CODA MAGAZINE

THE JAZZ MAGAZINE * ISSUE 192 (1983) * THREE DOLLARS

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PIANO VARIATIONS * AROUND THE WORLD

Cover photograph
LEO SMITH
by Dusan Klimes

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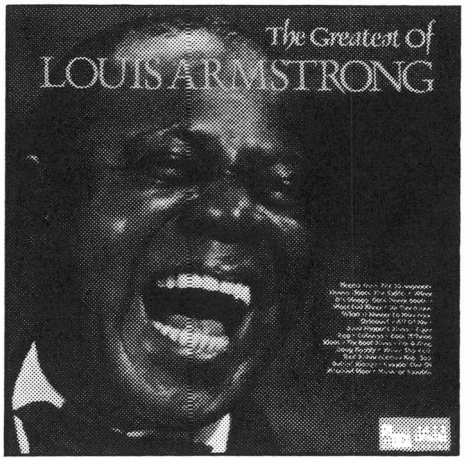

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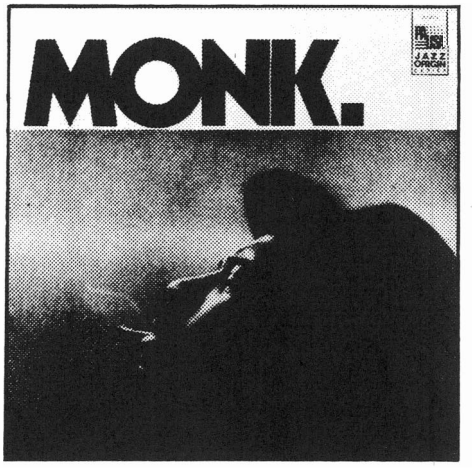

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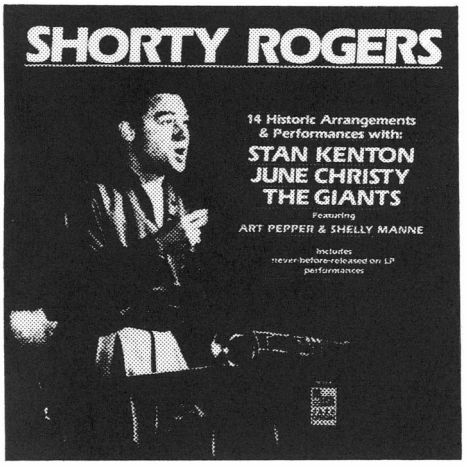

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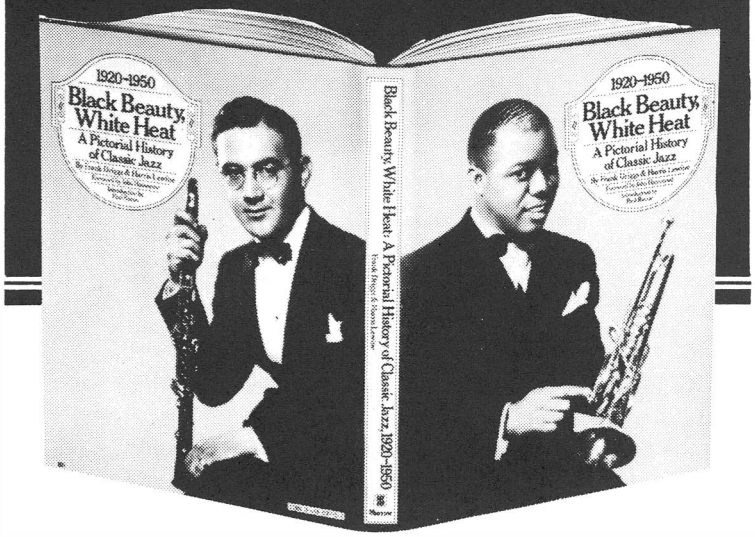

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In The Next Issue

OUR NEXT ISSUE – Coda Magazine number 193 will offer our own version of "the funky side" of creative improvised music. HORACE SILVER, the original Jazz Messenger and creator of "jazz-funk" music, talks about his return to active touring, his new band and his constantly renewing perspectives on his music and philosophy. JUNIOR MANCE, in Toronto to make a new record for Sackville with Martin Rivera, is interviewed by John Norris. Mance has always brought his own specially bluesy approach to jazz piano. And saxophonist OLIVER LAKE talks to Bill Smith about his success in bringing his message to a wider audience through his reggae-funk band Jump Up. Plus concert reviews, record reviews, photographs, blues news, books – the most vital forms of jazz and improvised music past, present and future continue to be documented in the next issue of CODA MAGAZINE.

HORACE SILVER (photograph by Markus di Francesco)

CODA MAGAZINE

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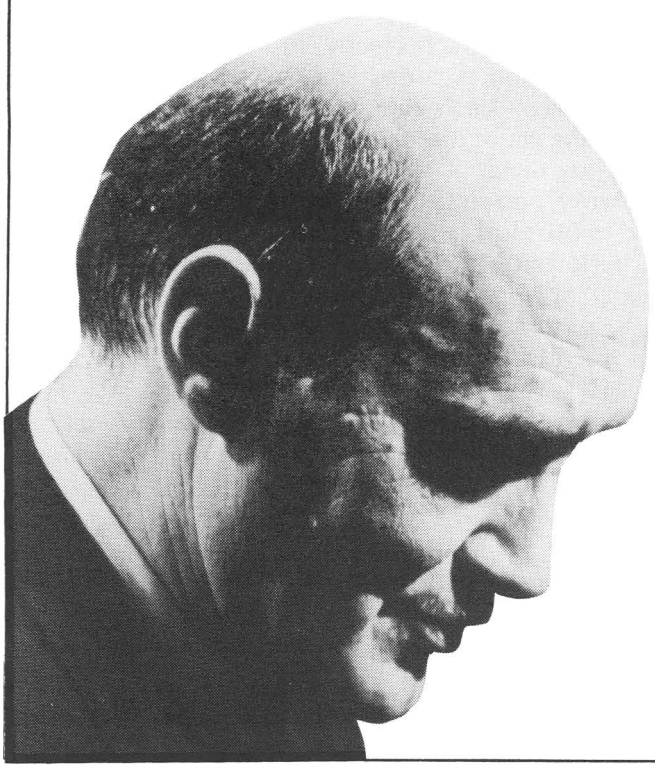
CONTENTS



DON EWELL's recent death at the age of 66, like that of Sadik Hakim, was deeply felt by many people despite the reality that neither musician ever achieved the wider recognition he so richly deserved.

Don was a "keeper of the flame". Through his mind heart and fingers breathed anew the world of Jelly Roll Morton and Fats Waller. He was as sharp as Jelly and, in his own special way, as humourous as Fats. He certainly brought joy to the hearts of many listeners in such cities as Chicago (in the Forties), San Francisco (the Fifties) and Toronto for a few precious years in the 1960s when he shared the stage with Willie The Lion Smith, Bud Freeman and Herb Hall. He virtually lived in this city while working at such long-departed clubs as The Golden Nugget, The Colonial and the Cav-A-Bob.

Don Ewell, in his own quiet way, presided over the bandstand and the keenness of his imagination ensured that you always heard music that was special. He had been touched by the magic of his youthful experiences with Bunk Johnson, George Lewis, Jack Teagarden and many others. He reignited that magic in many other musicians as well as giving his audience a special listening experience. Now he has gone but he will not be forgotten, and his music can still be heard on many representative recordings — especially the memorable series of piano duets he recorded as his Toronto legacy with Willie The Lion Smith. "Grand Piano" is an apt title for the record, and a fitting description of what Don Ewell's music meant to so many people.

DON EWELL (photograph by Bill Smith)

LEO SMITH • RASTAFARI

Leo Smith was born in Leland, Mississippi, on the 18th of December 1941, and fits perfectly into the historical legend that produces American jazz musicians. His father was a blues musician who recorded and performed on the radio with Willie Love, and went by the professional name of "Little Bill" Wallace. Leo's early training was at Lincoln High School under the direction of Earl Jones, where he was instructed in the art of marching band music in the tradition of Sousa. While attending Lincoln High (1955-56) he formed his first jazz band.

Like many Americans of his generation he was inducted into the Army, and so became part of the next stage of the tradition by studying at the Army School of Music at Fort Leonard in Missouri. 1963 saw him with the Army Bands in Italy for a period of eleven months. This is a very important period in his life as he explains in his own words:

"We performed in public in the army an awful lot. The most important thing is you get a chance to play every day. That's when I first began to understand the relationship of the newer music that was happening. That's when I heard Ornette Coleman. The same time I bought his book, I put together my own little group with a drummer, bass player, and myself. We worked around through that music, sounding like Ornette Coleman and others.

I went to Italy for eleven months. That band was very good. We were a post band, we played dignitary functions, if a senator would come to the country we played those things. We were on a propaganda mission to play in all the villages in Italy. We had a regular season that we would do these things. For five or six months we'd break. I got the chance to hear some of the greatest military bands on earth. I heard the personal band of Nasser. We played the International Military Band Festival. The band there from Egypt was the grandest spectacular thing you'll ever see. Beautiful trumpet players. They improvise in their music while marching. I heard the British International Band of the Queen there, the International band of the Italians, the Germans and Scots. Our band through an error got to participate in that particular performance, which should have gone to the air force band from Heidelberg that represents the United States. They should have gotten that particular performance, not our army band. We played it but we were totally outmatched. They were the best in their country. Our band was good but not the best. It wasn't the best in Europe by far. But it was good." — **CODA, November 1975, pages 3-4, from an interview with Bill Smith.**

DAVID PRENTICE — LARRY POTTER — BILL SMITH — DAVID LEE — LEO SMITH (photograph by Dusan Klimes)

Upon leaving the Army he headed for Chicago (January 1967) and arrived at a time when the most important contemporary music collective, the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians, was gathering strength. Its members at that time included Joseph Jarman, Thurman Barker, Lester Bowie, Roscoe Mitchell, and the saxophonist Anthony Braxton, who was to become part of his next stage of development. Joined by Leroy Jenkins, they formed a trio called the Creative Construction Company and 1969 saw them performing in France. In 1970 Leo formed his group, New Dalta Ahkri, which although it has a changing personnel is still in existence. In 1971 he created Kabell Records so that he could document his own music.

Leo Smith stands among the small number of trumpet players – Don Cherry, Lester Bowie, Don Ayler – who have, in the last twenty years, reinforced and changed the tradition of the trumpet in jazz. The list of major creative musicians that have been his companions on this journey is astounding, and apart from those mentioned in this introduction, they include amongst them Oliver Lake, Marion Brown, Henry Threadgill, George Lewis, and Anthony Davis.

The following conversation took place at my house Sunday, June 12th, 1983, when Leo Smith was visiting Toronto to perform and record for Sackville, with my ensemble.

BILL SMITH: ***Some years ago you told me that you would only release your music on your own record label, Kabell, because of the complications of having to deal with all the politics of commercial record producers. But in recent years you've made quite a few records on other labels like Nessa, and ECM, FMP and now Sackville. Is there some difficulty that occurred with Kabell Records that made you change your mind?***

LEO SMITH: No. When I started Kabell my initial intention was just to document my music in the different stages that it went through. Then I wasn't even interested in putting out any more than one record a year, maybe one every two years because I was trying to collect and capture that period of which I was going through. But inside of doing that I realized that if music, the way I see it, was to be a living part of a mainstream of culture, I had to do something about it. My way of doing something about it was to record for so-called 'commercial' companies. And when I did that I had a great feeling for getting my music out into different places it would never go on a Kabell record. But now I've been out here for almost seven years doing that, I'm finding that I might have to go back underground. By underground I mean go under and record primarily for Kabell and a few independents I respect. The reason that I feel like going underground is that it's a dangerous course that's been laid out in this modern world in regards to who can contribute to society and at what level they will contribute to society. I found that being out in this particular market, it's not conducive to what I think it is. In other words I came out originally hoping that I would reach more people than Kabell would reach – and that ***did*** happen, I did reach more people. But somehow I didn't get that kind of push on records that I thought should be pushed. That would have made the big difference. As it stands, if music is not on a record that people can buy in different stores they won't even come to hear you. They're not even interested in experimenting, in so far as walking down the street and seeing a sign that says LEO SMITH, if they don't know him then they won't experience going to hear him. But it seems that the natural course of things would be if a person is playing music and you like the music then you'll go check out the music. Inquisitive or investigative, so to speak.

It seems when we say 'commercial' record companies, as opposed to independents, that in certain periods major companies will pick up on certain kinds of artists. For instance with CBS or Columbia, they will record Charles Ives, they recorded Harry Partch and they recorded Moondog. Theoretically they have a great deal of power as they have a large sum of money. I think the same thing happened on Arista, where there was a certain period around '76 where they suddenly became involved in recording lots of 'creative' music, and promoted it to a very high degree. We know that in that period a lot of people actually came out to hear the music. Because a major corporation was involved in it that meant it was going into popular media. So record companies were interested in promoting artists they wouldn't normally promote. Why, when they have such a wonderful thing going for them, in the United States like this, why would they choose in this period to completely ignore creative music?

Well, it's part of the system. By that I mean in regards to who controls what on the market. For example, Charles Ives – you can find Charles Ives on many labels, the same pieces over and over. You find Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, any one of those players from, let's say early American music on back, you can find them on many labels, and that has partly to do with the political and cultural alliance that America has allied itself with. That is, it is a white country, it has a power of catering to a population that the majority is white, and they do so. In the long run I think that they lose by being so narrow and accepting who's going to contribute to society. Musical society I'm speaking about. If a company like those major companies for example would go along and pick up artists that are coming up now and develop their talent as a recording agent and push that record and push the artists. There are many things to be done. I find it unfortunate that when I recorded "Divine Love" for ECM that I never got a tour out of that. I do know that I've heard of recording companies that put groups on that are less popular, on the same bill as their most popular groups, and give them a vantage point of reaching a wider range of audience. Because of promotion. I think that there are allowances in those type of situations - they can be claimed through taxes. So I'm saying that by and large a society that's built off of a certain system for marketing a particular item like music they're going to cater it to the main culture. So I think that's why you find so many Bachs, Beethovens and so forth on different records, the same pieces done hundreds of times!

The same thing applies to the people who have the power to book the music live into clubs, and to festivals and so on. Do you think it's the same thing?

I feel it's the same thing. Because by and large they are only going to produce that which the recording companies are producing. They are a reverse mirror of what's happening out there with the recording companies. I've been playing music 27 years, and I've studied for most of those years in the sense that I do a lot of independent research and I read a lot of different types of things to try to see what's the best advantage for me as a musician. In those 27 years I've developed a craft, an art of music, if you will, that reflects my feelings totally personally. It's an individual music, it deals with a lot of types of systems and you can see there's a predecessor for that. There's George Russell, he came up with a lot of systems you see. He has basically the same problem, he doesn't give a lot of performances. Cecil Taylor... So it's like back up on the road again to rebuild a new audience.

In this situation we were talking about starting again. In the mid-seventies it seemed so fantastic what was going on, there was so much activity with live music, and audiences just loved the adventure of the new music. I'm sure that in the periods before with Ornette, Cecil and Coltrane the same problems existed, but I'm not quite sure in my mind why the audiences disappeared, because they seemed like very intelligent people who came to those events. I mean they weren't like a bunch of 'credit-card-jazz-drunks,' they were really intelligent people investigating something. Yet they seemed to have disappeared.

Well, what I think is one of the strongest points in a situation like that is that people become sort of disillusioned after a while when they can't find a proper avenue to express themselves in. Once that takes place you're going to find that you're hurting yourself into what you're doing as an artist. The listener has the same responsibility to try to seek out a continuously evolving horizon in terms of music. But in between that transition from the 60s into the 70s and the 80s we've had a complete reverse in the political and philosophical consciousness of the world. It's a conservative world, everything has rebirthed into getting rid of all the things that people think have value. Like jobs for instance, or being able to go once or twice to a movie, go out for lunch. You see people are suffering in this country. Not this country, this world. People are suffering in this world and no one seems to care. Can that suffering be relieved by music? I think it can. I think music has the power to heal and by that I mean psychically heal because all creation in its reality is a vibration. Music creates a vibration

that can stimulate any system and any kind of manifestation be it physical, like a concrete wall or a human body.

But wouldn't it be true that the situation is actually in reverse because what happens is that in reality the information given out to people through popular media is actually on a very low and mundane level. Newspapers in general are very bad to anything creative. Here we are being paranoid about who we are. I mean they don't cover the great painters, the writers, the poets or whatever. Unless they're traditionally acceptable.

They are part of the system. They constitute the reinforcement on a daily basis of the system. I just happen to think that it's a sad shame that humankind has evolved to a point where war seems to be the ultimate thrill in life. Those kinds of wars, whether they be psychological, spiritual, or material, hurt humankind. There's so much less concern with the true identity. For example most people would align themselves with your political proposition and then when you go to meet them in their own neighbourhood, their own community, or see their daughter, or their sister or their mother, it becomes a different thing. But if they see you in the street and you say, "Yes, I'm for the strike" or "Let's go up and join together and defeat this particular group or that one," they're for those things. But when it comes to the real problem of society, which is a loss of love, a loss of concept of being human... and I think that's reflected in a society as ours is, today.

But to communicate this kind of philosophy to people...

Song is the best way, in these days. By song I mean words and music, is what I'm trying to say. It's one of the most convenient ways of transmitting types of ideas that could evolve in civilization. Granted, that's not what is being pushed. Understand that.

But based in the song and rhythmic band accompaniment idea, like rock music is that with quite mundane lyrics mostly and a very, very fixed rhythm. I think that in general people are being programmed through the media to accept this kind of phenomenon. I can't see that after all these years of trying to change that idea how there would be any way of moving into the area. For example, a popular band in this period would be Oliver Lake and Jump Up. But it seems to me that although that is getting a lot of airplay and very large audiences Oliver also plays with the World Saxophone Quartet. And somehow that doesn't transmit to the next group.

Instrumental music is abstract. I don't care if a man in Africa plays it on a big bass zither, or someone in Tibet plays it on a double reed instrument or someone in Harlem plays it on a tin can. That idea of creativity explores the possibility of many realms and the song tradition brings it back down to a level that people can naturally understand, like language, like nature. We create instruments but the voice is a creation of Jah (God), you see. Instruments we create, that's our creation, that's our imagination which became a reality. But the voice was put in by the Creator. So I'm saying that more people are able to identify with a song, or let's say with a text, than they are with a purely instrumental creation. Because it's too abstract for them in the sense that this society has created this type of being. It's not natural for it to be that way.

So there's a separation between language and sound?

Yes, but that's not natural, though. That's unnatural.

I think that's really unnatural because language and sound are the same thing!

That's right!

So why, with the right kind of education through the media, would writers in newspapers for example write about music they're not actually involved in, and there are actually lots of writers who would really like to do that. So why in this idea that we're a democratic society is it possible that an editor of a popular newspaper could stop a writer writing about something that's creative? I mean, they're calling him a 'writer.' How can we move outside of the principle of the 'popular' press, popular media... how is it possible to attract, in this period of rebuilding the music, a new kind of audience?

I think for myself I have found the key and that has to do with my conversion to Rastafarianism which is the concept that Haille Selassie is the creator of the universe. I've found that through this level of mystical and philosophical conversion that I've developed what I call ritual dramas. Inside these dramas I try to demonstrate some of the forces that are at work in the world today. For example, my "Killing of the Prophet," which was performed four times in April of this year. It's a story about the coming of the prophet as witnessed through Marcus Garvey, who says "Look to Africa from which will be crowned a king who will be our redemption." Well, in this particular ritual drama that message is delivered. Through it being delivered, the evil forces cuts her down, which takes place with the female dancer, which is Mother Earth, the protective force of the universe, and the lion, which is the manifestation of the prophet. Inside of there, I'm in this cloth bag and I'm dancing and Sheri Carwell, the dancer with New Dalta now, she's dancing in live form, in her form. At some point there's a disruption which is the force of evil which cuts down this lion of the prophet. Everything comes to a halt, supposedly, but it ***doesn't*** because the moment that one drops another one arises. So once the supposed killing takes place the music drops, and immediately comes back again, and the dance begins again to signify that you cannot stop truth, neither can you kill that which you didn't create, and inside that is the message of who should level in terms of the force of good and evil. Now, in that I'm adding song, drama (because I have actors sometimes), dance, and musicians who also participate in the acting and the songs. I think that if I could get this type of music on the right type of media, which I think is video film, I would attract a much wider audience. I think that in this period that's where it's moving because Anthony Braxton is dealing with something he calls "Ceremonial Pieces." Roscoe (Mitchell) and Tom (Buckner) and them, they are doing a mixture of a lot of different things, with voice and double reeds and stuff. Muhal (Richard Abrams) is doing stuff with drama inside of it. I'm talking about colleagues that I'm working with often. So I feel a change has taken place that will wipe out this abstractness that people associate with instrumental music. If that can take place then I think we're on the road to redeveloping and rebuilding our audience. I feel that this is my only chance in this particular period to do that, to rebuild one.

So, in a way the printed media, like the popular newspaper, is not of much use because it can't involve itself in this.

No, not really.

And radio is not that much use because it hasn't actually happened in its entirety. So there is a great possibility of video, isn't there?

Yes.

Is the possibility for video because the music is going with the theatre and the drama and the words into a semi-visual theatrical presentation?

Yes! If Wagner had had similar types of equipment in that time, think what it would be like. Or if people in Africa had those kinds of things when their rituals and ceremonies took place, think where musical creation would be! It would be far more advanced than where it is now. That's exactly what I mean when I say that a society like this does not allow all its people to participate in the development of humankind as a whole being. They are not going to allow us to explore it that way so a new media has arisen that we can take advantage of.

Isn't there a danger though that once people can buy all these video cassettes of all these ceremonies and rituals that they won't actually come out to hear the music in live performance? That the music will become like classical music?

No, no. You see, creative music and world music will never become like classical music. But with regards to that question, I don't think it will stop people from coming out to see you perform. Take the movies. When television came in people thought that television would attract audiences and take it away from the movies but, in fact, there's audiences for both levels and I think that in the video field that will be demonstrated as well. You know, inside the home people are getting into the video games and the Aquarian age is already beginning which means a higher level of consciousness. So these technological tools that have been developed at this stage could really be used to give a greater satisfaction in terms of our creative life.

When you talk, you actually talk differently to what is the world opinion of what is going on, because you talk about this thing going forward with all the people you know (thankfully I'm one of them), you talk about it as a sort of new, flowering period and you emphasize this new awareness of people. But politically in the world Ronald Reagan is a conservative, Margaret Thatcher is a conservative, the Japanese and the Germans have conservative leaders, Canada is rapidly approaching a conservative period which is quite the reverse of what you're talking about.

Exactly, but the trick is all the stuff that is happening in terms of the conservative thrust makes the combat greater. It's showing the level of concentration now that means that this system must fall. I feel that in the next 25 years we will find that the world will change more drastically than it has in all the time of so-called recorded history. I feel that this music speaks about that time. I think there is a certain feeling in humankind about flowers, because inside a flower you have a scent, it's almost like a demonstration of humankind, a flower has an odour that transfers far from the flower, the flower goes in and closes up and comes back out. These cycles that we're going through are not just going in circles, they are evolving I would believe. I think that we all are evolving as a people. I know that out there is a so-called 'another world,' and that what's happening out there is really tight and hard now. We are ***all*** talking about rebuilding our audiences. I think it makes it greater. I think

that the struggle that's happening right now will be hastened by such drastic concentration of conservatism.

Well, in this conservatism however is a terrible thing happening which is a 'call to arms.' Missiles and nuclear weapons and so on. America seems to be a major antagonist in this chess game of war and yet it seems not to deal with the actual reality of the terrible consequences of such an action. None of the Americans that I personally know are part of this idea. Internationally, the only countries that are staying with socialism, with the idea of people's democracy, are also failing in this period. France is a very good example, I suspect, with the terrorists...

...East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Russia, Poland, all of them are examples.

Yes, it's very bad. Is it possible that, in this period, all the old concepts of politics are now out-dated like everything else is?

Obsolete. Totally obsolete. And that bugger that they call the United Nations is a sad dream that doesn't have a bone to stand on. You're right, it is sad. You know I find that I have one song called ***Peace Isn't Possible Without Love*** and I wrote this piece when I went to tour in Japan last October. I went to the museum in Hiroshima and there I went to the Peace Museum that they have, and they had a sculptural model of some people, like a woman, a child and a man, and in the background was an obliteration of some explosive stuff that had taken place and from their hands and from their nails skin was hanging down that long, and these people were not in the direct blast. They were miles and miles away and it just totally wiped them out. So I got real heart feelings in that place, man, real heart vibrations. So I went back and I started thinking, "Why should something like this happen?" You know people talk about "I love you" and it ain't happening, but when someone comes up to you and says "We're going to have peace in the world," they've got to be kidding. There's no peace in the world, there's no love. Love precedes peace. They don't teach peace in high school, they don't teach love. People do not teach young kids, young adults the concept of love and peace.

They do internally in households.

