ solo on ***Somewhere Over The Rainbow***; the loose Fletcher Henderson-ish charts and John Gilmore and Michael Ray's solos thereon.

Sunday afternoon offered the predictable blues and boogie of 63-year-old John Lee Hooker and the history book blues of a solo John Hammond. A Fender funkified Mandingo Griot Society opened.

The final show was an "Alto Summit" of Charles McPherson, Sonny Fortune, Richie Cole and Vi Redd. The individual segments and the jam session were too short for this idea to get off the ground, and the rhythm section left a lot to be desired.

The 650-seat amphitheatre never sold out, but enough people turned out to keep the sponsors optimistic for the future. The large number of progressive musicians from last year was hardly matched, but what was offered in a three-day span was healthy variation for such a concentration.

A week later, the International Blend Coffee House opened to give San Diego back a home for big-name jazz. So far they have brought to

town Richie Cole, Bobby Hutcherson, David Friesen and John Stowell, Lew Tabackin (look out Sonny and Dex!), Hank Crawford, Airto, George Cables, Joe Farrell, Cal Tjader, Tito Puente and McCoy Tyner. Viva el jazz!

— Marty Wisckol

GLENN FERRIS

with the Collectif Planete Carree
Dreher, Paris, France
20-28 October, 1980

Glenn Ferris, trombone; Jean-Pierre Debarbat, tenor and soprano saxophones; Olivier Hutman, piano; Jacques Vidal, bass; Eric Dervieux, drums.

Glenn Ferris blows his ass off. To be sure. Due to appear on new records with the present group (featuring his own bright compositions) and an Antillaise group, Ferris fortunately gets around. Two years ago he was doing concerts with John Carter, Bobby Bradford and others in Los Angeles. Subsequently he met up with a Haitian group in New York, by which he came to Paris. When he sat in with Steve Lacy at the end of an evening six months ago, he made people listen.

Ferris loves to play. Hearing him, one can imagine his energy in all of the aforementioned music and more. In fact, they cast a net beneath his ideas, and he seems able to pivot in any musical direction at any given moment. As in his warm tribute, ***Lawrence Brown, Master Of Sound***, where he leads off with a free solo banked off the mute; when the composition itself begins, the ensemble joining in a slow tight harmony, it merely gives occasion for further openings. And in his ***If I Were A Bird***, the bop lines take it and run.

Debarbat, though, holds his own. With an often melodic sound, his solos can drive past a surface sweetness until they get inside its source. With Ferris' trombone, they charge forth together as an enjoyable and unified front. Debarbat's compositions hold water too, as in ***Eclipse Carrée A Trois Cotés*** and ***Horizon Torride***, and in the latter particularly the rhythm section on its own crystalizes to a point far beyond functionality. *— Jason Weiss*

USSR

LENINGRAD — The Leningrad Jazz Week, held this year for the third time, has turned into the most representative jazz festival in the USSR. The festival is produced by Vladimir Feyertag, who serves also as MC. Seven concerts in five days (November 12-17) featured all the varieties of jazz music, from dixieland to the most contemporary avant-garde.

Among the musicians were groups and soloists from Moscow, Leningrad, Vilnius, Tollinn, Thilisi, Odessa, Archangelsk and other cities.

The highlight of this year's festival was the performance of the Ganelin Trio from Vilnius (Vyacheslau Ganelin - keyboards, electric guitar, percussion; Vladimir Tarasov - drums, percussion; Vladimir Chekasin - alto & tenor saxophones, clarinet, bass clarinet, violin, percussion), who had just returned from a successful appearance at the Berlin Jazz Days in Berlin.

