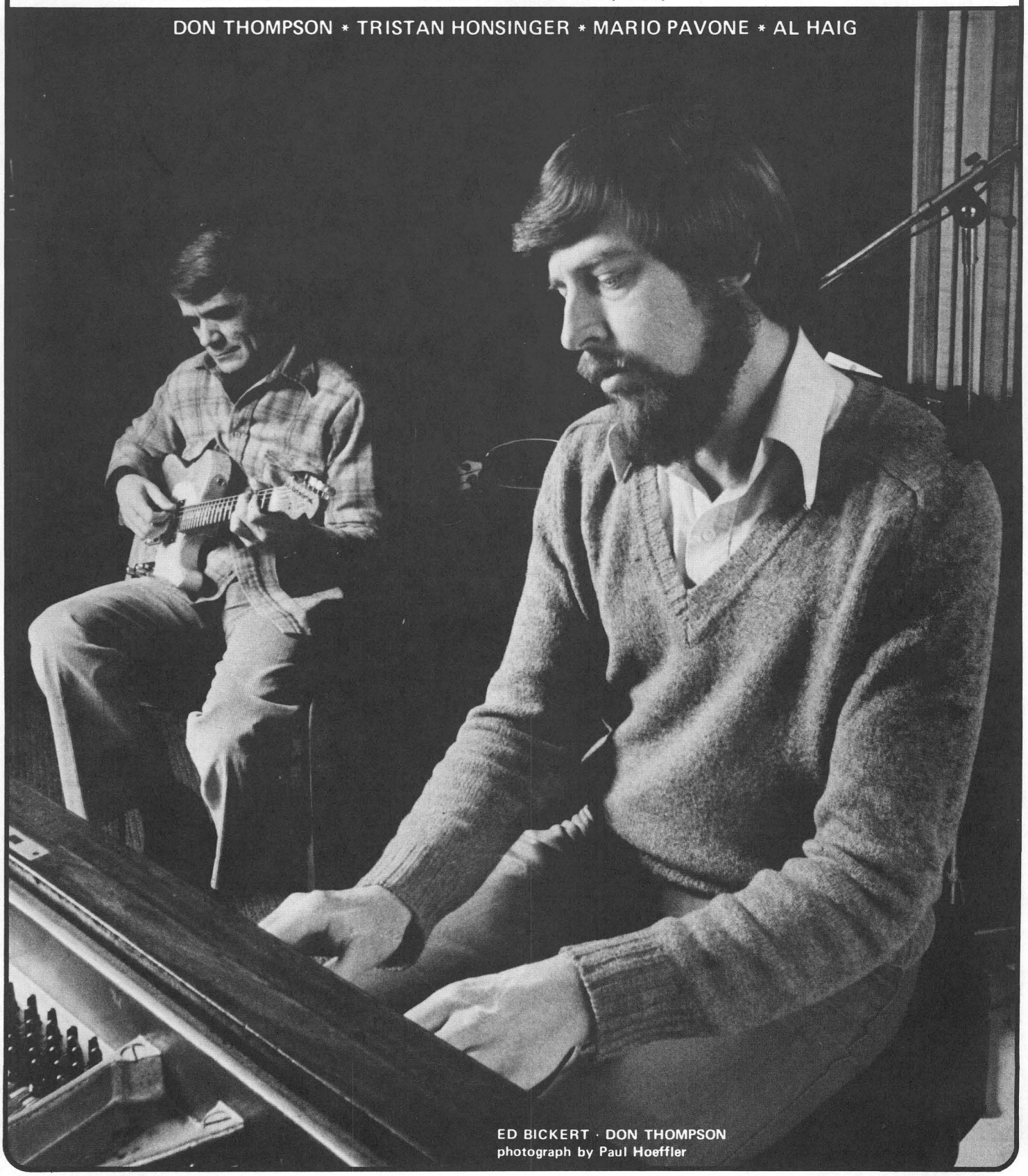
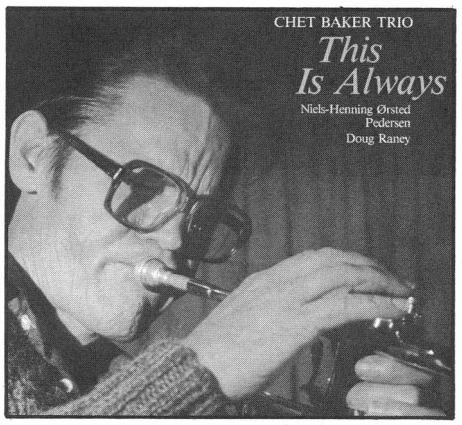
CODA MAGAZINE

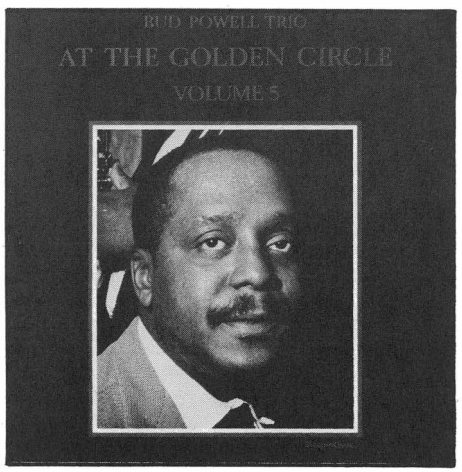
THE JAZZ MAGAZINE * ISSUE NUMBER 190 (1983) * THREE DOLLARS

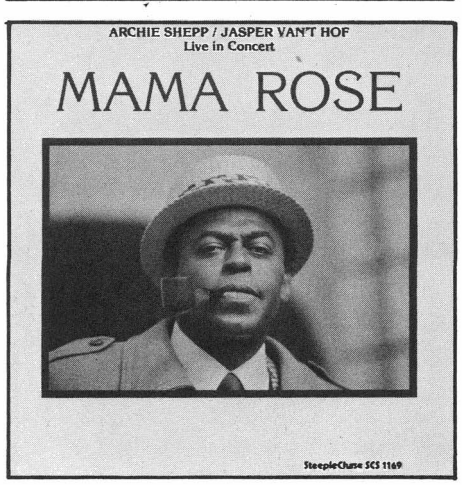
DON THOMPSON * TRISTAN HONSINGER * MARIO PAVONE * AL HAIG



ED BICKERT · DON THOMPSON
photograph by Paul Hoeffler







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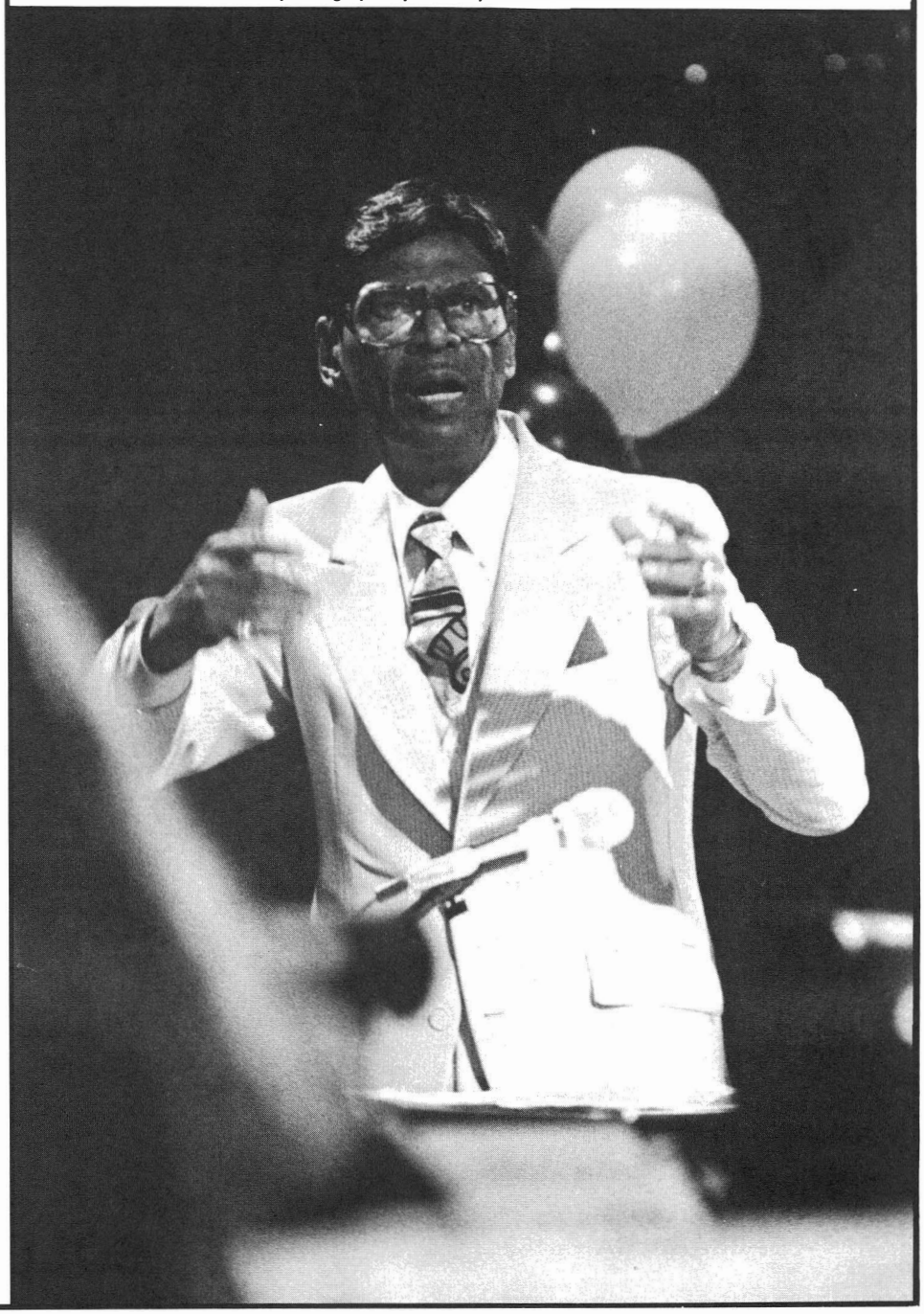
EARL HINES 1905-1983 photograph by Stanley Greene



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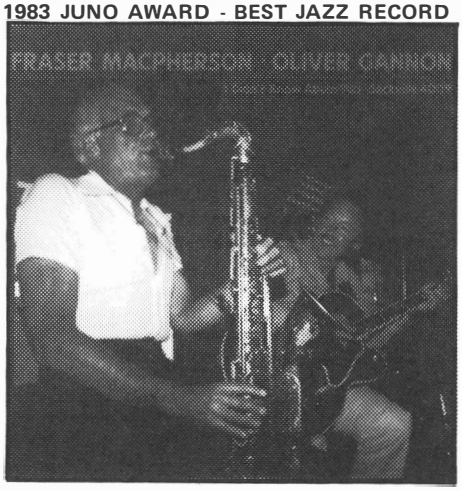
1983 JUNO AWARD - BEST JAZZ RECORD



4009 FRASER MACPHERSON & OLIVER GANNON: "I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT YOU"
Fraser MacPherson (tenor saxophone), Oliver Gannon (guitar)
This Heart Of Mine, Do Nothing Till You Hear From Me, Everything Happens To Me, All By Myself, The More I See You, Mean To Me, I Didn't Know About You, Day By Day, A Nightingale Sang In Berkeley Square, You Go To My Head, In A Mellotone.

1982 JUNO NOMINEE

4007 JOE SEALY TRIO: "CLEAR VISION"
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Summertime, All Blues, Clear Vision, What Is This Thing Called Love, We'll Be Together Again, Playa Caliente, Star Eyes, It's All Right With Me.

1983 JUNO NOMINEE

006 PAUL CRAM: "BLUE TALES IN TIME"
Paul Cram (alto and tenor saxophones), Lyle Lansall-Ellis (bass), Paul Plimley (piano), Gregg Simpson (drums).
OTS, Ruminations, Nebula, Carnations, Castillian Dreams, Au Privave, Everyone In Likeness.
Paul Cram (alto saxophone), Karen Oliver (violin), Ken Newby (bassoon, soprano saxophone).
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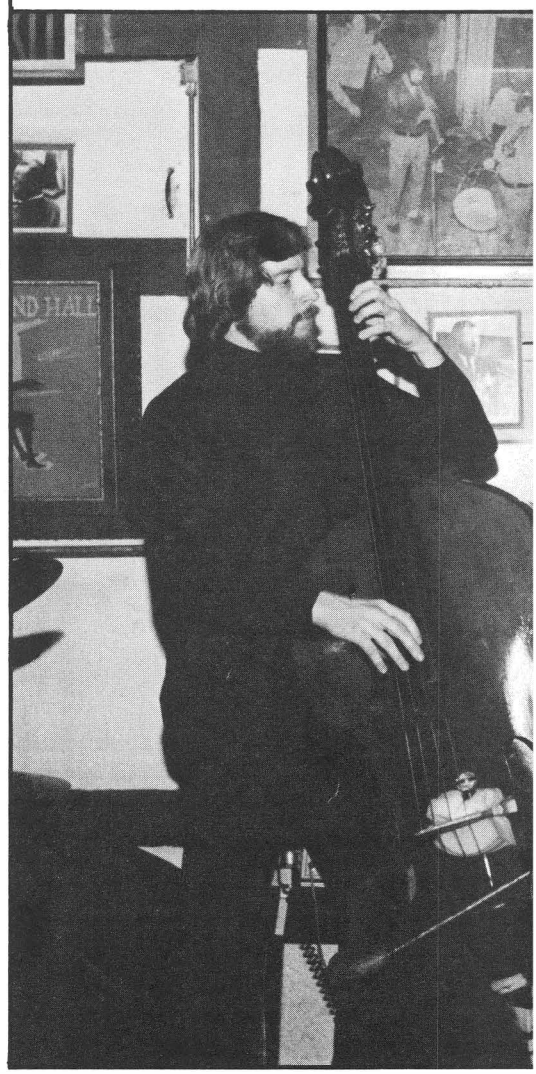


When I first went to Vancouver I played vibes more than anything else. I didn't even own a bass. I bought a bass after that. I just listened to records and tried to play what I liked. This would be around 1960.

I came from Powell River and I didn't know anything about anything. And so the Vancouver scene I came into, well, I didn't know anything about jazz or anything else and so I went to hear many guys play. They played ***Confirmation***, they played all the bebop tunes and all that stuff. There were so many guys who played so many different ways. There was Dave Quarin who was playing more out of the Lee Konitz approach. And then there was P. J. Perry and Dale Hillary, they were playing the bebop tunes. Fraser MacPherson was down playing a whole other kind of thing, Chris Gage and all those guys. I guess at that time I was just deciding what I could play because I couldn't hardly play anything so I was just learning to play everything I could.

I came to Vancouver hoping to be a musician as a matter of fact. I came because somebody had arranged for me to take a job with the CBC in the mail department — which lasted for two or three weeks. I kept messing up, took the wrong letters to the wrong offices. So finally I gave them two weeks notice and they said, "oh, you can go now!" So that was the end of that. I had no choice but either go back to Powell River or be a musician. So I just did whatever I could.

I had studied some classical music on the piano when I was a kid and then I played in a high school band and learned a little bit more. I mainly learned what I know through the guys I'd been playing with. Jerry Fuller taught me a lot. When I first came to Vancouver Jerry Fuller spent a lot of time with me and showed me how to voice chords and play tunes and things.

The first real band I played with included P. J. Perry, Jerry Fuller, Dale Hillary, and Ray Sikora. All those guys were really good players even way back then. There was a real good bass player called Tony Clitheroe. There was also a fantastic trumpet player called John Dawe... he doesn't play anymore which is a real drag.

There was a lot of activity though. There were a lot of clubs. There was the Cellar, and and then later on there was a joint called The Flat Five. There was the Inquisition. So there were three clubs, which is pretty good. Miles played in the Inquisition, the Montgomery Brothers came up quite a bit. Stan Getz played at the Inquisition. Everybody played at the Cellar from Ornette Coleman to Mingus, and Barney Kessel and everybody in between. It was a really good club. The Flat Five brought a few guys up. I remember playing with John Handy there. And Philly Joe Jones brought up a band a few times. It was pretty good that way. Actually I think the Vancouver scene then was probably hipper than the Toronto scene now. Yeah, this was like 1961, '62, you know, and a lot of good bands passed through. Miles Davis like I was saying, Cannonball Adderley. And they came with a whole band, it wouldn't be like one guy coming to play with some local guys, they'd actually bring their whole band. So I definitely think that was better than what we have here now.

Playing with John Handy was just one of those happy coincidences. In 1964 The Flat Five decided they were going to bring in John Handy, they asked me if I wanted to play with him. Well, I was only 24, and I'd never heard him play but P. J. told me that John Handy was fantastic. That was all I knew about him. So I said, "Sure I'd love to." Terry Clarke was the drummer, and Bob Witmer was the bass player and I was the piano player. About two nights into the gig Bob Witmer got ill and couldn't play for the rest of the gig so I played bass and we worked as a trio. Then Handy came back again, and Mike White and Freddie Redd and Terry and I played with him and that was the beginning of his band.

I started playing bass mainly because there were hardly any bass players around and they really needed somebody to play. I was really interested in bass. I had played around a little bit so I had a little idea of how to play bass anyhow, and there was hardly anybody else available who could play. So that's mainly why I started playing the bass. Picking up instruments isn't hard for me. I feel lucky that way I guess.

Playing with John Handy was really a fantastic thing that happened to me. There was a club in San Francisco that wanted John to go in and play for an extended stay and so he asked Terry and I if we would go down and join his band which was terrific for us because if that hadn't happened I can't imagine what I would be doing now. It was a fantastic learning experience. He just knew so much about music and he had so much experience that he really taught us a lot. So it was a good start in that way. We got to hear a bunch of really good people and played with people that we would never have played with in any other way. Elvin Jones came in and sat in a couple of times, Milt Jackson. A lot of people would just show up. Bobby Hutcherson was in the band for a little while, Sonny Greenwich came down to play with the band. Needless to say I would have run into Sonny eventually somewhere along the way but that was real nice the way that one worked out.

I guess it does seem strange now that we played such long tunes. I know that at some times I'd play ten or fifteen minutes by myself. Everybody else would just stop, and I'd go on playing by myself. In fact I have a tape of a tune we did where John plays the first solo and I play the second one, both of us play unaccompanied and the tape runs out during my solo. It's a half hour tape and that's before the rest of the band even played at all. We really used to play long. It didn't seem strange then but it sure seems strange now.

We were in New York for three months in 1967; January, February, March but all the rest of the time in San Francisco. In San Francisco it was fantastic. There were really a lot of fantastic bands and clubs — a lot of fantastic local musicians. The level of playing was really high. Guys you never heard of and never will hear of played so much you just wouldn't believe it. As far as the west coast was concerned that was where it was at. Then we went to New York and that was another step up. I've heard people say "Oh yeah there are all kinds of musicians in Toronto that are as good as any in the world" but that's just crazy. There are a few guys that are as good as some of the guys in the U.S. but there are a whole bunch in New York that are fantastic, never mind anywhere else.

I came back to Canada in 1967 but I went to Montreal because Sonny and I were going to try to get a band together. Well, we had a couple of different bands together but there was no work and no place to play so I just ran out of money and went back to Vancouver. Sonny and I had so many different people play with us that it never did turn into a band. We went through different drummers and bass players and a piano player played with us for a while. It was always different and with Sonny we've always had this problem, getting a set thing that we could build. Because if there wasn't a bass player, then it was a drummer. It was really difficult.

That was Expo year, but I didn't get there until halfway through September and by then Expo was close to being over, and a lot of the things that had been going on were finished. Back in Vancouver nothing was happening. I did some work in a studio playing tambourine on a rock and roll show...all kinds of silly stuff but very little jazz playing. I don't know what happened but the scene seemed to have come to a big crashing halt. When I went back there was a club called the Espresso where a bunch of guys used to all play but it was just like a 'sitting-in-on-the-session' type of joint. A lot of good guys used to hang out and play but there was no real work, nobody ever got paid and

THOMPSON

now even it's gone.

I know Al Neil really well. I didn't play with Al all that much, a few times, but I really enjoyed playing with Al — a beautiful feeling. He's changed now though. When I first heard him he was playing 'after bebop' but nothing really far out. It was after bebop, but it was not at all like what he's doing now. He was just really interesting, and definitely ahead of everybody else.

So with nothing happening in Vancouver, finally I got a call from Randy Toth and he wanted me to contract a band for the Gulf Oil Industrial Show out of Vancouver, so I did. I got Bobby Hill, and Dave Quarin and a couple of other guys and we went on the road. I made enough money from that to move to Toronto. I really wasn't doing anything in Vancouver. I came here about six months before Terry Clarke. He was still playing with the Fifth Dimension. I'd only been here a little while when we did that session with Sonny Greenwich down at George's Spaghetti House. That was almost the first thing I did. It was a terrific band. Jerry Fuller was the drummer, and Gary Binstead. That was a great couple of weeks. That music was very influenced by Coltrane. It was very hard not to be like that because that was my very favorite music in jazz. Sonny was possibly the very first guitar player who was influenced in that way, all those sax lines. And nobody I've heard since, not the way he does. I've heard other guys who claim to be but they don't really sound like it to me.

I never studied that Coltrane mode but I listened to it so much. We heard the band in San Francisco. That was just my favorite thing so I listened to it all the time. If you listen to something enough you're going to absorb some of it I suppose. I think Jimmy Garrison was terrific in that band, but he never influenced me at all. In fact, there were no bass players at all that did influence me, in that kind of music. Actually there weren't any bass players at all in any kind of music. Red Mitchell and Scott LaFaro were probably the only ones. I really liked the way Red played when I first heard him, and Scott too. Scotty just killed me — when I first heard him he really made me want to play the bass. I don't think I was very serious about it until I heard him.

I wish I knew why Sonny Greenwich hasn't been recorded more. He certainly had some really good bands, that's for sure. There are some gigs that I'd give anything to have had recorded. But it just never happened. Sonny really likes to play the clubs, I don't think he really likes to play in the studio. It's just not big enough for him, he really needs a lot of space to play, I think he feels confined in there, that he can't really play out.

I did a lot of studio work for a while there but that never had anything to do with Sonny's recording because whenever Sonny came up with anything we always did it. We played a lot of clubs and concerts but for some reason we never really recorded live. Well, it's really hard to record live. I've done a bit of that you know but with Sonny's band it was difficult because I'd be so involved in the playing that it would be hard to be aware of what your levels are like and that kind of thing. So I just never got to do it.

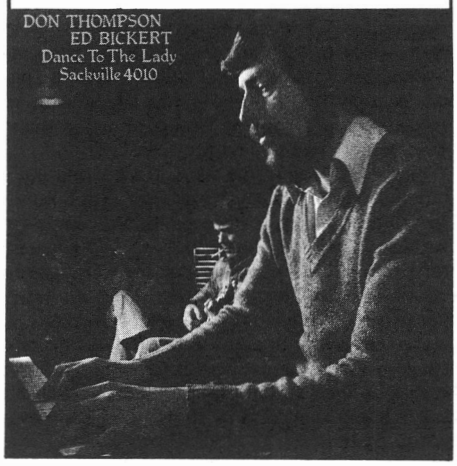
I began getting interested in the recording aspect of the music because I had this great tape recorder that I just had to try out. I had this four track Sony tape recorder and some microphones. I mainly bought it because it seemed like it would be a lot of fun. I hauled it off to Bourbon Street one night with Jim Hall to try it out and ended up taping that week. We took it home and listened to it, they all sounded so good that we got that album on A&M out of it. I didn't even know what the tapes were going to sound like. We had no monitor in the club so it was just pure luck how that whole thing turned out. I really thought it would be fun to have my own studio but I never thought that that would happen. It's something that really is a lot of fun as a matter of fact.

I feel very fortunate to have worked with Sonny and a whole bunch of other people, Milt Jackson and Jim Hall and Paul Desmond and George Shearing. I'm really lucky to play with those guys.

At one point I really got caught up in studio work, but that wasn't a choice I actually made. People started calling me and I kept taking the gigs and that's what it came down to. I did that for a long time. It's very attractive because there's a whole bunch of money there. I kept getting called and so I kept doing it. And then I was playing at Bourbon Street one night, I think I was playing with Blue Mitchell and I got a call to do a jingle the next morning at nine o'clock, and there was no way I could do it. We were having a good time and I just didn't feel like getting up early the next day. So I suggested Tom Szczesniak. I knew Tom and I knew he was really good, so I said "oh you'll love Tom." As it turned out they really did and so Tom became the bass player that they were using. It worked out fine. So I went farther away from that and into jazz, except I started to do the Bob McLean show with Jimmy Dale. Jimmy's a good friend so I really enjoyed doing that. That was about the last studio job I did — I've hardly done anything since then. Doug Riley will still call me now and then and I'll go and play but not very often. I actually feel a lot better not doing that stuff so much now because it makes you so darn tired. I had no energy. The one that really got me was last Christmas when Sonny was playing at Bourbon Street, we were having a really good week. On the Thursday night of the gig, after all those fantastic sets, I got a call to do the Bob McLean show the next day. I always

DON THOMPSON · ED BICKERT · PAUL DESMOND (photograph by Bernie Senensky)

NEW ON SACKVILLE



take Jimmy Dale's gigs so I went down there. The act was something like the teenage banjo champion of North America or something like that. We had to back this kid up on the ***William Tell Overture*** or something like that, "oh, Jesus, isn't this terrific." It really was ridiculous so I totally lost interest in studio work after that and I've only done two or three things since then. There were some technical problems too with the studio work. There wouldn't have been if I had been playing the same instrument but the problem was that whenever I was doing studio work I was usually playing Fender bass which didn't do you any good at all if you're playing string bass. So in that respect it didn't do me any good but it changes your attitude, because I found myself getting so dragged by the music most of the time. I wound up not liking the music as much as I had before and not really caring about it anymore. It affected me a lot that way. Plus it takes a lot of energy to get up at eight o'clock in the morning to bang away for six or seven hours of the day and then you go down and try to play with Paul Desmond or whoever at night and you don't have the energy you need. It affected me really in the wrong way, but the money is really good and I've managed to get my house and my studio and all that, so I'm not really sorry that I did it; but I'm really glad I'm not doing it anymore because I feel a whole lot better with just playing, I don't have to think about anything else, I just play my bass. Guys get stuck in studio work, but it's a false kind of security, because there's a limit to the demand for you in the studio. Especially rhythm section players, they're changing all the time. A guy might be a really in-demand session player for a couple of years and then somebody will decide that they want a different sound, they don't want the sound of this drummer, they've caught onto somebody else. Somebody who has really been busy for a couple of years will suddenly find himself right out. It happens, and can really surprise people.

Now I'm working with George Shearing. The travelling is ridiculous. I don't know, you win and you lose. I'm away a lot and that's not that much fun but I'm really learning a lot. Shearing is such a great musician, he knows so much. Plus he's a wonderful guy, just a great person to hang out with, to spend time with and talk about music. We really have a lot of fun together, and there isn't anything at all that I could ask him that he wouldn't show me right away. He's terrific that way. I've actually done that on the two pianos because he does things that I absolutely can't figure out so I tell him and he just shows me. He's got inner voicings that I've never heard from any other piano player, except maybe Tatum, he comes really close to that.

Those concerts with symphony orchestras are really easy for me because I don't have to do that much. There is just a part of the concert with an orchestra and then I just play a part of the concert with George too so my part is smaller than George's and George only plays about half of it himself. So those aren't very busy events for me. Club gigs are a lot more fun because then it's just the two of us. We play two or three sets and that really is fun.