In households, yes. But not as a major thrust of this society. Because if we teach that, there wouldn't be this threat of a major war as we have now upon us. In South Africa, what's going to happen in that situation? I'm warned that I'm supposedly feeling nonviolent, but I'm not nonviolent. I look at South Africa as being one of the most degrading situations in all of existing times, when, a man or woman born into creation has to carry passes and be out of town before dark and work in the mines, and they just crack down on them any time they want to. That's degrading. That's dangerous. And in the midst of all this war that people are talking about I think that that land will not go without war.

Is it possible that by you travelling around, I mean you've been to Japan, you played with Japanese players, playing traditional instruments, not playing Western instruments, and you played in Germany and East Germany with Peter Kowald and Bebe Sommer, and now you've come here and played with us in our collective. Is it possible that by moving about more without thinking too much about the financial gain as long as we can all live, is it a good thing to do, that we should now start moving about amongst all the cultures and try to play with each other and discover what it is we do.

Yes, I mean the greatest sense of learning is to experience someone else's experience. If you can do that, I think you've hit upon something that is really great. Quite often a lot of people will take the other side of the coin and say that I've been playing for 27 years so why should I play for a little bit of money when I should get more. Well, if you look at the scene, I ***can't*** get more. Of course I should get more

BILL SMITH and LEO SMITH (photograph by Dusan Klimes)

so I'm in a strange predicament right now. I have to go out and rebuild an audience. Because in the midst of this transition from the 70s to the 80s most of us have lost our audiences, not just me. It's people like Cecil Taylor, Anthony Braxton, Leroy Jenkins, all of us, we've all lost our audience.

Obviously when you travel around you think about the situations you're going to. I mean you've played in Communist-bloc countries, in Europe, Canada, America, etc. I suspect under no circumstances would you agree to play in South Africa.

No, none whatsoever. Only if there's independence, if they free the Africans that's there, and by that I mean making a collective society of one man, one vote.

But you do know of course that in this period there's a lot of demonstrations against musicians who are going there to play. Why would a musician who makes his music out of Black-American origin, like Chick Corea who's one of the people doing this, be naive enough to actually go there and record and play for segregated audiences? I can't imagine myself doing that. Why would another musician?

I don't know. There's no way possible to justify a trip to South Africa to play there, no way possible. They could give me all the mines there and I would not go. All of them.

It hurts the struggle too. You know, people in South Africa are dying, man, you know, getting killed just to gain the bare minimum of so-called civil liberties. A man or woman that lives in a society that can endorse that kind of policy I can't see where their existence is of much value. I'm speaking purely of art, where the art is of much value. I'm not talking innovative or creative-wise I mean they're using their art like it has no value, you see. I think that all art has the value to change people and it plays a positive force in creation. To use it in a segregated audience is outrageous.

Is there some idea that the music should be more of a community music like it was in its origins? Original musics were for specific reasons, you know, like court music and kraal music.

Yes, that will come back. That's what the ritual dramas, that's what this area that we're all in right now, the ritual aspect of music means, it's going to reawaken that kind of consciousness in people's psyche. There are all kinds of rituals, people think of rituals mostly as being religious and so forth, but in fact we see rituals every day on television. The news, the evening news, is a ritual, you see. So that level of consciousness that has been evolved can be explored on a much higher level than the six o'clock news. I think it would bring a change in their life. For myself, I like to see people sit down in the evening, or a Sunday afternoon or something, after eating, sit down and put on a videotape of a ritual drama and after playing sit and talk about it because it has a lot of mystical and symbolic levels involved in it that go much higher than what is actually said or played or heard, or seen.

This is like going back into tradition and discovering old traditions.

Well, like Harry Partch. Harry Partch to me was a very important musician and I call him a world musician. Sun Ra is very important to me, I call him a world musician. The AACM, they're all important to me, I call them world musicians. Inside of this world manifestation there's a real twist taking place, something that's going to bring a dramatic expectation on performers and to a high excitement. I find in those people, like Sun Ra and Harry Partch, I find that kind of excitement. Like I take Harry Partch records or Sun Ra records that I know are dealing with particular types of rituals that are purely particular to them and I can cut the lights down and I can sit there and deal with it, actually deal with it. I feel that that's the level that this society will begin to reach. I think that those people are like pathfinders in that area. But I believe in fact that it is going to integrate into all other areas eventually but controlled by a musical mind, controlled through a musical composition or a musical improvisation. I'm not talking about theatre and I'm not talking about performance pieces and I'm not talking about theatre pieces. I'm talking about ritual dramas, you see what I'm talking about?

The recording session that took place in Toronto with Leo Smith will be the next release on Sackville. The following information are the details pertaining to this release.

SACKVILLE 3030
LEO SMITH — "RASTAFARI"
Side One — ***Rastafari — Rituals***
Side Two — ***Madder Lake — Little Bits***
Leo Smith — trumpet, flugelhorn, percussion and harmonica; David Prentice — violin; Bill Smith — soprano and sopranino saxophones, alto clarinet; Larry Potter — vibes; David Lee — bass and cello.
Recorded Sunday, June 12th, 1983, by Phil Sheridan at McClear Place Studios, Toronto.

(photograph by Gerard Futrick)

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TWO BY TWO

Reviewing records has always had the contradictory quality of the writer's personal opinion. The following reviews of recent recordings of Leo Smith and Baikida Carroll are an illustration of this fact, and show that Roger Riggins and Gerard Futrick hear the music in quite different ways. (Photograph of Baikida Carroll by Bill Smith)

BAIKIDA CARROLL (photograph by Bill Smith)

LEO SMITH & NEW DALTA AHKRI

Go In Numbers
Black Saint BSR 0053

Leo Smith, trumpet, flugelhorn, atenteben flute; Dwight Andrews, tenor and soprano saxophone, flute; Bobby Naughton, vibraphone; Wes Brown, bass, odurogyaba flute.

BAIKIDA CARROLL

Shadows And Reflections
Soul Note SN 1023

Baikida Carroll, trumpet and flugelhorn; Julius Hemphill, alto and tenor saxophones; Anthony Davis, piano; Dave Holland, bass; Pheeroan Ak Laff, drums

These two recordings are both by contemporary trumpet players — but that's about where the similarity ends.

As would probably be expected, Carroll's record is closer to the mainstream of "jazz" than Smith's. The irony bordering on pathos, though, is that Carroll would have had a good record if his partner — one Julius Hemphill — would have stuck to his "home horn" (the alto saxophone) instead of trying to "fake it" with the tenor...a horn he obviously is nowhere near mastering.

Trumpeter/composer Smith's offering, on the other hand, is thoroughly compelling and deserves serious study. His musical perspective and attitude, unlike Carroll's, is not particularly tied to a standardized conception as to how the trumpet should sound. As a matter of fact it could be argued that Smith isn't even concerned with how his instrument relates to ensemble playing or even to the "particulars" of his often times brilliant compositional designs. Compositionally he's on the other side of Roscoe Mitchell. Instrumentally he's the earth to Anthony Braxton's air. And in terms of the Western musical world Stravinsky would probably be his closest other-half.

That's to say, from another angle, that his music is a "grounded" dry dense one that is ***only made to appear otherwise*** by Naughton's vibes and Dwight Andrews's sensuous sounding reed instruments and flute.

The piece ***Illumination: The Nguzo Saba*** is a good case in point. The piece opens with Andrews's tenor and Smith's trumpet bellowing out a dissonant glaring music along with the counter/melodicism of Naughton's shadowy vibes. This attention getting almost static thematic structure — yet "authentically" conversational in an Old World African kind of way — soon changes with Smith switching to atenteben flute while Andrews remains on his tenor. Soon Andrews has also switched to flute (and possibly bassist Brown as well) for a responsive flute exchange with Smith that leads one back into the forest/the bush & shade. Andrews, especially, is simply magic in this interlude...sheer magic.

After this flute interlude Smith returns to his trumpet to hang his important rocks in the air along with Naughton's vibes falling gracefully in the background. Andrews then enters after Smith has had his say playing a tenor saxophone music that truly has it all. His pronouncements are the logical suave answer to Smith's "abstracted rocks." Naughton's vibes have left with Smith, Andrews "duets" with the bass of Wes Brown.

When Smith had the duo thing with Marion Brown I understood that he has eyes for a certain type of contrast from horn players...a type of contrast that his music ***must have***. And in Andrews I think Smith has really found his man — the reedist is simply incredible in this stuff. Not only does he know Leo's language and compositional "set-ups" — but the ***places*** where they derive as well.

Smith enters on muted trumpet after Andrews and both — along with bassist Brown in the arco setting — take the tune to its illogical conclusion.

Smith is concerned with a conscious manipulation of what we've come to know as classicism...and he does it, more often than not, exceptionally well: listen to this record.

Looking at Baikida Carroll's record again I can only say that Carroll is an important figure primarily because of his ability to articulate — correctly — the essential nomenclature and shape of contemporary — and I despise this word — "struggle." The tune ***Left Jab*** — for example — which concludes side one of the recording is an important piece of music. Listen especially to the driving empathy established by bassist Holland, pianist Davis and percussionist Ak Laff and Baikida's masterful response to the blazing rhythmic currents established by these musicians.

These are better than average records — and although Smith has the "real" news because of his carefully monitored eschatological mentality — Baikida Carroll gives us two nice pieces: the airy moody ballad ***Jahi Sundance Lake*** and the rhythmically and harmonically refreshing ***Left Jab.*** ***— Roger Riggins***

BAIKIDA CARROLL

Shadows and Reflections
Soul Note SN1023

Baikida Carroll, trumpet & flugelhorn; Julius Hemphill, tenor & alto saxophones; Anthony Davis, piano; Dave Holland, bass; Pheeroan Ak Laff, drums.

Kaki/Jahi SundanceLake/Left Jab/Pyramids/At Roi

Although trumpeter Baikida Carroll is not as highly visible as say, Lester Bowie or Wynton Marsalis, he has nevertheless in his own way made a significant impression in the past several years. Whether acting in the capacity of sideman or leader, his adventurous playing always left its mark. "Shadows and Reflections" reunites Carroll with his old compadre Julius Hemphill, and while both men have been largely associated with the avant garde, this session is straight ahead and swinging. Very accessible. The tunes, all by the leader, offer a wide range of moods and tempos and are liberally spiced with fine solo work throughout. Carroll doesn't try to prove he's the fastest or most technically adept player around, but he does manage to give a good account of himself. Sticking mostly to the mid-range of his horns, his well constructed lines convey a sense of logic and continuity. Hemphill's presence is a positive force helping to heighten the level of inspiration. Heard on both tenor and alto, his playing is sparked with vim and vigor. More than once he succeeds in upstaging his colleagues. The rhythm section is also first rate with Anthony Davis seeming more relaxed and less inhibited than on some of his own recent work. It's a joy to see Dave Holland back in the swing of things after a long absence from the scene. As in the past, his name has always been synonymous with dependability and good taste. Ak Laff tends to be a bit overzealous at times, but his deft cymbal work is well worth mentioning. If you have shied away from the work of Carroll and Hemphill up until now, sample this recording. You will be pleasantly surprised. ***— Gerard Futrick***

LEO SMITH

And New Dalta Ahkri: Go In Numbers
Black Saint BSR 0053

Leo Smith, trumpet, flugelhorn, atenteben flute; Dwight Andrews, tenor and soprano saxophone, flute; Bobby Naughton, vibraphone; Wes Brown, bass, odurogyaba flute

The World Soul/Go In Numbers (For Kashala And Sarhanna)/Illumination/The Nguzo Saba/ Changes

Originally a prominent member of Chicago's AACM, Leo Smith has been based in New Haven, Connecticut, for the past few years. Here he has been quite fortunate in seeking out receptive, talented players who have been willing to assist him in formulating his unique theories of composition and improvisation. New Dalta Ahkri is a direct outgrowth of this association and has been Smith's most consistently successful venue for his eclectic brand of music. The performance heard here was recorded live at the Kitchen in New York in January of 1980, and more or less stays the course set by the group in the past. Side one's opening track is a spritely showcase for the shrill, biting flute work of Andrews. The title cut follows, bringing the whole band into action. It should be noted that Smith's concepts and directions are not always easy to follow, often demanding the listener's utmost attention and concentration. His trumpet and flugelhorn for the most part are cold and icy, but they fuse well with Andrews' soprano. Things do not swing in the traditional sense of the word; instead, a sort of pulse is generated by Naughton's vibes and Brown's nimble bass playing. There are moments when Smith and Andrews seem to signal each other in a sort of musical "Morse code," exchanging dots and dashes over lines of communication supplied by Naughton and Brown. Side two begins in a more lively vein. Andrews is on tenor and Smith's sound is a bit warmer, especially when muted. During one segment, Smith, Andrews, and Brown all on various flutes, introduce some delicate chatter over the top of light, barely audible vibes. Smith and Naughton pair off for some spirited exchanges as do Andrews and Brown who almost steal the show with their effective one on one confrontation. Andrews's tenor playing is especially noteworthy. A soft, reflective solo statement from Naughton caps off the album. While an apparent lack of consistency is present, there are enough hidden, little gems just waiting for discovery by the patient, discerning listener.

— Gerard Futrick

BAIKIDA CARROLL

AN INTERVIEW BY MONTREAL CORRESPONDENT PETER DANSON

The short period in the mid-seventies when Arista Records was recording American creative music, which is referred to several times in this issue of Coda, brought to light a number of startling talents, among them trumpeter BAIKIDA CARROLL. His collaborations with Julius Hemphill on "Coon Bidness" and "Dogon A.D." revealed that the new generation of composer/improvisers included more than one superb brass player. Baikida Carroll's latest recording under his own name, on Soul Note 1032, is "Shadows and Reflections," featuring Hemphill, Anthony Davis, Dave Holland and Pheeroan Ak Laff.

The following interview took place in Montreal late in 1981, while Carroll was appearing at The Rising Sun as part of an Anthony Braxton Quintet that included Marilyn Crispell, Wes Brown and Thurman Barker.

BAIKIDA CARROLL: When I was growing up, my father played saxophone and piano, and my mother played a little piano. There was always music in the house. My mother always had Count Basie and Duke Ellington and Miles Davis records – as a matter of fact she used to cut school to go listen to Miles Davis when he was playing over at Gino's in St. Louis. So she knew a lot of musicians; my father was a musician, and when I was little, jazz was all I listened to. In grade school and so on you were influenced by all types of music; but jazz was the main thread. In second year of high school I joined the school band – I noticed that the band would put on these uniforms and get out of school at one thirty, so I thought I would try that out. Up to that point I was really into basketball, but from that first day in band, I've never done anything else but play music. That was in September, and by January I was playing second trumpet in the senior band, and by the summer I was playing with Albert King and all of the blues bands around St. Louis. Ike and Tina Turner, that's when I met Lester Bowie, and we played with Fontella Bass at the Riviera, Little Milton, Oliver Sain, local bands. The blues, rhythm and blues, if you're into music at all in St. Louis, or Chicago, you can't get past the blues.

I used to listen to Art Blakey, and I used to like to listen to Gerry Mulligan when Clark Terry was with him, because I loved Clark Terry.

On Saturdays Vernon Nashville, who was the director of the high school band at that time, he took an interest in the kids around St. Louis who were really interested in playing, so he had this band on Saturdays, there were two unions then, a black union and a white union, and on Saturdays we would rehearse at the black union hall. Fontella Bass's band was rehearsing there too, and when Lester Bowie was finished there he would come and play with us, and Oliver Nelson contributed some of his charts, and Chick Booth, a drummer who used to play with all the big bands, he had charts, and we would scrounge up charts and send out for stuff. It was a ***good*** band: J. D. Parran, Jabbo James Ware, Lester Bowie would play with us sometimes, a lot of really good musicians, I learned a lot. There were a few places in St. Louis that would let us come in and jam with local bands, organ trios.

In high school I was really into Charlie Parker, Fats Navarro, Lee Morgan, Louis Armstrong. Not until I left high school and got into the army did I get into Ornette Coleman, John Coltrane, Eric Dolphy, their music. First the hippest thing was Lee Morgan's "Sidewinder," that kind of music got to me more immediately, but after I started playing those solos and listening to the records and learning all the little

BAIKIDA CARROLL & WES BROWN (photograph by Bill Smith)

nuances, I got hungry for more music, so I developed into Miles and Coltrane in that period: 1961, '62, '63. I did play trumpet, so there were certain things I would listen to, but I didn't necessarily go after trumpet players. At the time I just couldn't get around people like Lee Morgan and Kenny Dorham; in fact at that period of my development, any good trumpet player was just dazzling to me.

I see now that I was interested in composition then, and it was certain periods; for example I would listen to Miles, but not specifically for Miles; rather, because I liked Wayne Shorter's compositions, and I listened to Gil Evans because I liked those things that he was doing. A little later there was an album by Woody Shaw that I liked; I liked those songs, with Larry Young. I liked playing those songs. That was the period after the army, when I came back to St. Louis.

A lot happened to me musically in the army. A ***lot***. In junior high school it looked as if there were possibilities for me in college basketball, but by the time I was a senior it was clear that it was going to be straight-ahead music. Finally, I was supposed to graduate, but I was missing an English credit, so I had to come back the following September to get that credit. So what happened, not being able to graduate, in 1965, the star center of our basketball team was killed in Viet Nam; two friends on my block were killed in Viet Nam; about three or four friends had already been drafted, because it was the only time they were drafting by number, and I had to choose what I was going to do. Possibly one of the most influential men in my career, a lot of my personal guidance came from Vernon Nashville. He said, "Well it seems that you're seriously into it. I think what I can do (because I was thinking about coming here to Canada, or going to Amsterdam, to get away from the draft) there's a way that you can beat the whole thing, and use your music on all levels of your life." He took me to a friend of his who was a recruiter and also a musician, and I took this test to see if I could get into the Army Naval School of Music, which is a really special school. If you can graduate from that school, you can choose where you want to go in the world, and they have to employ you in what they've trained you in, so they can't assign you where you've chosen and then make you a truck driver. I went to school, graduated and my first choice was France, but by the time our orders came in DeGaulle had kicked them out of France. My second choice was Germany. It got me through that whole draft thing, otherwise, being eighteen and with no profession, you go straight to Viet Nam. Which I wasn't into.

That music school was one of the most incredible, intense periods of my life. They would get you up at five in the morning, march you to breakfast, march you to the school, and from about seven to five it's straight ahead music: composition class, orchestration class, big band class, combo class, private lessons, instrument maintenance class, chamber music class, every aspect of music. It was so short, I couldn't say I got a thorough training, but I got a really good insight into the disciplines you have to sustain to see the music through and to see your ideas through. In there I met some of the most incredible musicians I had ever seen, because in there were these nineteen, twenty year olds who ***did not*** want to go to Viet Nam — so they were playing their ass off to do well to stay here. The school was so hard that the only time you got to jam was two in the morning, so there would be some incredible sessions — that was a heavy bebop period, and that was when I got into Miles. A friend of mine, a drummer, Leonard Smith, came to me with this Miles Davis record, he was so excited: "Four and More." We would play it day and night, I would go to sleep listening to that, those tempos. We would go into town, Norfolk, Virginia, and jam sometimes with a band that played on Church Street. Once, when I had just been there a month or so, we went into town there to do some playing and there was a Ku Klux Klan march down Main Street! I crossed the street, got right back on the bus and went back to the school, I said: "This is a period of study for me." I was eighteen years old and this was my first encounter with that world.

After I got my assignment and went to Europe, I was playing in this army band. We did marches, concerts for the beer festivals in Germany, playing lots of classical music. On the side we had kind of a jazz funk band — when it was showtime and the singer came on we would play funk, and the rest of the time we would play ***Sidewinder*** and stuff like that, at night at the Officers' Club.

I was developing really fast, and after so much of that type of music I progressed. I got shipped to another division, in Wurzburg, Germany, and I went to the conservatory, where they had an American who was teaching composition. Basically I studied with him privately, but I had to go to the Conservatory to do that. In that time I got my first apartment in Germany, outside the post, and I had this friend who was a saxophone player. We got into listening to a lot of Ornette Coleman and John Coltrane. The composition class really inspired me to write, so at night I organized this big band. The Commanding Officer and everybody else in authority were against jazz, so it had to be an underground type band. That's when I really got into playing out, I would write scores and sketches, and we would play them and really take it out. That was a really heavy period for me, because I realized I had gone into this other music.

When I got out of the army, I went back to St. Louis just to visit my family. While I was there I figured I might as well do some work, make some money. So I went back and played a gig with Oliver Sain and Little Milton, and I realized that was not happening any more for me! The music was cool, but I wasn't as happy and excited playing it as I was before I left.

Before that happened, there was a situation about six months before I left where I got taken out of the band and I was with the Marne Division Showcase, we just played shows behind Georgie Jessel and people like that. We played numbers beforehand, and we got to travel a lot all over Europe, which was really nice, then I came back to the States.

I was not happy with the situation of playing with blues bands — I didn't realize the influence of that ensemble that I had, with all those eager people into this other music, to the point of staying up until three o'clock in the morning to be able to do it.

So I was playing with Oliver Sain, and we were playing funk, blues, R&B, which was cool for finances, but creatively I wasn't being inspired.

I had a small apartment, so to practice I had to go out to Forest Park, on the golf course. I like practising outside because it gives you a bigger sound. You can't fill it outside, so if you go inside after doing that, you have a big sound.

I'm sitting there, and there's this huge hill, far away, the golf course sort of rolls away into this hill, and at the top of the hill there was this little speck. I was sitting against this tennis court fence, practising for at least two hours, and this speck was coming towards me, closer and closer over this very long time, this huge green field with nothing on it but this person whoever it was. He was walking really slow, whoever it was, and gradually this person got bigger and bigger, and the next thing I know there was this very tall person there, and that's how I met Julius Hemphill. He came over and said, "Yeah, you sound really good," and we got to talking and he said, look, we've been getting together over at this building, why don't you come over.

It was this huge complex of apartments. On one street there was this trumpet player, and every time I walked past this house, on the way to the field, I would hear him. I would stand outside and listen to him practising and say, "This guy is really good."

So when I met this trumpet player at this rehearsal, after a while I said to him, you must be the guy who lives on such-and-such a street. And he said yes, you must be the guy who lives at so-and-so. It turned out that he would walk by and hear me practice, and he was doing the same thing! We got to be really good friends, his name was Isaac Rahjaan, he used to play with Sonny Rollins. A really good trumpet player, in the Kenny Dorham school, and he taught me a lot, because after that we would get together a lot.

That group was the original Black Artists Group, they were just starting. At that point I started teaching composition and trumpet, I was in the big band, Hamiet Bluiett had the big band, Oliver Lake had his quartet, Julius had a trio and a quartet, Isaac was playing with him then. A lot went down, we used to do all kinds of things, that was our first influence in multimedia. We had dancers and actors and visual artists and poets, so we had all kinds of information combinations: trumpet and poet, three saxophones and a dancer, Oliver Lake and an actor, whatever. Each week we would do something at the Gateway Theater, that we rented. The big band would play and we would go to Chicago and play with the AACM, and sometimes they would come down. Once in 1967 we had this incredible festival. We brought down most of the AACM, Anthony Braxton, Leo Smith. Everyone played. I had a quintet with John Hicks, J. D. Parran, John Mixon, the drummer was named Bubba, sometimes it was Phillip Wilson, it was a nice quintet-sextet because we had a trombone player, Apitu. It was a great event, people played to about four in the morning, after it had officially stopped. Anthony Braxton did a concert where he climbed up on a ladder and was dropping things into a trash can, it was totally bizarre. We were reading scores with colours and all kinds of different notation, it was really an incredible period. After that, Phillip Wilson had a big band. The big band was me, Floyd, Isaac, Wilber Rutling, sometimes David Hines on trumpet; Oliver and Julius, J. D. Parran, Jabbo James Ware, a lot of saxophones, three or four trombone players, Joe Bowie, Apitu... Hamiet Bluiett left with Mingus, and I took over the big band then. Julius and I started writing. I was conducting, and Julius did some incredible large-ensemble writing during that

period. I was doing all the recording, and the first few records we did were done on my tape recorder, although basically we did it for documentary purposes. Lester had one ensemble where we did a sunrise ceremony, where we played from twelve o'clock in the afternoon until sunup; at sunup we all went out and played on the streets. This may be 1970, '71. This is when I first really got into writing. We did this form for "Revolutionary Night" by Larry Neal, one of the biggest productions we had done to date. The whole music ensemble, 15-20 people. A play basically, with dancers, tone-poem collage, hard to describe, an incredible piece. I was so impressed with the ensemble, I was conducting, and you can work and rehearse with someone for months, but when they get out and perform, it can be something else. I had to keep watching everything, and I was thinking jeez, this is really hip! There are some bad motherfuckers around here!

At that point none of us were near famous. We would play to one, two, three people. It took a long time for people to take notice of what was going on. Plus it was Saint Louis, and the music was experimental, everyone was just developing their wares – and it was ***new***! The stuff was really new, I didn't know it then, but some of the things we did then, people are doing now. Especially some of the things with dancers, or a play that would have just one person and a saxophone. A concert with six trumpets, a concert with all drums. The main thing was to be in a situation, which I've only been in recently, where you have a staff of people in all of the disciplines of art, working together towards one end. Most of the time now if I can do that, it's only if there's some large financial backing involved. But then it was basically inspirational. The art department would do the sets, Emilio Cruz or Oliver Jackson, the dancers would work out the choreography, the writers' workshop would work out the dialogue or whatever, and we would all put a project together.