The jazz club "Kvadrat" and the Contemporary Music Club organised two jam sessions, for mainstream and avant-garde jazz players respectively. *— Alexander Kan*

ODDS & SODS

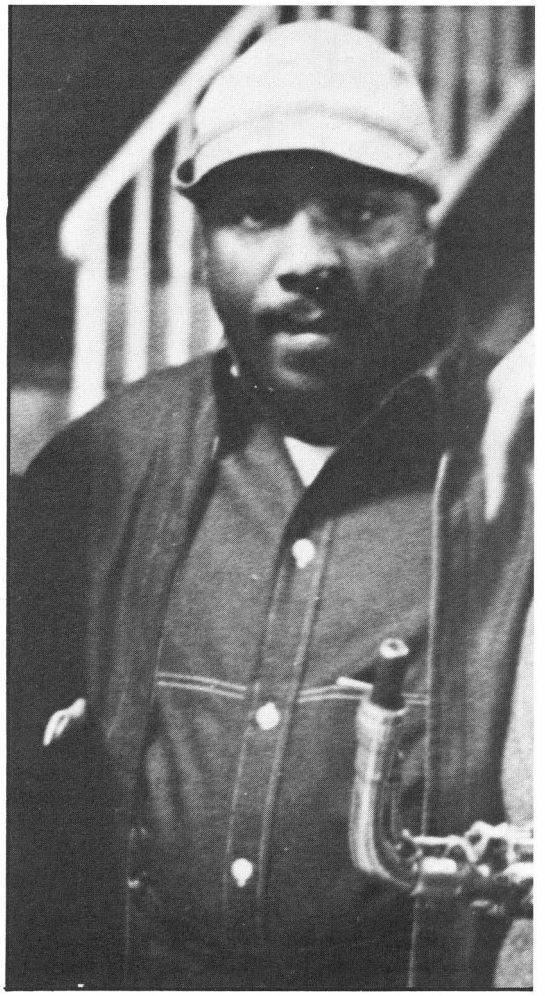
Pianist Martial Solal is returning to the U.S. for the first time since performing at the Newport Jazz Festival in 1963. A 1981 tour is in the planning stages and further information is available from Mialy Enterprises, 715-3 Frenchtown Road, Bridgeport, Ct. 06606.... DeLeon Artists (165 O'Farrell Street, Suite 208, San Francisco, California 94102) represents Tete Montoliu, Mark Murphy and Abbey Lincoln. Tours by all these artists are being planned for this year and further information is available from them at (415) 981-5348.

In New York City, Italian musicians Giorgio Gaslini and Antonello Salis performed and lectured at The Public Theater in November.... In December, the Human Arts Association presented a series of collaborations in dance and music. Ahmed Abdullah, Henry Threadgill, George Lewis and Julius Hemphill were among the participating musicians.... Bob Wilber was in residence at Bechet's in January. He presented an all-Sidney Bechet (naturally!) repertoire for this occasion.... John Jeremy and Angus Trowbridge's recent film "To the Count of Basie" was shown at the Museum of Modern Art on December 16.... The Lennie Tristano Jazz Foundation presented flutist Fran Canisius in concert with Connie Crothers at Carnegie Recital Hall January 18.... Jemeel Moondoc & Muntu (with Roy Campbell, William Parker and Rashid Bakr) performed in concert at the Third Street Music Settlement on January 24, following their highly successful European tour.... Violinist Billy Bang appeared at The Alley on January 15 and 29.... Soundscape's lineup of artists for February/March is particularly exciting. Write them at 500 West 52nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 for complete listings.... The Universal Jazz Coalition, 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 817, New York, N.Y. 10010 (212-924-5026) is one of the more active jazz organisations in New York. They present concerts, lectures and seminars as well as publishing an informative newsletter.

Pat and Joe LaBarbera returned to Berklee in the fall for a series of workshops.... Jonah Jones' quartet remains in residence at Philadelphia's Franklin Plaza Hotel.... A memorial concert for Jimmy Forrest was held in Grand Rapids, Michigan at the Fountain Street Church on November 25.... Yusef Lateef was the headliner along with local musicians.... The sixth annual Central Illinois Jazz Festival will be held February 6-8.... San Francisco's New College of California is presenting a weekend of music with James Newton, Jazz Art Movement and Horace Tapscott (Feb. 12), John Carter and Bobby Bradford and Gerald Oshita (Feb. 13) and the Robert Porter Quartet and Eddie Moore (Feb. 14).... The Western Regional Federation for Jazz (P.O. Box 19010, Las Vegas, Nevada 89119) is open to all non-profit jazz organisations west of the Mississippi and is an outgrowth of the activities of the Las Vegas Jazz Society. The steering committee consists of Monk Montgomery, Leo Johnson, Orrin Keepnews, Duane Martin and Benny Powell.