Life on the road with George: actually he's so well-organised and so together that there's no hitches with him at all. Everything is so smooth and well taken care of...actually that is kind of unusual. I've never encountered that before, there's usually problems when you're travelling but with him, if there's a problem that's really unusual.

My biggest problem in life right now is my bass because it just seems that my old French bass is just not made for travelling like I'm doing. I've had cracks appear that were never

DON THOMPSON (photograph by Ellen Tofflemire)

there before. It's really affected by humidity which is the problem all bass players face, though I hope everybody doesn't have all the problems that I've been having. I've had all those usual problems, like showing up with your bass and having to deal with all the stewardesses and flight attendants and strapping it in and all that stuff, and all the usual stupid remarks like "why don't you stuff it under the seat." But now I have a great big fiberglass case that I put my bass in and I put it through checked baggage and it's fantastic. The case is pretty good, I put two inches of foam rubber around it and so it's really well protected, it's really tough and so I haven't had any problems with it at all. It probably costs about sixteen dollars excess baggage which is way cheaper than half fare, which is ridiculously expensive. So you just check it and don't worry about it until you get there. It really is the only way to travel — I wish I had it all the way along. I've had some scenes with Jim Hall where I've actually been turned off of planes. It took us a whole day to get from New York to Cleveland once because they wouldn't take us on two different airlines in New York. Finally they flew us to Buffalo and we rented a car and drove. We got there about an hour before the concert, we left at about eight o'clock in the morning. It was just nuts.

I've tried most of the pick-ups I guess, the Underwood is the only one I really like. I now have a Roland Cube 16 amp that's pretty good too. It sounds just like the bass only a little bit louder. That terrible, mechanical amplified bass sound doesn't always have to happen. It doesn't always happen but sometimes it does, maybe 70% of the time. What I think is happening is that on most of the records with string bass you usually take a direct feed off of the bass pickup and that's the sound you get on the record. It's always that weird mechanical electric sound and I have a funny feeling that a lot of young bass players listen to that and think that's the way it's supposed to sound and then try to get that sound live. It drives me crazy because I hate it. I think the way recording engineers are recording bass right now, they just plug the bass into a direct box and not even bother to mike it and so that's the only sound that they have to work with. The engineer doesn't necessarily know anything about music or the bass. Ron Carter on CTI with no mike on the instrument, with the bass recorded direct, to me that doesn't sound like a string bass. But so many young musicians listen to that and think "that's exactly the sound I want" and so that's exactly the sound they get. You listen to Ron's old records with Miles Davis when they were miking the basses and it was a different sound. It was a beautiful sound because he's got that great bass, it was a lovely sound...I've heard records where it's just recorded direct and it doesn't sound right to me. Of course the medium for a lot of young players coming up is records, that is their source of information. That's why so many guys who are playing drums get that big tubby sound on the drums too. They hear those records with those rock and roll drums.

I'd never miss anything when I was in Vancouver, didn't matter who came to town I'd be there. I wonder if a lot of the young musicians don't go out now to hear live music and check out the players. I'd believe that because I've played so much in Toronto with some good musicians and an awful lot of the guys you never see. They mostly listen to records, they mostly think of making music in terms of making records. It's crazy, absolutely ridiculous. Most of the records being made are ruining everything because there are so damn many records now, everybody has a record and so nobody can distinguish what's good and what's bad. There's no standard. Twenty five years ago unless a cat was a real giant he just didn't make a record. You can listen to Miles and Cannonball and Horace Silver and all those great bands, they were really great bands and musicians. But now it's so easy that anybody can do it. I really think it's messed things up. When I used to listen to Miles, and Coltrane and Mingus I'd think that this was great. I hardly hear anything now that I could say was great. Every now and then I'll hear something that I think is all right but I can't remember the last time I heard a record that I thought "hey that's really great." 99% of it is mediocre nowadays, every now and then something rises above it.

In my studio I'm not planning to do anything but make the music sound the way I think it should sound. I have a piano, and I know what it sounds like, and I have a bass and I know what they sound like and that's all I do, I don't plan to do anything else. I think being a musician gives me an advantage as a recording engineer. I know more of what a bass is supposed to sound like than most engineers. I have to, I've been playing bass for twenty years, so I should know what it's supposed to sound like. And I've listened to a lot of jazz. Strangely, I've known a lot of engineers who haven't, who never ever came into the jazz club. When I used to do studio work all the time, and then go out and play jazz at night, there was one engineer, Phil Sheridan, who'd come out all the time. A fantastic engineer, he really knows what he's doing. Plus he's a musician. But not very many other ones. Dave Green would come in every now and then, Dave's a good engineer too, but most of the other engineers I would never see them in a jazz club, if they did it was to hang out and have a beer but not because they really came to hear the music. I don't know how anybody could be an engineer to record music and not come to hear the music they were going to record. I just can't imagine that. I'm halfway through an album now with Jim Campbell, the clarinetist, a fabulous player in classical music. A couple of weeks ago we recorded a piece by Carl Nielsen, a quintet, which was clarinet, French horn, bassoon, bass and cello and so I went down to hear that concert performed and they came over here to rehearse but I really wanted to have a good listen to that piece and the music before I recorded — I wouldn't have dared to record it without hearing it first. But engineers will do that and you'll get the piano sounding all hard and rock and roll-sounding drums and electric-sounding bass and you get nothing. I did a recording session once with Sonny Greenwich and Sonny started getting angry and told the engineer to come out and hear what the bloody guitar sounded like out here in the room. I also did a session for a well known label with a well known guitar player in New York, well we worked for two whole days and I don't think the engineer ever did come in to listen to the band in the actual room, and I can tell you man those drums don't sound like that. There was a well known drummer playing on his beautiful drums and I said "hey those drums just don't sound right." When this record finally came out the sound was less than fantastic.

Perhaps this is the same story that we just

discussed, about musicians who don't actually go out to the clubs and hang out and see what the scene is all about. Relatively few people listen to classical music and string quartets and avant garde music and singers, so they don't have any big picture of what it is they're a part of. They just say "well I'll do this" and that's what they do and you say "well what else can you do?" It's ridiculous, it's like a piano player who has never heard anything but McCoy Tyner, so he plays like him. It's a drag but that's the way it seems to be going.

Because unfortunately, pap makes more money and the people who are controlling are more interested in making money than actually presenting beautiful music to the world. If you go to a major record label and say "I've got a beautiful string quartet that I'd like to release and I've got a rock and roll band over here that's guaranteed to make you twenty million dollars in the next couple of years." It's terrible, it doesn't matter what it sounds like, because they never listen to it anyway. And they'll go for it, but the string quartet, are you kidding? That's all it is — the people in charge are motivated by just plain greed, as if they haven't made enough billions of dollars in music as it is, and it's not even music. It's a really frightening prospect actually. Jazz could cease to exist if the record companies had their way. And people can be so damn stupid that they can be brainwashed into thinking that this pap is the real thing. They've been told so many times on the radio and TV that this is really great music that they'll actually go out and buy it. And then every once in a while someone will actually listen to it and throw it away because it's ridiculous. You wonder about the future of music when it's in the hands of radio and television and recording companies because the music doesn't mean anything at all to them. It's really scary.

You know all the fuss the newspapers made about the final Who concert, but who cares? Well I'll tell you George Shearing's wife is a fantastic singer and she just sang the Bach ***B Minor Mass*** with the New York Philharmonic last week and so I went out and bought the Bach ***B Minor Mass*** and it's so great. It started me thinking that if that is what music is what is all this other racket? The fact is that all that other racket is being sold as music and people are becoming convinced that that's what it really is and it's a drag, because a lot of that stuff is a really evil, negative force.

I suppose that the big record companies, because of their attitude towards music, have actually brought about the possibility, and the need for, a number of very good independent record companies, who produce the music that they like. Like Sackville, for example in jazz and Crystal Records in classical music. Now Hal Hill and I are starting a record company. Perhaps it's difficult, but if something good can come of it it certainly isn't difficult enough to not make it worthwhile. If a few good records come out and a few people hear them and a few musicians are heard and a few gigs come up as a result of it, then obviously it's a good cause. I can't think of any other reason because there certainly can't be any money in it, or I'd be really surprised if there was any money in it. Meanwhile if there's just a handful of musicians who benefit from it, that would justify the whole thing for me. That's how I got lucky myself, just by playing and somebody hears me and asks me to go play with them.

I feel a lot of empathy with new music; modern chamber music as well, I just love that kind of music. I even like playing that kind of music. I had a band once as you know with Michael Stuart and Claude Ranger and we played some fairly avant garde music and I really enjoyed that. I really enjoy playing it, and listening to it and everything else. It just so happens that for a couple of years I haven't gotten into anything like that but I certainly haven't lost interest in it and I may well play that way again. In fact when we were in Banff last summer we played some definitely outside music, Dave Holland, Kenny Wheeler and myself and it was really strong. Trumpet, piano and bass, it was really nice, it was a beautiful concert — it couldn't help but be with those two guys because they are both really special people. Sonny Greenwich can get outside too. I love music and I just can't lock myself up in a room. Unfortunately it's difficult to present this in club situations in Toronto. It's hard to do anything here. Toronto is turning into a very conservative city because the clubs are reluctant to book anything outside of what you would call very mainstream. I mean, Coltrane is mainstream now. He's been dead for an awful long time now, but Coltrane would be much too far out for anybody to deal with in the clubs here in Toronto and it's becoming famous for that. I was in Los Angeles a couple of years ago and I ran into a really nice guy that books acts. He had just booked somebody into the Chick 'n Deli here. I told him I was from Toronto and he said "boy, they're really into dixieland there, aren't they."

FROM AN INTERVIEW BY BILL SMITH AND DAVID LEE

DON THOMPSON - A selected discography

As leader or co-leader:
'Ed Bickert/Don Thompson' Sackville 4005
'Dance to the Lady' (with Ed Bickert) " 4010
'Bells' (with Rob Piltch) Umbrella GEN 1-16
'Country Place' PM Records 008
With Sonny Greenwich:
'Evolution Love's Reverse' PMR 016
With Paul Desmond:
'Paul Desmond Quartet' Artists House 2
'Paul Desmond Live' A&M Horizon SP-850
With Jim Galloway:
'Thou Swell' featuring Jay McShann Sackville 4011
With Jay McShann:
'The Sackville All Stars: Saturday Night Function' Sackville 3028
'Tuxedo Junction' " 3025
'The Man From Muskogee' " 3005
With Jim Hall:
'Live' A&M Horizon SP-705
'Circles' Concord CJ 161
With Ruby Braff:
'Ruby Braff with the Ed Bickert Trio' Sackville 3022
With Frank Rosolino:
'Thinking About You' " 2014

With Ed Bickert:
'Ed Bickert' PM Records 010

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Thanks to Maureen Cochrane for transcribing the original tape of this interview.

TRISTAN HONSINGER

A CONVERSATION WITH PETER DANSON

I started playing cello when I was a kid. In the American school system, through playing something like the recorder, they find out what instrument you'd like to play, and I think my mother told me that I should play the cello so I started to play the cello. She was listening to Pablo Casals at the time. I was in the fourth grade when I started, and a year later I got a private teacher. From then on I played cello all the time. I switched teachers a few times, and I had a lot of chances to do many things in music. I joined orchestras, and I had a friend whose mother was a pianist and he was a flutist, so we used to play chamber music on weekends. I was fortunate enough to find kids my age to play with, and also youth orchestras and what have you, and of course in America there are competitions where you can try out for regional orchestras and then state orchestras and national orchestras, and this kept my interest in music. I was good enough to become pretty cocky about it, but by the time I was ready to try out for these schools, I wasn't so interested any more. I was just tired of school, I wanted to take a break, I'd had enough, really. Twelve years of school, and I just wanted to go somewhere, like New York, and get a job in a Broadway orchestra or something, but at the time the war was on so I had to go to school. So I went to first year at the New England Conservatory, and it was more like I was studying life than music. Of course it didn't work out, I didn't have much interest in school. I was out partying and smoking dope and what-have-you. I failed—in fact I almost failed on purpose.

At the same time, I was quite interested in chamber music, because of a violinist, a Hungarian man named Gabriel Banat, who took me into his group and influenced me to play chamber music. So I was hot on that. This was in the Berkshires, I went to these summer schools. I went to a chamber music school where there were about ten people. Then the next year he invited me to his own school, which was in Vermont near Marlboro in the mountains, which was about twenty people. We used to play chamber music all day. From Vivaldi to Schoenberg.

I stopped going to that school, then I met a cellist who wanted to make me into a big cello player. He took me to the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, and my parents gave me another chance, and I proved myself, then after the second semester I was tired again. Then it became clear to me that I was also tired of the career I was taking myself on, or of the career that this cello player was taking me on his idea of. I decided that I had to leave.

It was really the draft-dodging time, and I had a choice of Sweden and Canada. I had no money, I didn't know how I was going to get to Sweden, so I chose Canada. I was familiar with the east coast, and somebody gave me the address of the Quebec City Orchestra. I got through the border that way, and I went to Quebec City, but I knew no one. By and by I met some people, mostly French people, and a couple of weeks later I came to Montreal, and lived there for some years.

At that point I wasn't really initiated into improvised music. I improvised sometimes, but not with any intention, it was just some kind of

TRISTAN HONSINGER (photograph by Enrico Romero)

romantic image of how I would like to play, not really any kind of lifestyle. I was still practising classical cello pieces.

I stayed with a French family the first year in Montreal. That year I was just surviving and not knowing where I was going, I was kind of lost. Somehow, someone invited me to some kind of session of dance and music, and they told us: "Well, just play." A girl played recorder and I played cello. That was my first experience just to play. I said, my god, this is great! Then I met someone else, a flutist or something, and we started to play in the street. It's a different kind of music. I almost have to say that I almost had to start over as a cellist, in relationship to the techniques that I had developed as a classical musician. I really had to destroy that and start a new kind of language — with the instrument, and with myself, because the classical thing just didn't work.

I played with a few groups here. Jazz Libre du Quebec, which was about politics, mostly. It was a very political group, mostly older guys who had played jazz and cabaret in their earlier years. They had been Robert Charlebois' band for some time, then they split from there and started to improvise, influenced by people such as Coltrane. . Yves Charbonneau and Jean Prefontaine were the two main figures; Maurice Richard was the bass player, Jean-Guy Poirier was the drummer.

At that point I didn't know much about jazz music. I began to become famililar with it after I began to improvise, because people would say "Well you have to listen to Ornette Coleman and Coltrane". Of course, I was very surprised that people were doing this kind of thing. I thought I was the only one in the world who was doing what I was doing. By and by people heard me and would say, "I know these people in Europe, all these jazz musicians."

Because of course I had heard jazz music when I was a kid. My father loved dixieland, but I was never familiar with bebop, it was basically blues and dixieland that I was educated on. So bebop, and Miles Davis and so on, I only started to listen to after I started to improvise. I think I'm lucky in a certain sense, because I was able to develop some kind of thing by myself, and then I heard people who were doing things relative to what I was experiencing — so I didn't have to be so influenced. I could appreciate it and be inspired by it, but not so much that it was my school. Because I had already been through a very heavy school, and at that time I was not interested in starting on another one so quickly.

I was actually quite full of myself at the time, and in a way I think that was good. By and by I left the Jazz Libre, because they were more into a kind of dead-end thing I think. The politics could only take it so far, and it was almost finished by the time I started playing with them, and I found myself playing a lot on my own. I tried to organize a group with a Dutch drummer, Peter van Ginkel, but basically I found myself playing in the street most of the time — which was nice, but you can't play in the street in the wintertime in Montreal. Finally I left. Peter van Ginkel went back to Holland, and he invited me there.

Peter told me there were many possibilities to work in Holland. I jumped at the chance. In Holland I met many people whom I had heard on records in Montreal: Misha Mengelberg, Han Bennink, Derek Bailey, Evan Parker. I was very curious about their music, which was one reason I went to Europe. I played with Peter for a while, and then when I met Han and Misha they were very nice to me, they gave me work. Then I met Derek. And I also had experiences, moving around in France, playing in the streets for four months with a group, a dancer and two musicians. That was a very good experience, because I just wanted to play at the time. I would play three hours a night in the street, which developed me a lot in my own language. Improvised music in the streets.

I went back to Amsterdam, and I lived there for three years, and in that time met most of the musicians in Europe. It's quite a strategically-placed centre for many things — music, art, theatre, it's one of the most open cities in Europe and I think it will remain that way, even though it's sort of gone through the hippie movement and become a bit straighter. So now it's harder for people, only the ones who are strong enough can survive, where before it was a bit more wishy-washy, there was a lot of very mediocre stuff as well as the good stuff. Now it's thinning out, but it's still a good centre, along with Berlin and Paris and London. But Amsterdam is, for me, the most interesting. I've met more people there, and had more opportunity there than in any other place. The people there are very open-minded. It's very hard to get close to them in a way, because they have a very difficult language. Dutch is one of the most difficult languages in Europe; for me, anyway. And because it's so open, there is a point where the people, as individuals, close up. But as far as being open-minded about your music and your lifestyle, it's very very good. Although it's very small and everybody knows everybody — New York is probably more interesting in that respect, you can spread out more. Amsterdam was very important to me in this period, from about 1974 to 1979, until I moved to Italy.

The first important musical relationships I formed were with Han Bennink and Misha Mengelberg's ICP Tentet, and Derek Bailey's Company groupings. The ICP Tentet was very interesting. Misha has a kind of idea about instant composition. Together he and Han have a very large scope of musical cliches and ideas and games that they have developed in their long relationship, and I think Misha has always wanted to make a bigger group, and expand on his experiences with Han. Misha is a composer, and I think he wants to stretch the duo experience out, in an improvised way, so he makes small little compositions. When I worked with him he was just starting to develop a way so it became clear. With our group I think he really didn't have the chance to develop something because he had bitten off more than he could chew. There were too many individuals at the time in the group who didn't really meld, although we did a lot of interesting work. Probably the most interesting was when there were five people in the group instead of ten, so it became much looser.

The people in the Tentet at the time were Misha, Han, Michel Waiswisz, Maarten van Regteren Altena, John Tchicai, a few Dutch guys you may not know. Our gigs were mostly in Holland. I tried to get some of my own groups together too, but I was still developing — trying to show the world that I existed, in a way.

The Company experience was very nice, because Derek made a kind of polarity in that he got a lot of people together, and instead of us all playing together all the time, split it up so that a lot of good music came out because there were such things as trios, quartets, duos and so on. He basically picked from a bunch of people that he wanted to play with at the time, and called it Company.

Derek is a very inspiring man. He is one of the few improvisers I respect, because he has developed his language, and he plays within the limits of his language. There are very few people who do that on a continuous, non-compromising level — and he gets it across. He's not doing it only for himself, which is very beautiful to see, and to play with also. I've had many experiences with musicians telling me, "well he doesn't even know how to play his instrument — it's bullshit what he's doing" — but I've never heard anybody say that after they've played with him. He has a great influence. When you sit down and play with him, he's very sharp.

I've listened to the records [on Incus] of that Company Week, in 1977, and I have to say that my reflection of it, for myself, there were a few nice experiences — I played with Leo Smith a few times and I like that experience very much — but I found it to be very aggressive music. When I listen back to a lot of the music that I was involved in, I was still playing very very aggressively and with an almost free-jazz intensity, and was not so open to other attitudes of playing. But I think that all those experiences are very important in developing. We played very much, and I was very much into playing at the time, so we did some very nice things with Anthony Braxton and Han, Lol Coxhill was there, and I still have quite a strong relationship with Steve Beresford, whom I met there. Steve upset some people there, but I think he did it conceptually. I upset some people too, but I didn't do it intentionally, I just did it out of myself and I think Steve did it out of an idea that he had to do it, almost out of self-defence. It got him into a lot of trouble, because there were a lot of people who couldn't take it — especially the Americans because they didn't know where Steve was coming from, whereas I think the rest understood. I think that Steve understands that now. His approach was very theatrical, but at the same time it didn't work with some of the situations — whereas Han Bennink is also very theatrical, but he can be convincing in almost any situation. At any rate, Steve and I were the youngest so we had a certain thing we had to come over at the time, whereas the other players had come over that already.

I think music essentially comes down to something very social and something to do with language, personality, where one lives. So improvised music is different all over Europe. I find that the musical differences throughout Europe make a statement on how Europe is; it's very nationalistic. I see Europe as a country, and not a very big one. But the players in each country definitely don't. But that fact is very historical, and the different styles definitely come out of those boundaries. It's very natural, and explains why the music is so very different in different places.

As an American, naturally I'm thinking of bringing my work back to America, but that's very difficult in this period — perhaps in time.

The Globe Unity Orchestra experience also happened around the time of Company. I remember going with Han to Berlin once — not playing together but we travelled there together, I think I was playing solo. We were in a restaurant and Globe Unity had a gig the next

day. Peter Kowald said "why doesn't Tristan join us tomorrow" and that's how it started. I jammed with them on the gig and they liked it so I started playing with them. In a way it was a much freer atmosphere. I enjoyed it very much, there were some interesting people, the attitude towards the music in a collective sense was interesting, they had developed something very nice. But there came a time at the end when I felt there was no development in terms of what I wanted for the orchestra, and in terms of where the music was going generally.

Out of Globe Unity came the duo with Gunter Christmann, which was recorded on Moers Music. I think Gunter found that he could do something with me on a more kind of image, gestural, colour dimension that I don't think he got so much with the musicians he was playing with at the time. He had had experiences with people like Tina Bausch, the dancer, he was attracted to that with me, so we did some work together.

That element of performance I developed long ago in my own work. When I was in Montreal I lived with a dancer. With Peter van Ginkel we did some multi-media performances seven or eight years ago, at Vehicule. There was some interesting work with Misha Mengelberg and a friend of his, Wim Schippers, who directs the most interesting television show on the Dutch network, which deals with some very absurd kinds of ideas. They come out of the Fluxus movement in Europe in the late fifties, early sixties. They extended their relationship with Fluxus into music performances at a famous theater in Amsterdam, and they invited different people. I was invited, and enjoyed very much their approach to combining many different aspects of performance. Also I work with the woman I live with, Katie Duck, and Sean Bergin. We did some very interesting work in Austria – I suppose it wasn't very interesting but the whole experience was interesting –we were drunk most of the time and maybe in a way that's what was needed to give us the openness to perform these things. Through these experiences I've developed a great interest in different artistic movements, although I don't really compare what I do with anything else. I don't want to make a statement about something, I want to make something. I want to make my experience clear, and build from that. I think it's quite cultural, and not anti-cultural. It's very political, actually, but not in the sense that it has to be because people aren't eating, or there are only three whales left, I don't have to do it out of my guilt. I've been to the East, and I was very influenced by it – but I would like to be touched by it, by working with people from the East, or working with people from Africa, or working with people from America. I don't want to have a group and say, "We're all Europeans, and we're going to make a statement about the Indians in South America."

There are relationships between Dada and my work, in that Dada had something to do with getting away from classical forms in writing, in painting. Duchamp and Picabia were coming out of a cubist thing in a way. They didn't take it seriously, and they wanted to do something else with it, so Duchamp started to make a bicycle a fucking bicycle as a statement on cubism, and in a way I think that eventually influenced performance art today. Picabia, Bunuel, all those people influenced the work of performance, which means to get out of your head.

Sometimes when I perform, I like to just play music too, but I don't feel I'm finished with what I've involved myself in. I haven't really come through this performance/theatrical business. I have to carry on. But I think it definitely comes in a musical way, rather than a theatrical way, and I think that approach can eventually provide an answer to theatre. In fact there is a statement, because I feel that what I do is much more musical than it is theatrical, even when I do theatre. Because that's how I can operate naturally. I've never felt that I was a jazz musician. I was an improvisor. I've never wanted to play music just for music's sake. I feel that if I make a kind of story, and use theatre, the music is part of that. The way I play is determined by what I feel is needed by what I'm trying to say. I think what I do sometimes is not even my own personal thing. I sort of lose my personality, so there's very personal music, and very impersonal music, whatever is needed at the time. In theatre and in music, sometimes you have to put yourself inside what is needed at the time. You project yourself to a point that you are no longer there. In that sense, it's very very personal, because you really go into yourself, and you establish a presence and then you can work from there. Your personality can take over this presence in such a way so that it's not like "it's me that's doing it".

But once you do that, you have to take it somewhere, give it a line – not necessarily a story line, because it's the ***intention*** of the thing that makes it strong or weak, not the story itself. The story is a vehicle for your intention, and it's not the points of the story that you connect with, it's the intention that makes you say, "Well, I don't understand what he's doing, but it doesn't matter." Rather, it's my own knowledge that there's a beginning and an end that enables me to go with it, to take it out. But without the story, it would just go "out".

I feel that in my development, I'm no longer interested in just my personal language. I want to establish things that are outside of my person, so that I can use my personal language to hook up with something that's bigger than just my personal expression.

I think that improvised music is very performance-oriented anyway – that records are only documents, whereas in "jazz" records are more than merely documents. I think that jazz has become very classical and very defined. Not "free jazz" but "jazz" is a very defined art. It's sort of out of life, which is something that I like very much. It has to do with life but the form itself has gone beyond that. I appreciate it very much when I listen to a jazz record, and I can listen to it again and again, because it is really a "form", and improvised music as such has a different aspect to it.

I feel that I've come to what I want to do. Because it's actually my experience that gives me the content, but it's my ability to go very deep into myself that can make that content exactly what my experience has been, or can stop it. If I can go deep enough into where I come from – and I don't mean "from my people" or something, but where we all come from – the easier and clearer my experience can be told. I think it can be very generally stated that it's more release than tension that we're all looking for, in the end.

TRISTAN HONSINGER: Selected discography

"Live Performances"	FMP-SAJ 10
(One side Honsinger solo; one side Maarten Altena solo; recorded 1976)	
"Duo" with Derek Bailey	Incus 20
"First Company Recording"	" 21
(With Evan Parker, Bailey & Altena)	
"Earmeals" with Gunter Christmann	
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TRISTAN HONSINGER & GUNTER CHRISTMANN (photograph by Bill Smith)

Al Haig

Jazz has been a major part of my life since my teen years. Big bands at Philadelphia's Earl Theater gave me my first live taste of good music. From this I quickly went on to listen to both historical sounds and new artists of the time who were creating changes in jazz. By the time I was seventeen I was promoting concerts, going to jazz clubs much more often than most adults and collecting 78rpm records as fast as money would allow. Two Dial recordings by Al Haig were favorites as were many of his other sides, many of which featured him as a sideman. Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie were major voices in the new music of my youth and I have good memories of hearing these artists at Philadelphia's Down Beat Club.

Years went by and I continued to go to all of the good sets that I could. When Charlie Parker played the Show Boat Club with Al Haig, Tommy Potter and Roy Haynes, I was there! I stayed till the very end and then made my way to the nearby Broad Street subway, changing at City Hall for the Market Street Line West where I waited for a train to 69th Street and then a bus to my parents' home in Lansdowne. It was very late and there was a long, long wait for the train. I had not waited long when I noticed Bird's young pianist Al Haig waiting for the same train. Al recognised me from the club and we waited together, starting a friendship that was to last for many years.