Then in '72, after three or four years of this being an intense everyday kind of thing, everybody started going different places.

We all supported ourselves in different ways. The collective had some grants, and I was teaching, and writing arrangements for another musical project. This was still in the period of Lyndon Johnson, with some influence left over from the John Kennedy period, where there were some grants going to the arts – it's nice to have a cultural president! It would be nice to have another one.

There was this group across the river called the Young Disciples, teenagers from the area: there was a guy teaching them music and I was writing them rock charts; someone would write a little song and I would arrange it for the whole ensemble. And I was doing some teaching for John Hicks at Southern Illinois University, when he was away on a gig. A blues gig every now and then. There was an old blues guy named James, a guitar player – actually I guess he wasn't that old, he just lived hard – Oliver Lake and Julius Hemphill went through that band, everybody had played with this guy. One of those gigs where I knew I was going to play from nine o'clock to four in the morning and make only fifteen dollars – but I needed the fifteen dollars to get through the week! They were kind of hard times financially too.

A lot of pepple thought that the music we were playing was pretty outside – when we made that record "Dogon A.D." they were surprised: "Well, they can play somewhat straightahead!" You see, if Bird had played what was popular for his time, he wouldn't have been Bird, and it's not necessarily playing to go against the grain, but it's exploring; the true sense of improvised music is to explore, not to disregard all the things that you've learned before. The first time I went to Europe an interviewer asked me, "As a free jazz musician, what does 'free jazz' mean to you?" I had to admit that not only had I never called myself a free jazz musician, this was the first time I'd even heard of it. Because if Ike Turner called me for a gig, I'd have gone and made the gig! I've played with "Jesus Christ Superstar," whatever. I told the interviewer, I'll have to get back to you about that, I have to think about it. Because if I was going to use that term, I would say that to me it is to be free to play whatever you want to or whatever you hear and are inspired to play at the moment. And to be able to do that you have to have a grounding in a lot of different types of things; you have to have studied to be able to execute what's in your mind.

For example, the other night we played this march piece of Anthony's. And having a military background, I think I've played every march in the book. Victor Herman and Phillip Sousa are no strangers to me! The other night, playing one of Anthony Braxton's marches, in the improvised sections Anthony and I were throwing all these different marches at each other. To do that, you have to know all this different music – which means you have to be somewhat eclectic. There are purists, who stick to one certain thing, but in this music to be a purist means still, that you have to have the knowledge of a lot of other different things – blues, bebop, post-bebop, funk, rock, polka, dixieland, marches, classical. That's what free jazz meant to me, to be able to improvise, once you're set loose in this environment, when something comes through the air that suggests something, say a salsa, you might hear something that would fit there, but if you don't have any knowledge of that type of music, you can't go to it. You really have to study and develop your ear. Timbres and sounds and forms... if you're going to play ***All The Things You Are*** it puts you in this form. It's like when Miles finally stopped playing other peoples' pieces, the old, classic pieces he left show tunes and the band just played their own compositions – once you start doing that, that world is endless.

The miracle of the AACM (in Chicago) and the Black Artists Group (in St. Louis), existing in different cities as they did, is that we were all searching for something, philosophically, to keep the world of improvised music perpetuated.

PETER DANSON: ***One facet of the Black Artists Group situation was that the concert situation was preferred over the jazz club gig. Was that because you were consciously presenting an art?***

No, it was because the club owners wanted the beboppers basically! If we could have gotten a job in a club, we would have come up with something.

I moved to Paris in October 1972. Most of the people in the Black Artists Group moved to different places in the world. Oliver Lake did a record called "NTU" and the ensemble, which I think was about nine or ten pieces, was going to Europe on this tour to promote the record. All that fell through but with that momentum going, Oliver Lake, Joseph Bowie, Charles "Bobo" Shaw and Floyd Le Flore, we decided to go to Europe and see what we could do. So we had two vans full of musical equipment and stuff. We went to Paris and we played a lot of really good concerts, it was a good period, for about a year. We did some stuff with Anthony Braxton, and I did a few things on my own, did a couple of records. After a year Joe, Bobo and Floyd came back to the States. Oliver and I stayed over there; we played duo concerts and put together other ensembles; Oliver had a quartet with me, him, Oliver Johnson and Peter Warren in '74. Oliver left, and when he came back Anthony Braxton and I were the American representatives at the Cite International des Arts, a building where each country donates money to maintain a room; Anthony had one and I had one. Basically we'd sit around and talk about compositions and scores; he was working on his piano music then, and I was writing music for a record date that I had over there. Oliver and Anthony decided to go back to the States; I remember one particular conversation where we talked about the decision of going back to the States to be broke and poor! So I stayed another year after that. Just before he left Oliver did the "Orange Fish Tears" date with me which was also my first experience working with Nana Vasconcelos. Then I had an ensemble, which I wanted to bring back to the States, with Nana, Muntilla Nyomo, an excellent guitarist from Zaire, Jackie Sampson, who like Nana was from Brazil; Manuel Delaurio who was from Chile, and Dale Robinjack, who was from Madagascar, a tenor saxophone player – so I had this international band! We played a few concerts, and I was working on writing music for Pierre Gibert. That whole thing fell through, so I had all this music written, and decided just to do it with the quartet with Oliver.

Oliver has said that in Europe he was able to meet musicians on a level he wasn't able to meet them on in New York; you could hear them and meet them and they could hear you on a level that wouldn't have happened in the States. How did that come about?

We had a good agent, Michel Salaud, and we got to play in the same festivals as Archie Shepp and Cecil Taylor and Weather Report and so on. They hadn't heard us and when we'd come off the stage they would be really elated. I remember one of the biggest moments of my life was sitting in the back of the van with Wayne Shorter! He dug the music... and Shepp dug it. It's kind of nice to be appreciated by these people you grew up listening to – especially Wayne Shorter, he's one of my favourite composers.

While I was still over there, the great recording period came. Oliver Lake was calling me to come for a date, and Julius Hemphill wanted me to come over to do the other side of "The Hard Blues," but I didn't get back there for that, so I missed a lot of that Arista recording period. When I came back I tried to get a contract, but it was dead by then.

So I came back and stayed in New York. I was doing a lot of studio stuff, backup horn parts on a funk album, which was great money, I got an apartment out of doing that, and I was teaching composition and doing the big band at Queens College in New York. Working with Oliver, I did some travelling with Julius. We went to St. Louis and did a big multi-production, one we hadn't done in a long time – "Coontown Bicentennial Memorial Service" –

we wrote the music together.

But when I got to New York, I was so afraid of all the myths of New York – really concerned about setting up a base to work from without going under – so I was teaching, doing all these sessions, and after a while I realized that I had gone away from what I really wanted to do – which was write, and play my own music. So when Julius and I went to St. Louis, I continued on to San Francisco to play with Oliver at the Keystone Korner. There was also something happening with my embouchure at that time – I was playing too low on my bottom lip, and my range and flexibility was not happening. I went to a couple of embouchure specialists and I had to change my embouchure, which meant several months of being able to play very badly. I ended up staying in San Francisco for two years. I played a couple of concerts with Oliver Lake, a couple of local things, then for a long time I didn't play at all – going through this heavy study period where I completely changed my embouchure, which was like starting all over again. When I came out of it my range was different; I had more control over what I could do. Because up to that point I had worked myself into a corner, I couldn't go any further – but changing my embouchure corrected that and now I'm okay – playing hard every night. So when I came out of that I started doing solo concerts just to see how it was. I did quite a few solo concerts in San Francisco and Los Angeles.

I had done it before – Nancy, France and other places. In San Francisco there was a solo series at a place called Mapenzi. They had Oliver Lake, Joseph Jarman, Roscoe Mitchell, Leo Smith, Lester Bowie, George Lewis, Don Moye, Chico Freeman, Anthony Braxton – so I was part of that. Previously I had done solo concerts using percussive instruments, and flutes and little bells and stuff, but I had never done a concert just trumpet. I was determined to do it that way, which was going to take a lot of work. I was determined not to play a fifteen minute set, I wanted to play a 45-minute set. I had to go into training, like a boxer.

Oliver Lake and I used to talk a lot, at least twice a week, over the phone from New York. One thing we used to talk about was – whatever you do, the critics will go the other way on it. I had done a gig and the critics were really down on me because I was playing bebop-type stuff. It was at the Keystone Korner, and they were saying it wasn't true improvising because I was playing these figures, and it was rooted in the tradition, it wasn't ***pure*** improvising... so not necessarily to spite the press, but just to see... to see if I could sustain interest through pure improvisation. Sitting there with the audience, just you and the trumpet, and no ***Donna Lee***, no blues changes or Lee Morgan licks, just straight-ahead improvised music. That's where that whole album (on Hat Hut) came from. A concentration on spacing, and the timbre of the instrument, without diatonic chords and scales – just relating on the pure basis of sound, to paint these colours with sound, and to communicate – that's why I titled it "The Spoken Word." I did a few concerts after that, then I figured my embouchure was cool, and I came back to New York.

I know that Anthony Braxton says that when he played his first solo concert he got up

BAIKIDA CARROLL (photograph by Gerard Futrick)

there and played his heart out for what he thought was an hour, but it turned out to be only twenty minutes.

That's what happened to me in Nancy, France. I had prepared *nine* pieces for the first set, and I was going to do six in the second set. Some nice melodies, some things to keep the interest going, some improvising on chords, I played each piece and improvised on it, I ended the first set and it was about fifteen minutes! I thought oh shit! I only had six for the next set. But by the time of the Mapenzi series, I knew what I had to do.

Now, domestically I'm based in Woodstock. Until I'm financially able, I can't deal with New York on the level that it demands. I was basically looking for a place for almost a year when I got back to New York, playing with David Murray and Oliver Lake and Hamiet Bluiett, doing a lot of work. In New York there's a whole check-off list they have. First of all, you walk in and you're black, so there are certain areas you're supposed to go in. I don't like to be put in anybody's *area* per se – if it has what I want in it that's a different story. Then you say, I'm a musician – you *can* go in and say I'm an accountant or whatever, anything but a musician, but then you move in and people start complaining – it's hard to be a musician and not have your neighbours know it after a while. Then on top of that, you say you're a trumpet player! – they say oh... So I needed a place where I could rehearse, and practise at three in the morning if I got inspiration, a place where I could walk through the house, without feeling I was in a slot of some kind – and it didn't seem to exist for less than six or seven hundred dollars a month. At that point I was writing for a lot of plays, and I had a writing assignment, and Julius Hemphill was staying in Woodstock and he told me to come on up there while he was in Europe. So I stayed at his place for about six weeks and I dug it. You're in earshot of New York – someone calls you for a rehearsal and you're there in two hours – it's completely quiet, way in the country, I could play as loud as I want any time I want, if I had writing to do I could sit there and quietly do it without the influence of New York City – because when I'm in that city I'm usually going to hear some music, going to hang out, go to a party – there are too many distractions. I needed this space to get my stuff together, to take it to New York and sell, as opposed to dealing with the intensity of that city – which I love. Plus I find it less influential. When I'm in New York a long time, hanging out and going to hear this and that person, that comes out in your music a lot. Now when I hear some music, and I sit down to arrange or orchestrate it, I don't have all those things happening. Most of the people who are big in New York are not from New York, anyway.

And of course Jack DeJohnette is up there (in Woodstock), Dave Holland, Karl Berger. Plus when you're in the country, it's just easier to get together and play.

Do you feel that there is a contradiction between music as entertainment and music as art? A tension?

There's a tension in the literary world, in terms of how to label it, but personally I feel there's a function to every type of music, to fulfill someone's needs. If it's body music – James Brown or Earth Wind and Fire, Chaka Khan – that's a function and if I need that I will look for that music, I will not look for Anthony Braxton or Roscoe Mitchell, or some of the things that I do. I would look to them for a more intellectually stimulating kind of thing. If I need spiritual stimulation I will look for this type of music. I think that's a problem people have in western society in general... trying to separate and segregate everything, without knowing the function of each entity. The entertainment will speak for itself, just as the art will. It's like saying, "Where's the beat?" If you want to hear that, then you're in the wrong place. If there was only one type of music, then it would really be a drag.

Another thing in black music I find discouraging is that people tend to think that there is only one type of thing that can come out of one people's music. "Oh, you play jazz." It's actually a multi-faceted situation. Jazz – how many types of music fall in that category and how many levels are in each of that type? The only thing that makes music good or bad for me is the conviction. Most of the time if I see someone who's trying, I can't really think of one person I dislike – because there are other things happening in this world that are much more destructive than someone playing music – even if they're out there just to make a buck playing music. That same person could be snatching purses, you know what I mean. It's not good to bring in those types of bad forces anyway. So if you see someone performing who is trying to uplift his own creative being – for that reason alone, there's not really a bad music. Like punk – that music is a social statement. It all has a function.

Another good example of that is someone like Wayne Shorter, or even Miles Davis. You either follow the music, or you follow the person. If you're going to follow the music, you can't take that person and say, "Well, I wish he had stayed there." That's not fair to the artist. If you're going to follow the music, you should see who's doing what in that music now. Some people are not necessarily into creating new stuff, they're just into perpetuating a good situation – which is wonderful! It's nice to go into a club and hear someone sounding like Ben Webster – especially if you never saw Ben Webster! So that's a good function for that situation.

So as far as I'm concerned Wayne Shorter or Miles Davis can do what they want to do. They've gone through a lot of shit. They've been in New York – poor – making those funky gigs – in places they idolized when they were young and when they finally got to play there they realized it was just a cave, a little hole in the wall. They've gone through that, playing seven nights a week. And during that they've moved through several creative areas, so I can see that they might want to cool out, and see what they can create in this type of music.

I've been writing music of a wide variety for a number of projects. It keeps the creative conscious stimulated, because you're not always playing, and if I can't get a playing gig I'm not going to go out and get drunk. I just refocus it on composition.

We've been going through an intense period in jazz and the new music, and it looks as if we're coming to the end of that.

Well, in periods of recession the arts and education tend to suffer. But I know the music will go on, because I've already been through periods when we only played for two or three people, and the people in the music who are creators will keep creating. I have a backlog of music you wouldn't believe!

JAZZ LITERATURE

THE BESSIE SMITH COMPANION
by Edward Brooks
New York, DaCapo Press, 1982
229 pages, hard cover

There is little doubt that Brooks approaches his subject with conviction; as George Melly states in the Foreword (page xi), Brooks's concern is to transmit his belief in his subject's genius in a "journal of a love affair set down without bathos." The format is painstakingly chronological. The research draws together many notable sources, chiefly Albertson and Oliver. A useful capsule discography follows, listing, in addition to obvious information, composer, vocal range, essential form of the song and the song's tempo; as well, there is a handy index to record titles.

Nevertheless, there is a danger inherent in such close analyses; the sum of the parts may prove to be greater or less than the whole, or the "natural joys" (page xvi) found in the performance itself may indeed be tarnished. Shakespeare's Henry VI defended his right to the English throne, proclaiming, "My crown is in my heart, not on my head." By way of contrast, Brooks's "Companion" takes up the legendary Bessie's cause more from the head than the heart. To be fair, Brooks does concede that "visceral pleasure is in no way disparaged. I count myself amongst those countless people ...who get a strong gut-derived satisfaction from much early jazz and in particular the songs of Bessie Smith" (Introduction, page xv). Yet, Brooks strongly defends the delights of "informed listening," and what lay person, like myself, dares take issue with such phrases as "the brief descending run describes the dominant triad with added-sixth," or "a tonic first inversion arpeggio with added ninth", or "Bessie applies a variety of decoration to the pentatonically based melody...sometimes constituting an articulated glissando." My own sympathies, I'm sorry to say, lie with the guileless Henry, transparent and hapless, with whom one can enjoyably and openly take issue. It is for this very reason that my preferences remain with the Jan Evensmos of this world (Evensmo wrote a "Sologra phy Series" in which he makes his own personal comments on the solos of the artists concerned). To him I can cry out, "I really don't believe, despite all the evidence to the contrary, that that is Bessie singing on ***Frosty Morning Blues*** and ***Easy Come, Easy Go Blues***," or, "Clarence Williams, Fletcher Henderson, Don Redman (et al) aren't really all that bad as accompanists on some of those early Bessie records;" or, "Benny himself claims to be present on all four of Bessie's last recordings, and I believe him;" or, "I don't find ***Haunted House Blues*** and ***Eavesdropper's Blues*** unsatisfactory releases, or the piano 'purposeless' and the clarinet 'oppressive, superficial and insipid;" or, "I enjoyed the coarse, good-natured growlings of Bessie and Lang's guttural guitar peckings on ***Wild About That Thing*** and ***You've Got To Give Me Some***." But this isn't Jan — or Henry; hence, I defer such judgments.

Perhaps the title "Companion" is a misnomer; the book certainly does not inspire that kind of comfortable affinity among listener, reader and performer. It is definitely not for the first time listener to Bessie's magic; it would only serve as a detraction from the sheer vitality and emotional impact of the music itself. I'm not quite certain who might benefit from this, fascinating in scholarship and scope as it is. I wonder what Bessie might have said at this point?

— John Sutherland

BESSIE SMITH

ZEZ CONFREY: RAGTIME, NOVELTY AND JAZZ PIANO SOLOS, edited by Ronny Schiff
Belwin Mills Publishing Corp.

Can it be? Could it possibly be true that some sixty years since his heyday the premier composer of that much maligned genre known somewhat disparagingly as Novelty Ragtime is at long last undergoing a revival? And, I might add, a revival conspicuously lacking the concomitant distortions and irrelevancies of, say, a Broadway musical or a hit movie. For it. is to be hoped that if the renewed interest in Zez Confrey never matches the proportions of the Scott Joplin and Fats Waller revivals at least he will not have suffered the same posthumous indignities. This anthology of ninety piano solos, songs, and children's pieces is a huge step in the right direction, comparable in scope to the superb "Scott Joplin: Collected Piano Works" issued some twelve years ago by the New York Public Library, or the monumental thirty-six volumes of Fats Waller recordings issued over the course of the last decade by French RCA. That is the real essence of a revival: namely, the renewed availability of the artist's work in its purest form, not as an adjunct to some jive exploitative "showbiz" jumble.

This is the real thing. It is a remarkably rich and diverse collection of compositions ranging from the simplicity of ***Four Candy Pieces*** or ***Four Circus Pieces*** to the fiendishly difficult ***Coaxing The Piano*** or ***My Pet***, from the massive hit ***Kitten On The Keys*** to the relatively obscure ***Sunshine From The Fingers*** and ***Sport Model Encore*** (both presented here in their original manuscript). One is struck immediately by the density and complexity of much of Confrey's work, so much so, in fact, that it comes as something of a disappointment to realize that here was a man who represented at once the best and the worst aspects of the idiom he did so much to create. For while on one hand Confrey typified the very highest standards of musical sophistication for his day, he also apparently felt no qualms at pandering to the basest expectations of his audience. I refer to the rather offensive contrivances in, say, ***Humorestless*** or perhaps in the terribly coy ***Grandfather's Clock***; it is a huge talent, but it occasionally debases itself, as does much of Novelty Ragtime. Indeed, there are those who would argue that such a degredation was a necessary condition of the Novelty Ragtime aesthetic sense. But the great majority of the music contained in this anthology emphatically discounts such a point of view, as does the work of Confrey contemporary Roy Bargy and near-contemporaries Arthur Schutt and Rube Bloom (and, in England, Billy Mayerl). Theirs, and

most of Confrey's, was a music characterized by an astounding technical command of the piano, and consequently, a rhythmic and harmonic venturesomeness on a par with the experiments of the greatest Jazz musicians of their time. If we are willing, and indeed tenacious enough to go behind the 'novelty' facade we will find a marvellously vital idiom — just the kind of thing that ***doesn't*** find its way into the Broadway musical or hit movie conventionally deemed necessary in effecting a "revival."

With the appearance of this collection, as well as the news that Dick Hyman will shortly be releasing an album of Confrey material, things are looking up for those interested in "The Creator of the Novelty Rag." Would that they remain so. — ***Julian Yarrow***

JELLY ROLL, JABBO & FATS
19 Portraits In Jazz
by Whitney Balliett
Oxford University Press, New York 197 pp.

The book's title, suggesting as it does another jazz-came-up-the-river ramble through the already well-trodden early history of jazz, would not attract the serious jazz listener if its author was not Whitney Balliett. No work of Balliett's ever lacks its own special charm, to the extent that one could say that Balliett recreates and interprets the world through his own language, much as a great improviser, or any great artist does. Over the last twenty five years the benefits of his grace, wit and imagination have been applied to several generations of musicians — along with a puzzling ability to make his subjects, Ornette Coleman and Fats Waller alike, come across like characters out of mainstream fictional Americana, like James Thurber cartoons of John Cheever short stories. His writing is easygoing almost to the point of blandness at times, and to enjoy his work the reader must accept that this quality transmits itself to almost anyone he interviews, profiles or reviews, so that regardless of who they are, most of his subjects are portrayed as gentle, likeable eccentrics.

At the same time, Balliett's heart belongs unmistakably to pre-bebop jazz, and since so many of the major figures of that music are no longer with us, he is inclined to chronicle contemporary torchbearers of that tradition, such as Dick Wellstood and Dave McKenna in this volume. Like these musicians, he has always clearly identified the period of music from which he chooses to draw his inspiration, yet has always maintained a healthy and curious, if somewhat careful, respect for more recent developments. Therefore, if one is interested in contemporary New York City jazz musicians, one must be prepared to read about pianist Ellis Larkins and bassist Michael Moore rather than, say, Don Pullen or Reggie Workman. Although there is an interesting article here about Ornette Coleman, not much of it is news if you already know about Ornette, and it seems to have been assembled from recordings, liner notes and an interview with John Snyder rather than the artist himself. So a great innovator is given secondhand treatment relative to Larkins or Moore — Balliett virtually brings us in to spend the day with each of them (not that he is alone in this — aren't there lots of books now about Miles Davis being written by people who have never met or talked to Miles?). Incidentally Balliett's introduction of Michael Moore — and the interview is as usual excellent — as "the best jazz bassist alive" suggests a contentious streak in the writer that has not been revealed before.

Balliett's style is so polished that he can seem almost glib — he has a huge talent for one-liners — but in general his descriptions stand up under analysis, and when he is being arch — such as a passing reference to "Stan Kenton's huge, gleaming Art Deco band" — he can make a few words seem all that is necessary to say on a subject.

Although Whitney Balliett cannot perform the literary equivalent of turning a corny pop song into a moving emotional experience as the great improvisers can, he is able to make serious craftsmanlike performers come across as great artists, or at least engage our interest in them to a surprising degree. If, like me, you find yourself reading through a rather unexceptional biographical passage with fair interest, suddenly realizing that Balliett is now interviewing Dave McKenna's ***wife*** — as he is wont to do when the artists themselves are watching TV or going for another beer — you'll know what I mean. Merely the fact that Balliett has applied this talent to documenting the greats, near-greats and non-greats of jazz means that, although more current generations of improvisers may miss his attention, we should be grateful for what he has to offer us. This book contains essays on Hugues Panassie, Charles Delaunay, Jelly Roll Morton, Sidney Bechet, Tommy Benford, Freddie Moore, Sonny Greer, Jabbo Smith, Doc Cheatham, Fats Waller, Dick Wellstood, Vic Dickenson, Lester Young, Ellis Larkins, Erroll Garner, Dave McKenna, Michael Moore, Lee Konitz and Ornette Coleman.

— ***David Lee***

JIMMY'S BLUES by James Baldwin
London: Michael Joseph Ltd., 1983; 64 pages

One is greeted by a marvelous book jacket design and an excellent photograph on the cover of the very first published selection of poetry of James Baldwin. This cultural coup was wonderfully done by the Michael Joseph Publishers in London, England, which makes Baldwin's U.S. publishers seem rather unhip to the poetic side of their best-selling Black prose writer, or his U.S. publishers are only interested in 'best-seller' material: prose!

This handsome volume of poems by brother J.B. is a selection of seventeen poems. The book opens with a long poem titled ***Staggerlee Wonders***, for many Black poets, such as Sterling Brown and Ethridge Knight, Staggerlee (or Stagger Lee) has been a heroic folkloric character, but not so with Baldwin. His Staggerlee just sits around wondering and soloing with Time-Life mag interactions that perhaps would be fabulous if one heard this poem read aloud by Baldwin.

But then one would have to wish for an audio-book (a book that actually speaks each page outloud) or wait and catch brother J.B. in person, although ***he be no jazz poet*** in spite of his rather jazz poem, ***3:00 a.m. (for David).***

The poem ***Munich, Winter 1973 (for Y.S.)*** is a sophisticated urban blues that can be 'heard' with one's eyes, this is also true of the poem, ***Guilt, Desire and Love***. Baldwin being an ex-preacher, eternal Christian and, an above-average American, plus being included in that small number of the world's 'important' writers, must thus be pardoned for his use of or mentioning 'God' in almost every poem.