"A Night in Old Savannah" is the title of a music festival which includes jazz and blues in its activities. This year's event takes place Apr. 30, and May 1&2...Dizzy Gillespie will be one of this year's headliners.... The New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival takes place the weekends of May 1-3 and 9-10.

Plas Johnson and Tommy Flanagan were in Sweden in October for a private party in Stockholm. Completing the group was bassist Red Mitchell. Two sets of the music were broadcast live on Swedish radio.... Bill Holman was guest soloist with the North German Radio Network in Hamburg. Trumpeter Dusko Goykovich was also showcased. Holman then went to Holland and appeared on Hilversum Radio with vocalist Mark Murphy. Holman's music will be featured in Los Angeles in March at a performance by The Orchestra. Bob Brookmeyer and Jim Hall will be featured with the band.



Pianist Don Ewell was hospitalised in England with heart problems while on tour.... Trumpeter Roy Eldridge suffered a heart attack last October and is reported to be recovering.... on the fourth anniversary of Erroll Garner's death, bassist Slam Stewart looks backward and reminisces: "I treasure my memories of Erroll Garner....his endearing elfin grin, his humourous wit and his incredible ability to attain the sound of an entire symphony when he was playing. He was always composing.

...During our days on 52nd Street, we used to hang out together at the White Rose Bar with all of the other musicians... the drinks were inexpensive and the food was free. While we were playing The Three Deuces, I took my quartet into the Strand Theater with Erroll on piano, Johnny Collins on guitar and Harold West on drums. We played all the theater shows then went on to The Deuces until about two in the morning. After that, Erroll and I joined Art Tatum and we went uptown to Harlem to after-hours spots where we all played some more. The great Tatum had a few favorite pianists and Erroll was one of them. Erroll

also had great admiration for Tatum. They would get into a 'cutting' session and would try to outdo one another. Those places were always full of musicians who were anxious to play but not one pianist ever dared to play a note when those two 'Gods' were in the house. ..."

The 1981 Molde Jazz Festival in Norway will take place August 3 to 8.... Jason Weiss reports that... "Paris' first jazz festival in years, sponsored by the city itself this time, took place October 29 to November 6. At the main site, the Theatre de la Ville, which seats about 1500 people, tickets were sold out for most concerts days before the festival began. Among the featured artists there were Sonny Rollins, Dizzy Gillespie, Phil Woods, Elvin Jones, Carla Bley, Martial Solal/Stephane Grappelli, Rene Urtreger, the Quatuor de Saxophones, the Michel Portal group (with Bernard Lubat, Daniel Humair, and J.F. Jenny Clark), and Arthur Blythe.

"Under the guise of the festival, the program continued elsewhere about town at five other locations, most of which usually present jazz. At the Theater Present, six big bands played through the week, including those of Didier Levallet and Alan Silva. At the Theatre Dunois, African-related music took precedence, including Edja Kungali, Jo Maka and the group Dou. At Le Petit Journal, the usual program of Dixieland and Swing was augmented by the appearences of Kenny Clarke's group, Claude Bolling and Sugar Blue. And at the Dreher, a mini-festival included the groups of Sam Rivers, Chico Freeman and Archie Shepp.

"Lastly, at the Cinema Le Marais, five programs of jazz films were offered. They included "St. Louis Blues" with Bessie Smith, "Le Blues Entre les Dents," Paul Paviot's "Django Reinhardt," "Jammin' the Blues," "Sound of Jazz," "Jivin' Be-Bop," plus numerous shorts featuring many of jazz's principal artists."

"The Brass Group" is a musical organisation presenting jazz concerts in Sicily. The 1980/81 season has an interesting cross section of musicians which include Chick Corea, Phil Woods, Milt Jackson and Don Pullen. Further information is available from Viale Villa Heloise 21, Palermo, Sicily.. The Waterland Quintet consisting of Leo van Oostrom, Gerd Dudek, Mark Miller, Martin van Duynhoven and Loek Dikker is planning a second North American tour in April 1981. Anyone wishing to book the group should contact Rasa Artists, 611 Broadway, Suite 214, New York, N.Y. 10010 (212-473-1175).