Al Haig was cooking in those days and I could never quite be sure at the time if I preferred Al's playing or that of Bud Powell. Al, Tommy and Roy were busy playing for both Charlie Parker and Stan Getz. I can remember a visit to Cafe Society (Down Town) in New York City, when they played with Charlie Parker and Kenny Dorham, alternating with Art Tatum and a not too exciting comedian M.C. It was early in the week and there were but three of us in the audience for the first set. I believe there was some recording being done but, I had nothing to do with this and have no idea if this was the night when the recordings were made that I have seen recently at a local record shop. Al stayed at my folks' suburban home once or twice when he played in town, once when he did a couple of nights with Stan Getz, Nelson Boyd and Don Lamond. Stan's single of ***Small Hotel*** and ***I've Got You Under My Skin*** had just come out and Al contributed much to those sides. We sat outside of the 421 Club before the first set started. Stan had already gone inside and as we sat talking I spotted a local horn player whom I did not yet recognise as a major talent. I found out a little later that night. It was Ziggy Vines. One of us gave Ziggy a cigarette and we chatted for a bit, then Ziggy asked Al if he might sit in. Al stated that he had no objections but, that it was not his gig and that Ziggy should ask inside. A short time later as we entered a number of people asked me who the guy was that asked them if he could sit in. Well, Ziggy must have asked Stan eventually because he was up there blowing his tenor with them at the end of the set. During intermission Al stated "Whew, I know Stanley was surprised by that. Ziggy almost blew him off the stand." Good as Stan was playing in those days, nobody was going to make him look bad, but, Ziggy was very close.

Al was always a gentleman at all times over the years that I knew him, though there was some indication that he was under pressure. He had some problems in Canada while I was off in France fighting the Korean war (that's where they sent me). My dad and I were both Fred as I was a Jr. and I got a letter saying that he got a call at his office that was intended for me and that he had sent the cash needed for car fare home or whatever it was. What the hell kind of friends did I have? Well, from what I have heard from closed mouth Al and from others over the years I gather that some of the drug problems that he had may have been pushed on him for political reasons because he

AL HAIG (photograph by Gerard Futrick)

was such a great pianist and others wanted to be able to manipulate him. I do not know the details, though, many of them may be public knowledge to some. I know that I once walked Al all over the town of Lansdowne one morning when he was very disturbed, yet, this may have been nothing more than stress from life on the road. I have heard all kinds of stories about Al from unreliable sources and people that I would not consider to have much credibility. People who knew him well and musicians who played with him generally have held him in high regard. It takes a lot out of a young person's life to become a great musician. Being a great musician playing in the public eye (or ear) with other great musicians is a situation that leaves a young artist as a target for all kinds of manipulations that sheltered years of study and practice may not have equipped him to handle. It is a drag to see musicians caught in webs in their youth or to see great artists like Bird, Pres, Ben, Bud, and so many others cast aside by our wealthy society and left to die in a bad way.

Al Haig was a major voice as a jazz pianist through the forties, fifties, sixties, seventies and up till his recent death here in the eighties. He held his own, no matter what life did to him. He never got the acclaim that he certainly deserved, yet he never let this knock him down as some others did. I have heard most of the great jazz pianists over the years, from James P. Johnson to Jess Stacy right on up to Barry Harris, Cedar Walton, John Bunch and on and on, you name them I have probably have heard them. I could never name anyone as the absolute best (well, maybe Bird?) but Al Haig was a leading favorite of mine from the forties right on into the eighties.

A friend of mine, Earl Famous, a young drummer, got to know Al after I did and he invited Al to his folks' place in Upper Darby. Earl's dad played piano in Chester, Pa. on the weekends and they had an early Pentron tape recorder. Their old upright was out and the recorder was noisy and needed new belts but, Al played a nice solo of Jerome Kern's ***I'm Old Fashioned*** for them on one visit.

When I got out of the service, Al was out of the union and just kicking around. It was a shame to see this. He had studied at Oberlin, he had played the right notes for such greats as Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Stan Getz, Wardell Gray, Miles Davis, Fats Navarro and many, many others, helping them to play the solos and to make the recordings that shot them to fame, and here he was staying around my place in Philly without a union card. I had a nice sized loft right in the very center of Philadelphia back in the fifties and sixties. I had an old, old concert sized Steinway square grand piano. The low bass strings could not be brought up to modern pitch, otherwise it was a great piano for its age. A large group of youngsters and some great musicians of all schools frequently dropped by and there were regular sessions on Saturday nights. Philly had blue laws then and the clubs closed at midnight on Saturdays. Billy Root, Bobby Timmons, Ted Curson, Albert "Tootie" Heath, Henry Grimes, Spanky De Brest, Sam Dockery, Lee Morgan, Jimmy Garrison, Cool Nick Martinis, John Bonnie, Curtis Porter (Shafi Hadi), Howard Reynolds, Tommy Simms, Richie Powell, George Morrow, and many others were quite regular, and Al would occasionally stay at my studio for a few weeks at a time during this period, though he seldom played at the sessions. He and Al Steele played a few times together once and John Bonnie came up with a local group for a session with him once.

During one stay Hank Jones called Al to replace him with a group at the old Red Hill Inn over in New Jersey and I got Al a couple of gigs in neighbourhood rooms and after hours clubs. I convinced him to go after his union card and the folks at Local 77 tried hard to help him. I found that he had tried in Florida, Ohio, New York and who knows where else. Word came back from the national office that they were tired of starting the wheels in motion only to have him move to another area before they could clear him for a card. The folks at 77 stayed with it and pushed for him but, off he went to another town.

I had met John Hammond of Columbia Records once or twice and though I did not know him well enough to ask for favors, I risked it. I wrote him a note explaining Al's situation and requested that out of respect for Al's talent, if he could pull any strings, would he do so? At this point I must admit that all rich heads of companies are not all bad. It took quite a while for me to find out but, Al who did not know that I had done this, was aided by this fine man just as others had been before him. Al was drug with me and embarrassed by the situation. All jazz fans and piano lovers are indebted to Mr. Hammond for whatever he did. Al was playing around New York once again. He played with Chet Baker at Philly's Blue Note Club on Ridge Avenue and Philadelphia pianist Jimmy Golden was with another group alternating with them (that was some good piano playing from both artists that week). Al was not playing with Bird and the greats though. I can remember Al playing at New York's Hotel Edison in the Rum Room with three businessmen requesting very square tunes. I had just bought a nine foot Steinway Concert Grand piano for the new recording studio I was building across the hall from my apartment loft and I had just recorded my Al Cohn/Zoot Sims "Either Way" LP. Al came down after a few months and we cut some solo piano LPs with the idea of music for FM listening rather than jazz. He did some nice ballads; they were advertised in ***Coda***, but the LP jacket manufacturer went bankrupt with all of the art work lost forever and the recording never came out. We spent some time at the Show Boat Club during this time as Gerry Mulligan was there. Al was quick to help another artist and rather than push his own cause he would be urging me to record a young lady that played piano and sang, from New York or if I saw him in New York he would take me to hear Barry Harris at the Five Spot, calling Roy Haynes on the phone to make it choice. I wish that I could have done some of the things that I was urged to do at this time, although I am happy to have been lucky enough to accomplish what I did.

It was fun knowing Al Haig, he had a great sense of humor and he could take a joke too. Al had everyone playing chess at my place for quite a while. There was one fellow that just couldn't learn for the longest time. One day this fellow came by early in the morning and played a game with Al as he was having breakfast. Poor Al was not awake yet or maybe the guy was just putting him on but, he beat the pants off of Al that morning and for the longest time our friends were heard to quote Al's "What am I doing playing chess so early in the morning?" and we would all laugh heartily.

Eddie Evans played piano around the corner in the next block from my studio at Billy Krechmer's Club. Billy was a clarinet player who had owned this room for twenty seven years and many greats had either worked or sat in there including Tal Farlow, Ray Bryant, Lou Stein, Jimmy Lyons, Charlie Ventura, Bill Harris, Slam Stewart, Nick Travis, Steve Davis, Fats Wright, Johnny Smith to name a very few. Eddie was often mentioned as Philadelphia's Al Haig which I think was flattering to both men. Al frequently stayed with Eddie and his wife Barbara and their large family often sitting with the kids if Eddie and Barbara were both working. The Evans son Mark took up sax as he got older and he kept in touch with Al if his folks neglected to.

From time to time I would bring Al to the Painted Bride Art Center, and very recently to the Gallery Salon and then to Dobbs on South Street. Dobbs rented a seven foot Steinway for him and then we brought him back for a night with George Coleman. The last gig with George was with Arthur Harper on bass and Duck Scott on drums. There was some anxiety before the date as everyone did not know everyone else but, in all of my years hooking things up on the jazz scene, I never had so much response as I did on this one. A month after it was over I had eight or ten people stop me on the street in just one day, raving about it and asking when I would do it again.

Al had a following here in Philadelphia and he had a following in New York. Promoters Dave Gold and Kenny Shaw both made sure to get his number from me for gigs at Grendel's Lair and the Newsstand. Jamil Nasser and Jimmy Wormsworth would always remind me to call on them if I could hook it up with Al in Philly.

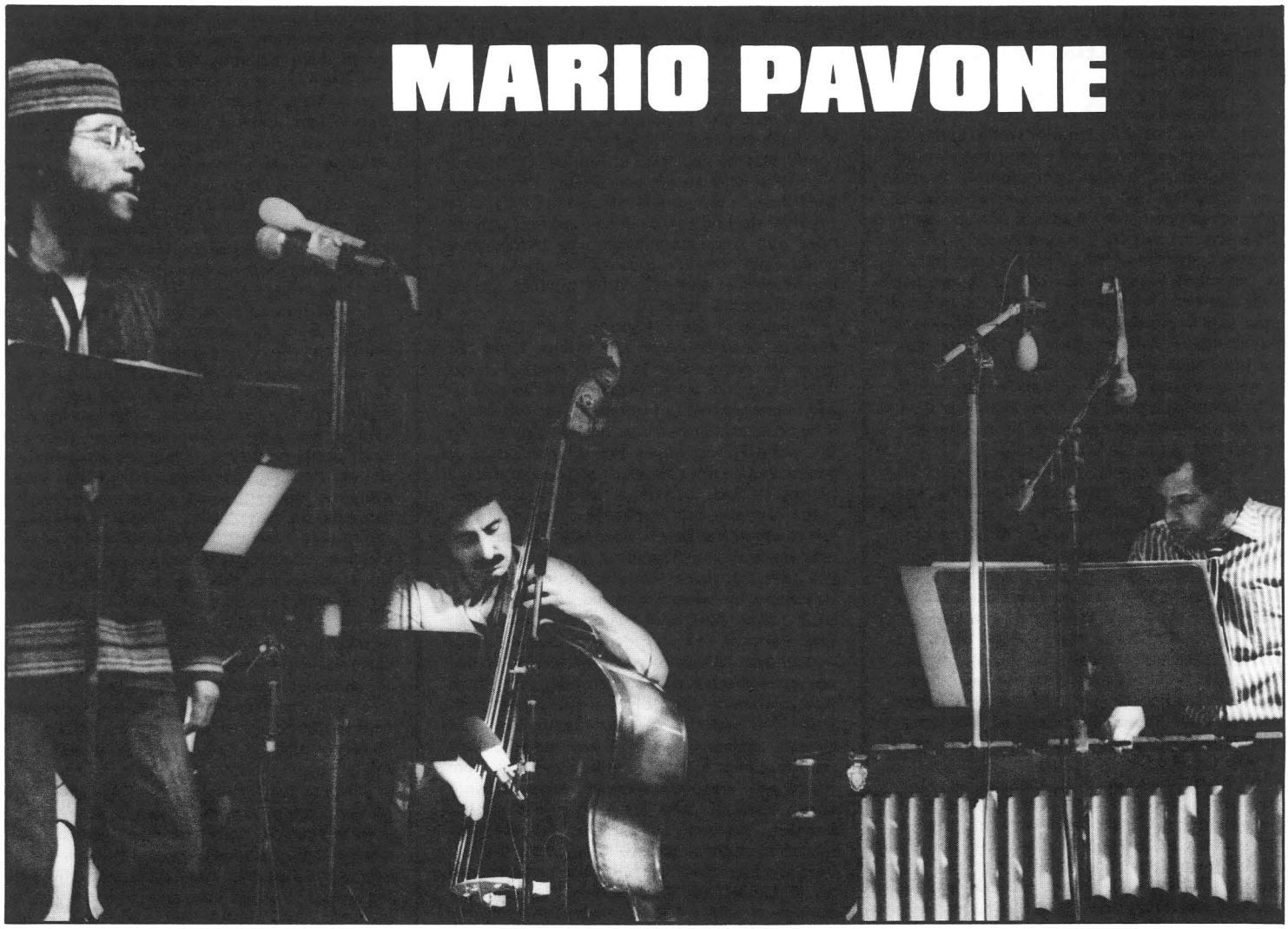
I regret that I never got Al's recordings out on the market and there was a time when I tried to hire him for a very major festival that I was packaging where he wanted things a certain way and I felt that there were restrictions on me where I could not give him all that he wanted. I had already been screaming like hell to get my way on other points to make the show right. I wish now that I had screamed a little more and got Al what he wanted for that one.

It was a shock the way I heard of Al's passing. I was at the 2nd Office for the Wednesday night session with Shirley Scott and Evelyn Simms when Aqueelah, a young lady DJ from Philly's jazz station WRTI-FM, came up to me asking about it, thinking that I might know more than she and the staff at the station did.

Al was not ignored by the media. Channel 3 TV had his trio on the City Lights show some time ago. WUHY-FM did a bit on him and WXPN-FM had a memorial program I am told. I am very glad to have known him and to have enjoyed his playing all of these years. I'm glad to have heard him with fine people like Bird and Stan and Roy and Jamil and Jimmy Raney, and so many others. Al played a lot of fine rooms and he had fans all over the world. Still he wasn't appreciated like he should have been and I get the same kind of feeling that I got when I heard that Ben Webster had died. With all of the grant money and all of the university budgets and corporations looking for ways to look good to the public, one would think that the genius artists like this who have been major resources of our nation could be treated well and given more stature.

A TRIBUTE BY FRED MILES

MARIO PAVONE



MARIO PAVONE: I think music is something that was always passing through me. I came from a home environment of second-generation Italians in which the arts were not supported. Nobody was a musician in my family. I had three clarinet lessons when I was seven years old, but I wasn't encouraged. The vital thing for me, really, was going to a high school where blacks were in the majority and whites were in the minority. It was there that I felt something musical was in me. I had this affiliation with the blacks totally, and I became aware of the whole black-white paradox where R&B artists like the Penguins were making records but were not making any money. It was an unbelievable contribution in terms of what was going on in music at the time, but two years later the Crewcuts would make the same record and of course make a million dollars.

In 1957, when I first went to college, I really started hearing jazz. I knew this fellow in the dormitory who had an incredible record collection. Hampton Hawes, Ahmad Jamal – just a whole load of jazz. And of course, Trane. I was enthralled. The listening experience really took me over, to the point where I would spend most of the day listening, not even going to classes. It was just a matter of years before the listening experience transformed itself into, "Well, maybe I'd better just start playing."

I always liked the tones, the register in which the bass operates. The bass function I could relate to. I felt that all this expression was welled up in me. I was doing a little painting at the time, but it wasn't a complete thing. What happened was that in 1964 a guitarist friend, Sangeeta Michael Berardi, and I went to Chicago to see Joe Diorio, a legendary figure who had come from our home town, Waterbury, Connecticut. The experience of those three or four weeks out there for me was awesome. I remember being at the 7:00 A.M. sessions that used to go down at Figaro's on Saturday mornings. There were a lot of great players there: Eddie Harris, Gerald Donovan, Gene Shaw, Scotty Holt, and of course Joe. Diorio said to me, "It seems like you've got a lot of energy and a wonderful love of music. Why don't you consider playing?" That was all he said. And the week after I got back from that trip, I went out and rented a bass.

I had a relatively small amount of formal training with Bertram Turetzky, an avant-garde contemporary classical bassist. I only had about six or seven lessons, but he was an influence on me. He helped me keep the feeling that in playing the expression, the emotions involved in playing, were the primary things. After playing maybe a year, Tommy Bellucci, a local pianist who doesn't play anymore, hired me for a series of gigs down in New Haven. That was basically my early instruction. But at that time Trane and people like that were defining what was going to become my view of the music.

Scott LaFaro influenced my early playing. Later, Gary Peacock. Scotty to me was the first. A lot of people put him down for his sound and for his busy high register work, which of course set the tone that was going to prevail for the next two decades in bass playing. But he played wonderful lows, there was never any problem with Scott's lows. To me, the best thing about his playing was that it almost always contained an ascending aspect in his lines, in his solos – just going out there, you know, searching for that spiritual thing. Gary's was full of this too, only with more meat on the bones. Percussive and very strong. His work with Albert Ayler totally redefined the whole thing. Even when he was with Bill Evans it seemed like he would break the bass in two almost and overstep what it could do.

There were other influences though who were really important that are underrated or not even playing now. One was Henry Grimes, a tremendously strong bassist. I don't think he's playing anymore, but he was an unsung hero of the music.

At that time I hadn't heard people like Malachi Favors. There are certain bassists I feel affiliated with, like Favors, Fred Hopkins, Kent Carter, and even the younger players, like John Lindberg. All those players have a percussive approach and come out of the school of strength and where to put notes.

LEO SMITH · MARIO PAVONE · BOBBY NAUGHTON (photograph by Peter Danson)

I really feel like I started in the New Music. My feeling was that it was the music of the future, the music of today. I really didn't have much desire to focus in on what is called straight-ahead. Within a year and a half after I started playing I was in New York, in two and a half I was living there and playing with Paul Bley. So I really feel that I started there. The over-riding influences on my playing in general were the October Revolution, its manifestation from 1965 to 1969, and the players involved with it, like Bley, like Ayler, like Sunny Murray, like Roswell Rudd.

VERNON FRAZER: In the mid and late sixties you shuttled between New York and Connecticut quite a bit. Did the economics of the music business dictate your moves?

M.P.: I would say, first, it was family reasons. My wife and child lived in Connecticut, so I would try to spend time with them. And the intensity of the City, which had a lot to do with what the whole New York musical sphere was about at that time — the intensity would get to me. I might spend a week and a half there, shuffle back to Connecticut for four or five days rest, and boom! hit it again, like a soldier or something. So, it was not so much economic as just the family situation and the intensity of the City.

The music scene in New York at that time was, in a word, intense. At that time, what I call one of the early loft periods, Studio WE was the focus. I would get up and by noon or one o'clock every day be over there playing music until midnight or one o'clock in the morning. Nine or ten hours of extremely intense music, music that was reflecting the times, the incredible friction going down with Vietnam, the generation splits, music that was dominated by two drummers like Sunny Murray and Lawrence Cook and four or five horn players. It was pre-pickup days, so I was just trying to be heard.

I had no pickups until much later, in the late sixties. It was before the Barcus-Berry and the other, more sophisticated pickups. I think that had a lot to do with developing my own style, specifically the idea that I had to play hard. But it also seemed like a valuable lesson on where to put the notes because there was very little space in the dense textures created by the drummers and the horn players. It had a very physical and musical effect on my style. To penetrate the textures, you had to choose the right notes and hit them hard, and in a specific space. Ornette used to talk about Charlie Haden and the range of the bass. Where you put the note has a lot to do with it, low or high, depending on where the textures are. It's like a knife slicing through it.

V.F.: What was the music scene like in Connecticut then?

M.P.: There wasn't too much happening. Hartford is enjoying an active music scene right now, but at the time New Haven was about the only place for jazz. I would work at a club called MacTriff's with Tommy Bellucci and sometimes Count Steadwell and Frankie Williams. There were some black clubs too, like the Monterey. I played with wonderful players and learned valuable lessons. But New York was the focus. I was going to New York to play, coming out of New York to tour. In 1968 I toured with Paul Bley and Barry Altschul and made a record with them in Montreal. The main involvement at the time, though, was a cooperative trio with Mark Whitecage and Lawrence Cook. We had that thing going for five years. Often we were augmented by two tremendous players: Trevor Koehler, a baritone player who used to play with Gil Evans but has passed away; and Perry Robinson, one of the greatest clarinetists in the world. New York was drawing me all the time, for sure. A lot of times Bobby Naughton, who lives here in Connecticut, and I would travel down there together, do a day or two of concerts and rehearsals, and come back.

V.F.: In the early seventies you took a hiatus from the music scene. What happened?

M.P.: I had some personal problems at the time, but the problems themselves came from where I think the American scene was at that time. I think late 1969 to 1970 was like an explosion in this country. Realizations about what younger people had said about the Vietnam war were becoming clear to the older people in power. My wife and I couldn't find peace anywhere, certainly not in New York City, not even in Waterbury and the surrounding area. So we ended up moving to Vermont for that peace. There was a three or four year period where music was a lesser involvement. I played the lodges for a couple of years, then didn't play at all. I finally worked in the electronics industry. But in a couple of years my lifelong concerns as an individual, the things that are really part of me that I kind of put aside for a while, just built up until early in 1975 it became clear that I was going to move back to Connecticut and resume my fulltime pursuit of music.

V.F.: What got you back into it?

M.P.: I think it was just a general feeling of some optimism in playing music. From my understanding, 1970 to 1974 was the most fallow period we've had in music in four decades. There were less recordings than ever going down in all fields of jazz and creative music. For a while there, it didn't seem like much music was being heard and nobody seemed to be in the forefront trying to advance really creative music.

V.F.: Did the revitalization of the music scene in Connecticut have anything to do with it?

M.P.: No, not so much. In Vermont, I really wasn't aware of just what was going down in Connecticut, just that Connecticut is an hour and a half away from New York. It turns out there was a very robust four or five years down here where things were developing, but there were two kinds of separate things happening. One was the Yale thing. That was terrifically influential. Eight or nine players — George Lewis, Ray Anderson, Mark Helias, Anthony Davis and Jay Hoggard, for example — brought the New Music consciousness into the area. Meanwhile, Leo Smith and people like that had moved to Connecticut, not necessarily from New York. A lot of players were leaving the City at that time and over the next four or five years would settle in New York state, Connecticut and Massachusetts, kind of a big circle around New York City. I think that definitely has contributed to what's going down in those areas now. But it should be clear that it's inevitable that this would happen, that people would tire of the City, that an attempt would have to be made to bring this music directly to urban communities of a more medium size.

V.F.: Was there much interaction between New York and Connecticut musicians before the CMIF (Creative Musicians Improvisers Forum) was formed?

M.P.: I think there was a little going down. Leo was still playing in New York. I was going down there occasionally for concerts. Certainly the people from Yale were splitting their time and eventually all of them moved there. I think CMIF certainly made an attitude favorable to the interaction, mainly because Leo is a member of the New York chapter of the AACM and President of the CMIF.

V.F.: Do you think we would have developed the kind of interaction we have now if musicians like Leo Smith hadn't moved here?

M.P.: I think it would have happened, no matter what. But Leo helped it a great deal. He's a natural leader, organizer, guiding spirit, and a heavy influence on the music. Leo just said, "I'm here. Now, who do I play with?" and set right out getting an organization started. And the CMIF is a unique organization. Only the AACM and the BAG in St. Louis resemble us in terms of the performers and administrators being the same people. We haven't seen organizations like these in New York state or Boston or Baltimore.

V.F.: Do you see the recent CMIF-AACM concert at the Hartford Jazz Society as a highlight of the interaction that has developed?

M.P.: It's certainly the bright side of it. The highly traditional and, I think, oldest jazz society in this country sponsoring an event of this nature is an encouraging sign. And just two weeks ago when I was hearing David Murray's wonderful group at Sweet Basil's I was struck by the fact that four or five years ago you would not have heard this group in a club. It was wonderful. I think there's been a small change in the consciousness of the audiences. A small one, nothing overwhelming. I think that every creative musician, any innovator, believes that it's happening, that it'll happen slowly, in micro-steps, that it'll take decades and decades, but that it will happen. Certainly, that's my stance.

V.F.: Has the formation of musicians' cooperatives like the AACM and CMIF increased the opportunities for musicians to perform and to educate their audiences?

M.P.: I think the idea of organising is the whole point. It may be strength in numbers or just the idea of musicians having to organise and plan out these things, but it seems that we do have more of an effect because we've used our administrative and creative talents to achieve this common goal.

V.F.: The creation of the CMIF seems to have given your own career a substantial boost.

M.P.: Yes, I think it's been involved with it. Certainly the organization, of which I'm a founding member and Secretary, has been my major involvement since 1976 or 1977. The idea of getting up every day and having the business of music on your mind is helpful, it helps get things done.

V.F.: Do you feel any conflict between being an administrator and being an artist?

M.P.: I guess there are conflicts. Certainly being a musician takes all of your time; it's pretty damn hard to be really good at it and be doing anything else. I would rather not do the business part, but right now there's no one else to do it. The conflict makes us unique, as both a performing and producing organization.

V.F.: Where did you perform before the CMIF got started?

M.P.: If you weren't going to live in New York City, there were very few places to perform. Real Art Ways in Hartford was the prominent space. Other than that, it was produce your own concert. You'd get a couple of hundred

dollars, rent a place and pay the musicians. That's what Leo Smith, Bobby Naughton and I were doing.

Leo was the primary force in organizing the CMIF. As I said, he and Bobby and I were putting on these little, self-produced concerts. It just came into being very naturally. Leo and Bobby met each other and started playing together. Bobby relayed to me that Leo was thinking of getting musicians together to form an organization. We started meeting at Leo's house and it just came into being naturally. It's that simple.

The first couple of years, I had to learn a lot of things about grants and concerts and the direction the organization was going to take. Bobby and Leo were wonderful teachers. I feel it's just been the last year and a half that I've become a much more effective member and officer of the CMIF. We've received three or four National Endowment grants and as many from the Connecticut Commission on the Arts. One winter we spent several weeks in the area's high schools, teaching Creative Music and the history of jazz. We've travelled throughout Connecticut, giving concerts, and we've given several series of concerts at one or another central location, like Bethel Chapel or the Educational Center for the Arts in New Haven. At this point we're building a library of books and records for use by the members. Some of the books were written by the members, most notably Leo. I think there are four independent record companies — including my own — within CMIF — that provide between twenty-two and twenty-five records for the catalogue.

To some extent the ideas Leo brought into the organization came from the AACM, which has exerted a tremendous influence on the music. But a diverse one. I became aware of them before I met Leo. When I heard various AACM artists on their early Delmark recordings, I felt a definite surge of optimism. I was incredibly impressed. I think the Chicago people were less competitive with each other than was the scene in New York. In New York, people were more like loners, the way the City can be. It seemed like the New York people — after the October Revolution developments — were trying to make people aware of things by sheer anger and by sheer screaming. Of course, they did reflect a lot of what was going down in the country at that time. But the Chicago people, they used a lot of colors. They got to their roots almost by a process of meditation; their music had a much more positive aspect to it. I remember thinking when I heard some of their earlier work that besides the European classical influences, and before Coleman and Coltrane and Ayler, Mingus said the closest things to the musicians of the next generation about where to stretch the music, where to extend it. Certainly his colors were always fantastic and titillating to me. Of course, the music has evolved tremendously. There's no denying that the musicians from Chicago, the masters like Muhal and Braxton and players like Steve McCall and Leo and the Art Ensemble of Chicago, are the reigning influences in today's music.

V.F.: Has the increased role of composition in Creative Music spurred your output as a composer?

M.P.: Yes. In a music situation where I was the force, there was an increasing need for me to control the sounds a bit more and it gradually evolved to where there's a kind of balance between improvisation and composition. A big influence on my composing has been Leo, in the sense that his spirit and his own writing lends itself to the message, "You can do it. You too can write a symphony." It's a wonderfully infectious thing to see Leo conducting a piece. And it's extremely instructive.