The poem titled ***The Darkest Hour*** seems to have the healthy influence of poet Langston Hughes, who wrote: "...My motto, As I live and learn is Dig and be dug in return." And brother J.B. writes: "...that the brightest hour we will ever see occurs just before we cease to be." He uses rhyme often and it works without being corny. The only exception is the poem for Lena Horne, in which rhyme is an excessive drag, unworthy of the poem's subject. Baldwin's poem ***Imagination*** has a hip quip that should be used in elementary schools, Here is the last contagious riff: "...It may, of course, be the other way around: Columbus was discovered by what he found."

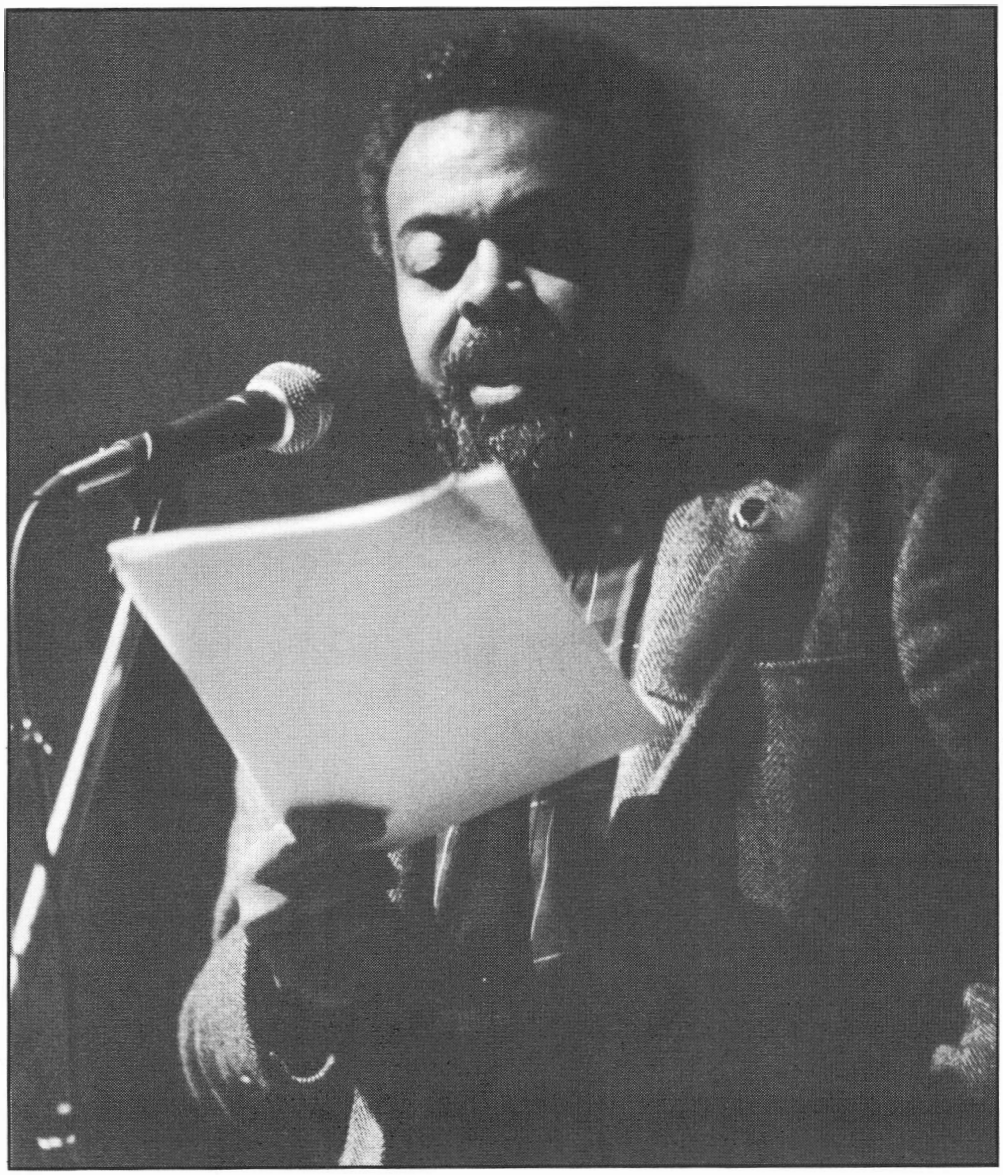
Mirrors (for David) is the Wahrheit of brother J.B.'s Bruderlichkeit. He cannot be accused by these seventeen poems of being 'universal' first and Black second, nor be charged with profaning human consciousness, or of infringing on those hallowed taboos of avant-gardism (Baraka, Reed, Sanchez, etc.) and academia (Walcott, Brooks, Soyinka, etc.), nope, neither school is his rule. For James Baldwin's poetic words and what they designate, remain firm in their biblical domestication, and are vigorously asserted, like the booming voice of Mahalia Jackson at a Newport Jazz Festival.

Therefore, "Jimmy's Blues" are honestly "Baldwin's Gospel" which are so well known in his great essays and much more powerful there than in this first-published book of poems. I hasten to add that I am more than happy to see brother J.B. plunge into the unfathomable ocean universally called poetry, but I must forewarn him that there are no life-savers (nor are they needed) in these immense poetry oceans as there are in the cluttered continental jungle of prose. So this 'god' he mentions throughout his "Jimmy's Blues" book cannot assert any power in the marvelous universe of poetry. "A poem must be a debacle of the intellect" and "poetry is the opposite of literature" said poet Andre Breton and also as a warning to those who do not like J.B. expressing his beautiful blackness, Malcolm X said, "If you come to put a rope around my neck and I hang you for it, to me that is not racism."

IN THE TRADITION by Amiri Baraka
Newark, NJ: Baraka, 1983 (booklet)

"Miserable link of necessity, that binds together minds so uncongenial!" - Melmoth the Wanderer

Years ago, actually about twenty, the Swedish film maker Ingmar Bergman made the point that art and not only art of the cinema, lacks importance, that it no longer serves the same purpose it perhaps once did. He goes on to say that "art can still have immense therapeutic value, but the time for art to be an agent of change, a force for reform, has passed. The other media have taken over that function." "Art exists," Bergman raps on, "to console, to enlighten, to help, to shock — and it can go on doing all those things. But the assumption that art can bring us new ideas, fresh impulses — I haven't much confidence in that." Well said brother Bergman. Now let's apply his valid Western theory to the classical music of our time, that bears the nickname 'jazz.' Is that where it's at for jazz music? Is this theory applicable to those musicians who create spontaneously every night, or at least on every record date or gig they share? Sherlock Holmes and the Doctor Watsons of this great music should start an investigation, of course there is



AMIRI BARAKA (photograph by Gerard Futrick)

nothing elementary about the present jazz condition, therefore the solving of what is (if there is) or, the who is seriously happening will be quite difficult to deduct. Amiri Baraka, the fabulous black poet and writer has recently published some of the solution, in his handsome little booklet titled "In the Tradition." Reading this highly contagious poem will repudiate everything that Bergman said, that is *if* it is applied to jazz. "In the Tradition" was written for Black Arthur Blythe. The marvelous alto saxman deserves such appraisal. The booklet has an 'in the tradition' painting by Vincent Smith for a cover. The long poem is typographically laid out 'in the tradition' of contemporary poetry, here is an excerpted example:

"Shit & whistling out of my nkrumah,
cabral, fanon, sweep – I cry Fletcher Henderson, Cane, What Did I Do To Be So Black & Blue, the most perfect couplet in the language, I scream Mood Indigo, Black Bolshevik, Koko, Now's The Time, Ark of Bones, Lonely Woman, Ghosts, A Love Supreme, Walkin, Straight No Chaser, In The Tradition
of life
& dying
centuries of beautiful
women
crying
In the tradition
of screamed
ape music
coon hollers
shouts
even more profound
than its gorgeous
sound
In the tradition of
all of us, in an unending everywhere at the same time....."

Get this book, read and reread this poem! You the jazz journalist, jazz writer, jazz critic, jazz book publisher, and even you, yes you: the jazz musician! Baraka is a difficult dude to walk away from during a duel, especially if the weapons chosen is Black music (i.e. Stanley Crouch). One will think Baraka's hip razor has missed, until one shakes his head! Order this book, write for a copy with a five dollar money order to Box 663, Newark, New Jersey 07101. Wouldn't it be great if Amiri Baraka could be the chief-editor of Down Beat magazine for one year, with perfect Third World distribution in three other languages? Poets that are hip to jazz should be in such positions, especially those who just happen to face-the-facts of Afroamerican history. So that lets out the English poet Phillip Larkin, for he-be-some-jive dude, almost as shifty as corny Alistair Cooke.

LIVE AT THE VILLAGE VANGUARD
by Max Gordon
New York: St. Martin's Press (hardcover)/ DaCapo Press (paperback)

A no-jive dude is Max Gordon, who wrote his autobiog "Live at the Village Vanguard," with an introduction by another no-jive dude, Nat Hentoff. Max Gordon as a longtime club owner is like Barney Josephson, they both were championing Black musicians and entertainers by employing them, and opening their night-clubs to Black clientele. They did their "giant steps" very early in their night club managering career. Sure they made money, but they also paid some dues while learning about jazz and people that create it. "Live at the Village Vanguard" is a good book to read, an easy book to read and is an enlightening book to read. The book is about the musicians and entertainers that figure in the history of the Village Vanguard. Baroness Nica de Koenigswarter's enlighening rap in Chapter 16. The Mingus bit in Chapter 14 (a serious mistake found in this chapter: "...Duke fired him because he punched Juan Tizol, the ***saxophone player***, on the bandstand.") reveals how Max Gordon paid some dues in dealing with Mingus, and in Chapter 13 how he gets a hip-education from dealing with and adhering to Miles Davis. And Max Gordon's wise sigh, "But what the hell, he (Miles) was money in the bank." There is a big chunk of Greenwich Village bohemia history in the book also. Max dug poets, welcomed poets and employed Jack Kerouac and Langston Hughes a few decades ago. "Live at the Village Vanguard" has some unpublished-before photographs in the offering, but not all the personages in the photos are identified, for an awful example, there is a photo of four black men in the foreground with an all white audience background, two of them are sitting at a piano, they are duly identified as Errol Garner and Art Tatum, but the other two distinguished men are not identified. Shame on you, Max! For those two gentlemen are none other than pianists Albert Ammons and Pete Johnson. But a clinker like that doesn't damage "Live at the Village Vanguard," for it is Max Gordon's personal jazz saga, which is like the music, still going strong at 178 Seventh Avenue south, New York City's Greenwich Village. When will brothers Iggy and Joe Termini of the Five Spot jazz history publish their saga? Then too, there is the Pablo Picasso of jazz promoters, His Hipness (the only one that doesn't laff or laugh enroute to his Swiss bank) Norman Granz. Yeah, when will his book be published, and let the world know what and how he did, to who and when, and of course we already know 'why,' but Granz can let us know where. He could perhaps get George Wein to write an introduction. Miserable link of necessity, that binds together minds so uncongenial.

TED JOANS is the author of the three preceding reviews and is also a poet in his own right. Recommended books by him that are currently available in paperback are ***Afrodisia*** and ***A Black Manifesto in Jazz Poetry and Prose***.

BLUES

A COLUMN BY DOUG LANGILLE

This time around I'm reviewing new releases by Gatemouth Brown, plus reissues of not too old material by Lightnin' Hopkins, Terry/McGhee, Big Joe Williams and Mississippi Fred McDowell.

CLARENCE "GATEMOUTH" BROWN's latest **Rounder** release – **"Alright Again!" (2028)** should make his R&B fans happy. Gate whips a big band through a program of predominantly jump blues, somewhat reminiscent of his Peacock days. Gate's vocals and biting lead guitar work are laid over a tight rhythm section and punchy full horn line, with plenty of solo breaks for individual hornmen like Red Tyler. Gate's violin is limited to a remake of the oldie ***Baby Take It Easy***. The remainder of the program is a mix of old and new originals plus tributes to fellow Texas blues guitarist Albert Collins (***Frosty***) and T-Bone Walker (***Strollin' With Bones***). A low point is the trite, country-sounding ***Honey In The Be Bo***.

Basically, **"Alright Again!"** is full-speed jump blues. The playing is tight and obviously well-rehearsed. Some may perceive this tightness as methodical formula playing. However, I like it. Oh yeah, the Rounder folks did well by a crisp mix and a clean pressing.

Next up are two **LIGHTNIN' HOPKINS** reissues. The first, **"The Blues Alive" (Archives 603)**, is a reissue of an old Guest Star (1459) release drawn from a live 1964 date at the Bird Lounge in Houston. Featured is a shortish program of six cuts with the emphasis on the slow, introspective side of the late Lightnin' Hopkins. To me, Lightnin' was at his best on his slow, improvised blues poems where he seemed to create that lonesome, spacious ambience that is characteristic of Texas blues. On this program check out ***You Treat Po' Lightnin' Wrong***. Even ***Rock Me Baby*** (titled here ***There's Good Rockin' Tonight***) is given the laid-back Hopkins treatment.

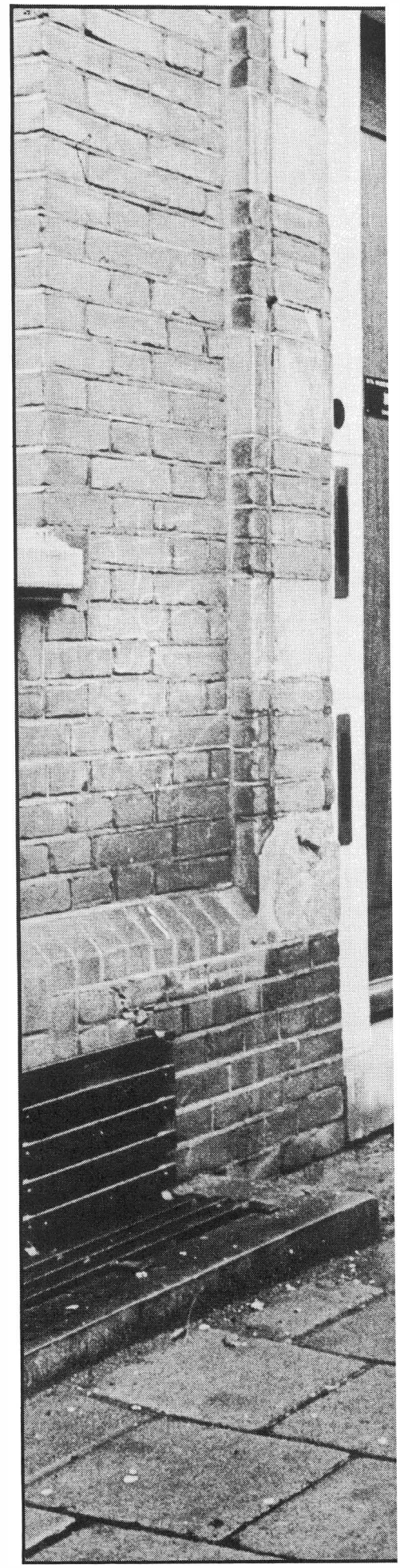
If really recorded live, the setting was a polite folk club, and not a rowdy ghetto bar. The audience is too polite. For a live one (?) the recording quality is very good. Recommended if priced right.

The other **HOPKINS** reissue – **"How Many More Years I Got" (Fantasy F-24725)** is a double LP drawing its material originally cut in 1962, from three Bluesville LPs – **"Walkin' This Road By Myself"** (BV-1057), **"Lightnin' and Co."** (BV-1061) and **"Smokes Like Lightnin'"** (BV-1070). Again, Lightnin' is caught in great form, this time with backing from some of his old Houston cronies Spider Kilpatrick (drums), Donald Cook (bass), Buster Pickens (piano), and Billy Bizor (harp). All have paid their dues with Hopkins, and are sympathetic to his unorthodox approach. Kilpatrick is ever-present providing an unobtrusive pulse to Lightnin's single note workouts. The others show up for the occasional contribution.

The program is a good mix of jump and slow blues. Aside from some standard themes drawn from the likes of ***Worried Life Blues, Five Long Years, My Babe*** and ***Black Rat***, Lightnin' offers up a little ***Mojo Hand, Black Cadillac***, some intense ***My Black Name***, a docu-blues dedicated to John Glenn's historic space trip, and some super slow blues in the form of ***Pneumonia Blues*** and ***Ida Mae***. In all there are nineteen lengthy cuts. A most enjoyable reissue. Mack McCormick's notes, drawn from the original releases, even offer some good insights into the personality of this great Texas blues poet and entertainer.

Also from **Fantasy** come double LP reissues of **BIG JOE WILLIAMS** and **SONNY TERRY/BROWNIE McGHEE**. Big Joe's **"Walking Blues" (F-24724)** comes from a 1961 date, and combines the Prestige/Bluesville releases **"Studio Blues"** (BV-1083) and **"Blues for 9 String"** (BV-1056). Joe's playing and singing are strong. The program of 22 cuts provides a good sampling of some original titles and Joe's personal interpretation of standard country blues themes. Willie Dixon accompanies on acoustic bass throughout, providing an added layer of unobtrusive bottom to Joe's already percussive driving blues. This reminds me of the solid Delmark sides Joe did with Ransom Knowling (Delmark 627). I particularly like their workout on the jump ***Tell Me Mama***.

Joe and Willie are also joined by New York bluesman Larry Johnson on harp on over half the cuts. After awhile Johnson's presence spoils for me what I think is a good program of Big Joe's country blues. I find his playing grating and reminiscent of the annoying intrusion of an audience harmonica player. On that note, I recommend that existing or potential Big Joe fans stick to his Arhoolie and Delmark releases where the accompanying harp players



BIG JOE WILLIAMS (photograph by Ton van Wageningen)

such as J.D. Short (Delmark 602 and 609) and Charlie Musselwhite (Arhoolie 1053) fit. Also look into the classic sides Joe did with John Lee "Sonny Boy" Williamson available on Blues Classics 21 and **"Okeh Chicago Blues,"** Epic EG 37318.

The Fantasy **SONNY TERRY/BROWNIE McGHEE "California Blues" (F-24723)** is a must for their fans. It combines the old Fantasy (3254) release of the same title with the Fantasy (3317) release entitled **"Blues and Shouts."** The material comes from a 1957 session that, according to the liner notes, established this pair of individuals as the folk/blues duet that has lasted for over 20 years. I understand that recently they have gone their separate ways, and are finally performing live separately. The 26 cuts are from folk/blues heaven. This familiar program includes lyrical visits with busy water boys, Louise, John Henry, Leadbelly, cornbread and peas, motherless children, along with remakes of ***Sittin' On Top Of The World*** and ***Going Down Slow***.

Also from the **TERRY/McGHEE** team comes the Muse Blues Series reissue of the old 1961 Choice LP, **"Hootin!" (Muse MR-5177)**. Actually, this is quite a good release. There is the usual folk duet stuff of the ***Rock Island/Pick A Bale of Cotton*** genre, plus some ensemble sides with urbane players like Lord Westbrook (electric guitar), Robert Banks (organ), Leonard Gaskin (bass), and Bobby Donaldson (drums). Ensemble sides like the instrumental ***The Rider*** allow Terry to stretch out a bit outside his formal duet playing. The highlights of this LP are the two ensemble cuts featuring vocals by Casey Hart: the uptempo ***What More You Want Me To Do***, and the soulful blues ***Call Today***. Hart is a strong, churchie R&B vocalist, and again Terry lays down some sympathetic harp. Good stuff. However, my review copy had a rice crispy sound on the second side. I don't know if this was a characteristic of the pressing.

In its Storyville series Moss Music has released **Storyville SLP-4032 "The Best of Brownie McGhee."** The material was cut in Copenhagen back in 1971, and features Brownie in a predominantly solo program, with Sonny Terry and/or a Scandinavian drummer joining in on a couple of cuts. The program is made up of mostly familiar material, with many numbers being performed on the two preceding LPs. Brownie turns in some beautiful performances. His vocals are relaxed, and he stretches out with some intricate acoustic guitar work. I personally like it when Terry/McGhee perform separately. Individual and out of the folk/blues mould, they are both capable of some good blues and R&B. Here McGhee lays out his Piedmont blues roots. Not bad at all.

Finally, a little **MISSISSIPPI FRED McDOWELL. "Shake 'Em On Down" — Labor Records LAB-15** — is a reissue of the Oblivion release **"Live In New York."** The material comes from a 1971 date at New York's Gaslight, recorded about eighteen months before Fred's death in July 1972. This is good Fred McDowell. Caught on vinyl is the intensity of his hypnotic, driving electric Delta slide. Added muscle is provided by Tom Pornosello on bass.

The themes are stock McDowell. The power of Fred's performance truly comes through on the title cut, plus the blues ***Mercy***. This Labor reissue ranks up there with Fred's now-classic Arhoolie sides. However, listeners will have to contend with a bit of equipment fuzz on one cut.

It has been suggested that there is no "purer" instrument than the piano. One of the miracles of this music is that pianists have been able to create such a diversity of distinct sounds from the instrument and those covered by these reviews reflect much of this. It would also be fair to say that the pianistic impact of Art Tatum is still very much alive in the music today.

ANTHONY DAVIS

Variations in Dream-Time
India Navigation 1056

Davis, piano; George Lewis, trombone; Abdul Wadud, cello; Pheeroan AkLaff, drums; J. D. Parran, clarinet, bass clarinet, flute; Rick Rozie, bass.

Minimalism is a term that denotes an essential lessening of harmonic complexity in favor of what could be called meditative repetition. Yet — and surprisingly so I might add — the fundamentally harmonic nature of (a) minimalist approach — seems to allow the music a somewhat 'contradictory' harmonic lucidity. That's to say that rhythm (as repetition) is by nature a harmonically tempered exercise and that any 'fictionalized quest' to compartmentalize this kind of musical attack is almost always doomed to failure.

This recording by Anthony Davis is a further exploration of what was contained on his "Episteme" recording for Gramavision Records. Minimalistic, dream-like and trance-like at times, the pianist seems as though he's found an excellent way to incorporate his contrapuntal musical thinking into a kind of 'compositional utopianism' that's almost buddha/istic in its sublime suspense.

Two pieces are included here, each taking a side of the LP: ***Variations in Dream-Time*** and ***Enemy of Light.***

Variations in Dream-Time is comprised of four sections containing a total of twelve events. Davis begins the piece with a dronish pedal-point accompanied by a mournfully dissonant line by Wadud. The cellist then develops this line into a semi-sensuous melodic statement that foreshadows the innate meaning of most of the music that is to follow. There's an enlightening flute-piano-cello section that sets the mood for Rozie's exceptionally executed bass interlude... after which Davis has a short solo interlude that goes into a highly polished lyrical segment of flute-trombone-cello. This finely crafted impressionistic section sets the stage for what Davis calls the "C Round" — a choppy semi-conscious thematic structure that seems to be the conventionalized result of Wadud's opening statements. At this point we're into section II where events one through seven take place. To my way of thinking, aside for a trance-like meditative sequence that has Parran playing some very fine clarinet, these opening events are probably the most successful on a purely musical basis. Yet we should probably remember that this music is about states of conscious/being and only on a secondary level concerns itself with the sheer nakedness of musical expressiveness. For this reason alone this is a significant piece of music and — surprisingly enough — bears a striking resemblance to Leroy Jenkins's "Space Minds, New Worlds, Survival of America" (Tomato Records).

As far as the other piece the ***Enemy of Light*** is concerned, I heard this music live (1981) with a slightly expanded ensemble at New York's bastion of post-modernist art The Kitchen. I reviewed the proceedings for New York-based ***Ear Magazine*** and my closing comments for that concert would probably serve well in closing this review. This reviewer wrote: "My only criticism or worry about composer Davis' present compositional perspective is that it might be, in the final analysis, a bit too limiting. Limiting in the sense that rhythmic repetition and "textural isolationalism" — both major components of Davis' present compositional thinking — tend to be rather boring when the music environment isn't a wholly organically conceived one, especially on the textural/sonoric level. Hopefully, continued involvement with this particular means of realization will yield wider and more varied compositional choices — choices which might reveal another important aspect of the improvisatory imagination."

— Roger Riggins

PIANISTS

SAM JONES

The Bassist
Discovery 861

KENNY BARRON

At the Piano
Xanadu 188

ALVIN QUEEN

Glidin' and Stridin'
Nilva 3403

KENNY DREW

It Might As Well Be Spring
Soul Note 1040

HORACE PARLAN

The Maestro
SteepleChase 1167

BILL EVANS

The Paris Concert - Edition One
Elektra Musician 96 01641

VARIOUS PIANISTS

Bill Evans - A Tribute
Palo Alto PA8028-2

BARRY KIENER

An Evening at the Strathallan
Strathallan SR-1

OSCAR PETERSON

Plays the Cole Porter Songbook
Verve 23MJ-3117

Pianist Kenny Barron is reason enough to acquire the Sam Jones recording if you missed it the first time around when it was on Interplay 7720. His fluent, hard hitting style, which is linearly connected to the Bud Powell tradition, is fully displayed on four of the six selections. This is especially noticeable in the building intensity of his attack in ***Tragic Magic***, the first selection on side two. There seems to be some confusion in the titling of the material as Cedar Walton's comments don't fit the music in the grooves. Two selections feature Barron on electric piano. He treats the instrument conservatively but he is such an excellent pianist it seems a pity he bothered to do this.