Winter holiday sun seekers will be pleased to know that Jack Simpson has organised Sunday night sessions at the Penthouse Lounge of the Quality Inn in Cocoa Beach under the banner of "Jazz on the Beach." Featured will be the Chris Pangikas Trio and guests.

A complete index has been prepared for Duke Ellington's "Music is My Mistress" by H. F. Huon. This 82 page soft cover book is available for $7.00 postpaid from QED-Co, P.O. Box 73, Pewaukee, Wisconsin 53072. It covers all the people, places and the music, including references to each of the many pictures.... Jack Millar's Billie Holiday discography (parts of which appeared most recently in Discographical Forum) is now available in book form under the title of "Born to Sing" and is published by JazzMedia in Copenhagen, Denmark.... Kemps Publishing Group (1-5 Bath Street, London EC1V 9QA, England) has published its International Music & Recording Industry Year Book for 1981 which provides listings of booking agents, concert halls, record companies and many other services related to the music industry. It serves, primarily, the music industry in England but there is an International section. Its focus is big business and there is little relevant information for people interested in jazz unless they wish to expand into other areas of music.... Bill Love (5808 Northumberland St., Pittsburgh, Pa.) has reprinted "Who's Who of Jazz Collecting" - a 1942 booklet listing collectors and their interests as well as a ten page booklet of "Original Record Labels." This is a reprint of four articles which appeared originally in Jazz Information. The black and white reproductions are designed to guide collectors in distinguishing between original issues and subsequent reissues.... "The Record Collector's Handbook" by Alan Leibowitz is another attempt to provide a price guide for out of print records which are in demand. There are sections for rock and roll, show business and jazz. It should be of use to those anxious to take part in record auctions. This paperback book retails for $9.95 and is published by Everest House in New York.... Yazoo Records has published a set of 36 cards of blues singers under the title "Heroes of the Blues." Each card has a drawing of a famous blues singer (in colour!) with biographical information on the reverse. The complete set comes in a box and is available for $6.98 postpaid from Yazoo Records, 245 Waverly Place, New York, N.Y. 10014.... "The Films of Artie Shaw, Glenn Miller and Tony Pastor" is a film-discography by Dr. Klaus Stratemann which is published by der Jazzfreund, c/o Gerhard Conrad, Von-Stauffenbergstr 24, D-5750 Menden 1, Germany and costs DM18.00.