V.F.: How do you approach structuring your compositions or scores?

M.P.: I'm not a very schooled player. I go out and learn what I need to know to get the idea across. My techniques of composition are not very sophisticated. The concept for each album I make as a leader or each concert I give as a leader is different. It's more an idea of instrumental juxtapositions. I try to use the instrumentation in a different way from what's gone down before, like on ***Shodo***, where I use a trio as the soloist and a horn choir in the background. I wanted the album to come off as a suite rather than a series of individual cuts. I definitely was ***consumed*** by the sound of marimba against the horns and wanted to have the overall sound of the record be clearly different from most of the records I've listened to. The "Digit" album I thought of more as driving quartet performances using structures other than bars or changes, but I wanted it to have momentum. Most of the cuts are trio cuts, either vibes or alto with bass and drums, but I wanted them to have that forward drive.

V.F.: Did the increase in independent recording give you an incentive to record your music on your own label?

M.P.: It wasn't until 1979 or 1980 that I realized how many people were doing it. I got the idea in early 1978 and had "Digit" pressed in early 1979. Bobby Naughton has been a major influence in independent recording; his importance in documenting the music since 1969 is clear. Not that I wanted to throw another label into what was becoming an increasing amount of independent labels, but it was clear to me that I had to document my own music. Your own record company is like a worldwide resume of yourself. I knew that I wasn't going to be able to travel around the world and play, that a record could do it easier. That's what motivated me to start it. I scraped the money together and did it. You can do a very inexpensive record today for maybe two thousand dollars. I suppose on the one hand that isn't a great deal of money, but on the other hand I haven't made anywhere near my break-even costs. I'm sure that's the way it is with most independent labels. I did most of the Alacras at RBY Studio in Southbury, at one-fifth the cost of a New York studio, and the sound has been just fine.

Distribution is probably the biggest problem in this industry, but I don't know what can be done about it.

V.F.: Has producing your own records enhanced your career?

M.P.: I would say so. When I went to Italy with Bill Dixon recently, I was surprised that many people had known about my work a couple of years before I got there.

V.F.: I remember hearing Bill Dixon's "Intents and Purposes" album at your house not long after it was released. Did you ever think you'd be playing with him?

M.P.: As it turns out, I played with him a short while after that came out. I played with him in the Orchestra of the Streets, which was subsequently taken over by Kenny Dorham. We had rehearsals twice a week for several months. We didn't play again until 1980, when he called me up to do a concert in Worcester, Massachusetts. That rekindled something from thirteen years ago, so we got together and enjoyed playing together and he invited me to play Switzerland and the Italy tour. We recorded "November 1981" on Soulnote, half of which was live in Zurich, the other half of which was done in a studio in Milan for Giovanni Bonandrini, who's one of the main people recording this music right now.

V.F.: Do you think that a musician still has to go to New York to gain artistic recognition?

M.P.: I don't think he necessarily has to, although it is important. Not so much for gigs, but for meeting musicians. I still get there whenever I can, both to listen and to play. I don't think it's as necessary as it once was, but that depends on how you think of your career as evolving; if you have a music of your own instead of being part of someone else's concept, you can just as well give it the long hours of deep thought in Connecticut as in New York.

V.F.: Although you've become recognized as a practitioner of Creative Music, you still play bop or straight-ahead jazz. Do you play it for[artistic or economic reasons?

M.P.: Well, I do get club work and that does keep me going economically, so that's a big thing. I enjoy playing it, even though I have an awful lot to learn about it. Certainly you can be creative in it, but the structures of it are so deeply set that the challenge of it is learning how to fit in. But Creative Music, where I'm creating my own form, my own structure, is more challenging. That's the consuming focus with me, but it's all music. I don't separate the experiences.

V.F.: Did you think, at any point in your life, that you might never gain recognition for your work?

M.P.: Yes. But I didn't get discouraged because I knew I'd always be going straight along the line. I believe in what I'm doing. I believe in this music and the great players that are involved in it.

I want to develop my playing and composing skills, continue my work with the CMIF and, if economics improve considerably, issue another release on Alacra records. I've been doing some things in a trio format with Craig Harris on trombone and John Betsch on drums and I'd like to tour with them. I would like to record for another record label besides my own. Paul Bley, Leo Smith and Bill Dixon have been important influences in my life. But I can hear my own voice emerging now.

For performances and recordings, Mario Pavone can be contacted at 19 Chandler Drive, Prospect, CT 06712.

MARIO PAVONE — A selected discography

As leader:	
'Shodo' (1981)	Alacra 1004
'Digit' (1979)	" 1002
With Bill Dixon:	
'November 1981'	SoulNote 1037/38
With Creative Improvisors Orchestra:	
'The Sky Cries The Blues' (1981)	CMIF 1
With Bobby Naughton:	
'Understanding'(1971)	Japo 60006/OTIC 1002
'Nature's Consort' (1969)	OTIC 1001
With Paul Bley:	
'Canada' (1968)	CBC 305

Interview By VERNON FRAZER

JAZZ LITERATURE

BLACK BEAUTY, WHITE HEAT

A Pictorial History of Classic Jazz 1920-1950
by Frank Driggs and Harris Lewine.
William Morrow, New York.

In several decades devoted to jazz collecting, record producing and writing (including Coda), Frank Driggs has amassed what is possibly the largest collection of jazz memorabilia in the world. Now, with the help of a veteran jazz enthusiast and art-director, Harris Lewine, he has put together the ultimate jazz memorabilia book: a soul-stirring and eye-boggling collection of over 1500 vintage photographs, magazine, book and early album covers, pieces of sheet music, intriguing ads and promotion material, revered record labels — the stuff of jazz maniacs' dreams and waking fan fantasies.

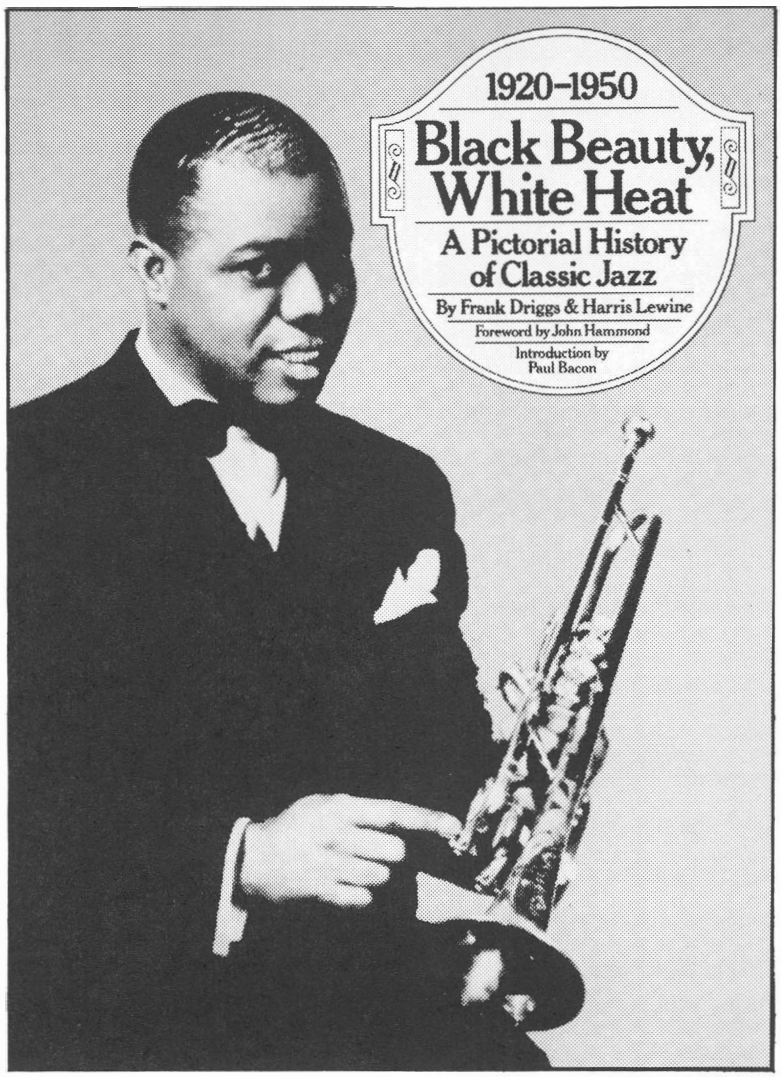
The nostalgic core of this painstakingly produced and handsomely printed volume is a 16-page color insert of a treasure trove of "120 Great Jazz Records To Get Out Of Town With", headed by, what else, Louis Armstrong's 1935 recording of ***On Treasure Island*** (Decca 648 A).

Label collectors (yes, there is such a breed) may wish for some of the more colorful labels listed by Brian Rust (in his definitive study "The American Record Label Book", such as the Orioles, Sunrise (and Sunset), English Vocalions (in pinks, greens, scarlet, blue, yellow...) in place of repeated black-label Victors, but that's nit-picking. What's here cannot fail to move even the most jaded of jazz collectors, circa 1950, when 78s started becoming a fond memory.

The scope of this book, 1920-1950, covers what could be called the golden age of jazz collecting and the artifacts, short of the records themselves, are here for the asking. Setting the tone is a devoted memoir by Paul Bacon on the prewar trials and trails of "collecting hot" in New Jersey, while John Hammond, in a foreword, talks about the years devoted to searching out and recording the jazz that later became collectors' classics (an ad for Hammond's first theatrical venture, the presentation of Fletcher Henderson's band at the Public Theatre in New York's Second Avenue and 4th Street on April 15, 1932 offers at "astonishing low prices", 15 cents balcony in matinees and 35 cents at night in the orchestra, besides the best jazz band in the world, Henderson's, a line of 16 chorus girls, several supporting acts and a grade-Z movie, "X Marks The Spot").

All this material is presented chronologically under nine chapter headings — New Orleans, Chicago, New York, Kansas City, California, "Crow Jim Europe," Jazz on Film, Swing, Modern, with informative historical notes and anecdotes (some from Driggs's own interviews).

But it's the visual material, particularly its collection of photographs, that puts "Black Beauty, White Heat" in a class by itself and on any true jazz lover's library shelf, if not coffee table. It's one of the best books of its type since "A Pictorial History of Jazz" by Orrin Keepnews and Bill Grauer (1955, 1966) which it complements but does not duplicate.



It is pointless describing the photographs — some are familiar, others rare, a few never published before (for lovers of jazz exotica, for instance, there are intriguing shots of the legendary Teddy Weatherford playing at the Taj Mahal Hotel in Bombay, Buck Clayton and his 14 Gentlemen of Harlem in Shanghai; Sidney Bechet with Sam Wooding's band in Moscow...)

Along with persuasive pictures of early 78 album covers, labels, fan magazines, Downbeats, Metronomes and Esquire Jazz Books, this material provides a rich lode for the jazz collector to mine at leisure. You have to see it all to set your nostalgic time clock spinning — along with your original 78s. ***— Al Van Starrex***

REMEMBERING SONG

Encounters with the New Orleans Jazz Tradition
by Frederick Turner
Viking Press, New York, 123 pages. $13.95US

Frederick Turner is a literary ethnologist. His previous books have been concerned with American Indian literary culture and folklore and with the impact of Christianity on the spiritual paganism of the Americas. He is at present working on a biography of American naturalist John Muir.

His focus on jazz in "Remembering Song" may seem then a departure for him but in fact it fits into his scheme of study and interest, for among other things the book details a kind of reverse process to that which he describes in "Beyond Geography" in which he relates the impact of white religion and ideas associated with it on native American culture. "Remembering Song" delves into the impact of blackness in New Orleans, stretching from post civil war times through the first two decades of the twentieth century.

But it is not an easy task to discover how that impact made itself felt, how it survived, how it was passed on and how it remains, even if only as a mere whisper of its true sound. Even while the author's sympathies reside with those older times, his study is not simply an exercise in nostalgic conservatism, though I suspect its aim, or one of its aims at least, to be a refurbishing of those older traditions of jazz: the title is significant — we must all, as listeners to jazz, make an effort to remember those beginning songs.

This book also relates Turner's personal odyssey. It is not the usual book about jazz, and Turner opens his study with a disclaimer to that effect. It is not meant to be a closely argued, objectively historical and descriptive study, though I hope this doesn't suggest that Turner has not done his homework and is merely indulging in fanciful flights; such is not the case. But he does include himself in the book at some points, explaining how his interest in jazz was fostered in his early years in Chicago, and how he latched onto modernism in jazz. But eventually he began to wonder about the roots of the music, its essential sound and where it came from. So he was led to rediscover that uniqueness in various trips to New Orleans with the idea that he could perhaps write a book about the life of oldtimers surviving from that time. Part of that notion remains in the book in his inclusion of a chapter about trombonist Jim Robinson and in his account of his personal contacts with William Russell and

members of some "jazz families".

But the book takes a broader look at the underlying life that produced this specifically different music. Turner uses the image of a palimpsest as a way of looking at the cultural life that blossomed into jazz. He sees the city of New Orleans as being the real repository of everything that makes up jazz, a kind of prehistoric swamp that still contains the bones and fossils of the music. For him, New Orleans is a "wet sucking place" where "everything that ever was here still is – that it is all down there someplace in dark, pressed layers... New Orleans is a giant, slowly settling palimpsest."

So these ruminations in the book try to dig out lovingly the layers of the city's life which are in danger of being destroyed or forgotten in the present with our "mindless rage against the past." He builds up a picture from reports by observers and authors about the essential African ceremonies and dances associated with the district of Congo Square, and from survivors from that early period he gathers information. Of course, these details may, in factual terms, be suspect – memory fails or plays tricks, dates get confused, places become hazy in the mind of the survivors. Turner readily admits this: "So much of this history is oral history, some might call it 'folklore' and others, less friendly, 'hearsay' or mere speculation." In this regard he takes up Bunk Johnson's famous claim about his relationship with Buddy Bolden, a relationship which, according to birthdates and ages, seems impossible. Turner's point, however, is that even if these details have no substantial factual basis, the details remain important because they represent legends and myths about those early days. Originally such stories may have had some basis in truth and they have simply become barnacled with cultural accretions and personal involvement, but they still bear some relevance to the inner history of jazz.

It is that inner life of jazz that Turner pursues in "Remembering Song," those layers underpinning where we are now in the music, layers from the past we must preserve in order to see clearly and remember as the real foundation, the inner sound – that true sound that established the 'hotness' of the music, its newness echoing through the city at the end of the last century, a sound not captured by any recordings at that time.

Turner quotes one of the survivors who remembers as a child he'd be playing some game with others when they would "suddenly hear sounds. It was like a phenomenon, like the Aurora Borealis – maybe. The sounds of the men playing would be so clear but we couldn't be sure where they were coming from. So we'd start trotting, start running – 'It's this way!' 'It's that way!' And, sometimes, after running for a while, you'd find you'd be nowhere near that music. But that music could come on any time like that. The city was full of the sounds of music." Memories like this one go a long way to substantiate that legend about Bolden's cornet being heard across miles of the city as well as to give credence to the living throbbing heart of jazz invested in the city itself.

Turner also stresses the nature of jazz as communal, musician with musician, audience with others in the audience, musician with the audiences mutually or individually. I suppose the interlocking collective improvisation in New Orleans ensembles is a musical equivalent of that communal spirit, continuing perhaps in familial heritage (we're just beginning to see sons of modernists emerging in their own right - the Copeland, Johnson, McBee sons, for instance, and of course there's the very recent emergence of what threatens to be a prime jazz family from New Orleans - the Marsalis family - to join the ranks of all the other jazz families). That communal spirit persists in the various organizations of black artists and perhaps in different loft situations. So that tradition continues to this day. Turner traces it to the communal dances of Congo Square – it's possible to see the manifestations of all of this spirit in the theatrical musical presentations by such a group as the Art Ensemble of Chicago. It reaches back to a very long heritage, linking the sound of the music at those early dances to the 'hot' sound of jazz. Turner speculates that Bechet, for instance, though he was born after the dances had discontinued, knew from what he had heard about them that the sound of his horn came from that dance music echoing with black heritage: "the long history of the African past and that darker tale of his people taken out of Africa."

In reviewing Bunk Johnson's career, the book sees this communal sense persisting through Johnson's sojourns with Evan Thomas's Black Eagle Band and Gus Fortinet's Banner Band through the 1920s when those groups roamed the western territories – that is, as New Orleans had begun to collapse as a jazz centre when musicians moved north, these bands retained a community with its audiences of dancers, who "truly needed this music. It was low-cost, deeply familiar, and it gave them both release and identification."

As the title of the book suggests, the original sound of jazz is now just a memory, covered over. We have to rely on memories and personal accounts, and yet obviously verbal descriptions cannot really convey what that real sound was. Yet Frederick Turner's book makes a valiant effort to recreate that sound for us and in the process elevates those memories to the status of myth and legend which in turn still breathe life into the music, if only we in our turn will make an effort to hear. That is why his book also deals with figures whose lives we still know too little about. Turner is aware of the little knowledge we have about Bolden, acknowledging Don Marquis's unearthing of that knowledge, yet he maintains that the other perhaps unfounded stories about Bolden have a place as part of the whole ethos of the city at that time, though I suspect he would object to the literary use made of him as symbol of the

KENNY DORHAM (photograph by Bill Smith)

self-destructive, mad artist Bolden becomes in Michael Ondaatje's "Coming Through Slaughter." He also suggests that however inaccurate (or even knowingly misleading) statements by Bunk Johnson are, they also deserve currency because they illuminate the real ambience of that period in New Orleans.

"Remembering Song," then, is a speculative book, bolstered by Turner's personal searches and responses, his sympathies with the old-timers who went on playing into recent times, keeping echoes of that original sound alive. It is a lively book and finely expressed though I am uncertain whether at times Turner doesn't himself fall into the trap of over-romanticizing those times and its specific music in his determination to rescue it from blurred memory and keep it alive in our memories. This is a laudable aim but "Remembering Song" is best read along with the factual and descriptive studies of the music, though in a sense Turner himself agrees with this idea, for in his notes to the book he includes the titles of those jazz books he most admires for their knowledge, style and use of cultural background. — *Peter Stevens*

LOOKING BACK ON MONK AND KENNY

Monk on Records
by Leen Bijl and Fred Cante

The Kenny Dorham Discography
by Bo Raftegard

Monk was always the odd man out of the bop revolution: the classic records featured Parker, Gillespie, Powell, Roach, while Monk's recordings of the forties were largely confined to a few sessions for Blue Note. In the fifties he was not heard in clubs, due to the loss of his New York card; though in the middle of the decade he was taken on by Riverside as their main modern jazz artist. It is hard to set aside this image of the obscure genius and to remember that, from 1959 to 1969, Monk had one of the most successful jazz careers, with a continuing contract from Columbia after 1962, concert appearances throughout the world, and his picture on the cover of ***Time***. I don't suppose the Thelonious Monk Quartet would spring to mind if one were asked to name a jazz group with a continuous existence of over a decade; yet Monk and Charlie Rouse, with assorted bassists and drummers, played together for ten or eleven years — longer than "Fats" Waller and his Rhythm, and for a period that compares with the sixteen years for which Fletcher Henderson's Orchestra had a more or less continuous existence.

Kenny Dorham, in contrast, played on innumerable classic sessions of the late forties. He was with the Gillespie big band in 1946, and was the trumpeter with the Charlie Parker Quintet from late 1948 to 1950. He replaced Clifford Brown in the Jazz Messengers, and in the late fifties had the trumpet chair with the Max Roach Quintet. From 1952 to 1964, he recorded prolifically for Blue Note, Prestige, Riverside and many other often obscurer labels. Yet, as Bo Raftegard puts it, he remains one of "the shadow people." After an active recording career, he died poor and sick in 1972.

Monk and Dorham are the subject of two excellent discographies: "Monk on Records" by Leen Bijl and Fred Cante; and "The Kenny Dorham Discography" by Bo Raftegard. Both books are comprehensive, thorough, and to be recommended to anyone interested in these players.

It is extraordinarily difficult nowadays to produce works of this nature that are completely exhaustive: LP reissues appear — and have appeared for decades — throughout the world. Thus, "Monk on Records" does not list the appearance on Sceptre of the piano solo session for Vogue in Paris; while the Dorham discography does not include the reissue of the Gillespie Musicrafts on a Prestige double album. No doubt there are other omissions that others will see; but such faults are inevitable, and are not major shortcomings of such undertakings.

When a discography is comprehensive, one's criticism is directed to the way in which it is set out, and to the way in which it is conceived. Both books adopt the usual form for the reporting of sessions; and, in common with many discographies, neither makes it possible for the uninitiated reader to tell whether a listed record is a 78, 45 or 33 rpm issue. Neither discography lists the issues in order of appearance, which would be helpful to readers interested in how the music came before the public. The Monk discography has the annoying practice of listing the most comprehensive issue first; and this is often a late issue. It gives the title of this issue as the head title; and this makes it difficult to ascertain under what title the album originally appeared.

In the case of the Monk discography, these practices reflect the attitudes of the compilers: "Details of 78 and 45 rpm discs as well as 10-inch LPs are only intended as an ode to the freaks and are useless to record buyers." This orientation towards "record buyers" results in the discography taking a rather limiting stance concerning its policy of dealing "exclusively with records." It does not list unissued material, even when details are to be found in other discographies. It hence does not name the unissued titles of which recordings are known to exist from the 1946 Spotlite Club broadcast by the Gillespie Big Band; nor does it list the four unissued titles from Monk's first Town Hall Concert (Riverside) that are included in Jepsen. In this respect, time has already passed it by, as a new two record set of a live performance by the Quartet has already been issued by Columbia, while Milestone are putting out the complete "Mulligan Meets Monk" Riverside session, with new material.

The Dorham discography lists unissued material, including that from the Spotlite Club broadcast, on which Dorham also played.

Both discographies follow the common practice of giving details of only those titles from a session on which the subject artist plays. This can often deprive the reader of information that could offer interesting insights. Surely all readers would want to know that, after Monk had left what was possibly his greatest session, "Monk's Music" for Riverside, the rest of the band made an additional title, ***Blues for Tomorrow.***

Nonetheless, these are fine pieces of work. Both players are unhappily no longer with us. In consequence, we can view these discographies as definitive, except in so far as new material is discovered.

"Monk on Records" is obtainable for hfl. 20 plus postage from Golden Age Records, Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal 51-53, 1012 RD Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

"The Kenny Dorham Discography" is obtainable for 38 Swedish kroner from Bo Raftegard, Penningvagen, 653 46 Karlstad, Sweden.

— *Trevor Tolley*

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JIMMY ROWLES Trio: Some Other Spring Blue Angel 512
BOY EDGAR Big Band: Music Was His Mistress, a Tribute to Duke Ellington - incl. Slide Hampton, Dizzy Reece BVHaast 022
SERGE CHALOFF: Boston Blow Up Capitol (Jap.) 50043 OR Affinity (E) 63
JOHN LEE HOOKER: Moanin the Blues (issued & unissued VJ, 1960) Charly 1029
CHARLIE CHRISTIAN: Solo Flight (2-disc set) Columbia G 30779
THELONIOUS MONK: Live at the Jazz Workshop (quartet 1964, 2-LP) Columbia 38269
DUTCH SWING COLLEGE Band: 25 Years Anniversary Concert DSC 001
D.S.C.B.: Souvenirs From Holland - 3 separate volumes: v.I (DSC 003) v.2 (004) v.3(005)
D.S.C.B.: Live 1974 DSC 1013
D.S.C.B.: Bud & His Buddies, with guest BUD FREEMAN (1975) DSC 1016
DON EWELL: Piano Solo (ex Windin' Ball Records) 88 Upright 002
BILL EVANS: Eloquence (solo, & duo with Eddie Gomez) Fantasy 9618

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AUREX JAZZ FESTIVAL LPs - live recordings from Japan, 1980/81 - Limited Supply!!
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JOHN COLTRANE: Legacy Atlantic 1553
STAN KENTON: In England '63 Jz.Groove 05
STAN GETZ/COLEMAN HAWKINS/ROY ELDRIDGE: Great English Concert J.Gr. 007
ERROLL GARNER: In England '63 J.Gr. 008

ORNETTE COLEMAN (photograph by Bill Smith)

RECORD REVIEWS

REISSUES BY JOHN NORRIS

ELMO HOPE
Here's Hope
Celebrity 209
High Hope
Beacon 401

DON FAGERQUIST
Octet
Mode 124

J.R. MONTEROSE
In Action
Studio 4 VSOP

Because jazz is a music of the performers it has created a wide variety of interpreters — some famous and many whose reputations are based on legend and a handful of recordings. All of the musicians in this glossy group of replica recordings have miniscule reputations and rarely receive more than a footnote in jazz histories. Yet, in their separate ways, they have contributed to the music, to the extent of establishing a cult following for their music.

Elmo Hope was a contemporary of Bud Powell and Thelonious Monk and there is something of both these pianists in Hope's playing. The crisply articulated bright sonorities of his piano sound immediately identify him as a jazz pianist of the first order. This is a sound which has virtually disappeared from jazz piano since Bill Evans introduced a softer, less percussive harmonic and rhythmic feel to piano jazz. The legacy of Bud Powell can only truly be heard today through Barry Harris and, occasionally, Tommy Flanagan and Kenny Drew. Both Junior Mance and Ray Bryant have percussive strength but their harmonic concepts are different.

These two lps are the last sessions listed in Jepsen of Hope and follow the successful sessions for Riverside but here we are presented with the pianist in the quintessential setting for a so-called "bop" pianist: a trio with bassist Paul Chambers and drummer Philly Joe Jones (who are replaced. by Butch Warren and Granville Hogan on three selections on the Beacon LP). All of the tunes, written in the rhythmically exciting vein of the time, are by Hope and he performs them eloquently. Chambers and Jones, of course, were two of the best players of their time and they make a major contribution to the ***musical*** success of these recordings.

The obscurity of the original release only heightens the sense of discovery upon hearing these outstanding examples of Elmo Hope's music, which are among the best from his limited recording career.

Don Fagerquist made his reputation as a trumpet player in various big bands and this Mode LP is the only extended example of his lyrical, rather pretty playing. Marty Paich's arrangements exemplified the cleansing process jazz music underwent in the hands of many Los Angeles musicians and this is one of several successful sessions from this period (Discovery have reissued the two Warner Brothers sets by Paich and Contemporary's Art Pepper date remains a classic of the genre).

What made the Pepper session so remarkable, of course, was the solo work of the alto saxophonist — like all great musicians his presence transcended the setting. Fagerquist is not of

JACKIE McLEAN (photograph by Jorgen Bo)

that calibre and neither are Herb Geller and Bob Enevoldsen. But they do play well and the arrangements and instrumentation reflect the pervasive influence of the "Birth of the Cool" band (from eight years earlier) on these musicians. The major difference, apart from the actual soloists, is that Paich has arranged eight well-known popular songs while Miles Davis and his cohorts fashioned well-structured original compositions which are still being played.

Fagerquist, in fact, evokes images of Bobby Hackett (as pointed out in the sleeve notes) and this kind of setting would have been perfect for Hackett himself — but no one ever thought of it. We are left, instead, with Fagerquist's own interpretations and they are eminently listenable.

The most obscure of this group of recordings is undoubtedly J.R. Monterose's 1964 session with Joe Abodeely's trio recorded in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Monterose himself is something of an oddity — even within the boundaries established by the legends of the music. His reputation rests on his early work with Kenny Dorham, his Blue Note session and the Jaro date with Tommy Flanagan (which is now available on Xanadu) and the brilliance of that period has not been duplicated in the few later examples of his work.