Three of the compositions are by the leader. ***Lily*** is an evocative ballad while ***Bittersuite*** has the kind of rhythmic line favoured by bassists who write compositions. It evokes images of Oscar Pettiford's ideas in particular. This is the only extended solo vehicle for the leader in a very satisfying musical program which is further enhanced by the crisp and appropriate percussion of Keith Copeland.

A closer look at the parameters of Kenny Barron's playing can be discovered in his outstanding solo recording for Xanadu. The linear/harmonic basis of his playing is quickly apparent in his impressions of Powell in ***Bud-like*** and the extravagant look at the classic ballad ***Body And Soul***. The riches of Ellington's ***Star Crossed Lovers*** is elaborately explored and Barron succeeds in retaining some of the rhythmic angularity of Monk's ***Misterioso*** and ***Rhythm-A-Ning*** while reshaping them to suit his own concepts.

Altogether, this is a remarkable demonstration by a mature artist who has much to say within the jazz tradition.

Jazz piano comes in many ways — the palettes are as individual as the performers. Underlying everyone's playing, though, are the roots of the jazz language which go back to the blues and Harlem's Stride stylists as well as the tremendous harmonic impact of Art Tatum and Bill Evans. Contemporary pianists, depending upon their backgrounds and experiences, draw upon some or all of these elements in the structuring of their music.

Junior Mance is one of several well-known stylists from the 1950s (Ray Bryant, Horace Silver, Sonny Clark, Carl Perkins, Kenny Drew, Horace Parlan are others) who imbued the music they played with the flavour of the blues. In this regard Junior and the others were the natural successors to such pianists as Sammy Price, Jay McShann, Lloyd Glenn, Count Basie

PIANO VARIATIONS

and Pete Johnson. It is a feeling, an expression, which has all but disappeared as jazz improvising becomes increasingly dominated by harmonic exploration.

The feeling for tempo, for space, for building intensity and variation within the framework of the blues is demonstrated superbly by Mance, in this recent trio session under drummer Alvin Queen's leadership. The music, though, is directed by the surging power of Mance's playing. He stretches out in sparkling fashion on his own ***Glidin' and Stridin'*** and reshapes ***Watch What Happens*** into a bluish ballad which takes Michel Legrand's tune into another dimension. This music contains the essence of jazz — it evokes images and feelings which have been part of it since Sidney Bechet and Louis Armstrong first took care of the expression of the blues. Junior Mance and bassist Martin Rivera interact intuitively to each other's inspiration — it reflects the benefits of their long association together and Alvin Queen is a powerful drummer who knows how to generate the rhythmic pulse of this exciting music.

Both Kenny Drew and Horace Parlan have long been European expatriates and their vision of music has expanded greatly from the days when they were house pianists at Blue Note. Their styles have broadened significantly in many directions and their recent solo recordings capture some of the horizons of their present-day playing. "It Might As Well Be Spring" is Kenny Drew's most subtle and satisfying recording yet to be issued. He distills the blues tradition in ***Blues For Nils*** without once becoming overtly cliched or obvious. It is a masterful statement. He refashions the title tune in alternately skittish and sombre sections which evoke feelings of the season and he is impressionistic in his own compositions ***The Quiet Cathedral***, ***Sun Set*** and ***Dreams***. There is also a marvelously tangy version of ***Django*** and a lyrical reading of Sahib Shihab's ***The Smile of Tanya***. Throughout are the sensitive touch and unexpected nuances of Kenny Drew's explorations which make this such a satisfying and varied presentation of his musical ideas.

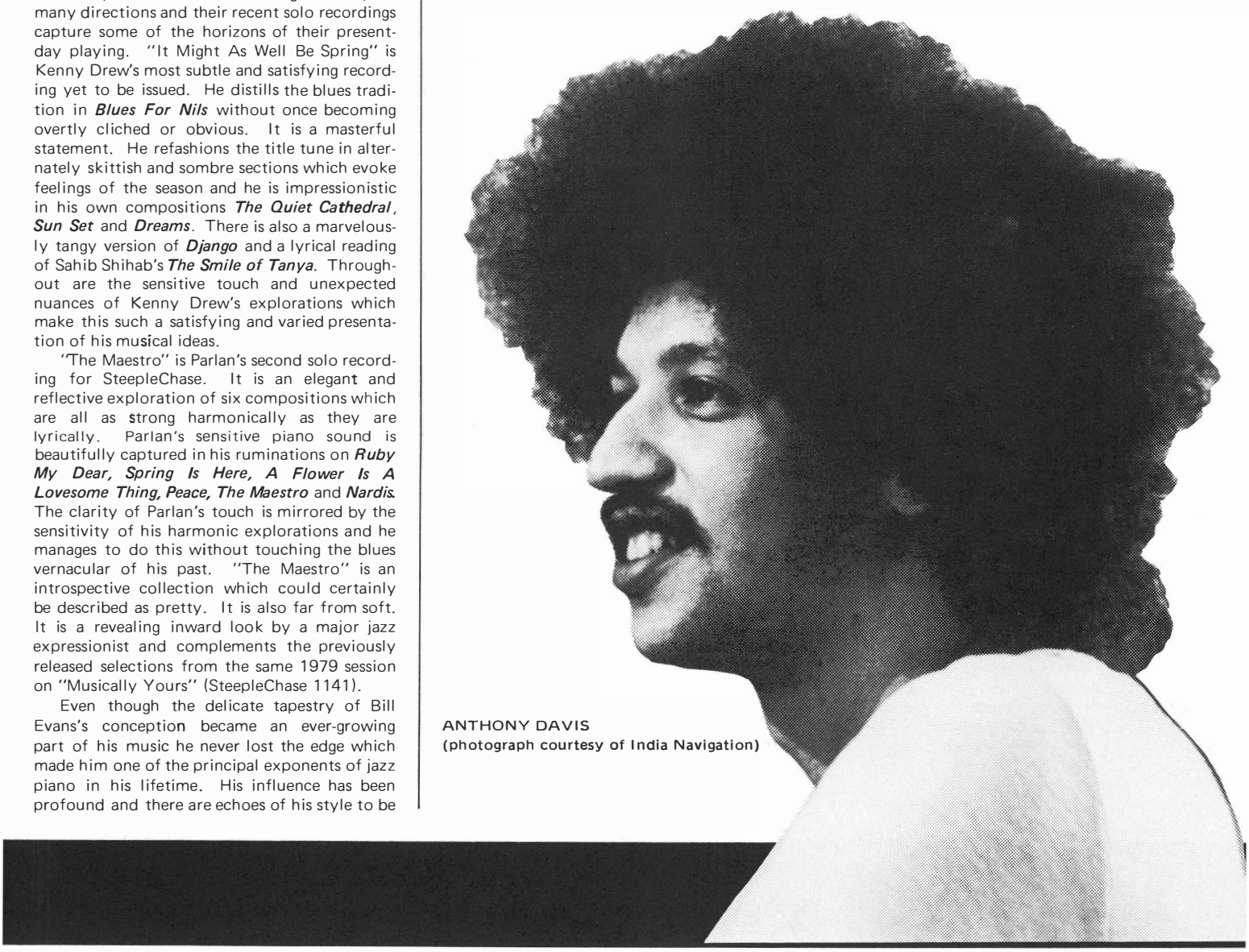
"The Maestro" is Parlan's second solo recording for SteepleChase. It is an elegant and reflective exploration of six compositions which are all as strong harmonically as they are lyrically. Parlan's sensitive piano sound is beautifully captured in his ruminations on ***Ruby My Dear, Spring Is Here, A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing, Peace, The Maestro*** and ***Nardis***. The clarity of Parlan's touch is mirrored by the sensitivity of his harmonic explorations and he manages to do this without touching the blues vernacular of his past. "The Maestro" is an introspective collection which could certainly be described as pretty. It is also far from soft. It is a revealing inward look by a major jazz expressionist and complements the previously released selections from the same 1979 session on "Musically Yours" (SteepleChase 1141).

Even though the delicate tapestry of Bill Evans's conception became an ever-growing part of his music he never lost the edge which made him one of the principal exponents of jazz piano in his lifetime. His influence has been profound and there are echoes of his style to be found in most pianists today — even those such as Kenny Drew, Horace Parlan and Oscar Peterson who had established their own vision during the same period Evans was developing his. This Paris concert was recorded in November 1979 with Evans's last working trio. It was rapidly developing into as important a group as his previous associations with LaFaro/Motian and Gomez/Morell. Bassist Marc Johnson and drummer Joe LaBarbera helped lift Evans into a highly motivated and stimulating resurrection which is well-captured here. The solo numbers are more introspective but the trio takes its performances into areas which hint at unrealised possibilities. Incidentally, it is instructive to compare this performance with another outstanding but earlier recording by Evans which has only now appeared for the first time, "California Here I Come" (Verve 2-2545), a set of performances from the Village Vanguard in 1967 with Eddie Gomez and Philly Joe Jones. The drummer's rhythmic drive makes this one of Evans's most exciting performances while the group cohesion of the Paris concert is an invaluable document of his final trio.

The spirit of Bill Evans dominates the two-lp tribute to him by fourteen outstanding pianists on Palo Alto's collection. It's interesting to perceive how much of Evans's concepts have been absorbed by others. Whether or not this is a conscious effort on the part of George Shearing, Richie Beirach, Teddy Wilson, Chick Corea, Warren Bernhardt, John Lewis, Andy LaVerne, Dave McKenna, Herbie Hancock, Joanne Brackeen, Jimmy Rowles, Dave Frishberg, Denny Zeitlin and McCoy Tyner is hard to say but there is remarkable continuity and consistency to their interpretations of Evans's tunes or those associated with him. It is a marvelous set which can be listened to over and over again — just as you can with Bill Evans himself.

Barry Kiener is one of the new generation of musicians who are emerging, after a decade of silence, to continue the traditions established in jazz during the 1950s. There are echoes of Powell, Peterson and Evans as well as a high level of pianistic articulation. Barry Kiener is also a fluent player of jazz and this second recording (his first was on Phoenix) captures him in full flight at Rochester's Strathallan Hotel with steady assistance from bassist Frank Pullara.

Oscar Peterson is the most prolific of all jazz pianists. He is probably the most recorded jazz musician of all time as well as being one of the most consistent. He was also, with George



ANTHONY DAVIS
(photograph courtesy of India Navigation)

Shearing, one of the key synthesisers of early piano stylists. Echoes of Tatum, Wilson and Buckner remain in both Peterson and Shearing's playing but the organisation of their music helped make their music popular as well as affecting the thought of many other pianists. The middle period of Peterson's career features the trio with Ray Brown and Ed Thigpen and the recorded highlights include "A Portrait of Frank Sinatra," "The Sound Of The Trio" and "Very Tall" (with Milt Jackson). There was also a series of "Song Books," generally overlooked at the time, which have stood the test of time. In fact, they are among the most satisfying of Peterson's trio recordings because of their conciseness and the quality of the tunes written by such songwriters as Gershwin, Porter, Ellington, Berlin, Kern and Arlen. All of these were recorded over a four week period in Chicago in 1959 and several have been reissued in Japan. The Cole Porter collection is now circulating in North America through Polydor Special Imports and the harmonic/melodic balance of Porter's songs are ideal material for Peterson to reshape in his own image. It is valuable to have this music available again. — ***John Norris***

ART TATUM

Solo Masterpieces, Volume 13
Pablo 2310.875

This is the thirteenth and last volume of the monumental series of solo piano sessions that Art Tatum undertook at the instigation and under the supervision of Norman Granz in what was to be the final phase of the great pianist's career. It has been suggested that it was Granz's intention to preserve Tatum's entire repertoire (more or less) in one body of recordings, a goal that was, depending on your point of view, one of the silliest or one of the noblest in the history of jazz record production. Silly, you see, because Tatum's repertoire contained a goodly number of meticulously arranged 'set pieces' that had already been amply documented on record. Also silly, or perhaps even bordering on evil, is the intention to use up the man's entire life's work. What new recordings could Tatum have made, had Granz achieved his objective? No musician, however great, is a bottomless well of material, and Tatum, more than most of his generation, was locked into the popular songs of his era, not well disposed towards seeking out new popular songs nor particularly capable of composing his own pieces. But, as fate would have it, the project was to become, more than any other group of his recordings, Tatum's memorial, and Granz's vision was to assume a nobility it would most likely not have attained had Tatum lived to wrestle with the problems of surpassing it.

As it stands, it is an impressive document by any standards, a total of one hundred and twenty one performances by the master — close to eight hours of solo piano. And for once history will look kindly on the much-maligned Granz for having preserved the bulk of a genius's work, even though much of this collection was superfluous to the pianist's recordings of earlier years; it might even partially forgive him for the musical atrocities he committed against Charlie Parker. We should, perhaps, get down on our knees and thank whatever divine providence delivered us from the possibility of a Granzified "Tatum With Strings," choral group, congas, bongos, or whatever grotesqueries were on the producer's mind at the time, and supposedly justifiable in the guise of "introducing the artist to a wider audience." No, thank God, Granz didn't interfere with Tatum — he attempted to milk him dry, but he didn't interfere. And consequently in these thirteen volumes of solo piano we have one of the richest bodies of music ever left behind by a jazz artist. If only Granz had omitted the 'set pieces...'

But for all its duplication with earlier Tatum recordings this is not a fundamentally excessive collection. It is, remember, an attempt to render the essence of the life's work of one of the greatest musicians of this century. It is nothing less than that. If we consider this project in conjunction with the more recent solo piano musings of a Keith Jarrett, released by the way in even ***more*** elephantine packaging, then we begin to realize that excess is a relative state, relative, that is, to the amount that the artist has to say. Tatum, fortunately, had a lot to say. The issue of whether a particular artist has been under- or over-recorded in the course of his career is one on which a consensus is notoriously difficult to reach, but let us agree on one thing: as represented by this set, Tatum was ***not*** over-recorded. Poor Norman Granz didn't get the chance to do that.

So now, some eight years after the first reappearance of the thirteen volume boxed set of the Tatum Solo Masterpieces, we have these recordings available in their entirety in single volumes at last. Given the incredible density, the concentration of Tatum's music, it seems a good deal more humane to the listener that it be available in this apportioned format. Long may it remain so. — ***Julian Yarrow***

PECK KELLEY

Commodore XF2 17017 (2 records)

Peck Kelley, like fellow pianist Joe Albany, was one of the legends of jazz. Jack Teagarden played in Kelley's orchestra in Texas in the early twenties, and praised him when he came to New York. John Hammond heard him in the thirties and considered him outstanding. He received many offers in those days to join name bands, but never did, preferring to remain in Texas. Unlike Albany, he refused to record. He died in 1981, after years of inactivity due to bad eyesight, still an unheard legend.

In 1957, clarinetist Dick Shannon and his group persuaded Kelley to play with them while they made some tapes. Kelley later listened to the tapes from time to time with satisfaction, but would not have them issued. Now, here they are, as a double album in the Commodore series produced by Columbia.

In the days when Kelley became a legend, many of us imagined him to be a reclusive Jess Stacy or Joe Sullivan: John Hammond made those comparisons when he heard him in 1939. What we hear on these recordings would suggest that, twenty years before they were made, Kelley may have sounded like Art Tatum. It is said that one of the things that could have made him reluctant to seek attention was that his playing was harmonically advanced for its day. Like Tatum, he plays complex figures in both hands, and seems to shift the harmonic basis of his improvisation in the middle of a phrase. However, these records are the work of a pianist who would have sounded thoroughly up-to-date when they were made in 1957. At times he resembles other Tatum admirers, Lennie Tristano and (at slow tempo) Bud Powell.

These remarks serve only to give a sense of what Kelley sounds like: they in no way encompass his achievement. Though his style is not unique, it has a fully developed individuality: if someone found another Peck Kelley record, you'd know who it was from this one. He moves without strain through a variety of stylistic effects: on ***Stompin' at the Savoy*** he turns the swing classic into a boogie woogie performance. As Dan Morgenstern remarks in his notes, he is "obviously at home with the entire jazz piano tradition, from stride to modern" and "he moves easily within these poles, and never in an anachronistic manner." The tunes are all good — mainly from the swing era: ***Limehouse Blues, Tea for Two, Sophisticated Lady, Sweet Lorraine, Moonlight on the Ganges, You Took Advantage of Me***. Kelley is outstanding on every track.

We owe these recordings to Shannon, whose group played at radio station KPRC in Houston, where the sessions took place on two Sundays in June 1957 (a few months, in fact, before Joe Albany made the recordings in a Los Angeles living room that were later issued on Riverside). Kelley plays with Shannon's regular band, who perform well enough, though with none of the technical and harmonic richness that Kelley displays — despite the fact that he had not played professionally for eight years. The tapes have been edited by Milt Gabler, and Dan Morgenstern contributes extensive and valuable notes on both the life and the music.

At last, it seems, Peck Kelley is heard and he steps out of legend. Or does he? Although these recordings were made twenty-six years ago, Kelley was already fifty-eight. Unlike some veterans of New Orleans music recorded at such an age, he displays no technical shortcomings. He is clearly a master on the basis of what we have on this album: his playing is fluent, without blemish, and up-to-date. Yet, just because of this, he eludes us and goes back into legend. There is no need to suggest that, because Kelley's approach to the piano is like that of Tatum, he learned from Tatum; but it is clear that he did not play this way when Teagarden joined him in 1921. Kelley was born in 1899, and began his professional career before the O.D.J.B. recorded. A year older than Louis Armstrong, and four years older than Bix Beiderbecke, he must have discovered the improvisational possibilities of the music as they did — though on his own in Texas. At every stage he would have sounded astounding to those who heard him; and his style must have

matured in the late twenties or early thirties, though he clearly went on absorbing ideas and developing throughout his life. Indeed, it is a miracle that a man who started playing professionally in World War I leaves us performances not valued as momenta of that era, but as examples of a style contemporary forty years later. No jazz player I know of evolved through so many styles. Even Hawkins did not begin until the mid-twenties, and then rather poorly. Kelley must have been one of the great pianists of jazz; you should hear him. ***— A. T. Tolley***

MARILYN CRISPELL

Spirit Music
Cadence Jazz Records CJR 1015

Crispell, piano; Billy Bang, violin; John Betsch, drums; Wes Brown*, guitar.

Rounds/For Atsuko/Stoic/Spirit Music*.

Closed form and a heightened subjectivist stance in improvised music would usually have to do with temperament and one's psychological experience because of that temperament. That's to say, further, that there's not so much one can do in terms of ***structural variance*** in music of this persuasion simply because the emphasis ***must be*** placed on continuance...through strict improvisatory/rhythmic means. This music, then, can be termed as basically one of marred temperament. A music essentially brought into being to challenge the supremacy of psychological malaise.

Composer/pianist Crispell exhibits the detectable influence of two pianists on her debut recording as leader: on the one hand Paul Bley, and on the other Cecil Taylor. Yet the Bley influence is the strongest one on this record (interestingly, hearing the pianist in live performances in solo as well as ensemble situations it was the Taylor influence that was the most prominent).

Violinist Billy Bang, unfortunately no longer a steady comrade of the pianist, plays some of the most powerful violin music this writer has heard from him in quite some time. Listen, for instance, to his harmonically daredevilish explorations on the opening selection ***Rounds***. A trio track — as are all the selections except the title tune which has bassist Wes Brown playing a faintly audible guitar — is pretty much indicative of the general musical/psychological thrust of the entire date. Here violinist Bang plays a lyricized scalar pattern of notes that sets the stage for his robust improvisations. Interesting, too, is the fact that it's just drummer Betsch and Bang until midway through the piece where Crispell enters to have her say against Betsch's thundering drums. These two 'percussive duets,' as it were, within the same piece give the music a dramatically emphasized call-response quality that's immensely meaningful.

Crispell's playing on the date is shockingly linearly motivated — yet this music was obviously ***vertically*** conceived. Which tends to present certain problems as to the 'legitimacy' of this music's aims outside of the concept of ***perpetual stasis***. Only on the title tune ***Spirit Music*** — with its rhapsodic daemonic ambivalence — does an integration between rules and sentiment enter the music to create something beyond the foibles of marred temperament.

There's not much here for those who already know the-freedom-trip in regard to jazz. I can say, though, that for those who miss what was happening Stateside within the improvised form during the sixties — the so-called "energy school" — this album would surely be worth investigating, it's a further development of that.
— Roger Riggins

LENNIE TRISTANO

The Lennie Tristano Quartet
Atlantic SD2-7006

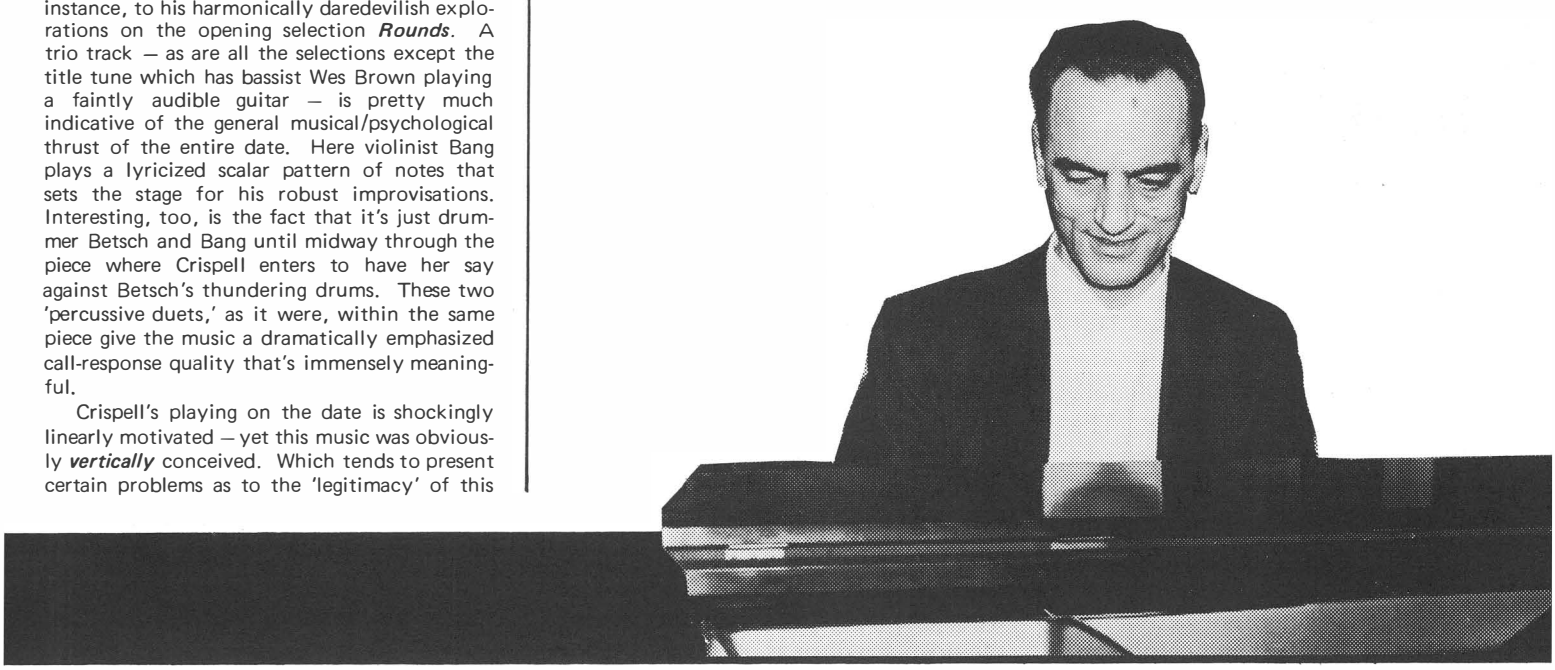
Lennie Tristano was one of the inventors — if not ***the*** inventor — of 'cool' jazz. Twenty years ago, John Norris called him one of the great "free thinkers" of our music; the title still seems appropriate. I remember the impact of the black label ten-inch Capitol 78 of ***Wow*** and ***Crosscurrent*** in 1949. With its bright, effervescent lines and its almost academic intonations, this was something different from Gillespie and Parker and Dodo Marmarosa and the other bop players I had come upon. Tristano was never widely recorded, but he left his mark, partly through the players who worked with him in the forties and who appeared on the Capitol and Prestige records of that period: Lee Konitz, Warne Marsh, Billy Bauer, Sal Mosca, Arnold Fishkind. Though some have changed over the years, we still sense the influence of Tristano in their music.