Cadence has expanded its activities with the launching of Cadence Records. Their first release will be a sextet session under the leadership of trumpeter Ahmed Abdullah and featuring Chico Freeman. Following this will be sessions with Beaver Harris's 360 Degree Experience and a big band date with Saheb Sarbib's Multinational Band.... Inner City's second release from Jazz Legacy is now available. There are LPs with Buck Clayton, Don Byas, Lucky Thompson, Bobby Jaspar, Roy Eldridge and Clifford Brown. Also from Inner City are "Trinity" with Tommy Flanagan, "Chasin' the Bird" with Sadao Watanabe and the Great Jazz Trio, Art Farmer's Quintet at Boomers and "Chasin' the Bird" with Helen Merrill.... Marian McPartland's most recent recording on her own label is called "Live at the Carlyle." A catalog of Halcyon Records is available from Marian at Box 256, Merrick, N.Y. 11566.... M & K Realtime Records has released two new digitally-recorded LPs. "Burnin'" is by the Don Menza Big Band and "Playin' it Straight" is by the Jack Sheldon All Stars.... "Legacy" by Ronnie Matthews is the latest BeeHive release. Coming soon is a new Johnny Hartman LP called "Once In Every Life".... Rounder Records continue to service the U.S. with Italian-produced records on Black Saint and Soulnote. "Faces of Hope" (Soulnote 1010) is a solo piano effort by Andrew Hill. "Strange Serenade" (Soulnote 1013) is a trio date by Hill with Alan Silva and Freddie Waits. "Electronic Sonata for Souls Loved By Nature – 1980" (Soulnote 1009) is a new recording by the George Russell Sextet. "Mama and Daddy" (Black Saint 0041) is the latest release by Muhal Richard Abrams.... Vineyards Records, 34 Greene Street, New York, N.Y. 10013 has released an LP by the David Bond Trio called "Odyssey".... Two new releases from RA Records (PO Box 964 Bowling Green Sta., New York, N.Y. 10004) are "The Seventh Son" by Malachi Thompson (RA 102) and "La Dee La La" by Shamek Farrah and Folks (RA 103)... Silver Sphinx is a new record label (4850 South Lake Park, Apt. 302, Chicago, Ill. 60615) whose initial release is an LP by the Steve Colson Unity Troupe.... The Smithsonian Institution has released two new records. "The Music of Fats Waller and James P. Johnson" is a live concert by the Jazz Repertory Ensemble and features Bob Wilber, Jimmy Maxwell, Dick Hyman and Dick Wellstood. "Henry "Red" Allen and Coleman Hawkins 1933" is a compilation of recordings made in that year by the two hornmen. These records can be ordered from Smithsonian Recordings, P.O. Box 10230, Des Moines, Iowa 50336.... Fantasy has issued twofers by Wes Montgomery ("Yesterdays"), John Coltrane ("Rain or Shine"), Joe Henderson ("Foresight") and Eddie Jefferson ("There I Go Again") as well as a new two-record set by McCoy Tyner called "Four Times Four".... New from Pumpkin is Wild Bill Davison with the Eddie Condon All Stars from Miami Beach in 1955 (Pumpkin 111).... Stomp Off is a new label devoted to traditional jazz. There are two Terry Waldo LPs ("Feelin' Devilish" by his Gutbucket Syncopators and "The Wizard of the Keyboard") as well as three LPs from Scandinavia by the Peruna Jazzmen, Scaniajazz and the Canal Street Jazz Band. Catalogs giving full details are available from P.O. Box 342, Dept. L, York, Pa. 17405.... Stichting Cat Jazz Records has released a second LP by the Jazz-O-Matic Four entitled "Looking Over a Four Leaf Clover".... "Rain" by the Thomas Clausen 3 is

DICK GREGORY and CHARLES McPHERSON (photograph by Fred Miles)

the latest release from Matrix Records.... Denmark's Storyville label has begun a new series of recordings and we can look for LPs by Benny Carter, Sir Roland Hanna, Teddy Wilson and Ernie Wilkins' big band.... French RCA had to cancel their planned volume 24 of Fats Waller material because RCA in New York did not wish them to release the V Disc material. Now available, however, is a final volume called Fats Plus (PM 43261) which includes items missed before in the series.... JSP Records has released Hound Dog Taylor Live At Florence's, Chicago 1969.... "Let's Boogie" (Spivey 1025) is the latest sampling from the blues world to come out on this New York label.

New Orleans trumpeter Albert Walters died October 20 in New Orleans at the age of 75.... Drummer Chauncey Morehouse died October 31 in Medford, N.J. He was 78.... Composer Alec Wilder died December 24 at the age of 73.

— compiled by John Norris

IMAGINE THE SOUND/A JAZZ FILM

Simultaneous with the development of film art in the 20th century, there has evolved in North America a creative improvised music known as "jazz". Yet to date, there have been few serious films dealing with jazz music. ***Jazz On A Summer's Day, The Sound Of Jazz, Jammin' The Blues, Jazz Is Our Religion, Last Of The Blue Devils*** and some of Robert Herridge's television productions are the major efforts among the handful of cinematic attempts to depict this music.

Now, 1981 brings us a Canadian production dealing with four giants in the recent evolution of jazz: IMAGINE THE SOUND, which is being filmed in Toronto early in February of this year. The four artists who are the subjects of this production are:

PAUL BLEY — The Canadian pianist whose work has appeared on over 50 record albums, who has played with Charlie Parker, Charles Mingus, Ornette Coleman, Don Cherry, Sonny Rollins and the Jazz Composers Orchestra.