By 1964, when this recording was made, there had been changes in Monterose's work. In the uptempo numbers there are traces of Coltrane's tonality and harmonic elasticity while the ballad features (***I Should Care, Lover Man***) have some of the fragmented forlornness of late Lester Young, but without the latter's rhythmic sureness.

The backup trio is competent but faceless and this reissue will fill a gap in the fragmented recording career of J.R. Monterose.

All four of these records are facsimiles of the original issues and it is the intent of Jeff Barr, the producer, to restore to circulation in this manner some of the most sought after and expensive records on the collectors' circuit. These are legitimate, licensed issues and the pressings and jackets are of a very high quality. Playing time on the original LPs is quite short — there is only about 30 minutes of music on each of the Elmo Hopes and the J.R. Monterose. Circulation of these records is minimal and I've only heard of one store that has stocked them. The retail price is high and the rationalisation for this is not the high cost of production, but the amount of money collectors have been prepared to pay for the originals. $15.00 will now get you the Monterose while $12.00 is the price of the others. This pricing and marketing policy ensures that these records will have just as limited a lifespan as the originals. Full ordering information is available from V.S.O.P. Records, P.O. Box 50082, Washington, D.C. 20024 U.S.A.

DUKE ELLINGTON
Anatomy of a Murder
Columbia JCS 8156

Soundtracks all too seldom have a life of their own but, in this case, Duke Ellington's music for "Anatomy of a Murder" has transcended the idiom to sound fresh and invigorating. In fact, this is one of a series of outstanding sessions recorded by the rejuvenated band of the late 1950s. Sam Woodyard gave the Duke Ellington Orchestra as distinctive a drum sound as Sonny Greer had done previously, and the return of Johnny Hodges was essential to this musical renaissance. Duke's creative energies were at a high level and many new compositions were performed and recorded by the band. From this score emerged ***Flirtibird*** and the main theme which was retitled as ***I'm Gonna Go Fishing*** when played by Gerry Mulligan. Ray Nance, Clark Terry, Paul Gonsalves and Jimmy Hamilton are all featured — as is the piano of the leader. After more than twenty years it is safe to say that the music has dated less than the film.

JACKIE McLEAN / JOHN JENKINS
Alto Madness
Prestige 2512

Jackie McLean was always one of the most assertive of the post Parker alto saxophonists. But there were others with something to say who never achieved McLean's reputation or success. One of these is John Jenkins, heard here in a welcome reissue of a 1957 session which joined together the talents of these two altoists. The music is representative of its time — extensive blowing on the changes of the blues, two standards (***Easy Living, The Lady Is A Tramp***) and two Jenkins originals (***Windy City, Pondering***) — and sounds just as good today as when it was recorded. Jenkins and McLean have similar tones and methods of improvisation but there is enough contrast to retain listener interest — just as there is when Al Cohn and Zoot Sims collaborate.

Wade Legge, Doug Watkins and Art Taylor are a cohesive rhythm section, playing in an idiom which has all but disappeared today. This reissue for the first time unites all the music from the session. ***Bird Feathers*** was not on the earlier versions of "Alto Madness" (7114, 8312) but was only included in an LP with selections by Phil Woods and Hal McKusick (8204).

Jackie McLean went on to make a series of outstanding sessions for Blue Note, but this is one of the more successful of his earlier dates and deserves its reputation.

DIZZY GILLESPIE, JAMES MOODY, others.
Bebop Enters Sweden
Dragon DRLP 34

Sweden, along with France, quickly recognised the qualities of the bop movement of the 1940s and their own musicians soon learned to play the music with authority. Some of them are heard here supporting James Moody in three selections (***Indiana, Anthropology, Tea For Two***) from a 1949 remote broadcast of a jam session. Arne Domnerus' alto shines briefly but Moody dominates the occasion.

Chubby Jackson and his Fifth Dimensional Jazz Group were the first U.S. musicians to bring the then-new music to Sweden. Conte Candoli, Frank Socolow, Terry Gibbs, Lou Levy and Denzil Best completed the lineup and this LP contains three selections (***Crown Pilots, Begin The Beguine, Shiska***) from a December 20, 1947 broadcast. These musicians had already grasped the essentials of bop as well as adopting many of the mannerisms of the times.

To get to the heart of this music, though, you have to listen to its principal innovators — such artists as Charlie Parker, Bud Powell, Fats Navarro and Dizzy Gillespie. Dizzy's big band was ***the*** explosive force of its day and much of its repertoire was recorded by Musicraft and RCA, but the energy level of its live performances was never duplicated in the studio. There are several of these occasions preserved on disc/tape (notably the 1948 Pasadena concert on GNP 23) but this broadcast from February 2, 1948 has the advantage of being well recorded. The band performs ***Our Delight, I Can't Get Started*** (an excellent showcase for the trumpet duo of Dizzy and Dave Burns), ***Ool-Ya-Koo, Manteca, Oo-Pop-A-Da, Ray's Idea, More Than You Know*** and two theme versions of ***I Waited For You.***

All of the music on this LP originated in Swedish Radio broadcasts and its technical superiority makes this a worthwhile acquisition even for those who have grown skeptical of such recordings. Musically there are many delights here for lovers of bebop.

VALAIDA SNOW
Hot Snow
Rosetta 1305

Quirks of fate often determine the success or failure of artists in their lifetime. Only those with immense amounts of talent succeed in communicating beyond their own time to any great extent.

Valaida Snow was a singer and trumpet player who found a niche for herself in Europe during the 1930s. She made enough recordings there for World Records to have reissued two LP collections of her work. Several of these (***You're Driving Me Crazy, Minnie the Moocher, Caravan, Swing Low Sweet Chariot, My Heart Belongs To Daddy, High Hat, Trumpet And Rhythm, Some Of These Days***) are included in this reissue which gives us a comprehensive look at her career. These early sides illustrate the competence of her Armstrong-derived trumpet playing and the exhilarating rhythmic poise of her singing.

After suffering the trauma of a German concentration camp she returned to the US and the balance of the music in this LP dates from 1945-1950 and shows us a singer whose emotional expressiveness is heightened, but much of the joyousness has disappeared. Like Billie Holiday, Valaida Snow's youthful exuberance seems to have given way to a more deeply felt and melancholy mode of expression.

A full and detailed resume of Valaida Snow is included in this worthwhile tribute to a singer and musician whose talents were probably greater than the reality of her role as an entertainer.

PIANO SINGERS BLUES
Women Accompany Themselves
Rosetta 1303

The common denominator in this collection is that all of the singers are women who play piano. The material is well known with most of the sixteen selections previously available on LP.

However, this grouping holds together very well and there is some remarkable music. It ranges from the unadorned simplicity of Gladys Bentley (***Worried Blues***), Edith Johnson (***Nickel's Worth of Liver Blues***) and Hociel Thomas (***Go Down Sunshine***) to the more urbane sounds of Julia Lee (***Snatch And Grab It***), Nellie Lutcher (***St. Louis Blues***), Una Mae Carlisle (***Stop Going Through The Motions***) and Hadda Brooks (***I Hadn't Anyone Till You***). There's also Billie Pierce's New Orleans approach

(*Jelly Roll*), the vaudeville-flavoured Lil Armstrong selection (***Harlem on Saturday Night***) and the passionate old time gospel preaching of Arizona Dranes (***Lamb's Blood Has Washed Me Clean***). Fannie May Goosby's ***Fortune Teller Blues*** is most notable for Henry Mason's trumpet accompaniment and there's fine Mutt Carey obbligatos on Hociel Thomas's ***Go Down Sunshine***.

Both Georgia White (***The Blues Ain't Nothing But?***) and Cleo Brown (***Pinetop's Boogie Woogie***) are fluent interpreters of boogie styled piano and this worthwhile set is completed with Hazel Scott's ***Nightmare Blues*** and an unissued 1962 Victoria Spivey performance of ***I Had It.***

JIMMY & MARIAN McPARTLAND

Goin' Back A Ways
Halcyon 116

Back in the 1940s the McPartlands organised their own record company (Unison) and recorded four sides in Chicago and followed those up with four more in Boston the following year. Vic Dickenson and Gene Sedric illuminate the Boston date but Chicago's Harry Lepp (trombone) and Jack McConnell (clarinet) do a credible job. Jimmy's Bixian cornet is much in evidence — especially on such numbers as ***Singin' The Blues, Davenport Blues, Royal Garden Blues*** and a small group arrangement of ***In A Mist***.

Filling out this LP are previously unissued performances of ***How High The Moon*** and ***I've Found A New Baby*** which reflect the changing character of jazz during this period. There's a nice feel to those two selections and they give the developing Marian a chance to showcase her talent.

The two Unison sessions were also issued by Prestige as 78s but this is the first time they have all been packaged together.

BILL EVANS

The Interplay Sessions
Milestone 47066

"Interplay" has long been one of the definitive Bill Evans sessions. His piano sparkles in the supercharged company of Freddie Hubbard, Jim Hall, Percy Heath and Philly Joe Jones and the repertoire, decided at the session, gives the music the kind of spontaneous freshness which isn't found within the carefully crafted arrangements of his trio performances. Evans, like Oscar Peterson, benefits from this kind of situation — which is why this session, Miles Davis's "Kind Of Blue" and the duet session with Jim Hall ("Undercurrent") are so spectacular. Then, too, there is always an extra dimension to any Bill Evans session which had Philly Joe Jones present (witness the recently released Vanguard tapes from 1967 on Verve). The rhythm section on "Interplay" is a dynamic force which provides the momentum for a series of excellent solos from Evans, Jim Hall and Freddie Hubbard. This session is one of the few times when Hubbard tackled such popular songs as ***You And The Night And The Music, When You Wish Upon A Star, I'll Never Smile Again, You Go To My Head*** and ***Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams***. His incisive lyricism and good taste are so apparent here that one wonders why it didn't continue. It is the clearest evidence of his direct lineage with Clifford Brown (a trumpeter who always showed impeccable taste).

The second LP will be a major surprise for Bill Evans collectors. None of the material from two sessions in August 1962 was issued — although a different take of ***Loose Bloose*** is included in "Peace Piece And Other Pieces" (Milestone 47024). Jim Hall and Philly Joe Jones are holdovers from the July session with Zoot Sims and Ron Carter replacing Hubbard and Heath.

All of the tunes at this date were written by Evans but the freewheeling spirit of the "Interplay" date isn't duplicated. There's some good playing from everyone but Evans's compositions were new to all the players and sometimes there is a reticence to the music. Orrin Keepnews's detailed liner notes contain further information surrounding the circumstances of the session.

The Sims/Evans material is a pleasurable bonus but the "Interplay" date alone is reason enough for anyone to obtain this reissue.

JAMES MOODY/BENNIE GREEN

Bebop Revisited Volume 4
Xanadu 197

Collected together here are obscure sessions which appeared originally on Vogue, Manor and Jubilee under the leadership of Ernie Royal, Babs Gonzales and Bennie Green. Side one (the Royal date) was recorded in Paris in 1950 and contains the most interesting music. Trumpeter Royal, James Moody and trombonist Ted Kelly evoke the spirit of Tadd Dameron in their arrangements and Royal's tasteful solos are in the shadow of Fats Navarro.

Babs Gonzales's vocals dominate the four Manor sides which were recorded on December 2, 1948. It's good to realise that Babs has greater warmth and respect for the jazz tradition than annotator Mark Gardner whose comments sound as if they were written in 1950 rather than the 1980s. Anyway, Babs Gonzales is always humourous and hip even if his talents are less than Eddie Jefferson's and there are solo spots by Moody, Green and trumpeter Dave Burns.

The four Jubilee sides featuring trombonist Green and tenor saxophonist Budd Johnson were recorded August 13, 1950. Green's extrovert style is much in evidence here but he was to make more representative recordings later in his career.

Collectively, these three sessions will fill some gaps in many collections as well as offering some worthwhile music by the participants within the bop idiom. They do not extend our knowledge of the period and first time listeners will find the definitive examples of the period elsewhere.

CHARLES MINGUS

Presents Charles Mingus
Jazzman 5048

The legendary Candid LP with Eric Dolphy, Ted Curson and Dannie Richmond is back in circulation once again. This is good news for this is not only one of Mingus's greatest recordings but is also a definitive example of the art of jazz music.

Folk Forms No.1, in particular, demonstrates the surging energy of Mingus's music, the explosive drive of the band, the superb improvisations by all the musicians, the retention of structure while stretching the boundar-

ies to the limit. Above all there is marvelous internal balance and extraordinary coherence of musical thought as the musicians listen and respond to each other while never forgetting the textures of Mingus's compositions. The same is true for the other three selections included here from this date. ***Stormy Weather***, the final tune recorded October 20, 1962, is included in the earlier Jazzman reissue of Mingus's Candid sessions (5011).

The only word of caution is about the suspect quality of some of the Jazzman pressings. Side two of the review copy sounds like rice crispies. Hopefully this is not true for all copies.

FRASER MacPHERSON / OLIVER GANNON

I Didn't Know About You
Sackville 4009

Duos are a tricky business. When successful, the music has a complete and full sound. When things aren't working that well, the result is something like a music-minus-one session. This is the right time to make that observation, for here we have a combination that works perfectly — a tenor sax and guitar twosome that provides all the sound and rhythm needed.

MacPherson and Gannon are well acquainted with each other, having worked together for several years in their home area of Vancouver and a good many other places — Montreux, Concord, England, Russia. This occasion, originally a CBC radio broadcast, was different, though, in that they played as a duo for the first time. That context obviously presented some challenges in working closely together to sustain the performance, and the record attests to their success. Individually and in tandem, they play their instruments with both loving care and precision, fully in command of what they want to express together.

MacPherson is another example of the great good broad influence of Lester Young. He's one of the numerous creative musicians whose playing tells you they are descended from Pres, but with an individual means of expression that is original and unique. The liner notes suggest that Stan Getz and Zoot Sims have probably influenced him the most, but that simply means that going farther upstream you come to the Lester Young headwaters. Gannon is an ideal foil, responsive to the duo context and MacPherson's needs, with substantial chording interlaced with well-placed single notes. There's a buoyancy to the playing, whatever the song, whatever the tempo, that can be attributed to both men but with a particular debt to Gannon.

As is so often the case, what helps to distinguish a record and make it outstanding is the material selected. There are eleven tracks, mostly old standards but mostly not overworked ones. We're treated to handsome interpretations of such pieces as ***Everything Happens To Me, Mean To Me, You Go To My Head, A Nightingale Sang In Berkeley Square*** and a swinging up-tempo ***Day By Day***. There are also three by the Duke — ***Do Nothing Till You Hear From Me, In A Mellotone*** and, especially welcome, ***I Didn't Know About You,*** the album's title piece.

This is a well-paced record, with a sustained mood. It has a character of its own, coming across as a subdued session that is supported by strong underpinnings — moss-covered rocks. It's one of those records with a late-hour ambience that stands up well at any listening time. ***— Dick Neeld***

TETE MONTOLIU

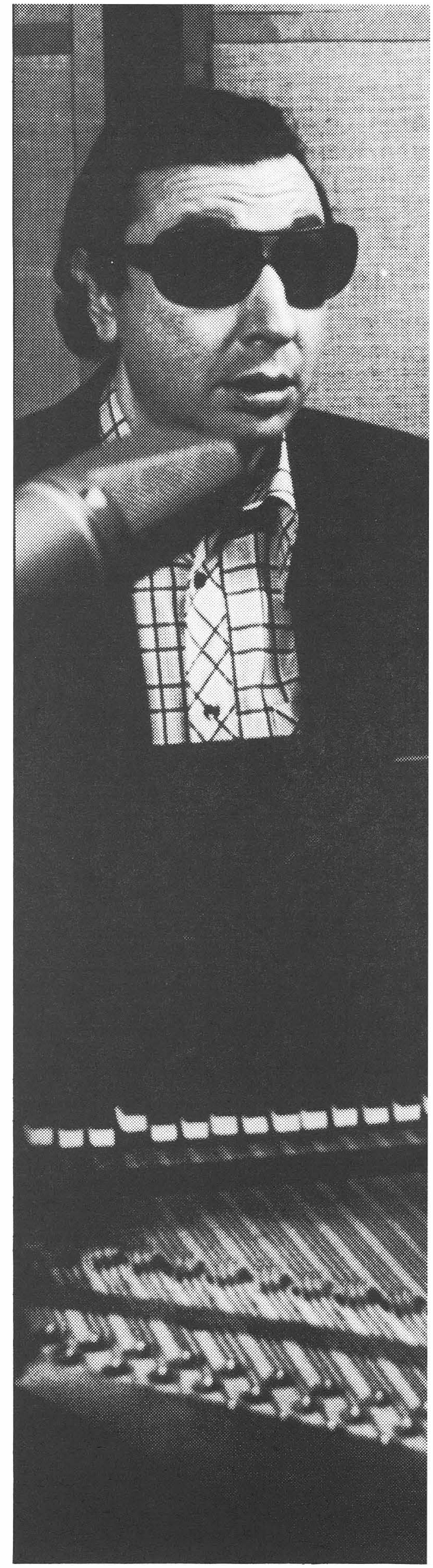
Boston Concert
SteepleChase SCS 1152/3

This is a two record set recorded live at Boston University on March 17, 1980, and features Tete Montoliu's unaccompanied solo piano for approximately one and a half hours. Presumably this was the concert in its entirety and if so it must have been a hell of a night for all concerned. For as Jazz continues its protracted move from the nightclub to the concert hall/gallery and is consequently affected by such a vast change in ambience it becomes increasingly apparent that, with musicians the caliber of Montoliu, live performances of an indisputably 'classic' nature are being created, and by their very nature are practically begging to be preserved. This concert in particular is a milestone in Montoliu's career, presenting as it does the full range of his glorious solo piano sound in a broadly varied program of material and unencumbered by any sort of accompaniment. One is reminded of those 'if only' occasions, all those performances that were witnessed just once and then lost forever, destined to fade into the mists of time and the distortions of memory.

And while there have been, conversely, countless live sessions issued and reissued that should never have been allowed to happen in the first place, the sustained joy of Tete Montoliu's solo piano has never been so beautifully captured on record until now. This is that rare item: a live record that was absolutely necessary, for instead of being a mere reiteration of Montoliu's previous recorded work, it is an extension, a richly significant addition to it. The folk-derived ***Catalan Suite*** is a case in point, emerging here in a lyric purity that was only hinted at in its previous trio performance (on "Tete a Tete," SteepleChase SCS 1054). Aside from having the value of presenting Montoliu's music in a different context, this set also has a pretty sound justification in historical terms: this was Montoliu's American concert debut.

While it is utterly shameful that it took so many years to create the groundswell of interest deemed necessary to present such a concert, there is some consolation to be taken from the musical evidence contained herein that Montoliu was well and truly ready for the event. His range of material and of mood is staggering, from the magnitude of scope of the original ***Apartment 512*** to the impromptu brusqueness of ***When I Fall In Love*** to the abandoned bebop energy of ***Hot House, Confirmation***, and ***Oleo***. Not only was Montoliu ready, his audience was ready, responding continually to his performance with enthusiasm — which brings me to my one complaint. The applause must be among the loudest, relative to the volume of the music, ever put on record, and while it may be heartwarming to find Montoliu received with indulgence and sympathy he deserves, this deafening applause is obtrusive (like watching a quiet late show on TV interspersed with blaring commercials).. Still, I suppose it was part of the 'event...'

And one does understand their joy at being allowed to hear Montoliu playing solo piano at the absolute height of his powers (so far, that is). May there be glories of similar magnitude to come. ***— Julian Yarrow***



TETE MONTOLIU (photograph by Jorgen Bo)

WAYNE PEET

Down-in/ness: Piano Improvisations
Nine Winds 0111

Ballad: Transitional Frobisher Lounging/Neon Leon/Ballad: To the Edge/Justice Roll/Every Day/Plow & Angel/The White Light (part 1 & 2)

I admit to no prior knowledge of Wayne Peet and his music; hence, it's always exciting to share, as a listener, a new musical experience without the customary preconceptions or anticipations. Comparisons, of course, are inevitable. Certainly the liner notes, a list of credits and a brief poem, afford little. Ironically, the poem turned out to be more meaningful than at first glance, and random phrases from it kept popping into my mind as I listened — "entangled prose," "sharp texture," "gravel and ice."

Side one presents two ballads, the first relaxed, melodic and explorative, reminiscent of Corea or Jarrett, the second a gradual fusion of disparate sounds into an almost bluesy coalescence. ***Neon*** proved to be much more assertive in nature, music in motion carrying flashes of a Bud Powell, Cecil Taylor or Don Pullen. With the introduction to ***Justice Roll***, I half expected to hear Dollar Brand's ***The Aloe and the Wild Rose***; it is full of rolling chords and sombre tones that swell and recede inexorably throughout.

Side two opens with teeth-grinding stuff, indeed: a honing of strings (prepared piano) to the pitch of icy clarity, elegiac (subtitled ***Elegy for Kurt Ulrich***), I suspect, in its suggestiveness of agonized cries and stretched emotions, all set against a slowly developing knell-like dirge played at low register. Briefly, on ***Plow***, we motor along in spritely fashion, almost rollicking at times. Part I of ***White Light*** begins in full-flight tempo as well, wheeling forward like an express, building momentum before it dissolves into the lovely nuances of melody, cool and unhurried, of Part II. For me, this was the most solidly developmental of the numbers, powerfully constructed, full of heavy rhythms and blustery chords, contrasting appealingly in the subtler shadings of the second part.

Though the numbers are obviously well-intentioned and competently articulated, I found the album a difficult listening experience. There were just too many "dark shadows" for my liking, and a sense of aimlessness about it all that kept me edgy rather than on the edge of my seat. However, I imagine we may hear more from Wayne Peet, and, despite my reservations concerning this album, I look forward to that.

— John Sutherland

GEORGE SAMS

Nomadic Winds
Hat Musics 3506

George Sams, trumpet, piano; India Cooke, violin; Andre St. James, bass; Anthony Brown, drums; Abdul Washid, percussion.

Nomadic Winds/Tortuous/In Search/Path With A Heart For Africa

George Sams has been previously heard to good advantage under the banner of "United Front," the Bay Area co-op ensemble which already has two noteworthy releases to its credit. "Nomadic Winds", however, is Sams' first solo outing and he has wisely surrounded himself with intelligent, sensitive partners who understand the value of functioning as a unit. Here individual grandstanding takes a back seat to concerted team effort, although there is still ample room for the display of soloistic capabilities. The title cut opens with the leader on piano, his rhythmic, percussive chords setting the mood and tempo for the drums as violin and arco bass gradually state the theme in unison. Soon the theme is being tossed back and forth with greater and greater variation until Cooke steps forward to solo in a smooth reflective manner revealing just a hint of Slavic romanticism. St. James, switching to pizzicato, follows, his strong, resilient lines singing with authority. The same plodding pulse is maintained by the piano throughout, leading to an abrupt ending. ***Tortuous*** is a trumpet-bass duet with St. James supplying a springy, cushiony backdrop for Sams whose sputtering, blurting, buzzing sound effects slowly evolve into longer, more defined phrases, disclosing a large, clean tone and bringing to mind Lester Bowie. But Sams is definitely his own man, charting his own course. He starts to toy with more melodic lines, bouncing them off of St. James's rich, thick accompaniment. Eventually the piece reverts back to the sputtering sound effects, ending as it had begun. ***In Search***, a lively affair, is kicked off by trumpet and violin over brisk bass and drums. The tempo shifts in and out as Sams and Cooke engage in some good-natured sparring before things turn into a group free-for-all charged with kinetic vitality. Drummer Brown, also a recent member of "United Front," is responsible for keeping everything under control and provides the impetus for Sams' muscular trumpet which is laced with upper register trills. Small tinkling bells and percussion coupled with Cooke's droning violin create a peaceful, reflective aura in the beginning of the final selection. The trumpet introduces a Middle Eastern flavored melody and tabla drums help sustain the flow as Sams and Cooke trade ideas over the insistent rhythm. "Nomadic Winds" proves durable under repeated listening and most certainly deserves your attention.

— Gerard Futrick

HORACE TAPSCOTT

Dial 'B' for Barbra
Nimbus NS 1147

Live at Lobero
Nimbus NS 1369

Horace Tapscott is one of the most vital grassroots forces in American music. His stature in the Los Angeles community is analogous to Muhal Richard Abrams's former role in Chicago; more than a masterful pianist and an intriguing composer, Tapscott has organized associations and Arkestras since the sixties, stewarding the development of many musicians (including Arthur Blythe). Only in recent years has his music been adequately documented, first on the now-defunct Interplay label, and more extensively on the Santa Barbara based Nimbus label. Though neither "Dial 'B' for Barbra" or "Live at Lobero" find Tapscott at the helm of the acclaimed Arkestra, they do offer extensive insight into this extraordinary musician.

Approximately, Tapscott's orientation has much to do with the harmonic developments pianists like Andrew Hill, McCoy Tyner, and Jaki Byard forwarded in the sixties. A Tapscott solo is likely to be rich in angular, heavily chromatic, single note runs supported by jabbing modal chords, cascades of large, jangly chords that decay into arpeggiated lines, outbursts of percussive close-order drills and/or dramatic rubato, and more. Activated within the context of his probing compositions, Tapscott's style is both challenging and satisfying, easily one of the most fluent voices in post-bop piano.

On "Dial 'B' for Barbra," Tapscott leads a strong, cohesive sextet consisting of drummer Everett Brown, Jr., bassist Roberto Miranda, trumpeter Reggie Bullen, and saxophonists Gary Bias (alto and soprano) and Sabir Matteen (tenor). Except for the lovely, mid-tempo title piece, which features a lengthy, well-sustained solo by Tapscott and an impressive, fluid muted statement by Bullen, the material has bristling rhythmic foundations that promote fiery solos from all hands. A sprinting line full of tangy twists and turns, ***Lately's Solos*** showcases electrifying solos from Bias, Brown, and Tapscott. ***Dem Folks*** gains considerable momentum from a simple vamp; a risky proposition unless a rhythm section like Tapscott, Miranda, and Brown continually and inventively turns it inside out and there is a string of cogent solos (as is the case here: Bias is gritty; Bullen has a full, brassy tone that echoes Morgan and Tolliver; Matten is especially effective when he slides through the registers; Tapscott builds from subtle contrapuntal tensions; Miranda displays enormous dexterity and sophistication).

A trio date with Miranda and percussionist Sonship, "Live at Lobero" affords a more head-on perspective of Tapscott the pianist. Though he gives his colleagues generous solo space — Miranda confirms initial impressions that he has total command of the instrument; Sonship is sometimes dazzling, sometimes overbearing — Tapscott dominates the music. The program reveals aspects of Tapscott's work not touched upon on "Dial 'B' for Barbra," particularly on ***Sketches of Drunken Mary*** and ***Raisha's New Hip Dance***. The former is poignant, bluesy portraiture that finds the pianist shifting between nimble single note lines and boisterous chordal passages. Beginning with melancholy balladic musings, the latter — the only unaccompanied solo on either disc — evolves into an elastically structured work, where moods abruptly change and a panoply of techniques are used. The twenty-one-minute ***The Dark Tree*** rounds out the album with a reprise of the hard-driving modalities found on the sextet outing.