In the mid-fifties and early sixties, Atlantic brought together the Tristano group for a series of recordings almost as celebrated as those of 1949: "Lee Konitz With Warne Marsh;" "Lee Konitz Inside Hi-Fi;" "Lennie Tristano;" and "The New Tristano." The last two were reissued as a double album (Atlantic SD2-7003) in 1980, and were hailed as the "Reissue of the Year" in the Downbeat International Jazz Critics Poll. The first record of that set included five tracks made at the Confucius Restaurant in New York on June 11, 1955 by Konitz and Tristano, with Gene Ramey on bass and Art Taylor on drums. Now Atlantic has given us another thirteen tracks from that evening in a new double album.

In many respects, it was a "new Tristano" by 1955. His music had always been relaxed, even if the ebullient phrasing of Lee Konitz seemed to leap out and startle one on the early recordings. Here Tristano's playing is very laid back, and the long, loping, single-noted lines have been replaced by a two-fisted approach to the piano, with sparse chords punched out. The group plays many show tunes without disguising the heads in the customary bop manner; while Konitz is warmer, more melodic, less whispy than in 1949: he had been with Kenton in the meantime. Ramey and Taylor play in a much less tight and nervous style than the rhythm sections of the Tristano/Konitz groups of the forties.

On some tracks, such as ***317 East 32nd***, we do encounter a reformulating of a show tune (***Out Of Nowhere***) in the shape of the rapid flowing phrases of Tristano's earlier records, with Konitz and Tristano playing a unison or contrapuntal line in the old style. More frequently, as on ***Sweet And Lovely*** or ***There'll Never Be Another You***, the distribution of parts is the usual one for a quartet recording, with Tristano providing supportive chording to Konitz's statement of the tune, showing the great rapport between the two players. They seem very much at home with these great standards, and there are no tracks less than excellent. In all, it is a feast of music from the heyday of this particular style by two of its masters.

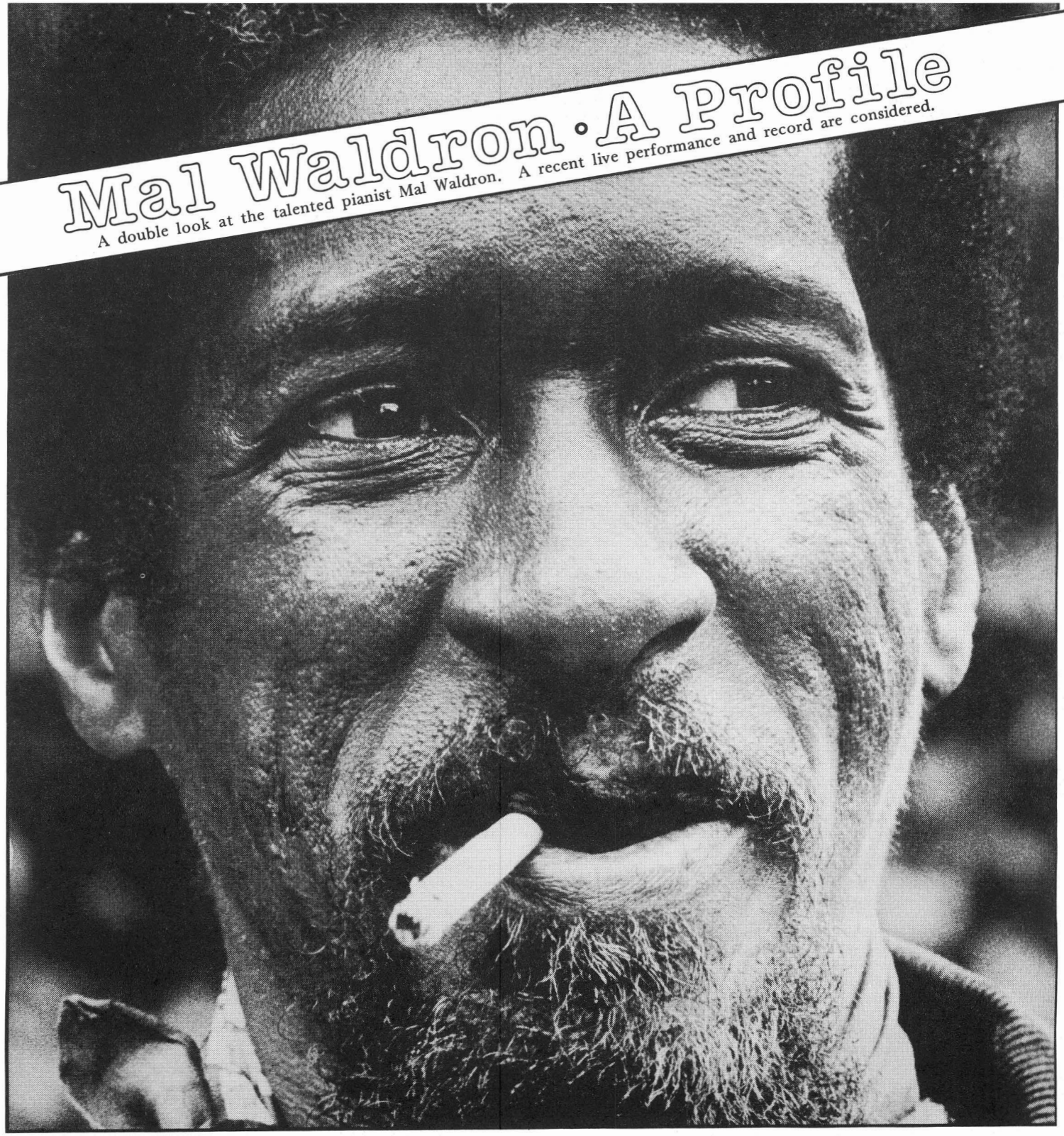
Could we ask for anything more? The five tracks from the Confucius Restaurant chosen originally for issue included three at slow tempo — among the loveliest performances Konitz ever recorded. In consequence, there are no slow numbers on this new set — and no uptempo ones either. So we get nearly an hour and a half of music at medium tempo with the same voicings, and, inevitably, similar routines. Nevertheless, it is an unexpected treat to get so much new music by Tristano. ***— A. T. Tolley***



LENNIE TRISTANO (photograph by Jack Mitchell)

Mal Waldron • A Profile

A double look at the talented pianist Mal Waldron. A recent live performance and record are considered.



Since 1978, expatriate pianist Mal Waldron has been making ever more frequent Stateside appearances. The younger members of San Francisco's jazz audience were first introduced to Waldron's idiosyncratic style in 1978 when he played solo opposite Ahmad Jamal at the Keystone Korner (a famous San Francisco club), and again in 1979, playing solo opposite Jaki Byard. Many may have already been familiar with Waldron's playing and composition from records of the late fifties and early sixties when he collaborated with Eric Dolphy, John Coltrane, Jackie McLean, Charles Mingus, Abbey Lincoln, Max Roach and others. The true jazz buffs may have known of Waldron's tenure as accompanist for Billie Holiday during the last two years before her death in 1959. Some might even be familiar with *Left Alone*, the ballad she and Waldron wrote together on a plane going to San Francisco. Or seen Shirley Clarke's extraordinary film on Harlem kids, "The Cool World," scored by him and Dizzy Gillespie.

In 1980, Waldron brought a quar-

photograph by Jorgen Bo

tet to the Keystone with tenorist Joe Henderson, a rhythm section of Herbie Lewis and Freddie Waits. He returned the following year with another quartet – Clifford Jordan, Eddie Moore and Herbie Lewis – a group described by Conrad Silvert as "smouldering." And at the close of 1981, he participated in a truly classic Holiday Jazz Festival at the Keystone along with Sonny Stitt, Billy Higgins, Joe Lee Wilson et al. 1982 saw Waldron again in duo format with Oregon-based bassist David Friesen. His most recent quintet which played the Keystone late February of this year was a West Coast version of a group that had been playing the Village Vanguard in New York and included tenorist Charles Rouse, Billy Higgins, David Friesen and trumpeter Eddie Henderson.

Waldron's music has been described by generations of jazz writers as "a rock, introspective, terse, hypnotic, disciplined, melodic, mesmerising, economical, inventive, sizzling, subtle" and "impossible to pigeonhole." Like Waldron himself says of Billie Holiday, "she was her own woman," so he is his own musician. Coming up in New York City during the forties and fifties he was exposed to every major name in music – from Ellington and Lunceford to Bud Powell, Horace Silver and Monk. A classical pianist since age ten, his major influences in that vein are Chopin, Bartok, Brahms, Bach and Satie.

Now at 57, Mal Waldron stands at the edge of jazz piano tradition with his roots firmly established in the past. Unlike Bud Powell or Bill Evans he did not attract disciples: there is no 'school' of Waldron players. Yet his influence has been indirectly felt in improvised music for the past thirty years. Like Monk, Andrew Hill, Randy Weston, he's carved his own unique niche in the music and continues to grow, experiment, change.

About 9:30 or so on Monday, July 25, Bajone's newly remodeled club on Valencia Street in San Francisco was about half full. A hush fell on the audience as Waldron struck the opening chords to *Fire Waltz*, the composition he first recorded with Eric Dolphy and Booker Little at the Five Spot in New York, 1961. *Fire Waltz*, like good wine, has aged well, and Waldron played his classic with forceful, repetitious passion. The capacious and smiling Eddie Moore is on drums; Frank Tusa on bass. The second choice was a ballad; Waldron turning on phrases like a dime, with a slow, slippery, sophisticated logic. Tusa and Moore stayed with him, offered exact melodic complement. *All Of You* closed the set at medium tempo; a smoky, lush, redundant blues.

After a long break, the second solo set began dramatically with thrusting, jabbing, abstract chords. Again, that hypnotic repetition of clusters underscored by single note lines, inexorably developed with a hard blues current. Simple fast runs were balanced by affirming chords; every resolution led to another starting point. The audience was with Waldron, whether liking it or not, caught up in each meander, each darkly colored plunge or playful probe where he spanks out the blue notes, one at a time. Fading into lower octaves, he picked it up again with that curl in his line which is his signature, his trademark, until the closure of this trancelike improvisation – shimmering tremolo – his hands in a blur. In the follow-up tune, *I Should Care*, he slid once more into his signature melodic fragments, haunted the upper register with a timing and voicing that suggested a French chanteuse.

It was after one AM when Frank Tusa and Eddie Moore joined Waldron on the bandstand for the third set. They were in a lively, Monkish mood, diving into *Straight No Chaser* and *Round Midnight*. Trumpeter Benjamin Jones was called up for *Bye Bye Blackbird*, delightfully rendered, and stayed for a madly swinging finale. All this action was joyfully propelled by Tusa and Eddie Moore, whose smile never deserted him the evening long. Clubowner Johnny Bajone gave no exact date, but will be inviting Waldron back.

– Elaine Cohen

MAL WALDRON

One Entrance, Many Exits
Palo Alto 8014

Golden Golson/One Entrance, Many Exits/ Chazz Jazz/Herbal Syndrome/How Deep Is The Ocean/Blues in 4 by 3

Mal Waldron is another of those ubiquitous figures in jazz who has been around almost long enough to have assumed the mantle of legend, of whom most can at least say, "Wasn't he on some of those Billie Holiday sides in the late fifties?" or "Didn't he play with Mingus or Coltrane?" or "Sure, I know the name, but I can't really tell you much about his style of playing." Recordings under his own name from the late fifties and early sixties seem to have been swallowed up by time; the man himself, though apparently internationally recognized, has seen only limited exposure to North American audiences over the past two decades. This is unfortunate, for Waldron is a fine jazz craftsman with a distinctive voice (a fact attested to on this recording), one who, in retrospect, should have received a larger share of critical acclaim than he has hitherto been granted; there are others who have been accorded the same neglect – Kenny Drew, Cedar Walton and Jaki Byard, to name a few.

Though tenorman Joe Henderson is featured in some fine playing on ***Golson***, the standard ***Ocean***, and ***Syndrome*** where he gives evidence of "prior influences Sonny Rollins and John Coltrane" (liner notes), it is with the trio that the real joy of the album lies. Billy Higgins and David Friesen are ideally suited to Waldron's unpretentious and economical style, and gain the freedom to flow above, below and around the strongly rhythmical linear patterns laid down by the piano.

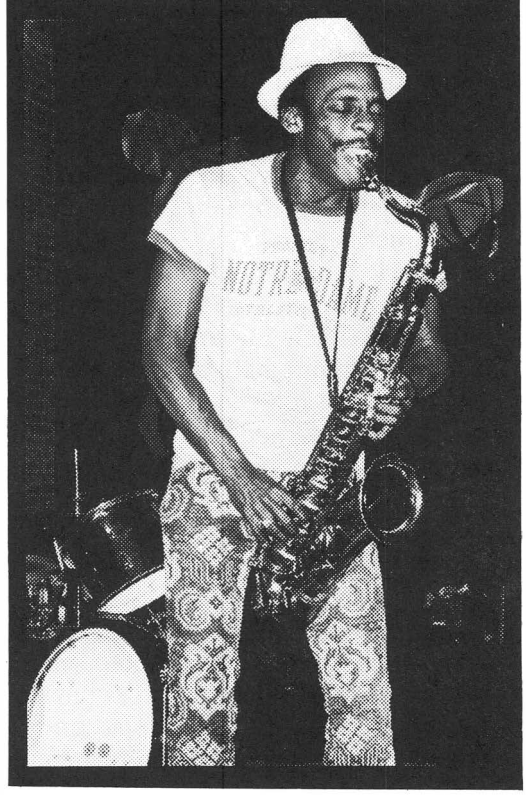
The title tune is set out in layers of emotional impact from the slowly unfolding plangent strides of piano and bass, through a dervish-like acceleration, a transformation to subtle exchanges and a final plateau of monosyllabic accord, flavoured with eastern mysticism. As Waldron himself states, "This duet was like a conversation we can't remember anything about... until one hears it again." ***Chazz***, a nostalgic tribute to Mingus, captures the rhythmic pulse and sudden time changes that flowed through so many of Mingus's compositions. Chiefly a solo effort, it reveals Waldron's own distinctive attributes – an aptitude for saying much in little, an uncomplicated yet direct and percussive approach to the keyboard, a man with a keen ear for harmonic changes.

For me, the highlight is the delightful empathy shared by piano, bass and drums in a gently swinging romp with the ***Blues***; Waldron sums up this listener's feelings about the number: "...it went down so easy – no struggles... I loved the session."

Mal Waldron shows here that he is more than just a person behind the scenes, an "attendant lord, one that will do/To swell a progress, start a scene or two"; his is a multifaceted talent reflected in the many roles he shows himself admirably to assume.

– John Sutherland

SUMMER FESTIVALS



MONTREAL FESTIVAL

FIJM (Festival International de Jazz de Montreal)
July 1-10, 1983

The fourth annual Festival International de Jazz de Montreal was bigger and better than ever. Building on last year's achievements, organizers Alain Simard and Andre Menard did what would have been inconceivable ten years ago. They effectively replaced the Fete Nationale festivities with a jazz extravaganza as this city's traditional summer bash: a feat the French daily, La Presse conceded was an excellent antidote to Quebec's waning nationalism.

The FIJM is now an event on a par with any major jazz festival in North America. This year an estimated 100,000 people hit the St-Denis area for ten days running, where they partied in the streets with trad bands, conga players and African dancers, and enjoyed countless local groups in an assortment of bars and on two bandstands. At the 2300-seat Theatre St-Denis and 800-seat Cinema St-Denis and Spectrum, capacity crowds caught the acts of no less than 30 international headliners. Whereas in the past festival organizers faced the difficult task of attracting the big names before they headed off to the European summer circuit, this year was different. Many name players publicly acknowledged how proud they were to be in town. And Montrealers were not the least bit reserved in showing their appreciation of that fact. The chemistry therefore couldn't have been better: another sign the FIJM has come of age.

A festival which hosts 400 musicians from 10 different countries can't fail to capture a good portion of the current jazz scene. So music fans had a chance to get a glimpse of just about everything. Predictably most of the headliners in the Grands Concerts series were acclaimed. But of more importance was the success of the contemporary jazz featured in the new, mid-night Jazz Dans La Nuit series. There it was re-affirmed how vital and accessible jazz's advance guard can be.

The leaders of today have moved beyond mere clichés, virtuosity and novelty to re-fashion our appreciation of "the jazz tradition". While some have quite properly referred to this process pejoratively as "neo-traditional", groups such as the World Saxophone Quartet and Sphere proved they were much more than that. Combining original self-expression, solid compositional formats and a captivating group sound, they made clear what the way of the future will be.

The World Saxophone Quartet, which performed the only all-acoustic set without any amplification, drew an impressive audience of 1800 much to the surprise of the organizers. This quartet has reached a stage where its cohesive swing, exciting inventiveness and endearing romanticism are accessible to anyone who cares to listen. In short order they blew their avant-garde label to smithereens with a classic set of originals: ***Revue, R&B, Steppin', San Antonio, Ming, David's Tune, Po In Cairo, Sundance*** and ***I Heard That.*** After the encores someone yelled out, "How about next year?". Then someone replied with, "How about next week?". Coming as they did at the festival's end, these remarks couldn't have been more appropriate.

Many came to the Sphere concert expecting to hear the band play all those beautiful Monk tunes. However the group turned out to be a lot more than a repertory band. The quartet played all original material, except Monk's ***Well, You Needn't*** (at the end!). The 800-strong crowd made it abundantly clear they were in complete agreement with this programming decision.

In a sense Sphere's performance was like going back to the era that fostered Monk's genius, and the journey was totally fresh. Hearing Charlie Rouse again after 15 years was reminiscent of those times when one first heard Dexter Gordon and Sonny Rollins: he was bigger than life. As for the rhythm section, it swung with stunning confidence and ease. Kenny Barron was particularly outstanding as he fashioned an original style which reached back to Bud Powell and Thelonious Monk and moved right through Horace Silver and Sonny Clark to McCoy Tyner and Cecil Taylor. Stupendous!

No programme of modern jazz would be complete without some AACM musicians, and this year Chico Freeman and Air were the chosen representatives. The former exhibited a growing sense of maturity stemming in part from a successful consolidation of previous endeavours in African modes (***Kings Of Mali***), balladry (***Spirit Sensitive***) and latin music (***Beyond The Rain***). He featured many compositions from his recent Contemporary and Elektra/Musician recordings, moving handily through a variety of idioms in a suite-like manner. At times the extended compositional forms were rendered in a perfunctory fashion, a problem which was exacerbated by Wallace Roney's frequent exits when the tunes did not require his trumpet. Fortunately though the 1500 in attendance were so vocal in their enthusiasm, the band had no choice but to dig in and blow up a storm. This concert, plus the others on July 8 (Stan Getz, Michel Donato, David Grisman, the Widespread Jazz Orchestra and Jacques Labelle) were broadcast live across Canada on CBC.

Air came as a pleasant surprise. In the past the trio has struck me as being a bit too stiff and formulated. But on this occasion the group was playful and at times emotionally moving (especially on ***Lady Sings The Blues***). Pheeroan Aklaff filled in beautifully for Steve McCall with his loose, talking-drum style. However it was a shame the band only played for an hour. Many of the 800 in attendance would have appreciated more.

Other names in the Jazz Dans La Nuit series included the MJQ, Paquito D'Rivera, Mingus Dynasty and Steps Ahead. The MJQ could have just as well been scheduled into the Grands Concerts programme, for the quartet easily filled the Theatre St-Denis with their many fans from years gone by. The crowd revelled nostalgically in the band's precious reproductions of its oldies-but goodies. Leader John Lewis offered a host of new originals, giving the performance something more than sentimental value.

Paquito D'Rivera's alka salsa was as exuberant as ever, especially when tenor saxophonist Mario Rivera joined the fray after his set with Tito Puente (who performed at the Spectrum earlier in the evening). Of course D'Rivera and Puente should have been billed together for an entire night of latin jazz: a real oversight on someone's part.

Mingus Dynasty substituted for Jimmy Smith who cancelled at the last moment. I didn't meet anyone who was looking forward to the latter, and in terms of attendance not too many people were very excited about the former either. The Mingus Dynasty lineup and performance was practically identical to that witnessed here last winter, but it was great to hear Dannie Richmond, who was on hand to replace Billy Hart. Too bad Richmond's quartet with Don Pullen, George Adams and Cameron Brown wasn't booked; maybe next year.

"Steps Ahead" was a misnomer if there ever was one. How a group of commercially-oriented jazz musicians got into a programme devoted to pure and experimental jazz I'll never know. Fortunately this blunder didn't detract from the overall success of the series, and Jazz Dans La Nuit will probably be a permanent feature in the FIJM. Many of us would love to hear the likes of James Newton, Anthony Davis, Sam Rivers, Steve Lacy, Roswell Rudd, Roscoe Mitchell, Charlie Haden, Dewey Redman, Archie Shepp, Pharoah Sanders, Jeanne Lee, Sheila Jordan, Buck Hill, Eddie Lockjaw Davis, Johnny Griffin, Jackie McLean or Woody Shaw.

As mentioned above, many of the performances in the Grands Concerts series were good, with Ray Charles, Sarah Vaughan and VSOP II as the obvious highlights. I have waited a long time to catch Charles in the proper concert setting, and right from the beginning it was clear his show was going to be one of those special occasions. He walked on stage to rapturous applause and within minutes took off his glasses and embraced the crowd. After that, it was all soul as he played his heart, out, kicking and swinging from the piano bench. The masterpiece of the evening was a gripping version of ***Georgia On My Mind***, which he re-designed to such an extent that one local critic complained he hadn't even performed the classic! Well, Brother Ray can certainly take you to places only he knows about. Spectel Video taped the

DAVID MURRAY (photograph by Jacki Ochs)

show for Canada's First Choice pay TV channel, so you may want to catch it this fall.

The gala opening (Sarah Vaughan) and finale (Ella Fitzgerald) were also video-taped for future broadcast on First Choice. Vaughan left no doubt that she is THE grand lady of jazz voice. This is not to overlook Fitzgerald's knack for jazzing up just about anything in the American songbook, however her gregariousness and workhorse vocal style couldn't compare with Vaughan's gift for pure voice. While Vaughan didn't choose to improvise all that much, the presence, range and suppleness of her sound was never less than sublime. If you can catch the First Choice broadcast, don't miss her marvelous tribute to Johnny Hodges on Strayhorn's ***Chelsea Bridge***, an exquisite jazz aria if there ever was such a thing.

VSOP was first conceived in 1976 by Herbie Hancock as a "Very Special Onetime Performance" for the Newport Jazz Festival. It had all the makings of a truly super group, but some felt it never really made it. Now Hancock has organized a new edition, VSOP II, featuring jazz's current darling, Wynton Marsalis. While it smells of a commercial ploy, those of us who have followed Marsalis' development at close quarters were not about to miss this Very Special Onetime Performance. Right from the very first number, ***The Sorcerer***, the quintet played its ass off. By the time they got to Marsalis' ***Father Time***, sparks were flying. And Monk's ***Well, You Needn't***, the finale, featured an array of exciting staccato lines and off-beat punctuations.

The same vigor and ingenuity was not in evidence at the Miles concert. This was due in no small measure to the lack of sophistication displayed by the predominantly rock-oriented crowd. The key to Miles is dramatic tension, and because the audience didn't know how or when to respond to the emotional nuances of the master's narratives, the performance came off totally flat.

Oscar Peterson, Canada's most reknowned jazz musician, put in a typically commanding performance with Niels Henning Orsted Pedersen and Martin Drew on hand to offset the pianist's penchant for solo marathons. Two highlights were a tribute to Monk and Evans in which Peterson had much more to say on ***Waltz For Debbie*** than on ***'Round Midnight***, and a beautiful blues entitled ***Peace*** from a soon-to-be-released suite called ***Africa***.

Many folks were pleased to see that organizers had decided to showcase four local groups as openers for the big names. The choices couldn't have been more fitting: Oliver Jones' trio for Sarah Vaughan, Dave Turner's sextet for VSOP II, Nelson Symonds' quartet for Ray Charles, and Michel Donato's quintet for Stan Getz. The Dave Turner unit was the biggest hit, playing in the Jazz Messenger tradition on such originals as ***Mocha Bread Song*** and ***ABC'S***. While Ron DiLauro proved to be consistently strong and inventive, it was Turner's night all the way. The altoist played his heart out on ***Mr. JC***, a tribute to Julian Cannonball Adderley. He also honored his former boss, Vic Vogel, with a very hot rendition of the bandleader's arrangement of ***Cottontail.***

The Contrasts and Concours represented programming anomalies of the worst kind. The former seemed designed merely to ensure additional revenue (from Radio-Quebec and First Choice) and give the festival some sort of international flavour. Conceptually though the series could not have been more eclectic: reggae (UB-40), blues (Albert King, Albert Collins, John Hammond), fusion (Diane Tell, Uzeb, Tiger Okoshi), new wave jazz (Carla Bley, Lounge Lizards), latin jazz (Tito Puente, Tania Maria), and jazz strings (David Grisman, Didier Lockwood, Christian Escoude). The Concours (Yamaha Jazz Competition) was even worse, sponsoring the most banal kind of fusion I have ever heard. How a legitimate jazz festival could entertain such garbage is beyond me.