CECIL TAYLOR — The pianist and composer whose work over the last 25 years — as soloist and in his various "Units", as poet, educator and eloquent spokesman for his art — has elevated him to legendary status in his own lifetime. In the realm of film, Cecil Taylor has been the subject of G. Patris' & L. Ferrari's ***Ambitus, The Other Side Of The Tracks*** and ***L'Invention***, and D.A. Pennebaker's ***Cecil Taylor And Allen Ginsberg.***

ARCHIE SHEPP — saxophonist, composer, actor and playwright, leader, poet and teacher, has been in residence at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst since 1975. In recent years he has been acclaimed as having taken his place alongside Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young and John Coltrane as a major jazz tenor saxophonist. He has been the subject of Theo Robichet's film, ***Archie Shepp Chez Les Tourages***, and Niels Holt's ***Future One.***

BILL DIXON — trumpeter and composer, in the early '60s he was instrumental in forming the Jazz Composers Guild in New York City — a cooperative of avant garde musicians which included, among many others, Paul Bley, Archie Shepp and Cecil Taylor. Bill Dixon is a professor of Black Music at Bennington College in Vermont.

IMAGINE THE SOUND is a film by Canadian producers Ron Mann and Bill Smith. Ron Mann is the director of IMAGINE THE SOUND, whose previous films include ***Flak***, a docu-drama, ***The Only Game In Town,*** an animated short, ***Ssshhh!***, a theatrical short, and ***Feels So Good***, sponsored by Wintario. Bill Smith is the editor of Coda Magazine, and co-owner of Sackville Records and Toronto's Jazz And Blues Centre. He is also a composer and instrumentalist of increasing reputation.

For IMAGINE THE SOUND the producers have assembled some of the most talented technical staff in North America. They include:

Emile de Antonio, creative consultant: a renowned documentary film maker whose films include ***Point Of Order, Painters & Painting, Underground, Milhouse*** and ***In the Year of the Pig.***

Robert Fresco, cinematographer. Fresco has had fifteen years' experience as a director of photography for features, commercials, industrial documentaries and television series.

Phil Sheridan, recording engineer. A musician, composer and arranger in his own right, who studied the art of recording with the famous U.S. engineer Phil Ramone, Sheridan is the co-owner of McClear Place Recording Studios.

The filming of IMAGINE THE SOUND will commence on February 8, 1981, at The Edge in Toronto. It will continue, at McClear Place Studios and other Toronto locations, February 9, 10 and 12.

SMALL ADS

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

NOTE: As of our next issue, # 178, to be published April 1, CODA's advertising rates will INCREASE. Small ad rates will rise to 40¢ per word. Small ads purchased before April 1 will be honored at the old rate. Also, we allow a 10% discount on ads purchased for 10 consecutive issues. We urge all our advertisers to take advantage of this offer and purchase your ads before April 1 — payment is to be made in advance.

ON TOUR

The Bill Smith Ensemble with David Lee & David Prentice will be travelling from Toronto to New York City to perform at Soundscape on April 10, 1981. They are interested in performing elsewhere in the Eastern United States and Canada at this time and may be contacted at Onari Productions, 191 Howland Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M5R 3B7. (416) 368-3149

The Bill Smith Ensemble is now being represented in Europe by Jerry Vermie, Moerasvaren 29, 1441 SN Purmerend, Holland — and in the USA by Blue Light Productions, (Dick Lynn), P.O. Box 187, West Hurley, NY 12491 (914) 338-7640.

DISCOGRAPHIES

ORNETTE COLEMAN 1958-1979: A Discography, by Wild & Cuscuna. Complete information on all recordings; biography; photographs.

Now available, $5.50 US postpaid. Still available — RECORDINGS OF JOHN COLTRANE: A Discography, Second Edition. Revised, enlarged, updated. Complete information on all recordings. $7.00 US postpaid. Also available: ***disc'ribe***, a journal of discographical information. Subscription - $5.00 US; single issue - $1.50 US. WILDMUSIC, Dept. A, Box 2138, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 USA.

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