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— Bill Shoemaker

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CANADA

AROUND THE WORLD

CANADA

May 30 is inauguration day for Toronto's Cafe des Copains summer "Jazz Piano Festival". See the ad on the back cover of this issue of ***Coda*** for the details. Each musician will perform as a soloist between 8-12 pm Monday to Wednesday and 9 pm-1 am Thursday to Saturday. The best of Toronto's jazz pianists will be complementing this schedule with performances (Monday through Friday) weekly between 5-7 pm. Scheduled to appear are Bernie Senensky, Joe Sealy, Gary Williamson, Ron Sorley, Ian Bargh, Charlie Mountford, Wray Downes and Bob Fenton. Ian Bargh will also be taking the evening spot August 15 and 16.

Leo Smith, one of the most creative of today's musicians will make a rare Toronto appearance with the Bill Smith Ensemble, Friday, June 10 at ARC, 789 Queen Street West, and Saturday June 11 at The Spadina Hotel. Both performances start at 9 pm.... The Red Rodney/Ira Sullivan Quintet should rescue Lytes from the doldrums for two weeks beginning May 23.... Cycles Music Bar is a newcomer to the Toronto scene. It opened with the trio of Geordie Macdonald, Paul Taylor and the fine young tenor player Rob Frayne, and the "textural jazz" of Brian Katz was heard Monday nights in May. The club, located at 166 Bedford Road, features a wide variety of jazz-oriented singers and instrumentalists through the week.

Rob McConnell's Boss Brass was at Bourbon Street for two weeks at the beginning of April. It launched a hectic spring schedule for the highly acclaimed band which is gaining widespread U.S. recognition. They made a quick jaunt to Kentucky to perform at the U.S. Stage Band Festival and in mid-May headed west to appear at the Canadian Stage Band Festival in Calgary. After a four-day stay in that city they took up residence in Vancouver's Four Seasons Hotel May 23 to 25. The band recorded a new album for Dark Orchid during their Bourbon Street residence.

The Music Gallery's spring schedule included appearances by Claude Ranger's Sextet, Strangeness Beauty, the Fred Stone Improvisational Ensemble, a solo cello recital by Ernst Reyseger and a four-day electronic music festival.... Jim Buchman's Jazz Barons were guests at the Sacramento Jazz Festival in late May and they will then head for the St. Louis Ragtime Festival for the week of June 13-19. A package trip to this event has been arranged by Bob Stride of Brotherton's (225-1151).... The Ragtime Festival is organising a series of events and the most recent was held May 14 at Korenowsky's. Information on these events can be obtained by phoning 425-0227. The weekend of October 15-16 is the date of this year's bash at the Cara Inn. Membership to the society can be obtained by writing P.O. Box 520, Station A, Weston, Ontario M9N 3N3.... Brownie McGhee and Albert Collins were headliners at Albert's Hall during February.

The National Film Board's "Kubota" was premiered March 21 at the Art Gallery of Ontario. The 30-minute film is a sound and film portrait of the multi-talented musician/artist Nobuo Kubota.... Helen Henshaw's documentary "Acid Reign" premiered May 13 at Ryerson Institute. The film features a music soundtrack by The Bill Smith Ensemble.... Eric Stach, who remains active in the London area, toured New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Quebec in April.... The Kitchener International Summer Festival is an educational and performance event to be held at Wilfred Laurier University. The Jazz Institute program (June 20-July 2) is under the direction of Phil Nimmons and the faculty will include Rob McConnell, Guido Basso, Pat LaBarbera, Gary Williamson, Ed Bickert, Don Thompson and Terry Clarke.

Jazz is part of the Ontario festival circuit this summer. Tim Brady (August 8) and Claude Ranger (August 15) will be at Niagara On The Lake's Shaw Festival, while the Stratford Festival is presenting a series of Monday night events with Ella Fitzgerald (July 4), George Shearing and Adam Makowicz (July 11), Ray Charles (August 1), Preservation Hall Band (Aug. 8) and Mel Torme with the Boss Brass (August 22).

Tenor saxophonist Fraser MacPherson and guitarist Oliver Gannon won top honours in the Juno Awards jazz category for their Sackville lp "I Didn't Know About You". The saxophonist was in Toronto for the awards ceremony and also performed with the Ian Bargh Trio at the Sheraton and with the house quartet at Errols, where he responded to the challenges laid down by pianist Wray Downes and guitarist Roland Prince in fine style.

The Edmonton Jazz Society celebrated 10 years of activity May 8 with an all-day event. This year's Edmonton Festival begins August 14 with Dizzy Gillespie. It continues with Strangeness Beauty, The Sackville All Stars (Buddy Tate, Jay McShann, Jim Galloway) and Albert Collins (15th); Loek Dikker Quintet, Betty Carter (16th), Franco D'Andrea Quartet (from Italy), Alive, and Calgary's Pro Band directed by Bob Brookmeyer (17th); Anthony Braxton/Dave Holland Duet, Alberta Jazz Repertory Orchestra (18th), Time Warp, Dewey Redman Quartet, Woody Shaw (19th), United Front with George Sams, Bob Wilber's Bechet Legacy, Timeless All Stars (Curtis Fuller, Bobby Hutcherson, Harold Land, Cedar Walton, Buster Williams, Billy Higgins) (20th); Art Ensemble of Chicago (21st).

Canada's music community was shocked at the sudden death of saxophonist Bernie Piltch on April 7. The well-known musician/composer had concentrated his energies on studio work, but he was one of the pioneers of jazz in Toronto in the 1950s when he was a member of the Ron Collier Quintet. ***— John Norris***

TORONTO — There has been a lot of jazz activity in Toronto lately, sometimes so much that it has been hard to decide just which club or concert to attend the same night.

Slide Hampton came to Bourbon Street and worked with P.J. Perry, Bernie Senensky, Neil Swainson and Jerry Fuller; hard swinging music every night; all the players were infected by the joyous spirit that prevailed. P.J. created an eventful evening about half way through the engagement with an unbelievable version of ***Old Folks*** that prompted one enthusiastic patron to shout out loud "Parker has returned!" Hampton obviously enjoyed himself immensely, joining the audience after his solo space to listen to the band, and smiling all the time.

Goo Goo Productions brought some excellent music to Basin Street, including Elvin Jones with Pat LaBarbera, Richard Davis and Jean-Paul Bourelly, Archie Shepp with Ken Werner, Marvin Smith and Avery Sharpe, and Freddie Hubbard with Stanley Cowell, Buster Williams and Carl Allen.

The annual club gig in Toronto for Rob McConnell's Boss Brass brought 23 of Toronto's best together. The band swung hard and smooth, and considering the size of the club — some of the members of the audience were practically in the sax section — the sound was extremely good. Thank you Rob for all the hard work that went into making these few nights most memorable, and if I didn't mention all the members in the band, thank you too.

A guitarist of note, returning to Toronto after a lengthy absence was Roland Prince, who worked with Wray Downes, Paul Novotny and Archie Alleyne at Errol's. Playing in the tradition of Wes Montgomery, with traces of Kenny Burrell, he spun webs of intricate beauty and couldn't have worked with a more sympathetic unit. Downes in particular was outstanding. The Eugene Amaro Quintet were at Errols for two weeks: a fresh, exciting well-rehearsed unit with good charts. Eugene was featured on alto, tenor and flute with Mike Malone - trumpet and flugelhorn, Gary Williamson - piano, Chris Connor - acoustic bass and Archie Alleyne - drums.

A great highlight of the season has been the trumpet players who have come to town: Nat Adderley, Doc Cheatham (both at Bourbon Street) and Kenny Wheeler. Kenny came to town as a member of the Dave Holland Quintet with Julian Priester, Steve Ellington and Steve Coleman. Holland took the band through several pieces of intense, compelling music that had the packed Club Bluenote asking for more. The J.J. Johnson lineage was quite evident with Priester, yet he often went "outside" during his solo spots. Wheeler, obviously inspired by the surroundings and the music, expressed himself in outstanding controlled forays. All the members shone in this context and the evening will be long remembered. Thanks to Rainer Wiens, who worked so hard to make this event take place.

The Ontario Science Centre wound up its ninth season of free jazz concerts (CJRT FM's Sound Of Toronto Jazz) with tenor saxophonist Rick Wilkins and his band, with Terry Clarke on drums, Ed Bickert guitar and Don Thompson bass. One of the best of these nine concerts; Wilkins proved that all that studio work has not diminished his ability to play pure jazz. Just finished nine nights with the Boss Brass, where he was often a featured soloist, this small group setting gave him a better chance to work on his own choice of material. Special favourite of the night was a version of ***Au Privave*** which let every member stretch out.

Andy Bey was at Cafe des Copains and returns in June for a lengthy stay at Errols.... The Basie band appeared at the Royal York, and the Toshiko Akiyoshi/Lew Tabackin band at Minkler Auditorium.

Ed Bickert and Steve Wallace will be appear-

DAVE HOLLAND (photograph by Gerard Futrick)

ERNST REYSEGER (photograph by Bill Smith)

ing with the Concord All Stars at the Concord Festival this year.

Bookings for some of the clubs over the next few months in Toronto include Max Roach, Lenny Breau, Lee Konitz, Al Cohn, Richard "Groove" Holmes, Sir Roland Hanna, Art Hodes, Tal Farlow, Phil Woods, Monty Alexander and Joanne Brackeen. — ***Hal Hill***

ERNST REYSEGER

ARC, Toronto, May 14, 1983
Ernst Reyseger, acoustic & electric cello; Bill Smith, soprano saxophone; David Prentice, violin; Richard Bannard, drums; Larry Potter, vibraphone; David Lee, bass.

The Music Gallery, Toronto, May 15, 1983
Ernst Reyseger, solo cello

Somehow overlooked for years (perhaps because it never really got very far as a "jazz" instrument), the cello is now coming into its own as a major vehicle in improvised music; in fact as in some ways the perfect instrument for improvised music. Spanning the registers from bass to the highest highs, supremely flexible in pitch and tone, percussive or legato, almost as polyphonic as a guitar and almost as portable, the cello is being given a new identity by a new generation of performers.

Ernst Reyseger is among these composer/improvisers. The character of his art is offered by more than just his mastery of the cello. He seems able to play just about anything on the instrument, and in fact in the course of a concert, he does. Rather than seeming like empty eclecticism, in that distinctly Dutch manner he uses different musical styles as improvisational elements in a given situation, so that the result is ultimately a sequence of events that come across in a theatrical manner, rather than a mere pastiche.

This is very different from the approach of other serious improvisers, whose performances stay more strictly in their areas of instrumental research. It is a mode of improvisation that has never been very transmittable via records, which makes the performances of such musicians as Reyseger in North America all the more interesting to us (as well as important to their own development). In the group improvisation on Saturday, for example, Reyseger acted as a catalytic element in what became a sort of ongoing music theatre, although there was also a lot of good "strictly musical" improvisation. In his solo concert on Sunday, he managed most of the time to involve the audience in the drama and comedy of his own improvisational problems and solutions as a performer, where, as well as making theater out of a disjointed C string - playing electric kalimba - and spanning musical styles from a vast range of world cultures - he may not have left anyone out - he even managed to play some exceedingly pretty solo pieces, written by fellow cellist Tristan Honsinger. — ***David Lee***

MONTREAL — Many of the rumours about this year's festival program (July 1-10) were confirmed recently by organizers Menard and Simard. The following headliners have been booked: The World Saxophone Quartet, Chico Freeman, Carla Bley, Paquito D'Rivera, Sphere, the Modern Jazz Quartet, V.S.O.P. (with the Marsalis brothers), Sarah Vaughan, Ella Fitzerald, Stan Getz, Ray Charles, Jimmy Smith,

Tito Puente, Didier Lockwood and Christian Escoude, Pat Metheny, David Grisman, Steps Ahead (with the Brecker Brothers and Peter Erskine), Albert King and Albert Collins.

Doudou Boicel has gotten back into his summer act with the scheduling of another "bop concert of the century" this June at Place des Arts. On this occasion the "V.S.O.P. Of Bebop" will be Dizzy Gillespie, Freddie Hubbard, Benny Carter, Slide Hampton, John Lewis, Ray Brown and Mickey Roker.

Earlier in the year the Spectrum was the scene of two major concerts — Mingus Dynasty and Carla Bley. The former oddly enough was arranged by Quebec City's Cafe Campus, and due to limited publicity the turnout was a miserable 200 or so. The performance on the other hand was rather interesting given Mingus Dynasty's impressive new lineup: Jimmy Knepper, Johnny Coles, Ricky Ford, Roland Hanna, Reggie Johnson and Billy Hart. Knepper's presence accounted for some lovely arrangements, plus a good deal of off-the-wall humour on numbers like ***Fables Of Faubus, Peggy's Blue Skylight, Haitian Fight Song, Reincarnation Of A Love Bird, The Man Who Never Sleeps*** and ***Tijuana Gift Shop.***

Carla Bley and her 10-piece band, who were brought in by the festival people, played to capacity crowds two nights running. On opening night, the band kicked things off with a very hot version of ***Blunt Object***. As usual a lot of territory was covered in the course of the evening including a crazy spoof of westerns, entitled ***A Lone Arranger***, and Bley's splendid tribute to Nino Rota, ***8½***. Steve Swallow deserves special mention for his superb bass playing. Electric bass in jazz has never appealed to me, but Swallow obviously knows how to swing and sing on his ax.

Michel Donato's April concert at the Spectrum coincided with another record release by Spectra Scene and Radio-Canada: this time it was a recording of Donato's prize-winning festival performance. On June 4 Spectra Scene will present Chick Corea, Miroslav Vitous and Roy Haynes.

The Rising Sun's spring program included Elvin Jones, Archie Shepp, Sonny Terry, Barney Kessel/Herb Ellis, Jim Hall/Harvie Swartz and Sonny Greenwich.... The Jon Hassel Trio was presented by Traquen'Art at L'Eglise St-Jacques l'Apotre. Steve Reich and 22 musicians performed at Salle Claude Champagne to close the Societe de Musique Contemporaine du Quebec's current season. Diz and Moe (Koffman) did their thing at Place des Arts, while Stephane Grappelli and Keith Jarrett gave separate concerts at Theatre St. Denis.

EMIM put on two festivals — one at L'Opale in early winter and another somewhere on St-Laurent St. in March. Le Grand Cafe is still going strong. Cecile Houle, a good friend of the music, is the current booking agent. Pianist Steve Holt used his gig at the cafe in early April to release his debut recording on the PM label. Vocalist Johanne Desforges on the other hand left for Paris to do a recording date, while bassist Dennis James has been playing with Hank Jones in NYC from time to time.

The jazz community paid tribute to Maury Kaye who passed away in early February after a lengthy illness. Kaye was best known as a leader of the show bands at the El Morocco and Bellevue Casino night clubs during the 1950s. A scholarship fund has been set up in his memory at the McGill Faculty of Music.

— Peter Danson

TORONTO / NEW YORK

When musicians and writers talk about Europe and jazz, it is usually about how the Europeans appreciate jazz more than Americans and consider it to be an art form. Too often, the indigenous European jazz scene is completely ignored. Yet, since the sixties, some very important styles of music have taken shape there. While names like Evan Parker, Derek Bailey, Albert Mangelsdorff, Misha Mengelberg, Han Bennink and Peter Kowald are not exactly household names here in North America, they are major figures in Europe, and in many cases, significant contributors to the evolution of improvised music.

In this sense, it is regrettable that we rarely get to hear live European improvised music. Occasionally though, the German representatives, under the auspices of the Goethe Institute, perform in North America. Over the years, Toronto's Music Gallery has presented such musicians and on March 27, their guests were pianist Alexander von Schlippenbach and percussionist Sven Ake Johansson.

Schlippenbach is part of that European tradition of improvisation which draws upon and parallels Monk's descendants — particularly Cecil Taylor, Dollar Brand and Mal Waldron in Schlippenbach's case. What is most striking about Schlippenbach, though, apart from his awesome technique, is his methodical approach to improvisational form. At the Music Gallery he hammered out one structural transmutation after another in a stern, unwavering manner that was startling in both its precision and consistency. When the flow of rocking syncopations and pointillistic runs reached overwhelming proportions, the hilarious Johansson stepped into the picture with humorous, free-form antics. These included an assortment of comic pea-shooting, junk throwing and verbal forays. No less impressive was Johansson's straight-ahead drumming. His awkward style of punctuating rhythms with jerky accents while cooking on the cymbals brought Montreal's Guy Nadon immediately to mind.

I heartily recommend the Schlippenbach-Johansson Duo to any jazz fan who has never heard European improvised music. If you are already hip to this stuff, I suggest you contact your nearest Goethe Institute representative or Al Mattes at The Music Gallery. It would be great to hear more of this music more often.

While a weekend in Toronto occasionally gives me an opportunity to hear important musicians who do not make it to Montreal, three days in New York offers everything at once. New York also enables one to determine who is really taking care of business. I had an opportunity to hear seven acts this past Easter, and two "young lions" (as they are now called) and one veteran were far-and-away the front runners.

Wynton Marsalis and Anthony Davis represent polar ends of the new wave of young, well-schooled musicians, and their respective venues were as much evidence of this as anything. Marsalis played to SRO crowds at the famous Village Vanguard, while Davis drew respectable audiences of 80 or so at Soho's The Kitchen.

I only caught one set of Marsalis, but it is enough to confirm my estimation of him. I think it is fruitless to speculate whether he will be THE new force in jazz. What is clear is that he has shaken up the scene by aiming for the highest standards in jazz, and has done so with a verve and polish that all too often have fallen by the wayside since the sixties. Here, I am not referring to his technical fluency. Certainly his trumpet playing is a marvel, but in that sense so was Jon Faddis's when he first hit New York. More important is Marsalis' concept of music-making and band leadership. Specifically, I am thinking of the demands he sets for group improvisation and dynamics. For him a jazz performance is more than a series of hot solos. At the Vanguard, for instance, the level of collective interaction and reaction was nothing less than telepathic. Cues signalled sudden shifts in tempo and mood, of which there were at least five or six in any one piece. It was not a matter of copying the famous Miles Davis Quintet, but rather emulating its working principles. I have heard the group on many occasions, and their performances are always different in significant ways. Of course, Marsalis is still in his apprenticeship phase. Where he will go eventually I would not hazard a guess. But I do know the beginning of his career is just fine. So don't miss it!

Finesse of an entirely different order is offered by Anthony Davis' Episteme band. Davis is half a generation older than Marsalis, which partly explains their different approaches. Davis is old enough to have been a participant in the past decade's extensions of '60s music in which the "global village effect" was critical. It was embraced to the extent that Davis (and many of his mentors and contemporaries) now works in an area that is simply referred to as improvisational music. This includes world folk and modern classical musics, as well as contemporary jazz. In the case of the Episteme band, Davis has designed set compositional and improvisational formats in which to explore subtle variations in rhythm, harmony and melody.

At The Kitchen performance, the music initially struck me as being unduly meditative. In time, though, it took on an unusual mesmerizing quality that was ultimately irresistable. The charm was two-fold: first, Davis' use of unique instrumental colours (piano, violin, cello, flute, bass clarinet, bassoon and vibraphone); and second, his structuring of a lively tension between melodic counterpoint and drone effects on one hand, and rhythmic nuance on the other. The individual contributions of cellist Abdul Wadud and flutist James Newton also deserve special mention. Both lent the proceedings extraordinary power and excitement. The concert was another illustration of how satisfying and coherent new music can be.

Repertory bands have never been my cup of tea, but Philly Jo Jones' Dameronia at the Blue Note was another matter. Hearing a little big band with veterans like Frank Wess, Cecil Payne and Walter Davis Jr. playing such splendid works as ***Soultrane*** and ***Dial "B" For Beauty*** couldn't miss, and it didn't. Catching Philly Joe at the helm was a lesson in itself. If you were not impressed with Dameronia's first recorded effort, don't miss the real thing.

— Peter Danson

ANN ARBOR — Flautist James Newton closed Eclipse's 1982-83 season with three sets at the University Club (on the University of Michigan's Ann Arbor campus) April 16. Newton brought a quartet with Detroiter Geri Allen on piano, Anthony Cox, bass; and Andrew Cyrille, drums. The band played mostly his compositions, although pianist Allen was represented in the

book along with Mingus and Monk. If memory serves, Newton was last heard here a few years ago in duets with pianist Anthony Davis. Coincidentally, Davis and cellist Abdul Wadud played the recital hall of the Detroit Institute of Art the day before Newton's concert, in a performance with Creative Arts Collective members Anthony Holland, saxophone; A. Spencer Barefield, guitar; Marlene Rice, violin and viola; Jaribu Shahid, bass and Tani Tabbal, drums. The concert included Wadud's ***Tawaafa*** and several of Davis' compositions.

One could make interesting comparisons between Eclipse's closer and its pentultimate concert this season, an evening devoted to Duke Ellington's music as performed by a group led by drummer J.C. Heard. The April 2 concert featured Herbie Williams and Marcus Belgrave, trumpets; Sherman Mitchell, trombone; Charlie Gabriel, tenor sax; George Benson, alto; Doc Holliday, baritone; Earl van Ripper, piano, and Will Austin, bass. The same basic group with the same charts played the Detroit Institute of Art April 28 in DIA's third annual Ellington Birthday Party (a day early). Heard was joined by Doc Cheatham on trumpet in mid-May, and May 29 led a quintet at the Stroh's Motor City Bluegrass and Traditional Music Festival at Meadowbrook, on a double bill with singer Big Joe Turner.

Baker's is cooking once again with the sort of ingredients that built its reputation in the old days: musicians like Tommy Flanagan, Detroiter Gary Shunk, David "Fathead" Newman, Dexter Gordon and Johnny Griffin. Singer Betty Carter was scheduled in May. Maybe the economy really is recovering.

The street-level corner room which was the now-defunct Detroit Jazz Center's Jazz Gallery (and earlier the World Stage Cafe) has featured jazz again lately. Bassist Rod Hicks recorded a live album there April 8-9, but as a cellist (bassist Melvin Jackson took the lower voice). The excellent group also included trumpeter Marcus Belgrave, pianist Teddy Harris Jr., and drummer Roy Brooks. At the end of April the club hosted two guitarists from different coasts and of radically different approaches. Guitarist Eugene Chadbourne is known for his new music efforts, but on April 22 he fronted what was billed as a country-type band aptly named Shock-A-Billy. On Sunday Oregonian Ralph Towner did a solo set at the club.

It's no surprise that Marcus Belgrave's name keeps popping up in various combinations around here. He is that good, deserving of his position on the local scene. His Jazz Development Workshop and Donald Walden's 20-piece Detroit Jazz Orchestra did a two-concert series on successive Fridays April 22 and 29. The orchestra did the earlier concert, with Belgrave, Roy Brooks and Geri Allen among the twenty. The second concert could have been billed as the Brass Menagerie — trumpeters Lester Bowie, Belgrave, Maurice Davis, Russell Green, Louis Smith and Felton Jones. Smith incidentally leads the University of Michigan jazz band, and is remembered for a 1958 Blue Note LP with Cannonball Adderley.

The Caucus Club in downtown Detroit has been booking two and three-piece jazz groups recently, led by John Katalenic, Dennis Tini, Joe LoDuca, and Ursula Walker with Buddy Budson. Matt Michaels and Jack Brokensha will be there June 7-18.

On the Canadian side of the river, Antonelli's Radio Cafe and Tavern in Windsor combined guitarist Ed Bickert, bassist Dave Young, Louis Smith and drummer Pistol Allen on May Day. And back in Ann Arbor, blues pianist Big Joe Duskin played at the Blind Pig April 29 and 30.

— David Wild

BOSTON — Although Boston still has no full-time jazz club, things are definitely looking up. Over 21,000 people attended the 12th annual George Wein-produced Boston Globe Jazz Festival (March 18-27). Opening the event was a free Friday, March 18 afternoon concert in the Faneuil Hall Marketplace (downtown near the wharf) by Pat Hollenbeck and the Medium Rare Big Band of the New England Conservatory of Music, followed that evening by a not-so-free "Big Band Ball" held in Boston's Park Plaza Hotel to Les Elgart and his Orchestra and the Widespread Jazz Orchestra's danceable sounds. Other concerts took place either at Symphony Hall or the Berklee Performance Center, and featured Lionel Hampton, B.B. King, Bobby Bland, Art Blakey (who added to his Messengers guest soloists Makoto Ozone (piano), trumpeters Jon Faddis and Wynton Marsalis, tenor saxophonist Branford Marsalis and trombonist Robin Eubanks), Oscar Peterson, the World Saxophone Quartet, Paquito D'Rivera, Betty Carter, the MJQ and Return to Forever. Tuesday, March 22 featured a stellar tribute to composer George Russell, featuring a selection of New England Conservatory members and Ricky Ford, Bill Pierce, guitarist Mick Goodrick, tap dancer Leon Collins and blazing local reedman Dick Johnson. Earlier, Russell had participated in a ceremony with Boston mayor Kevin White, who honored the musician by naming the date "George Russell Day".

Other performers included Spyro Gyra and Dave Sanborn. All in all, it was a fine, diverse, festival, sadly overpriced, but well-presented nontheless.

In April vocalist Mark Murphy made a rare visit to the increasingly jazz-oriented Jonathan Swift's in Cambridge, followed by a charged-up Dizzy Gillespie, the latter backed rivetingly by saxophonist Dick Johnson, pianist Makoto Ozone, drummers Terri Lyne Carrington (a recorded "veteran" at seventeen years old!) and Nasyr-Abdul Al Khabyyr (down from Montreal for the gig) and bassist Marshall Wood.... Dewey Redman's Quintet, Don Cherry & Codona, Bobby Hutcherson and the Ricky Ford Quintet all played at Harvard's Hasty Pudding Club... Keith Jarrett's solo concert at Symphony Hall was cancelled due to lack of advance sales, but Windham Hill pianist George Winston returned to Boston for a well-received performance with other Windham Hill artists Liz Story (piano) and Alex De Grassi (guitar).... Illinois Jacquet spent most of March and April as a guest lecturer/performer at Harvard.... Gunther Schuller and his famed New England Ragtime Ensemble checked into Symphony Hall for a delightful evening of orchestrated Scott Joplin, Joseph Lamb, James Scott, James Reese Europe, Jelly Roll Morton and Eubie Blake.... Stanley Turrentine played at "The Channel" and lastly, Brigitte Berman's lively documentary, "Bix", had its Boston premier April 24 at New England Life Hall.

— Joe Carey

NEW YORK — The last weekend in February saw an abundance of concerts of new(er) music. Don Cherry played on the 25th and Odean Pope the 26th at Soundscape. Also on the 26th, the Billy Bang String Ensemble performed "Acoustic Illusions" at the Alternative Museum. The ensemble featured Jason Hwang (of Commitment, viola), Diedre Murray (cello), Wilber Morris (bass) and Kafi Patrice Nossoma (harp) along with the leader's violin and dance by Rrata Christine Jones. Over the years, Bang has presented several versions of string ensembles and this one exhibited a dense sound, good exchanges of solos, especially between Bang and Hwang, and a nice balance of compositional materials.

The next day at the Kaufmann Theater in the American Museum of Natural History, the Frank Lowe Sextet played "A Jazz Tribute to W.C. Handy" to a full house on a great sunny afternoon. The sextet featured Amina Claudine Myers' vocal on ***St. Louis Blues*** and ***Careless Love***, and James Williams on piano along with Butch Morris (cornet), Billy Bang, Wilber Morris and Tim Pleasant (drums). They played five songs by Handy and ***Second Guessing*** by Lowe. Both of these concerts were part of "Black History Month".