At the festival's end organizers acknowledged the need for some fine-tuning, but in the case of these two series a major overhaul is required. There are so many possibilities: great piano stylists (Jay McShann, Randy Weston, Dollar Brand, Cecil Taylor, Horace Silver); famous arrangers and big band leaders (Gil Evans, George Russell, Sun Ra, Muhal Richard Abrams); elder statesmen)Buddy Tate, Benny Carter, Vic Dickenson, Doc Cheatham); legendary drummers (Max Roach, Art Blakey, Philly Joe Jones, Roy Haynes, Elvin Jones, Ed Blackwell, Milford Graves); Canada's finest (Ed Bickert/Don Thompson/Terry Clarke), Phil Nimmons, Rob McConnell's Boss Brass, Jim Galloway, Sonny Greenwich, Claude Ranger). As far as the competition is concerned, it might be better to organize a contest for Quebec's many high school, junior college and university jazz bands.

The Images Of Jazz series was again organized by Robert Daudelin of the Cinematheque Quebecoise and local jazz film archivist Walter de Morenschild. I particularly enjoyed Reichman's "Mingus" (1968) and McLynn's "Art Pepper: Notes From A Survivor" (1980): two very moving portraits of legends who are no longer with us. For some reason Mugge's "Sun Ra: A Joyful Noise" (1980) didn't make it across the border, but perhaps the festival can secure it next year. Nierenberg's "Say Amen, Somebody" and Richter's "Last of the Blue Devils" would also be suitable additions in 1984.

The FIJM's relationship with the Guild (AFM local 406) remained amicable; just about every local musician, including the free players, got some kind of work. At the Grand Cafe, CBC taped nine groups for its Jazz Sur Le Vif series; most observers agreed that the Karen Young/Michel Donato Duo took top honours. Young, whose idols include Abbey Lincoln and Sheila Jordan, relished in pushing her agile voice to the highest peaks, while bassist Donato, a perfect soul-mate, carried the bottom in his Ray Brown-to-Jimmy Garrison style. Other local acts of note were the fiery duo of Leo Perron and Ivan Symonds at Le Cour, the quaint Monk repertory band called Mysterioso at St-Sulpice and Jean Derome's amusing Grand Aventure street band.

According to one source the FIJM's $1.5 million budget generated close to $4 million in economic spin-offs for the city. Sixty of the festival's two hundred acts were free to the general public, and as in the past, three different memberships ranging from $25 to $75 entitled the festival goer to catch anywhere from 5 to 20 concerts. Ticket sales, which were in excess of 40,000, represented 25% of revenues, with the remainder coming from the sale of broadcasting rights to CBC, Radio-Quebec and First Choice, a $50,000 grant and $200,000 loan from the Quebec government, and an assortment of subsidies from Benson & Hedges (the main corporate sponsor), Carlsberg -O'Keefe, the Guild's Performance Trust Fund, Yamaha and Montreal's tourist bureau.

Despite such solid financing organizers still expect to end up in the red. This is due largely to the fact that C-Channel, Canada's lively arts pay-TV station, recently went belly up, leaving the festival with a $70,000 loss in potential video sales, plus a $62,000 debt in unpaid contracts from last year's sales. But Simard and Menard let it be known that such setbacks were not enough to threaten the FIJM's future. The festival is now as big as they want it; all that's needed is more cohesion and consistency in programming. Jam sessions, workshops and exclusive concerts are already being considered, so 1984 certainly looks promising. If I were you, I would make every effort to be here next July 1-10. ***— Peter Danson***

NICE JAZZ FESTIVAL

The Tenth Grande Parade du Jazz, 1983
Nice, France

A jazz festival is expected to be many things to many people: a cultural meeting, an encounter of musicians who do not usually play together, a chance to hear many outstanding players in just a few days, a source of income for musicians and many other people, a hook to keep youngsters off the streets, an event highlighting a season, a tourist attraction, something to do while on vacation, an ego trip, just another gig. The tenth Grande Parade du Jazz in Nice managed to be a little of all this. Of over forty jazz festivals held in Europe this past summer — from Pori in Finland to Cascais in Portugal— Nice was the longest with its eleven days. It presented 237 (I may err by one or two) musicians in 221 sets, on three stages, for seven hours per day. Indeed there was more music at this festival than one pair of ears could hear, and reviewing it in detail would exceed the scope of this writing.

The festival takes place at Les Arenes de Cimiez, a wooded park with a beautiful Gallo-Roman amphitheatre which is used as one of the three stages. The park is located on a hill, above downtown Nice. It is an ideal picnic spot and indeed one sees many a French family, in-laws and children in tow, carrying blankets and baskets, to feast on 'saucisson' and 'oeufs durs' on the grass. THis year the festival honoured **Lionel Hampton** with a bust which was placed in an inconspicuous corner near where they already had a bust of Louis Armstrong (inaugurated at the 1973 festival by Princess Grace).

American impresario George Wein and his French associate Simone Ginibre run the Grande Parade so efficiently that organization and security are almost invisible. They manage to get this awesome machine to work quite smoothly, giving the impression that it works effortlessly by itself. Wein looked happy and relaxed at the piano in a couple of sets in which he jammed with the likes of **Doc Cheatham, Warren Vache, Buddy Tate, Scott Hamilton, Arnett Cobb, Illinois Jacquet, Kenny Davern, Slam Stewart, Eddie Jones, Gus Johnson** and **Shelly Manne**.

The range of the music went from **Jabbo Smith** — whose claim to fame stems from a bunch of records made in 1929 — to the **Marsalis** brothers, who began to be known in the eighties; from the blues of **Buddy Guy** to the Latin rhythms of **TIto Puente**; from the pop sound of **Fats Domino**'s group to the straight-ahead jazz of the **Festival All Stars** (Freddie Hubbard', Lew Tabackin, Joanne Brackeen, Charlie Haden, Billy Hart); from the jazz rock

fusion of **Jaco Pastorius** and the Word of Mouth Band (Pastorius plus Ron Tooley, trumpet; Alex Foster, tenor sax; Mike Stein, guitar; Delmar Brown, keyboards, vocal; Don Alias, percussion; Kenwood Dennard, drums), to the mainstream of the **Harlem Blues and Jazz Band** (Robert Williams, trumpet; Eddie Durham, trombone; George Kelly, tenor sax; Al Casey, guitar; Richard Wyands, piano; Johnny Williams, bass; Ronnie Cole, drums).

Except for the avant garde, there was indeed something for anyone with some interest in jazz. There were the 'names' like **Hampton, Gillespie** and **Sacha Distel**; two European groups: the Italian **San Remo Jazz Ensemble** (Pietro Tonolo, tenor sax; Ricardo Zegna, piano; Dodo Goya, bass; Alfredo Bonaccorso, percussion; Roberto Gatto, drums) and the British **Jazz Journal All Stars** (Alan Elsdon, trumpet; Roy Williams, trombone; Danny Moss and John Barnes, saxes; Brian Lemon, piano; Len Skeat, bass; George Collier, drums; Jeanie Lambe, vocal). **Naoya Matsuoka**'s Japanese group turned out to be a bland, poppish product but the Latin-American contingent, with **Tito Puente**'s, **Ray Mantilla**'s and **Paquito d'Rivera**'s groups, gave a substantial proof of the music's vitality and affinity to jazz. Indeed one of the most exciting sets was when **Celia Cruz** fronted Tito Puente's group and gave an electrifying performance of such classics as ***Guantanamera*** and ***Usted Abusó***. They outswung most conventional jazz groups and reminded us that rhythmic propulsion in the hands of gifted artists is a valid and powerful means of expression and communication. One could easily establish coincidences between Celia Cruz and Bessie Smith — each in its own cultural context — and this association was brought to my mind by the former's superb Nice performance.

France was represented by two trios (**George Arvanitas**, piano; Jacky Samson, bass; Charles Saudrais, drums and **Maurice Vander**, piano; Pierre Michelot, bass; Philippe Combelle or Charles Bellonzi, drums); one trad band, **Les Haricots Rouges**; the **Claude Bolling** Big Band and **La Bande A Badault**, an interesting post-Coltrane-styled organization. Also, the amazing **Michel Petrucciani** was featured with **Charles Lloyd**'s Quartet (Lloyd, tenor sax and flute; Petrucciani, piano; Palle Danielsson, bass; Sunship, drums) and several local musicians played in a couple of jam-session sets.

While Fats Domino, Lionel Hampton and Jaco Pastorius drew the largest crowds, most hardcore jazz fans showed up at the **V.S.O.P. II** and the **Festival All Stars** sets. V.S.O.P. II is quite an amazing group teaming the brilliant Marsalis brothers with the Hancock-Carter-Williams trio. They show roots firmly established in the jazz tradition, and a full knowledge of contemporary musical forms. Nevertheless, the playing of these five master musicians was not fully satisfying. Somehow one feels that they could have delivered more, that they should have been more engaged in the making of music than in the flamboyant performance of it. The Festival All Stars mainly jammed, and it was a delight to watch and hear a beaming Freddie Hubbard take chorus after chorus on the well-established changes of jazz standards.

Joanne Brackeen played some great solos and proved to be quite versatile when she backed **Illinois Jacquet** and **Al Grey** on ***Back Home In Indiana*** and a Jo Jones tune based on ***I Got Rhythm*** changes (although she panicked for a moment when Jacquet called the number). Papa Jo Jones was also there — albeit in a wheel chair — and it was heartwarming to see the loving and respectful attention he received from musicians and audience alike. The musical level of performance was consistently high during the whole festival. Nevertheless, some highlights did stand out: the playing of **James Moody** reached great depth every time that he graced a set with his presence. The same is to be said about **Sphere** (Charlie Rouse, Kenny Barron, Buster Williams and Ben Riley), who performed twelve sets during the eleven days of the festival, and each of these sets was superb.

There were of course many other great moments: **Dizzy Gillespie** singing and playing a very bluesy ***Gee, Baby, Ain't I Good To You*** over a funky 6/8 beat played by an ecstatic J.C. Heard; **Buddy Tate, Scott Hamilton, Budd Johnson** and **Arnett Cobb** outswinging each other while Ray Bryant, Eddie Jones and Gus Johnson cooked behind them; **Jay McShann**'s vigorous piano solos; **Dick Hyman** and **Dick Wellstood** stride piano duets.

Before the tenth Grande Parade started, there were rumors that it was going to be the last one because the mayor of Nice had withdrawn the financial support which makes its staging possible. I am happy to confirm that the mayor has reconsidered his decision and that there will be an eleventh Grande Parade du Jazz in 1984, and hopefully others for many years to come. ***— Jose Hosiasson***

OTTAWA INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL

Ottawa, July 4—10, 1983

This year's Ottawa jazz festival was truly international in scope and far beyond the trad-band mentality of earlier years. An estimated 25,000 people enjoyed a week of free concerts at locations all over the city. About forty local groups were featured and many gave lunchtime concerts at such venues as the National Arts Centre Terrace and the Sparks Street Mall.

From July 4-7 outdoor concerts were presented at the Astrolabe overlooking the Ottawa River and Gatineau Hills. Sweden's Per-Henrik Wallin Trio, Brian Downey, Didier Lockwood and UZEB played there, and the John Hicks Trio was the resident rhythm section. On July 4, the trio backed the delightful Pepper Adams and were featured on July 5; along with Hicks on piano there were Dennis Erwin, a former sideman for Art Blakey, on bass, and Lorne Ellen on drums, who was born in Montreal but now lives in New York City. Hicks was a revelation and it was exciting to hear how the group grew more cohesive as the week went on. On the 6th they performed with the Texas tenor Billy Robinson, before an estimated 1500 people, and on the same day they supported the great J. R. Monterose.

The Astrolabe drew double the estimated audience for each successive night, and on Friday and Saturday (July 8 and 9) films were shown there to supplement the long weekend of music at Major's Hill Park (July 8-10) where a relaxed atmosphere prevailed like a family picnic from noon until midnight. Fraser MacPherson performed with Peter Appleyard, followed by the Apex Jazz Band, the Vernon Isaac Big Band then the Stan Getz Quartet — a revelation after their perfunctory hour set the day before in Montreal. The festival ended on Sunday with delightful performances by the Peter Leitch Trio, followed by Roddy Ellias's augmented group.

The Ray Brown-Milt Jackson Quartet closed Ottawa's International Jazz Festival and displayed all the variety and versatility which has set the tone for this year's festival. Throughout their two hour concert the Quartet sustained a marvellous rapport, demonstrating that jazz is far more than just a soloist's art, for the group's rapid counterpoint never sounded crowded or rushed, on the contrary — it created a feeling of bountiful space.

Cedar Walton played an awesome solo of his own composition ***Holy Land***, his percussive technique has a dynamic blues flavour, his right hand creating long unbroken lines of sinuous melody and surging energy, lines memorable for their fluidity, symmetry and emotional wholeness, qualities reflected by the group's music as a whole.

Milt Jackson began ***Close Enough To Love*** solo vibes, supported by Walton's comping and some rich counterpoint from Ray Brown. Then Jackson transformed the shimmer and light of his vibes into a bright shrapnel of sound. Throughout the concert he demonstrated his astounding prowess for melodic and harmonic variations, and his ability to combine strident flurries of notes with passages of delicate lyricism, most notably in ***Nature Boy***, his solo tour de force during the second set.

Mickey Roker struck up a carnival atmosphere for an uptempo version of Sonny Rollins's ***Saint Thomas***. He improvised around a rock-steady beat, after Walton's rollicking piano solo he brought his drum solo to a climax by restating the melody in double time. Roker was in his element on uptempo numbers like this, lashing out on the snare drums behind busy cymbals. On ***Blues March*** he set up a martial beat, spinning out fragments of the melody from a barrage of sound peppered with rimshots. On the slower numbers he was laid back, adding just the right accents and embellishments, particularly with his deft and rippling cymbal work.

After being introduced by Milt Jackson as "One of the greatest bassists in the universe today," Ray Brown played a phenomenal solo as though to prove that this was an understatement. He must have the most ferocious bass sound in jazz after Charles Mingus, for his percussive strumming grew so intense that he drowned out the Peace Tower Bells.

In future years, the organisers of the festival shouldn't schedule events to overlap so entirely with the more established festival in Montreal. Otherwise the format for this year's festival should set the trend for the future and if the events can remain free to the public, the organisers will have every reason to feel justified. This year they took a gamble on a program that clearly did the city, the musicians and the music proud. ***— David Lewis***

4th Annual D.C. LOFT FESTIVAL

d. c. space, Washington, D.C.

The annual D.C. Loft Jazz Festival is becoming as much of a 4th of July institution as the fireworks. d.c. space was the location for this needed forum among some of Washington's best improvisers. The problems that plague these musicians are all too familiar: lack of work, isolation from like-minded musicians, and few chances to be heard. The D.C. Loft

Jazz Festival successfully addressed all these needs.

A large audience was on hand as **Jim Sivard** opened the festival on Friday night with a solo set. Sivard is a fine soprano/tenor saxophonist and clarinetist who likes to simultaneously employ tapes of various world rhythms with his playing. His long set brought on protests from some irritated listeners. An unfortunate situation, perhaps, yet the acrimony seemed to raise the room's energy level. Clearly, this was not another passive D.C. audience.

Carter Jefferson came on next. Jefferson is a D.C. native, and one of the festival's better-known musicians beyond D.C. An excellent tenor saxophonist, Jefferson explored tunes in the vein of John Coltrane's late fifties work — complicated harmonies with bop rhythms. On piano was Koco Brunson, a spirited, percussive player. James King was the bassist. His full tone and steady playing were in demand for other bands at the festival. Young Wynard Harper, also busy this weekend, was on drums. Carl Grubbs joined the group on alto for a burning ***Cherokee***.

What was to my ears the highlight of the festival (although I admit I didn't catch all the groups that performed, and this is reflected in my report) was the performance of the 19-piece **D.C. Jazz Workshop Orchestra** conducted by Carl Grubbs. The orchestra first came together in 1981 in a series of workshops culminating in a performance under Don Cherry's leadership. Last fall the orchestra reassembled for the challenge of working with Anthony Braxton. This fall, Jaki Byard will work with the orchestra in a tribute to Duke Ellington. Yet it may be that Carl Grubbs is the right musician to work with the orchestra on a long-term basis. He effectively communicated his charts to the band in only four days of rehearsal, as shown through his conducting the band with simple suggestive hand signals.

It must have also been beneficial to Carl to hear his arrangements performed, and performed well. A recent composition of his, ***Special Moments***, especially revealed the freshness of Carl Grubbs's music. Built on a simple, catchy melody, soloists' entrances were set up with ensemble sections that created drama with a tension-and-release effect. The closing ***Giant Steps*** received an original treatment from Grubbs (it should be mentioned that Carl and Earl Grubbs are cousins of Naima, Coltrane's wife. The two brothers learned ***Giant Steps*** inside and out directly from Trane, who gave it to them to study while teenagers. Carl's arrangement of the tune alternated between sections playing the changes of the tune and modal sections built on the original changes.)

On Saturday night tenor saxophonist **Singh Neal** joined percussionist **Abu Sharif** in duet. Altoist **Fred Foss** led a quartet with Wynard Harper, James King, and pianist Larry Scott.

Joe McPhee played tenor sax with Sharif on Sunday night's opening duet. **Byron Morris**, an altoist who's been leading groups for at least a dozen years, put together a young quartet. On bass was Pepe Gonzales. Wynard Harper, 21, powered the group with flashes of blazing originality. What makes him special for a young drummer is that he listens. Likewise, his brother, trumpeter Phillip Harper, showed an awareness beyond his 18 years, as he recalled trumpeters from Eldridge to Bowie. The good news about the Harper brothers is that they will be studying with Jackie McLean this fall at the University of Hartford.

On Monday night two of the strongest blowers in the D.C. area joined forces. Altoist **Charlie Young** is another kind of musician you'll find in D.C., a fine player in one of the area's U.S. armed services jazz ensembles. It was good to hear him stretch out in the company of trumpeter **Malachi Thompson**. Malachi is an AACM vet who has brought New York intensity and standards to Washington. With Kevin Toney on piano, James King on bass and Steve Williams on drums, it was hard to believe these guys were together for the first time. Their set brought the 4th Annual D.C. Loft Jazz Festival to a blazing finish.

P.S. — The **D.C. Jazz Workshop Orchestra** has now begun a series of performances on Saturday nights at dinner time. The first performance after the festival confirmed that this band will continue to grow with time and work. It's going to be a pleasure watching them.

— Ken Steiner

WASHINGTON, D.C. — 9th ST. FESTIVAL

A partial listing of events at this upcoming New Music America series:

October 8 — Duke Ellington tribute with
WORLD SAXOPHONE QUARTET, JAKI BYARD & THE D.C. JAZZ WORKSHOP ORCHESTRA Western Plaza 8:00 pm
ROVA SAXOPHONE QUARTET, JIM SIVARD d.c. space 10:00 pm

October 11 — **ANTHONY DAVIS** Hirshhorn Museum 8:00 pm
ORNETTE COLEMAN Wax Museum 10 pm

October 12 — Solo keyboard concert including
BORAH BERGMAN, CONNIE CROTHERS, MARILYN CRISPELL & OLATUNJI National Museum of Natural History, Baird Auditorium, 8:00 pm
GLASS ORCHESTRA Air & Space Museum, Spacearium 8:00 pm

October 14 — **DOUGLAS EWART, JOSEPH JARMAN, BUTCH MORRIS ENSEMBLE, and others** National Building Museum (Pension Building) 8:00 pm

October 15 — **OLIVER LAKE & JUMP UP** 9:30 Club 11:00 pm

October 16 — **NEW ORLEANS SAXOPHONE QUARTET, ABU SHARIF, SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK and others** National Building Museum (Pension Building) 8:00 pm
LEROY JENKINS & STING 9:30 Club 11:00 pm

SINGLE CONCERT TICKETS $6.00-9.50 DISCOUNT SERIES AVAILABLE. CHARGE BY TELEPHONE 202-393-7236 (Visa/MC/Am Ex) FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PHONE 202-347-4717 OR PHONE DIRECT FOR TICKET INFO REGARDING CONCERTS AT d.c. space (202-347-4960) or 9:30 CLUB (202-393-0930).

AROUND THE WORLD

CANADA

CANADA — The upcoming fall season looks like a good one for listeners. Cafe des Copains' imaginative piano festival series continues with a second series featuring such outstanding soloists as **Jaki Byard, Dick Wellstood, Dave Frishberg, Tommy Flanagan** and **Dave McKenna**.

For more than twenty-five years Doug Cole played a major role in the presentation of jazz music at George's Spaghetti House and Bourbon Street. Now he has retired from the music business. Tony, the longtime host at Bourbon Street, is now owner of George's and is continuing the same policy but the room has been refurbished and has a brighter environment. Changes will occur at Bourbon Street when the new owners take charge in September but the music policy will continue along the same lines as before. Upcoming are **Peanuts Hucko, Johnny Guarnieri, Joe Turner** (September 26-October 8) and **Woody Shaw** (October 10-22).

Many of the same performers will be at Ottawa's Chateau Laurier but they also have **Sonny Fortune, Gene Bertoncini** and **Maxine Sullivan** — none of whom have Toronto appearances on their schedules.

Blues bands are still a force at the Brunswick for **Hubert Sumlin** was there for a week in mid-August and by the time you read this **Luther Allison** will have been and gone. Also appearing to enthusiastic audiences there was **Oliver Lake** with his band Jump Up.

Mel Torme, Woody Herman, Maynard Ferguson, Cecile Frenette and **Teddy Wilson** were in town July 6 for a CBC-TV taping at Ryerson Theatre along with an ad hoc band of Toronto musicians which included **Peter Appleyard, Moe Koffman** and **Rob McConnell**. The CBC people missed a chance to catch on video the *internationally* acclaimed Boss Brass band.

Humphrey Lyttelton's busy schedule during his Harbourfront appearances at the Molson's Traditional Jazz Festival included a luncheon reception where his impact on traditional jazz was noted by Jim McHarg, a quick speaking appearance on Toronto Alive as well as working with seven Toronto bands at the festival which was climaxed by an hour set of music organised by **Jim Galloway** with fellow horn players **Brian Ogilvie, Laurie Bower** and **Peter Sagermann** and a rhythm section which included Bob Price, Ian Bargh and Archie Alleyne.

The hour-long version of the Toronto Alive broadcast each Saturday by CKFM has attracted a lot of attention this summer with many of the guests being the pianists appearing at Cafe des Copains. Exceptions to this were the quick visit by guitarist/vocalist/raconteur **Marty Grosz** and a Canadian All Star package on July 2, which featured **Rob McConnell, Ed Bickert** and **Don Thompson** with regulars Jim Galloway, Neil Swainson and Terry Clarke.

Gutiarist **Michael Kleniec** gave a recital July 17 at the Mercury Theatre on Brunswick Avenue...From Bebop to Now is a new record label masterminded by Hal Hill and Don Thompson. Their first release, which is now available, features the **Frank Wright-Archie Alleyne** Quartet recording "Up There." Wray Downes and Steve Wallace complete the personnel.

The Jazz Room at the Spadina Hotel is still featuring some fine examples of New Music on Saturday nights. Recent appearances have included **David Lee**'s ensemble, **Bill Smith, Paul Cram** with recently-arrived East German reedman **Friedhelm Schonfeld, Fish and Chips** (a band including Lee, Smith, John Oswald, Rich Bannard, and guitarist Arthur Bull). Forthcoming in September is West Coast flutist **Walter Zuber Armstrong.**

Air Raid's new electric band ("Nowave") appeared at the Cameron August 8 and shortly thereafter at the Rivoli. It features Bill Smith and Maury Coles on saxes, drummer John Lennard and the electric Jim Pett (guitar) and David Lee (bass).

Normally-mainstream Harbourfront opened its doors a little wider September 8-11 with a New Jazz Weekend presented by CKLN-FM and Contemporary Music Projects, starting with the **Bill Smith** Ensemble and **Paul Cram** Quartet on Thursday, **Tim Brady** Trio and **Dave Trevis / Geoff Young** on Friday, to the harmolodic happenings of **Malcolm Tent** and **Whitenoise** on Saturday and the trios of **Rob Frayne** and **Rob Carroll** on Sunday.

The CBC broadcast six hours from the Montreal Jazz Festival on July 14; a full report of the event can be found in this issue on page 28. Pianist **Oliver Jones** and bassist **Charles Biddle** finally seem to be getting some of the recognition they deserve. They perform regularly at the Biddles Jazz and Ribs Club in Montreal and their duo recording has been issued through the Montreal Jazz Festival's label which is handled by CBS. Following behind this by a few weeks is a trio recording on another new label — Justin Time — which was released August 23 at a party at the club..."Les Cahiers de Jazz: Volume 1 — Montreal" is a collection of 50 compositions by noted Montreal jazz writers. This is the first such venture in Canada and the collection is available by mail from Les Editions du Lycanthrope Ltee, CP 1171, succ. Desjardins, Montreal.

Saxophonist **Bobby Vinson**, a New Yorker currently living in Vancouver, has released an album of his music recorded live at the Railway Club on the Alva International label (4508-349 West Georgia St., Vancouver, BC V6B 3Z8)..... Jack Chambers's book on Miles Davis "Milestones 1" is due in October. It traces the music and times of Miles up to 1960. ***— John Norris***

TORONTO — Summer in the City for jazz has been quite healthy — but some more variety would have been appreciated. Toronto's jazz audiences are getting a little fed up with the tried and true, the need for experimentation is strong.