The Saheb Sarbib (bass) Quintet at Sweet Basil, with Joe Ford and Booker T. (saxophones), Bob Neloms (piano) and Dennis Charles (drums) performed spiritedly. Their groove, driven by constant cheers from Neloms and Booker T. on the bandstand, reminded one of Charles Mingus and Rahsaan Roland Kirk; most enjoyable.

Craig Harris played at Sweet Basil a week later and March 13 & 14, Ahmed Abdullah brought in his new ensemble with Billy Bang, Bob Neloms, Muneer Abdul Fataah (cello), Brian Smith (bass) and John Betsch (drums). The group utilized the combination of three string instruments nicely; sometimes as a thick voicing behind the trumpet, other times collectively improvising by themselves. Neloms again added a really joyous touch to the music, fusing his vast knowledge of the jazz tradition with his uniquely warm personality, and Betsch drove the band hard. Many of Ahmed's materials are inspired by African folk melodies and were effective in this setting. A welcome chance to hear him again, as recently he has not been playing as much around town as he was in the '70s. The group played again at Small's Paradise in April with the addition of Akbar Ali, violin.

A week later the Henry Threadgill Sextet played at Sweet Basil with the same personnel heard on their first record, except with Diedre Murray (cello) replacing Brian Smith. The ensemble was functioning excellently, and the day after the gig went into the studio to record their second album for About Time. All of these concerts were part of "Music Is An Open Sky", the Sunday and Monday series at Sweet Basil. The crowd and the atmosphere are good and many musicians hang out there, just like the old Tin Palace used to be.

March 11 & 12 John Zorn presented his "Track and Field" at the Dance Gallery; this time augmented by other dancers and performers. This was the third public performance of this composition in New York, following last year's performances at Roulette and Public Theater, and the music by now has finely developed, reflecting Zorn's unusual compositional skill.

On Sunday, April 3, Andy Capole of WKCR-FM presented the John Lindberg Trio and Leo Smith's New Dalta Ahkri at Wollman Auditorium, Columbia University. John Lindberg has lived in Paris for about three years and recently decided to move back to the U.S. He has been a solid bass player from his early days with Charles "Bobo" Shaw's Human Arts Ensemble and has now emerged as a fine leader/organizer in his own right. His 40-minute ***Haunt Of The Unresolved*** featured one voice continually playing a written part, over which the others improvised. Hugh Ragin (brass) and Marty Ehrlich (reeds) superbly fit into the music, and a nice interaction developed between the three.

After the trio, New Dalta Ahkri performed what was supposed to be a ceremonial ritual drawn from Rastifarian prophecy. Leo Smith sang on some of the tunes, and the trap drumless rhythm section with two bassists (Mario Pavone, Joe Fonda) and two percussionists (M. Mills, Yohuru Ralph Williams) fit well into the music's structure. The group played the same material, refined with the addition of a female dancer, at the Public Theater on April 29 and 30, opening for Space (Roscoe Mitchell, Gerald Oshita, reeds; Tom Buckner, voice). Space also featured beautiful solo pieces by Oshita and Mitchell this time.

April 24, the Gunter Hampel Galaxie Big Band was at the Wollman. It included Jeanne Lee, Perry Robinson, Mark Whitecage, Thomas Keyserling and old friends Marion Brown and Steve McCall, supplemented by Leo Smith, Charles Tyler, John Stubblefield and others. The concert was preceded by four days of open rehearsal, which was a good way of providing insight into the music.

After a long absence from the New York scene, Don Ayler returned with a sextet to Soundscape on April 8. The final piece of the evening, ***Peace***, sounded beautiful.... The Public Theater started its season April 8 & 9 with the Dave Holland Quintet, and the Rova Saxophone Quartet played a nice set of Steve Lacy material on the 15th.

At this writing the second "Company" in New York is taking place at Shambhara Center, 49 East 21st Street, from April 28 to May 1, despite many financial difficulties. Musicians this time are Derek Bailey (guitar), Peter Brotzmann and Ned Rothenberg (reeds), Hugh Davies (live electronics), Gerry Hemingway (percussion), Joelle Leandre (bass) and Ernst Reyseger (cello). Musically there have been nice surprises and developments. The place has very live acoustics so the musicians have to adjust their improvisations accordingly. There were some nice acoustic qualities in a duo with Bailey and Reyseger, and it was interesting to see the interaction between Brotzmann and Rothenberg. Although it may be rather unusual to find a musician playing (only) trap drums in Company, Hemingway reacted to the situation very well.

— ***Kazunori Sugiyama***

SAN FRANCISCO — The sad news from Oakland, California is that pianist Earl "Fatha" Hines passed away in his 78th year on April 23, 1983. He had been living in Oakland since the '60s.

Only a week earlier Hines led his newly formed octet for a two-night engagement at Kimball's in San Francisco. The consummate artist, Hines surpassed himself in performance although he had been ill. He also told jokes, sang and led the octet, which included trumpeter Eddie Smith, through beautiful classics: ***West End Blues, Squeeze Me, Mandy, Make Up Your Mind.***

Luckily for those who never had the opportunity to hear Earl Hines' distinctive piano style in person, filmakers Ashley James and Tony Williams, with pianist Les Walker, will be releasing their cinema verite portrait of Hines in December, "Fatha Knows Best". Thanks to the personal generosity of Hines, Billy Eckstine, Dizzy Gillespie and many others, the film is an insightful and imaginatively conceived statement on jazz as an historical institution in America. However, this 2-year project has been hindered by funding problems. The NEA and other likely sources apparently wear cultural blinders and the filmakers continue to seek assistance. Contact: Obsidian Films, 30 Berry Street, San Francisco, CA 94107/ (415) 543-1254.

A torrential winter was lightened by the arrival of the Mal Waldron/Charlie Rouse Quintet, February 22-27 at the Keystone Korner. Mal Waldron has been long overlooked in the States due to his European residence. Yet as pianist and composer he has been a major force in the music since the early '50s. Thirty years later the master is playing better than ever. His long, hypnotic, climatic solos, dense and darkly colored, evolved into bright, madly swinging ensemble pieces with drummer Billy Higgins chuckling subtly on the bottom. Bassist David Friesen added an emotional edge and trumpeter Eddie Henderson got a new lease on his career. And Charlie Rouse, to quote Waldron, was simply SUPERB.

Codona, the happy combination of Don Cherry, Colin Wolcott and Nana Vasconcelos, appeared at the Great American Music Hall on April 6. Basing their music on folk tunes and

rhythms, the trio created a serene world village atmosphere. Tablas spoke to talking drums, the sitar was strummed like a banjo, fretted like a guitar. Cherry's pocket trumpet wove golden threads around berimbau, zither, triangle, gong, thumb piano, flutes, as the beat shifted from Africa to Brazil to Asia to the blues. The large audience was encouraged to sing along. Moved by the unaccustomed strength of gentle forces, the crowd responded, and was uplifted.

March 12, Marian McPartland and Teddy Wilson performed a special duet concert at Davies Symphony Hall; Dizzy Gillespie and Joe Pass played a two week stint at the Fairmont Hotel's posh and pricy Venetian Room, as did Ella Fitzgerald in April. Pianist Jimmy Rowles and his very talented trumpet-playing daughter, Stacy Rowles entertained at Kimball's; Nat Adderley with Sonny Fortune played both the Great American Music Hall and Bajone's. The Keystone Korner (always teetering on the brink of financial ruin) manages to keep its doors open for Art Blakey, Woody Shaw, Kenny Barron, Airto and Flora Purim, Chico Freeman, Eddie Lockjaw Davis, Phil Woods.... Pianist Norma Teagarden, soon to be crowned 1983 Grand Empress of Jazz at the Sacramento Dixieland Jazz Jubilee, holds forth Wednesday nights at the Washington Square Bar and Grill, and piano giants Martha Young and Ed Kelly continue regularly at Bajone's.

The Bay Area Jazz Society, which sponsored an educational workshop concerning The Music Business on April 23rd, also features local musicians at Monday night jam sessions at Kimball's. Outstanding in this spectrum are singer Bobby McFerrin, the Pickle Family Circus Jazz Band and an exciting new quintet, Autumn. With the indomitable George Sams on trumpet, the sensitive beauty of Ray Collins' bass clarinet and saxophone, Rudy Mwongosi's prodigious piano playing, James Lewis' formidable bass and the controlled dynamite of Anthony Brown's drum kit, the band transforms standards from the bebop era into a 1983 context. Their first lp will be out soon. Watch for it.

— Elaine Cohen

PRAXIS JAZZ FESTIVAL

Athens, Greece
Spring 1983

Jazz lovers in Athens, Greece were kept busy from mid-February to mid-March attending films and concerts. The focus of this activity was the 1983 Praxis Jazz Festival, organized by Praxis Records (run by Kostas Yiannoulopoulos) in cooperation with the Goethe Institute, Athens (Hartmut Geerken, program director), and Soundwave Ltd.,

This was the third Praxis festival. The first, in 1980, featured Leo Smith, Sam Rivers, Dave Holland, John Tchicai, Peter Brotzmann and Han Bennink; the second, in 1982, included Jeanne Lee, Gunter Hampel, Jemeel Moondoc, and Greek musicians as well. This year's festival had two nights of jazz film workshops and four nights of music: Globe Unity performed twice; the major event was a concert by the Don Pullen - George Adams - Cameron Brown - Dannie Richmond Quartet, and one evening was devoted to Greek musicians.

Opening a festival with film workshops is risky. Attendance was good and the response was warm on both 14 and 15 February, however, and with good reason. The films, of high technical and musical quality, presented excerpts from the 1982 festivals, in Berlin, Munich, and Burghausen. Featured were the Milt Jackson - Monty Alexander group, the Texas Tenors, pianist (not the singer) Joe Turner, Richie Cole, and others. The highlight, unquestionably, was a stunning, moving performance by Alberta Hunter. She is not only of antiquarian interest: she is a superior singer and an engaging personality whose energy and saltiness made her rendition of ***My Handy Man*** totally believable. The German audience was reluctant to let her leave the stage, and the Athens audience applauded her enthusiastically.

Jazz films are valuable, but they are, finally, only films. Despite their success at the Praxis festival, they served primarily as a prelude to the live music. Globe Unity was first. It performed on 17 and 18 February at the Goethe Institute to standing-room-only crowds. The group played two sets each night, each set consisting of one one-hour piece. Globe Unity plays free jazz well, and its sound is enhanced by the group's texture and the players' personalities. They create an aural and a visual treat. Globe Unity is bottom heavy, a la Gil Evans' bands, with three trombones and a tuba. Of the former, Johannes Bauer and Gunter Christmann play loudly, frequently at breakneck speed, while the acclaimed Albert Mangelsdorff points his horn toward the floor and plays, often barely audibly. Tubaist Bob Stewart, who used to play with Charles Mingus, goes largely unnoticed until he solos, at which time he fashions thoughtful, sensitive lines that one does not expect to hear coming from a tuba. Kenny Wheeler and Toshinori Kondo, the two trumpeters, are the antipodes. Of all the players, Wheeler is the most introspective and, with his eighth-note runs and gorgeous tone, is the soloist closest to bop, especially when playing flugelhorn. Kondo, on the other hand, the most extroverted of the eleven, is a one-man band. He leaps about the stage and weaves among the other musicians as they improvise with and riff behind him; he plays his trumpet open and muted, and then he plays only the mute, followed by a child's plastic bird whistle, and then any two of these at one time.

The two saxophonists are similar to each other. Gerd Dudek and Evan Parker, both of whom play tenor and soprano, favor long melodic lines. They are substantial soloists. Parker has mastered the Harry Carney - Roland Kirk technique of circular breathing, so he can sustain a solo for ten minutes or so without pausing for a breath. After soloing, each returns quietly — inconspicuously, really — to the group.

The rhythm section supports the others throughout, but pianist Alex Schlippenbach, bassist Alan Silva, and drummer Paul Lovens also solo. The first is especially effective at frantic tempos; the second is a wonderfully inventive player; the third, like Kondo, plays a variety of instruments, including a saw and a hubcap.

Globe Unity is mostly a European group that is not widely known outside its home territory. It is nonetheless a splendid aggregation deserving of wider recognition than it has hitherto received.

The Goethe Institute could not accomodate the expected audience for the next concert on 28 February, so it was held at the Orpheus Theater, the largest hall in Athens. And wisely so: almost every ticket was sold. The feature, of course, was the Pullen - Adams - Brown - Richmond Quartet, which is one of the finest groups of the last five years. The musicians do not attempt to emulate or recreate Charles Mingus' music or mood, but since all but Brown were longtime regulars with Mingus the quartet constitutes the ***real*** Mingus Dynasty. Some groups, after being together for a year or two, begin to play less demanding material than previously and rest on their laurels. This is decidedly not happening with this quartet. Yes, it plays tunes from its recent albums (one can understand the impulse, yet it is one to be resisted), and, yes, Richmond's patter delights the audience, but is really superfluous; nonetheless, the level of improvisation is so high and the group's integrity is so great that each performance is masterful and memorable.

The group makes a strange, stunning appearance. Brown wears a coat and tie; Adams, a loose shirt and a Muslim cap; Richmond, cowboy attire; Pullen, a tuxedo. They are serious but not somber, and Brown and Richmond suggest an impishness that buoys one's spirits.

The first of the two sets began awkwardly. The sound was so out of balance that the bass boomed and the piano could barely be heard. At the end of the first number Pullen halted

GLOBE UNITY · GRONINGEN 1982
Albert Mangelsdorff · Alan Silva · Ernst Petrowsky · Evan Parker · Toshinori Kondo (photograph by David Prentice)

the concert. Ten minutes later, when the balance was corrected, the music resumed. After the second set the audience demanded an encore, which was provided.

Although both Brown and Richmond soloed occasionally and well, Adams and Pullen were the major soloists, as was to be expected. Adams is equally adept on tenor and flute. On the former he is something of a Sonny Rollins disciple, with a virile, large, often raspy tone. On the latter, he is lithe yet forceful. He is also a whimsical blues singer. The acrobatic Pullen is a perfect foil for Adams. The pianist creates Coltrane-like sheets of sound with his three-handed technique: left hand, right hand, and back of the right hand. Listeners familiar with Pullen's work know his technique well, but it is something of a wonder to the uninitiated. His goal, obviously, is to stretch the limits of pianistic expression by playing more notes than were previously thought possible. At first he appears to be slapping the keys haphazardly with the back of his hand, but one soon perceives that he is always in control, that he plays only the notes that he wishes. If Pullen may be faulted, it would be for overindulging his technique. Restraining his torrents of notes would defeat what he is trying to accomplish, however. More is more.

Praxis concluded one week later, on 7 March, with an evening of four Greek duos at the Alambra Theater. Following as professional a group as the Pullen - Adams - Brown - Richmond Quartet would be difficult for any local talent, but listeners turned out and the players did well. These are the duos: Minas Alexiades and Vasiles Papavasileiou, Petros Protopappas and Nikos Touliatos, Demetres Zapheireles and Andreas Georgiou, and Giorgos Xatzemixelakes and Vasiles Papavasileiou. The festival's producers deserve thanks for granting these musicians exposure in a big-league context.

Praxis is no Newport (Kool) or Monterey. It is small scale. It is also very good, and it is, perhaps surprisingly, not conservative. It is a perfect example of how dedicated jazz lovers (Yiannoulopoulos and Geerken) can present, with limited means and far from the world's jazz centers, excellent jazz and can cultivate interest in it among a seemingly uninterested populace. Their efforts and risks were amply rewarded. *— Benjamin Franklin V*

NICK BRIGNOLA

Page Hall, SUNY, Albany, N.Y.
April 23, 1983

Nick Brignola - soprano, alto, tenor, baritone saxophones; Dewey Redman - tenor saxophone; Dave Holland - bass; Jack DeJohnette - drums & synthesizer.

Saturday, April 23 was a fine night for Upstate New York jazz fans, and approximately 750 of them showed up for an evening with saxophonist Nick Brignola and friends. Brignola, a Capitol District resident, has been performing in this area for the better part of 25 years. He is a consummate saxophonist, best known for his special relationship to the alto and, especially, baritone saxophone.

The evening's performance began with a Dave Holland original, ***Jumpin' In***, and featured Nick on alto. It was an exciting opening and the crowd, which seemed to be comprised heavily of college students, was enthusiastic in its applause. A rousing beginning.

Jack DeJohnette's composition ***Tin Can Alley*** followed. It has been somewhat revised in form and orchestration since it was recorded on ECM Records, and could have used a bit more rehearsal. Unfortunately, for this concert only one rehearsal was available. Nevertheless, the performance had its positive moments, and featured Nick on the horn that first brought him international recognition, the baritone saxophone.

Another original of Jack's, ***Pastel Rhapsody,*** was introduced by its composer on a Casio synthesizer. During this and his later solo, Jack displayed a fine keyboard technique, and an especially arresting command of color and chord movement. Dave's composition, ***Four Winds*** closed the first half of the concert, and provided Nick with an opportunity to display his abilities on the soprano saxophone. His solo spot was first, and he was hot, performing in what is loosely referred to as a free-bop framework, with the soloist moving in and out of the customary chord changes, and employing a freer-than-usual variety of tonal colorations, by way of speech-like sounds and extended fingerings. Dewey, who has always been at home in this type of setting, seemed a bit reserved on this occasion, but the audience was not disappointed. Dave concluded the piece with a captivating solo.

After the intermission the band reconvened with two duets, ***Fun***, an original written for Dewey Redman and himself, featuring both on tenor, and Ellington's ***Sophisticated Lady***, which spotlighted Dave Holland with Nick on alto and baritone. The first was certainly appropriately titled, as the two saxophonists romped through a piece that reminded one of a children's play-song in its simplicity and catchiness of line and rhythm, and of one of the late Sonny Stitt's rousing two-tenor vehicles in its delightful swinging quality. The second duo changed the mood a bit, as Nick opened on alto. His command of the horn, and his natural singing expressionism, were certainly showcased on this Ellington evergreen. He switched to baritone to close the number, and showed why he is considered one of the finest baritonists in jazz history by musicians and knowledgeable listeners. Nick has dedicated this composition to the late Harry Carney, who was both a friend and an inspiration to him during his early career, on his Interplay record "New York Bound".

Nick introduced the completely improvised blues that followed by saying that this was a favored challenge to the jazz artist, and that the title would have to await its completion. From the outset, it was filled with the kind of spontaneous interplay and esp-like ability of jazz artists to contribute, and respond to, fresh musical ideas. Featuring two tenors, the opening, which was a slow-drag, segued into a bass-drums duo that picked up the tempo and established a rockbed rhythmic foundation. Nick soared into the solo spotlight, with apt riffs and color provided by the sensitive Dewey Redman, who also played a wonderful solo. The band completed a stunning series of chase choruses, each spurring the others, before Jack brought the house down with a drum solo of such variety, musicality and power that it would be very hard to imagine any drummer, from any era, providing a more satisfying performance.

The concert closed with Dewey Redman's original, ***Rush Hour***. Dewey's opening solo was his finest of the night, and featured his own unique vocalizing effects to great advantage. It was the only number on which he did so, but it was well worth the wait. Nick followed on alto, employing his widest range of expression and technique, inspired no doubt by Dewey's flight. His dexterity, passion and freedom were a highlight of the concert. Dave and Jack returned to the duo format before Dave performed a "seeing-is-believing" arco (bowed) solo that brought smiles to the artists and mesmerized the audience. At this tempo, a pizzicato solo would have been impressive. Jack switched to the synthesizer, employed a fast calypso rhythm and with additional accompaniment from the others, provided a touch of joyous good fun to the proceedings, as he ripped through his keyboard solo. The closing brought Jack back to his drums as Nick and Dewey improvised a closing blues theme. It was one of the most authentic and satisfying jazz events to have occurred in the Capitol District of Upstate New York in a long while, as was made abundantly clear by the unrestrained applause that greeted the artists at the end.

— David N. Peirce

JAZZ/MUSIQUE A GRENOBLE

Grenoble, France
March 21-27, 1983

The "Maison de la Culture", which organizes this festival, changed its name from "5 Jours de Jazz" to "Jazz/Musique a Grenoble". The diagonal stroke is not meant to imply that jazz is no longer considered to be music; rather it signals the subtle distinction between different kinds of music. Thus, the festival confronted jazz purists with music that approaches jazz in substance without giving up its own identity. The organizers offered music ranging from classical and free jazz to avant-garde; improvised music and new wave performances, young talents as well as established stars.

The Francois Mechali Quintet with Mechali, bass (France), Andre Jaume, bass clarinet (F), Radu Malfatti, trombone (Austria), Ken Wheeler, trumpet (Canada) and Gunter Sommer, drums (GDR) played carefully elaborated sound constellations, Malfatti visibly manipulating his trombone, Jaume producing extremely clean and euphonic sounds, a singing and talking bass and playful drumming, which kept the music from becoming merely academic. Mechali and Wheeler had worked intensively for one week with 15 musicians from Grenoble: the result was refreshing and intelligent music, going unconventional ways, splitting into groups and extraordinary duos. Thanks for this experiment also belongs to the A.G.E.M. (Atelier Grenoble Espace Musical), which also organized concerts of junior talents, such as the piano duo of Francois Raulin and Pascal Lloret, and Benoit Theibergien, guitar and Khier Guefif, trumpet.

A rare event was "Torito", eight musicians from the A.M.R. (Atelier Musique et Recherche) in Geneva. Jacques Probst presented an oratorio adapted from a novel by Julio Cortazar about the self-accusation and self-defense of a prize-fighter. A thought-provoking poem, expressively recited and intelligently commentated by the musicians. Equally exciting was the concert of Jean Bolcato, bass, Christian Rollet, drums, and Patrick Vollat, piano, three members of A.R.F.I. (Association a la Recherche d'un Folklore Imaginaire) from Lyon. Maybe their trio is call-

DAUNIK LAZRO (photograph by Delahaye)

ed "Traces" because they follow traces of an enormous variety of musical elements from classical and blues to folk music. An extreme tightness of musical events and extended phrases, building tension, produced with the most advanced instrumental techniques. It is a real loss that these representatives of French music are still not taken notice of outside Europe. This is equally true of Daunik Lazro, alto saxophone (France), who gave an unforgettable concert with Jean-Jacques Avenel, bass (F) and Tristan Honsinger, cello (USA). Their nervy, restless music, penetrating every pore, was underlaid with a tremulous rhythm. As the listener tried to catch hold of the bits of beautiful melodies, Lazro crudely broke them up and the utopia vanished into caterwauling. Only Parker and Ayler were able to express anguish as painfully as Lazro did. The three musicians did not allow any distance between their music and the listener. Those of the audience who left, probably expect art to be delightful. I never considered Picasso's cubistic faces with everything out of place especially delightful, yet nevertheless his paintings are beautiful.

People looking for positive vibrations enjoyed themselves immensely at Lol Coxhill's (reeds, UK) and Dave Holland's (piano, UK) concert. But the duo did not provide cheap amusement through easily digestible music. Their special spirit lies in the decomposition of catchy melodies; the ingenious art of slipping in "false" notes. By contrast Bex (piano & synthesizer, F) and Jouvelet (drums, F) added humour to their music from the outside: for example Bex playing musette and French chansons while Jouvelet shaved with a noisy vacuum cleaner. There were more dadaesque absurdities, but their dull dance music between gags was itself deserving of parody.

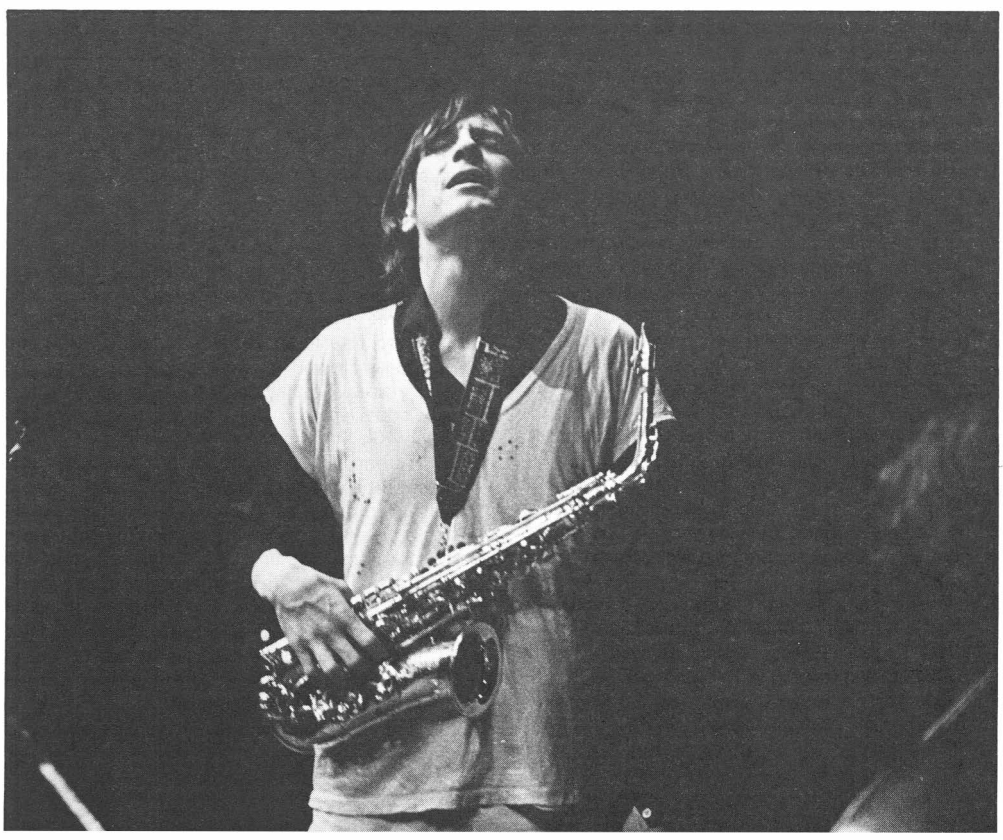
Besides "Traces", Lazro/ Avenel/ Honsinger, and Coxhill/Holland, avant-garde free music was further represented by the trio of Lindsay Cooper bassoon (UK), Maggie Nichols voice (UK) and Irene Schweizer piano (Switzerland), founding members of the Feminist Improvisers' Group. Irene Schweizer always created a safe ground for Nichols' voice acrobatics and Coopers' sound experiments with her manipulated bassoon.

A vocalist completely different from Maggie Nichols is Diamanda Galas (USA). Modulating her dramatic voice with technical devices of all sorts and accentuating its demonical aspect with an effective light show, she performed her latest compositions "wild women with steakknives" and a piece dedicated to the victims of the Greek junta. Like Lazro, she expressed human misery, but Galas' hysterical screaming – to me – seemed like narcissistic wallowing in pain. Cathartic theater.

Like Galas, Ghedalia Tazartes also constantly echoed himself or the sounds coming from a tape recorder. Although he used everyday sounds as his musical material, the overall effect was surreal. The cold and technical aspect of his art was rendered graphically by a dancer who seemed glued to a puppet which looked completely identical to him. Two bodies with three legs and arms mechanically moved around the mobile stage of the theater.

While all these avant-garde artists performed in a relatively small hall, about half of them with free admission, the big hall was reserved for the stars like Freddie Hubbard and the Sun Ra Arkestra. The Arkestra is still about the same. (A new and nice gesture, however, was that the musicians stopped playing while the audience applauded solos). The New Wave has reached the infinity of their galaxy, and a crude beat, mechanical rhythms and top-worldly city din disturb the Sun's universal harmony, to which we had been accustomed. They are still convinced that the salvation of all humankind comes from their music. I am not sure if the Arkestra got the enthusiastic applause for its music or if Sun Ra got it for his fashion show.

It seems that the New Thing has to be wrapped up in the old music for the jazzophiles. In any case, the two pure new wave groups presented within this festival were received by half of the audience with indignation. The Angel/Maimone Enterprise performed a show which was carefully thought out in its visual and musical effects. Angel, a mixture of David Bowie and Klaus Kinski, presented his songs in an extremely cool and arrogant manner. He satirized Italian operas and provoked the audience with a brutalized version of a chanson by Louis Aragon and Leo Ferre, holy to French listeners, ***C'est ainsi que les hommes vivent***. A performance interlaced with elements of transvestitism, extremely mechanical rhythms from drums and synthesizers, and two reeds. The alarming question suggests itself: why is there a demand for mechanical and synthetic music and decadence, and why do so many people find pleasure in this decadence? The question again arose with Peter Gordon (USA). He sang absurd social-critical texts and played melodies on his tenor which were nearly too beautiful to be true. They were a painful contrast to the guitars (Rhys Chatham, Ned Sublett, USA), sounding like machine guns, and to the sounds coming from backstage: screams, collapsing skyscrapers, car horns and sirens, and the tick-tock of a station clock which changed into the ticking of a time bomb. Feet wanted to rock. How to prevent this simultaneity of lyrical beauty and apocalypse from creating a voluptuous pleasure in contradictions? I have never been to a festival where so many different ways of perceiving social reality were musically expressed and where it became obvious that the listener's like or dislike of certain kinds of music seemed to relate directly to his or her worldview or lifestyle. ***— Ellen Brandt***



BERN JAZZ FESTIVAL

Bern, Switzerland
April 27 - May 1, 1983

Bern, like a number of other European festivals, focuses attention on a particular aspect of jazz music. Its organising committee has consistently tried to present an interesting and varied program within the dimensions of the central tradition of the music. It is the one week of the year when Bernese people can enjoy music by many of the world's outstanding practitioners in the comfortable surroundings of the Kursaal.

This was the eighth year for the festival and the consensus was that it topped any of the preceding years. There was some exhilarating music as well as a warm, sharing atmosphere between the musicians and the organisation, which made many of the performers feel that this was the best spot on their yearly itinerary.

The nightly programs focus on a particular aspect of the music with the festival culminating in a Gala Night where one of the major names of the music is presented. This year the Modern Jazz Quartet justified everyone's expectations by performing a long and brilliant program. The unity and cohesion of the group has always been one of the miracles of the music and on this occasion there was a truly zestful flavour to their performance. The first set focused on many of their well-known themes but, in 1983, these were presented in fresh arrangements and intriguing new solos by the players. John Lewis, while retaining the economy of notes which has always placed him next to Basie as the epitomy of brevity at the piano, has added a decidedly funky touch to his music. Blue tonality is much more noticeable now in his playing but

this doesn't lessen the contrasts and similarities between his and Milt Jackson's playing. Jackson is the master of the vibraphone and a major innovator, but he is at his best within the discipline and focused structure of the MJQ's music. For this reason alone it is important that the MJQ are now a working organisation again. Percy Heath and Connie Kay are the workhorses of the unit and their delicate approach helps cement the internal balance of this extraordinary quartet, whose new material continues its fragile balance between composition and performance. The themes were attractive and, with more playing, will take on a shape ready for recording.

This most European of evenings was further emphasised by Milt Hinton's presentation of a bass quartet of himself, Bob Haggart, Arvell Shaw and Slam Stewart. A brief rehearsal enabled them to put together several tunes where they played in ensemble, in duets and as soloists in a demonstration of the fundamental concepts of jazz bass playing – both bowed and pizzicato.

Audience enjoyment of this concert was enhanced by the absence of any stage amplification. All the instruments were played acoustically and this gave the music better balance and a natural sound to the instruments.

The festival had started slowly with a "Blues and Boogie Woogie" night featuring Clarence Gatemouth Brown, Eddie Cleanhead Vinson and pianist/vocalist Katie Webster. The music was idiomatic but predictable and there was little space for such musicians as Preston Love, Roy Gaines, Gerald Price, Leroy Vinnegar and Alvin Queen to display their talents in their supporting roles with Cleanhead.

Thursday night there was a "Tribute to the Great Ladies of Jazz and Blues". Stylistically it continued the theme of Wednesday's concert but was notable for the performance of Sandra Reaves-Phillips and her Ladies All Stars. Sandra Phillips had been a headliner in "One Mo' Time" and her repertoire was drawn from this show. Her versions of songs by Bessie Smith, Ma Rainey and other early blues greats transcend imitation and she was greatly assisted by the piano of Lillette Harris Jenkins who was also in the New York version of the show. Esther Phillips and Odetta were the "name" attractions and their performances were, we understand, well received.

Peter Appleyard, one of this year's contingent of Canadian musicians, is a popular performer at Bern. His percussive vibraphone style is exciting and his stage presentation always seems to have an impact on his audience. It is also predictable and gave little space to such eminent musicians as Hank Jones and Slam Stewart, who were functioning in a supporting role along with drummer Jerry Fuller.

It only took a few bars for Benny Carter and Harry Edison to establish their authority when they took the stage on the "Swing Night" following Peter Appleyard. Both musicians were in top form as they ran down complementary and contrasting runs on some of Benny Carter's originals and familiar standards. While there were no surprises it was gratifying and moving to hear these masters performing with such intensity. Gerry Wiggins, Jimmy Woode and Oliver Jackson quickly established a groove behind the horn players in a set which disguised well the spontaneity of its organisation.

Saturday's "Jazz Band Ball" was one of the high points of the week. Three organised bands performed superlative music in quite different styles which gave the evening pacing and variety. It opened with Jim Galloway's Canadian All Stars – a band which was paced by its rhythm section. Ian Bargh, Neil Swainson and Terry Clarke were one of the explosive forces of the festival and they provided the energy for the intense playing of Jim Galloway and his special guests Doc Cheatham and Roy Williams in a set of standards which were given an entirely fresh look.

Their set set the tone for the evening and the Panama Francis band responded with some hard-driving arrangements of swing classics. The arrangements, for the most part, reflect the spirit of the original Savoy Sultans and Chick Webb – bands who performed swinging music at the Savoy Ballroom. Hot solos were mixed with ensemble parts and this tradition has been kept by Panama Francis, but only trumpeter Irving Stokes of the current band is a major soloist. The loss of Howard Johnson and George Kelly has diminished the creativity of the solo work in the reed section, whose present members are idiomatically sound but have little to say. Drummer/leader Panama Francis is still the driving force in a rhythm section which is notable for the rhythm guitar work of John Smith and the solid foundation from Bill Pemberton's bass. Pianist Sammy Benskin was an excellent band pianist who set up many of the numbers with idiomatically correct introductions.

The Yank Lawson - Bob Haggart Band were last up. They retain the authenticity of the Bob Crosby Bobcat sound as well as being distinctive stylists in their own right. Clarinetist Abe Most, tenor saxophonist Eddie Miller, trombonist George Masso, pianist Lou Stein and drummer Bobby Rosengarden were the impressive roster of this version of the band. The strength of these musicians is within the ensembles of a small group. Their solo imagination if a lesser aspect of their music, so it was disappointing that they devoted so much time to solo features. The band had played almost the same set two days before at one of the open air concerts where their natural sound, with Yank Lawson's hard-driving horn was captured much better than in the Kursaal.

The Bern Festival offers many additional attractions. One of the most popular is the Sunday afternoon gospel concert. The Sensational Nightingales were featured this year and demonstrated the polished urbanity of their style which has been honed over a twenty year period. The late night sessions at The Barrelhouse are a showcase for informal sets while the Sunday morning Kornhauskeller jam session is a very popular family affair.

The many open-air daytime concerts give festival visitors another opportunity to hear many of the musicians in different settings, and one of this year's highlights was George Masso and Roy Williams playing trombone duets with Lou Stein, Arvell Shaw and drummer Spider Webb. Both trombonists are major interpreters of the Teagarden/ McGarity/ Cutshall tradition and their mutual pleasure and respect for each other produced some pleasurable music.

The overall ambience, beautiful setting and marvelous music are what make this festival so successful. Milt Hinton added to the flavour of the event in his capacity as festival M.C. His presentation of a selection of his color slides was also notable for its insights into the makeup of the music.

The variety within the music and the many different faces helped make this year's event one of the best. It is truly a festival in the best sense of the word. — ***John Norris***

TOMMY FLANAGAN

Widder Bar, Zurich, Switzerland
May 2, 1983

Hearing a great musician in a perfect setting is something we all dream about. Zurich is fortunate to have a club like the Widder Bar where the intimate setting, the excellent piano and attentive audience are ideal for a musician responsive to such an ambience.

The delicate, yet powerful, piano concept of Tommy Flanagan was heard at its best on this occasion. He is a continually creative performer who is constantly seeking fresh ways to interpret the music he chooses to perform. Nothing interfered with his concentration and his ideas flowed as easily as the lines of the jazz classics he played by such eminent writers as Tadd Dameron, John Lewis, Charlie Parker, Benny Golson and Tom McIntosh.

Tommy Flanagan seeks out the harmonic possibilities of his material but presents them within the lyrical framework of the original melody, thus providing a unified interpretation of the tune rather than simply running the changes. He is a major interpreter of the music of his generation and he is almost alone in bringing this tradition to the attention of today's listeners. It is a vital message he has to give us all and in a setting such as the Widder Bar the message is readily understood.

Tommy Flanagan's warmth, ease and good

humour were infectious and the joyfulness and concentration of bassist Isla Eckinger and drummer Ed Thigpen produced a cohesive feel to any direction the pianist chose to take. Everyone was constantly listening and responding to the flow of musical ideas. It was a rare and wonderful evening. — *John Norris*

ODDS & SODS

The 1983 edition of the New York Kool Jazz Festival takes place between June 24 and July 3 with concerts at Carnegie Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, Soundscape, Waterloo Village and Saratoga Springs. Festivals such as these are becoming the only possibility to hear many of the best known musicians. They have priced themselves beyond the resources of most club and concert promoters. Thus, in New York you will be able to hear Miles Davis, VSOP II with Herbie Hancock and Wynton Marsalis, Oscar Peterson and Milt Jackson, Mel Torme, George Shearing, Count Basie, Sarah Vaughan, Modern Jazz Quartet, Betty Carter, Dave Brubeck, Stan Getz, Joe Williams and Ray Charles. There will be piano recitals by such diverse artists as Ralph Sutton and Don Pullen, Soundscape will present nightly concerts of newer music while traditional listeners will be able to spend a weekend at Waterloo Village. The festival is a catalyst, of course, and it will generate considerable activity in New York clubs so there will be music to satisfy all tastes. Program information is available from P.O. Box 1169, Ansonia Station, N.Y. 10023 USA.

The United Nations campaign to discourage artists from performing in South Africa continues to build in momentum. **The Mal Waldron Quartet** performed at the **United Nations** May 23 in a concert which was taped for transmission to South Africa. Among the many musicians who have ignored the United Nations campaign are the following jazz-oriented performers, and the United Nations recommends a boycott of these artists: George Benson, Ray Charles, Pete and Conte Candoli, Chick Corea, Buddy de Franco, Terry Gibbs, Joe Henderson, Willis Jackson, Shirley Scott, George Shearing, Jimmy Smith, Dakota Staton, Brian Torff, Stanley Turrentine and Jimmy Witherspoon.

Swing Plaza is a new club in NYC, located at the corner of 15th Street. Jack DeJohnette's Special Edition, The Art Ensemble of Chicago, and the Red Rodney/Ira Sullivan Quintet were there in May with Panama Francis' Savoy Sultans performing May 27-28 in a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Savoy Ballroom.... **Big Joe Turner** and **Gil Evans' Orchestra** were at Sweet Basil Monday nights in May with **James Newton, David Murray, Ahmad Jamal** and **Sam Rivers** taking care of the weekly schedule. Eddie Chamblee and Doc Cheatham handle the Saturday and Sunday brunch sessions.... Cheatham was also at The West End May 25-28. He followed such legends as Haywood Henry, Eddie Barefield, Franc Williams and Rusty Bryant at the uptown club.... Jim Galloway was at Jimmy Ryans for a week in April where he played with the house band under Spanky Davis' leadership.

The Public Theater's New Jazz Series featured in April the Dave Holland Quintet, Roswell Rudd Quintet with Sheila Jordan and the Rova Saxophone Quartet, Jimmy Giuffre, and Roscoe Mitchell's Space with Leo Smith's New Dalta Ahkri.... The Charlie Haden/Ed Blackwell Quartet with Jane Ira Bloom and Fred Hersch debuted at the Village Vanguard April 19-23.... The Walter Bishop Quintet performed at the Actor's Outlet (120 West 28th Street) April 4.... Singer Karen Lehrere performed at Cooper Union April 8.... **Leroy Jenkins' Concerto for Improvised Violin and Chamber Orchestra** was premiered April 22/23 with the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Lukas Foss.... Jeanne Lee gave a concert April 22 at Carnegie Recital Hall.... The Lennie Tristano Foundation presented Harvey Diamond April 24 at Plexus.... Gunter Hampel's Galaxie Big Band performed April 24 for WKCR Radio who earlier sponsored a concert with John Lindberg and Leo Smith April 3.... **The Mary Lou Williams Foundation** presented a concert May 8 at Symphony Space to celebrate the memory of the great pianist. Appearing were the Chris Anderson Trio (with Art Davis and Frank Gant), vocalist Lodi Carr, Amina Claudine Myers and a specially organised sextet of Woody Shaw, George Coleman, Hilton Ruiz, Major Holley, Walter Perkins and vocalist Carmen Lundy, performing music by Ms. Williams.... Sheila Jordan was at Carnegie Recital Hall May 13.... Maxine Sullivan celebrated her 72nd birthday May 14 (one day late) with a party at Jazz Gallery.... Valery Ponomarev and Janet Lawson headlined a Sunday concert at the Blue Note May 15.... George Coleman's Quartet was at Fat Tuesday's the week of May 10.... The Billy Harper Quintet with trumpeter Wallace Roney was at Lush Life the week of May 18... Free concerts are being held this summer at noon hour in Bryant Park and on Sunday afternoons at the Dairy in Central Park.... Air Studio (336 East 13th Street) is featuring until June 20 a photographic exhibit by Alice Su entitled "Portraits in Performance".

Boston's Jazz Daze took place between April 17 and May 1. The opening event — an all night affair — was headlined by Archie Shepp.... The Harvard University Jazz Band directed by Tom Everett saluted jazz trumpet greats April 22 with a concert featuring the band and guest soloists Johnny Letman, Jack Sheldon and Lester Bowie.... Another participant in the Jazz Daze was the Harlem Blues & Jazz Band who performed a benefit concert for the Back Bay Aging Concerns Committee. Members of the band were Eddie Durham, Al Casey, Bobby Williams, George Kelly, Gene Rodgers, John Williams and Ronnie Cole.... Boston's New Black Eagle Jazz Band maintains a busy schedule and have released several records of past and present bands. A full schedule is available from 128 Front Street, Marblehead, MA 01945.... The 12th Annual Black Musicians' Conference, April 10-17 at the University of Mass. in Amherst, was dedicated to the memory of Thelonious Monk. Marion Brown, Donald Byrd, Dexter Gordon, Abbey Lincoln, Archie Shepp and Billy Taylor were among the participants/performers... Ran Blake gives a solo piano recital June 25 in New York before leaving for a tour of Sweden. He will record with saxophonist Houston Person for Soul Note in September.

Art Park has abandoned its summer weekend Jazz Festival in Lewiston, New York. In its place will be a series of individual concerts which reflect the desire of the organisers to present popular performers rather than striving for an artistic balance between the established and the lesser-known. B.B. King, Dizzy Gillespie/Moe Koffman, Preservation Hall Band and Oscar Peterson/Joe Pass are all scheduled to appear in early August.

Impressions is the name of the newsletter of the newly organised Jazz Artists and Associations Alliance of Michigan, P.O. Box 15145, Detroit, Michigan 48215. It contains news and reports of jazz activity in the Detroit area.... Clarinetist Perry Robinson performed at Glen Echo Park, Maryland April 10.... The third Hall Of Fame Sarasota Jazz Festival took place May 10-12 with an all-star lineup including Buddy Tate, Al Grey, Jay McShann, Bill Watrous, Joe Wilder and resident host Jerry Jerome.... The Afterdeck Lounge is the place to be for Jack Simpson's Jazz on the Beach Sundays at Cocoa Beach, Florida.... The Association of Recorded Sound Collections' meeting this year was in Nashville in April.... The first National Blues Convention will be held in Memphis July 15-18. ... The Dirty Dozen Brass Band is continuing the music's traditions in New Orleans with a contemporary flavour. A single on Mad Musicians label contains performances of ***Lil Liza Jane*** and ***Feet Can't Fail Me Now***. The personnel includes two members of the noted Joseph family (Kirk and Charles) and the band can be contacted through Gregory Davis (phone 504-282-7660). It's a different experience.... This year's Monterey Jazz Festival takes place September 16-18 with Mundell Lowe replacing John Lewis as musical director. Program schedules are available from P.O. Box Jazz, Monterey, California 93942. The festival is sponsoring a summer jazz clinic in Monterey August 7-12.... **Dave Burrell** has completed his jazz opera, "Windward Passages".

"Jazz Alive", the most popular program on National Public Radio, is to be cancelled in September due to the severe funding cuts in the U.S. This program, more than any other, helped bring the sound of jazz music to a large new audience of young people by presenting a broad cross section of jazz styles on a continuing basis. The excitement and strength of jazz music was vividly captured by these live broadcasts. Its relatively high costs were directly responsible for its demise, despite its success. Many of the radio stations who carry the show have activated campaigns to save **Jazz Alive**. You can lend your voice by writing to **Frank Mankiewicz, President, National Public Radio, 2025 M Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036**, with a copy of the letter to **Dr. George Klinger, Chairman Program Committee, NPR Board of Directors, KSUI-FM, University of Iowa, 330 Engineering Bldg., Iowa City, IA 52242....** Ironically, at the same time came the news that **WDET-FM** in Detroit has expanded its jazz coverage to devote 80% of its total programming to jazz music. Perhaps a coalition of the stations carrying **Jazz Alive** can come up with an increased percentage of the revenue to keep the program going. Jazz music needs this exposure.

Company Week 1983 was held May 24-28 at the ICA Theatre in London with **Vinko Globokar, Peter Brotzmann, J.D. Parran, Evan Parker, Hugh Davies, Jamie Muir, Joelle Leandre, Ernst Reyseger** and **Derek Bailey....** Buddy Guy/ Junior Wells, John Lee Hooker and Albert King headlined the London Blues Festival May 21/22.... The Harlem Blues and Jazz Band is touring England in June with an appearance at the 100 Club June 11.... The Northsea Festival takes place July 8-10, the Grande Parade du Jazz at Nice July 9-19, and the Jazz Festival Willisau, Switzerland will be from August 25-28 with Dudu Pukwana, Xalam (25th), Vinny Golia, Henri Texier, Arthur Blythe (26), Musica Libera with Joe McPhee, Cecil Taylor (27), Daunik Lazro, Horace Tapscott, Gianluigi Trovesi (27 night), Karin Krog-John Surman, Odean Pope (28 afternoon), Tony Coe- Chris Lawrence-Tony Oxley, Mike Westbrook (28 night). ... The Lenzburg Jazz Festival (Switzerland) took place May 7-8 with Joe Viera, Baden Powell, Charly Antolini, Mal Waldron and Elvin Jones.... **Jim Galloway** did a short tour of Germany following his appearance at the Bern festival. On May 4 he was in Pforhzeim with saxophonist Klaus Bader. From there he went to Frankfurt for two appearances with the V.S. O.P. Jazz band with trumpeter Herbert Christ, clarinetist Klaus Pehl and trombonist Klaus Lohfink. The Saturday performance at Jazz Club Rodermark was exceptional, pianist Herbert Hess evoking images of Joe Sullivan in his rolling ensemble passages which generated a lot of drive. K.B. Rau's press rolls evoked images of the past and the enthusiasm and support of the club's members lifted the music to an exceptional level.... Elsewhere in Frankfurt, jazz can be heard at Der Jazzkeller, Kleine Bockenheimer Strasse 18a.... The International Herald Tribune of April 12 contained an interesting profile of Charles Delaunay by Mike Zwerin in which he reports that Delaunay still visits his office at Vogue Records on a daily basis but has to close his door to avoid the noise of the latest pop groups! The article also reported that Delaunay continues to work on his memoirs.

Chris Strachwitz reports that Willie Mae Ford Smith recorded an album in the mid-1970s for Nashboro under the title of "Going Down with the Spirit" (Nashboro 7148).... A source book for Contemporary Creative Music is being prepared by Brian Auerbach, P.O. Box 14653, San Francisco, CA 94114.... The Pelican Publishing Company, P.O. Box 189, Gretna, LA 70053 is a source for many of the jazz and blues books published originally by the Louisiana State University Press.

Jazz Classics In Stereo is the title of a series of radio programs presented in Australia by Robert Parker, a professional sound engineer who has devised a system for producing wide range sound from original 78 recordings, through the use of the latest electronic techniques. The results are stunning. He has transformed these old classics into performances which sound like recent recordings. One comment upon hearing the music was that they sounded like a present day band producing replicas of the old music. Parker's system will become the standard for the next generation of lp reissues as we move into the era of the compact disc. Personally, I can't wait for that to happen. In the meantime it is to be hoped that all new reissue programmers will utilise Mr. Parker's system.

Leroy Jenkins' Mixed Quintet album is now available on Black Saint.... Contemporary Records are reissuing "Carl's Blues" by the Curtis Counce band, Helen Humes' "Swingin' with Humes" and Bunk & Lou with the Johnson and Waters band (on GTJ).... Palo Alto (which has dropped the jazz from its title) has issued an intriguing two-lp tribute to Bill Evans by fourteen of today's best pianists. Other new releases on Palo Alto include Richie Cole and Art Pepper together and a return to more straightahead music by Mal Waldron in "One Entrance, Many Exits" with Joe Henderson, David Friesen and Billy Higgins.... New from Audio Fidelity Enterprises are albums by Ahmad Jamal, John Coltrane, Eddie Harris, Cecil Payne and Charlie Parker on either Chiaroscuro or Charlie Parker Records. It's the usual mixture of live sessions and studio dates.

Fantasy's second series of Original Jazz Classics is due in June. Among the 30 titles are "Bird at St. Nicks", "Steve Lacy Plays Monk", "Abbey Lincoln Is Blue" and Brubeck's "Jazz at Oberlin".... Stella Lawson's debut lp is available from SL Records, 29 Rochelle Terrace, Mount Vernon, N.Y. 10552.... Drummer Bill Goodwin has taken over as president of Omnisound Records.... Five more unreleased performances by Albert Ammons and Meade Lux Lewis were found in the Blue Note vaults in time for them to be included in the Mosaic box set of Ammons and Lewis before manufacturing had begun.... The Peck Kelley two-lp set on Commodore, with extensive notes by Dan Morganstern, is now in the stores.... Harrison Records continues its service to collectors with LP-Q, a collection of sides by Joe Candullo, Willie Creager, Bob Finley and Billy James.... New from Folkways are Morton's early piano sides (1923-24), a collection of "Swinging Piano" and an album of unissued 1951 recordings by Emile Barnes.... Butch Thompson, Scania Jazz, Charquet & Co., Steve Lane and Terry Waldo all have new lps on Stomp Off Records.

Earle Warren, now resident in Switzerland, has produced his own lp (MLP 10248) which showcases his considerable talents on alto, clarinet and flute with pianist Henri Chaix, bassist Isla Eckinger and drummer Ed Thigpen. You

can order the lp direct from Earle Warren, 7 rue des Pierres du Niton, CH-1207 Geneve.... Clarence Gatemouth Brown won a Grammy for his Rounder lp "Alright Again". His new Rounder lp is called "One More Mile".... Lonnie Brooks' newest Alligator lp is "Hot Shot".... JSP has issued an lp by Jimmy McCracklin.... Timeless Records will issue in 1983 lps by Toots Thielemans, Hank Jones, Kenny Ball and Max Collie. ... FMP has issued new lps by Peter Kowald and Leo Smith; Alexander von Schlippenbach & Sven Ake Johansson; and the Conrad Bauer Quartet.

Trumpeter **Ernie Royal** died March 16 in New York, from cancer.... **Dolo Coker** died April 13 in Los Angeles, from cancer. He was 56.... **Earl Hines** died April 22 in Oakland, California of a heart attack. He was 77.... **Muddy Waters** died April 30 at his home in Chicago. He was 68.... Trombonist **Kai Winding** died in New York City May 6. He was 60.

— *John Norris*

SMALL ADS

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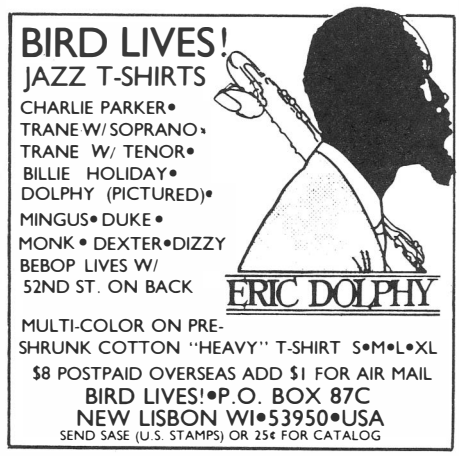

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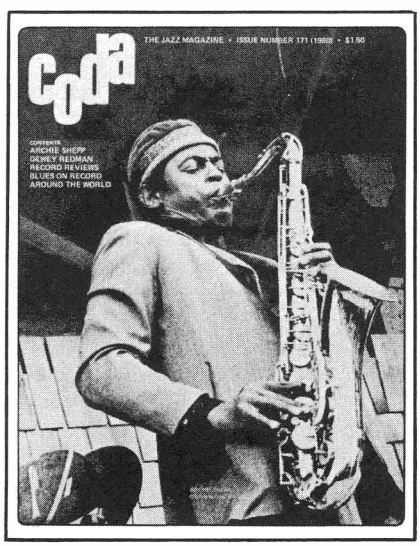

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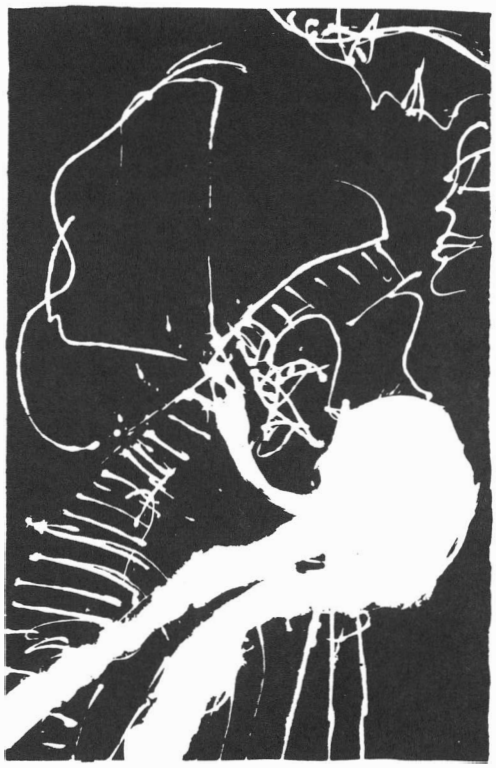

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