That need took me to the **Tralfamadore Cafe** in Buffalo, New York on numerous occasions, one of which in mid-May presented the **Roy Ayers** group, these days noted as a fusion package. That was most evident, but for a solid twenty to thirty minutes during both sets of the concert Ayers proved he has not lost his jazz chops and these few minutes were worth the trip. The Tralfamadore has quite an interesting lineup for the year with Gerry Mulligan, Carmen McRae, Stanley Turrentine, Gary Burton, the Waterland Quintet and others.

Bourbon Street welcomed back such fine performers as James Moody, Al Cohn, Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson and Richard "Groove" Holmes, plus a few surprises. Plagued by a lackluster sound system, the **Horace Silver Quintet** got off to a shaky start at the club for a week's engagement May 30th. The master of funk piano, finger poppin' Horace led a young quintet: Ralph Moore — tenor, Brian Lynch — trumpet, Carl Burnett — drums and Bob Maize — bass. Lynch was by far the better of two frontline soloists (recent work with the Toshiko-Tabackin band seems to have toughened his sound), although Moore restored my faith in the young musicians coming out of England with his Billy Harper-inspired playing. Even though the band played well after the first evening, the fire one expects from any Silver-led unit was not prevalent.

Bourbon Street also brought us the long-awaited collaboration of **Lee Konitz** and **Ed Bickert.** The easy affinity these two found was a pure delight; at times eclipsing what the other two members of the band were contributing. Bassist Neil Swainson and drummer Jerry Fuller were at all times obviously enjoying playing with Lee. ***Summertime, My Old Flame, Chopin Prelude Number 20*** (with a coda tag from ***Nature Boy***) and ***Star Eyes*** were most outstanding.

The joyous sounds of the **Red Rodney/Ira Sullivan Quintet** finally echoed through the Lytes jazz room of the Royal York Hotel. I say "finally" because certain fans had tried unsuccessfully for months to bring this superb unit to

HUMPHREY LYTTELTON (photograph by Mark Miller)

Toronto. Highly charged sets were the order of each and every night, each artist sparring for supremacy in the front line, goosed along by an exciting rhythm section. This band insists on being totally involved and this obviously carries itself out to the audience, who just couldn't get enough. It was also a pleasure to see so many local musicians returning night after night to hear the group. One of those musicians got a little carried away on the final night when the band played a unique version of ***Amazing Grace*** as a closer. Guido Basso, known for his flugelhorn and trumpet work, but also a very good harmonica player, came in on the coda with Red and Ira that brought the house down. This was a most joyous occasion for all and we hope it will be repeated very soon.

The Chris Chahley Nonet gave a delightfully fresh and well attended concert at the Music Gallery at the end of May. Chahley, a student of Lee Konitz, showed this direction in his arranging of tunes such as ***Milestones, Anti Calypso*** and two of his own compositions ***Don't Look Now*** and ***Bill Bop***. Exciting patterns, clean runs, tight ensemble work and the interaction between front line and rhythm section was at all times very evident. With Chahley, who played alto and tenor were Kirk MacDonald - tenor and soprano, David Mott - baritone and flute, Mike Malone - trumpet and flugelhorn, Roland Bourgeois - cornet and flugelhorn, Jerry Johnson - trombone, Mark Eisenman - piano, Marty Melanson - bass and Barry Elmes - drums.

Many of the local musicians fared reasonably well this summer. **Rick Tait's Big Band** played some Monday gigs at the newly-decorated Chick 'N Deli, which also featured a rare and most pleasurable week with Memo Acevedo and his latin jazz unit. **Eugene Amaro** led a quintet with Mike Malone, Chris Connor, Charlie Mountford and Archie Alleyne for a two-week engagement at Errol's, as did vocalist **Dianne Brooks** with a not-too-sympathetic backup group. **The Archie Alleyne-Frank Wright Quartet** with Wray Downes and Steve Wallace worked a week at George's Spaghetti House, during which they launched their first album as a working unit and helped establish a new record label, "From Bebop To Now" at the same time. The quartet was in its best form since their beginnings some eighteen months ago. A broadcast of their mid-week sets will be aired on CBC's "Variety Tonight" sometime in September.

Some of the new jazz stylists appeared at the Spadina Hotel, including the **Bill Smith Ensemble** with special guest **Leo Smith** (no relation). It was also a pleasure to see **Maury Coles** return to Toronto for a brief visit. Maury has made his home in London, England where he has found more acceptance for his music. Their gain, our loss.

The Boss Brass under the leadership of **Rick Wilkins** (they called themselves the Canadian All Stars) taped a show for CBC to be aired in the fall. Guests included Maynard Ferguson, Teddy Wilson, Peter Appleyard, Woody Herman, Cecille Frenette and Mel Torme. A jam session finale on ***Apple Honey*** had all the guests out front of the band except Mel Torme, who replaced Terry Clarke on drums. Personally I wish Terry had played.

Concerts in the Parks were a valuable asset to those who might not normally be exposed to jazz, and there were many concerts of this nature to attend. Nothing nicer than to spend your lunch hour in a park listening to some fine music. The Toronto Musicians' Union are to be thanked for their participation in this venture.

The Fifth Annual Ontario Place Jazz Festival got under way on Thursday, July 7 and ran through to Sunday the 10th with a mixture of purist music and not-so-purist, but attracting a large audience to almost every event. Worthy of mention are: **Oscar Peterson with Niels Henning Orsted Pedersen and Martin Drew** — Toronto's own **Brass Connection**, performing music from their new album. A Bill Holman arrangement of ***My Shining Hour*** and some excellent solo work by Ian McDougall and Lorne Lofsky on ***All The Things You Are*** made the concert worthwhile.

Carla Bley's influence over her band was a joy to see and hear. This is fast becoming one of my favourite groups. This was one of the best nights on the tour, Carla later told me, and it showed. The strength of soloists Steve Slagle, Gary Valente and Victor Lewis could be felt through the audience.

Sonny Rollins gave us a backwards look at the Sonny of the '50s and '60s before turning to the funk/rock rhythms he has adopted recently. A little Island music (***Cocoanut Bread***) had some of the audience literally dancing in the aisles, much to Sonny's delight. Trombonist Clifton Anderson and the guitarist had some good solo spots throughout.

McCoy Tyner Quintet gave us a much better performance than they had a few months earlier in a different setting. Maybe it was the outdoor atmosphere of the Forum — with its constant movement of people on the perimeter of the amphitheatre, children running, seagulls swooping down, constant flashes of colour in the sun, modes of dress and undress, yet down in the amphitheatre a quiet and attentive audience — that gave the band a good feeling, because theirs was an inspired set that never let up in its creativity. Gary Bartz sounded at times like a mid-50s Coltrane on alto, long flowing lines, sheets of sound. John Blake's violin never sounded better in this setting, and he took long fresh solos. McCoy, whether in the trio or quintet context, sounded happy and his inventiveness was offered with apparent effortless ease.

Rob McConnell and The Boss Brass gave one of the most interesting concerts in their all-too-brief time slot. Exceptional solos by pianist Bernie Senensky (subbing for Jimmy Dale), Guido Basso, Rob on valve trombone, Ed Bickert, Eugene Amaro, Ric Wilkins, Moe Koffman and Ian McDougall. (The Boss Brass also performed a beautiful concert with vocalist Mel Torme at the Stratford Theatre later in the summer to a sold out audience).

Ella Fitzgerald, with Bobby Durham, Keeter Betts and Paul Smith, gave a majestic performance. Ella was in fine vocal form and very attentive to all that was going on around her, at one point during her singing of ***Honeysuckle Rose*** she gently inserted the words "don't cry little baby", aiming this at a babe in arms who was crying in the audience.

Goo Goo Productions presented two contrasting concerts in July, the first being a midnight performance of **The Chico Freeman Quintet.** Not being able to attend this, I was told by those who did that it was an evening (or early morning) of rare musical excellence.

The second concert featured the **Milt Jackson -Ray Brown Quartet with Mickey Roker and Cedar Walton.** A rare treat musically.

Goo Goo Productions had presented the Phil Woods Quartet in June; the band returned to Toronto for a week at Bourbon Street in August. Upcoming events presented by Goo Goo include Art Blakey, the World Saxophone Quartet, Jack DeJohnette and Harold Land.

David Liebman performed a concert at Harper's to a near-capacity audience, but the music suffered from a mismatched rhythm section and, during the first set, a poor sound system.

Finally, a genuinely interested (listening)

audience greeted the return of **Phil Woods** to Toronto with **Hal Galper, Steve Gilmore** and **Bill Goodwin**. After seven weeks on the road this all-acoustic band was indeed in rare form, a tightly knit and hard-swinging unit with the ability to constantly surprise and enthrall. Many of the visiting musicians in the club including vacationing **Ray Bryant** expressed sheer delight at hearing a tradition in jazz being kept alive. Summer in the city has indeed been interesting, something great has been happening, and the interest in this art form is improving. *— Hal Hill*

MONTREAL — The cancellation of Doudou Boicel's second "Concert du Siecle — VSOP de Bebop" brought the Rising Sun's decade-long commitment to jazz to an end. Meanwhile the people from the Festival International de Jazz de Montreal have filled in with an increasing number of jazz concerts at the Spectrum. **Chick Corea**'s very fine ***Trio Music*** was presented there in June, and this fall there is talk of a weekend mini-festival featuring **Steve Lacy, Jack DeJohnette** and **Jaco Pastorius**; a special blues night with **John Lee Hooker, Willie Dixon** and **John Hammond**; and some single events which will include **Sonny Rollins, Wynton Marsalis** and **Ralph Towner/Gary Peacock.**

The Queen Elizabeth Hotel attempted to capitalize on the festival spirit by showcasing Montreal's best jazz during the month of July. I am told the music didn't really take off until the last week when **Sonny Greenwich** and the **Karen Young/Michel Donato** Duo performed.

The Bateau Ivre room at the Grand Cafe offered some excellent concerts by such notables as **Billy Robinson** and **Bobby Watson, Bob Mover, Steve Hall, Steve Blum** and **Claude Ranger.** The latter brought in a powerhouse septet which played an exciting, new repertoire of free jazz.

Oliver Jones's Trio celebrated its second release in less than two months. Entitled "Live at Biddles," the recording was put out by Jim West, owner of the new Justin Time label. **Charlie Duncan, Nelson Symonds** and **Skip Bay** (a bassist who hails from Wisconsin) opened Club Mingus, a new jazz spot on Bishop. Gilles Archambault of Radio-Canada did another one of his night-long jazz programs; this September the theme was "Jazz In The Fifties."

Many Montrealers will dearly miss **Sadik Hakim** who passed away this June in New York City. According to Len Dobbin, Sadik first came to town in the late forties to play at the famed Cafe St-Michel as a member of Louis Metcalfe's International Jazz Band. In the sixties he returned to Montreal for a ten-year residency (1966-76) during which he became a Canadian citizen. He blessed many a jazz fan here with his beautiful music and spirit. As a tribute, however belated, the CBC should release all the recordings Sadik did for the Crown corporation (especially "Sadik Hakim Plays Duke Ellington" CBC RCI-379 which is no longer available). *— Peter Danson*

AMERICA

ANN ARBOR — The competitive spirit has always been there. In the old days they were called cutting contests, with a locale's best players meeting toe-to-toe after hours, the rules strict but unwritten, the judges sharing the bandstand with the competitors. Times change, and I suppose the third annual WEMU Jazz Competition, at Ypsilanti's Heritage Festival August 26-28, is probably not that unusual, with auditions, written rules, a panel of knowledgeable judges, assigned time slots and AFM approval. The winners: **Mason-Jacaloo**, a duo of Matt Jackson, piano, and Jason Boekeloo, bass; vocalist **Cathy Moor** with pianist Stephanie Ozer; and the **Ujima Jazz Ensemble** from Pontiac.

Each year the contest features local name performers as a sort of dessert, following each day's portion of the competition. This year the topping was provided by drummer **Danny Spencer** and Friends; the **Lyman Woodard** Organization; and, under a tent hot with Sunday afternoon sun, the revived **Contemporary Jazz Quintet.** The CJQ was formed in 1967, and its attractive sound was captured on several albums for Blue Note and Strata-East before the group broke up in the early seventies. The reunited ensemble has four-fifths of the original CJQ — Spencer; pianist Kenny Cox; saxophonist Leon Henderson and trumpeter Charles Moore, with Bob Hurst a spectacular replacement for original bassist Ron Brooks. For their performance here they were joined by guitarist Joe LoDuca. The new CJQ has much to offer, especially Spencer's propulsive, multi-layered drumming and Henderson's coarse tone and angular lines. But Hurst, the ringer, keeps the band from any hint of nostalgia. He's an obvious joy to work with, with good lines, supple time, radar ears and lots of chops. With Hurst's catalytic contribution this is more continuation than reunion; it's a sequel that deserves the longevity of the first edition.

In Ann Arbor, Eclipse Jazz is gearing up for an interesting fall season. It opened at Hill Auditorium on September 22 with **Ray Charles** (Orchestra, Raelets and all), with the **Marcus Belgrave** Sextet as opening act. **Jerome Cooper** was to provide a solo percussion recital at the University Club, on October 1. **Olu Dara** will bring his trumpet, Jean-Paul Bourelly guitar, Kevin Harris bass, and Greg Bandy drums, to the University Club on October 15. The **World Saxophone Quartet** is at Rackham Auditorium on November 12, and Eclipse is leaving the amplification system at home. The season closes with the **Heath Brothers**, Percy, Jimmy and (now) Tootie, with Stanley Cowell.

Eclipse still sponsors an improvisation workshop on Mondays, with **David Swain**, and jam sessions every other week at the University Club. This year they've added a History of Jazz lecture series. Eclipse sponsored a variety of free concerts this summer (with the assistance of the Music Performance Trust Fund), with a number of jazz groups featured at the Art Fair in late July. As usual they offered Coda's correspondent a chance to practice a little role-reversal, with the able assistance of Vincent York, saxophones; Ted Harley, bass; and Dave Koether, drums.

As we stuff this in the mailbox, the annual Labor Day weekend madness of the Montreux-Detroit Kool Jazz Festival is almost upon us. This year's schedule seems to have picked up more of the mainstream, at the expense of the new music end of the spectrum.

The free concerts at Hart Plaza Ampitheatre, as well as the use of local artists for opening acts, is one way Detroit sets itself apart from the usual Kool Jazz Festivals. A good selection of high school and college jazz bands are also a regular part of the festival. We'll report on some of these performances next time.

It really was a good summer for music in southeastern Michigan. The Detroit Institute of Arts again offered "Jazz at the Institute" (which gains a wider audience through public radio rebroadcasts). Among the groups and artists heard in the five months of the series were **Lonnie Hillyer** and **Hugh Lawson** leading a quintet, **Claude Black, Ron Brooks** and **J.C. Heard** in a trio, **Dewey Redman's** quartet, trumpeter **Louis Smith** of Ann Arbor with Matt Michael's Trio, harpist **Dorothy Ashby**, **Cecil McBee** and **Kenny Cox; Budd Johnson** with J.C. Heard's trio; **Danny Spencer** and Friends; **Sheila Jordan** with Harvie Swartz, Woody Shaw and drummer Roy Brooks; and **Max Roach**.
— David Wild

BOSTON — Sweltering summers usually slow down the Boston jazz pace a bit as folks clear out for cooler coastal climes, but for keen-eyed jazz buffs, there was more than enough activity. **McCoy Tyner** powered his way into Jonathan Swift's in Cambridge June 21 with reedman Gary Bartz, violinist John Blake, bassist John Lee and drummer Wilby Fletcher and left hints during a post-performance interview that he has

BILLY BANG (photograph by Ira Berger)

a record with "some of the younger, up and coming jazz guys" in the Columbia works. One day later, a scattered crowd at Sandy's Jazz Revival on Boston's North Shore was treated to a blast of the blues by the 72-year-old "Boss" himself, **Big Joe Turner**. Forced to move around these days with the aid of crutches due to a nagging case of arthritis, Joe ripped through two extended sets that necessarily included past R&B hits like ***Flip, Flop & Fly, Corinne Corinna, Chains of Love*** and ***Shake, Rattle & Roll***. Big Joe's still in top vocal shape and his July Muse Records release, "Blues Train" with Dr. John and the nine-piece Rhode Island-based band Roomful of Blues is his most riveting in years. Other Sandy's offerings of late were **Bob Wilber** and the Bechet Legacy, **Buddy Rich** and his band and gumbo keyboard master **Dr. John** in a tribute to Roosevelt Sykes. At fifty, Sandy's is reputedly the oldest active jazz club in the United States and it is hoped that the establishment will rebound from puzzling attendance woes this summer to be around for fifty more.

The Museum of Fine Arts took the plunge recently with a series of sold-out "Jazz Under the Stars & On the Screen" outings that ran July 8-August 12. Concerts dedicated to specific composers (Duke Ellington, Kurt Weill, Thelonious Monk) were held Thursday evenings in the Museum's inner sculpture court by groups led by **Herb Pomeroy, Billy Pierce, Makoto Ozone,** and **Jimmy Mosher**, while Friday (indoors) films included "Boogie Woogie Dream" (with Lena Horne, Teddy Wilson, Pete Johnson and Albert Ammons), "Jazz on a Summer's Day," "No Maps on My Taps," "Lionel Hampton and His Orchestra (1949)", "Mingus" (complete with the bassist's 1968 New York studio eviction and occasional errant ceiling rifle shots), and "Last of the Blue Devils," with Count Basie, Jay McShann and the former Kansas City bartender/blues shouter Big Joe Turner. Meanwhile, the Concerts on the Common (held at one end of the Boston Common in a high, fenced-off area), played congenial host to ten-thousand-plus crowds assembled to hear **Al Jarreau** and **George Benson**. **John Scofield** checked into Somerville's Willow Jazz Club mid-August only to be followed a few days later by **Slide Hampton**. Though often a tight-packed sweatbox, Harvard's Hasty Pudding Club continued to present fine jazz entrees such as **Tommy Flanagan** and **George Mraz** (July 18), **Hank Jones** and **George Duvivier** (August 1) and **George Adams** and **Don Pullen** (August 6).

Those who couldn't get to the coastline this summer often took to the water instead on the various jazz cruises offered Wednesdays and Fridays in the Harbor by Cambridge-based Water Music. Featuring two or more acts each night (each located on a separate deck), the wind-blown boats allowed listeners to peruse sundown-drenched Boston sights while performers like **Woody Shaw, the Heath Brothers, Woody Herman, Johnny Copeland, Tania Maria, Herbie Mann, Kevin Eubanks, Gary Burton, Wynton Marsalis** and the nonpareil tenor duo of **Al Cohn** and **Zoot Sims** hovered nearby. For real environmental buffs, **Paul Winter** and several Consort members performed a musical whale watch on board a ship that departed Provincetown on the Cape in late August. *— Joe Carey*

LOS ANGELES — An unusual summer here in Southern California this year. A cooler one with only one hot spell — running about 103° for five days in the middle of July. I wore a light coat through most of June. And in the middle of August, rainstorms, two of them, lasting seven days total, something that's never happened in my whole life here. Washing out the vicious smog. Smog that on some days made one feel quite nauseous.

Amongst this are my own changes, which as pertains here include the fact that I'm not out "on the set" as much as I should be to do a column such as this properly. So as not to slight my own writing and a great magazine that Coda is, I will be taking a break from my reporting for a while. I do have a few items to make note of and then end with a poem inspired by the late **Lamar Wright Jr.** who died July 8 of cirrhosis.

The San Francisco band **United Front** made its first showing here July 9 at the Amerasia Bookstore in the newly developing district known as Japantown. Near downtown taking over parts of skid row. United Front was hot as the night that encompassed us.

Some interesting things I missed: May 28 at Miles Playhouse **Nels Cline** and **Charlie Haden** duet and a **Peter Kuhn** trio. From an interview of KPFK's Jay Green I learned that Kuhn has been living in Los Angeles since 1980; **Benny Golson** at Marla's Memory Lane May 8; at Rumsey's March 13 **Dizzy Gillespie** used L.A.'s Ron Eschete, Al McKibbon, Harold Land Jr., Jimmie Smith (the drummer), and Harold Land — hope they recorded! **Bud Shank** and **Shorty Rogers** at Hop Singh's June 24; poet **Robert Alexander** reading with accompaniment from guitarist **Thomas Tedesco** June 18 at Beyond Baroque. Also there was a **Vinny Golia** Chamber Quartet performance in Venice Beach June 25 with Wayne Peet, piano; John Rapson, trombone, and Tom Heasley, tuba.

On the down and out side: The Maiden Voyage closed down at the end of last year. The Parisian Room closed last winter. **Willie Bobo, Art Hillary** and **Frank Butler** have cancer. **Dolo Coker** died of cancer April 13. Gutbucket tenor saxophonist **Wild Bill Moore** died August 9. For the last bunch of years here he could be seen in his long white beard tending the game room and rehearsal rooms at the musicians' union Local 47.

I got to check out **Bobby Bradford**'s recording session for Black Saint June 7, his first record in ten years. All the glowing superlatives fit this great artist. Also in my pantheon of L.A. favs are John Carter and Horace Tapscott.

Akbar DePriest aka Bobby Brooks returned to L.A. after eighteen years of playing the world — a serious case of wanderlust. He's from the generation of Watts drummers that produced Frank Butler, Joe Peters and Lawrence Marable. He's worked on a couple of movie soundtracks that **Benny Maupin** scored recently and formed a band out in Pomona that keeps jazz going in those suburbs forty miles east of Los Angeles — the massive suburbs of L.A. The group includes Harold Howard on trumpet, previously heard with H. Ray Crawford, Boots Robinson, tenor sax, and Bobby Blevins on organ.

The guy with the metallic blue trombone **Michael Vlatkovich** put out another Thankyou Records album "The One That Never Stayed" which is quite nice. Discovery Records is covering the local scene like the great Contemporary Records did in the fifties and sixties. Right now I'm listening to the Clare Fischer and Gary Foster duet album "Starbright."

The Watts Towers Jazz Festival July 16

featured that community's artistic offspring with dynamite showings by **Ernie Andrews, Melba Joyce, Esther Phillips,** and a **Horace Tapscott** ten-piece unit ending the day scorching the blues with poet Kamau Daaood, Arthur Wells, Ernie Roberts & Gary Bias, reeds, Roberto Miranda, Larry Gales, David Bryant, Melvin Moore, strings, and Thurnman Green, 'bone, a trap drummer was in there too. **Johnny Otis** MC'd early in the day and then old man **Popeye Maupin** took over the raconteurship. The Towers surrounded by scaffolding these last couple years. "We all contributed to it" says Linda Hill sly-eyed tongue in cheek.

LESTER YOUNG'S CAT
was named Ding Dong
and when Lester lived
in one of those NYC apartments
for awhile he was on the first floor
and Ding Dong used to
jump in and out the window
well as things go
in a probably identical room
Lester moved to the fifth floor
the window was open
Lester was probably pouring a drink
guess what Ding Dong did
as Lamar Wright told me
Lester said, "Ding Dong done donged."

— Mark Weber

NEW ENGLAND — Southern New England had its fair share of great black music this summer and much of it happened in Rhode Island. In the beginning of the summer, WBRU's Jazz After Hours and New Best Friends Productions combined energies to present a duet between **Marion Brown** and **Steve McCall**. Playing to a sold-out house at Providence's Grant Recital Hall, they blazed their way through a diverse program that showed Brown's pastoral logic at work. Although Marion chooses not to play the competition game of many New York based musicians, he still has an edge to his sound that speaks for itself. Recently departed from Air, McCall's performance was proof positive that he is one of the top improvisers on the planet.

In early August the Westerly Center for the Arts hosted what had to be the swingingest bop date held in Rhode Island of late. **Hank Jones** was the leader of a trio which included George Mraz and Jimmy Cobb. Even though Jones and Mraz are more than capable of intelligent bop, it was Cobb who propelled the music that was basically comprised of standards such as ***Oleo, Confirmation***, and ***Round Midnight***.

In Hartford the summer series of Real Art Ways hosted a top shelf series in early August. Evening shows on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday included an array of **Joseph Jarman**'s solo skills, and **Spiral**, an electric string band that included Steve Swallow. **Marilyn Crispell**'s post-Taylor melodic inventions sounded beautiful on Saturday night. She was opening for **Julius Hemphill**'s JAH band, which seemed to be a working person's Prime Time with the leader sailing high over dual electric guitars. The evening turned into a dance party for those who stayed. On the last night **Don Pullen** overcame a slight functional problem with the sustain pedal on his piano to give insightful meditations on two of his pieces, ***Richard's Tune*** and ***Suite For Malcolm.*** This paved the way for the **Andrew Cyrille** quartet which has replaced David Ware with pianist Sonelius Smith. Many of their playful compositions came from their current Soul Note LP "The Navigator." It was evident that Cyrille was in charge, but lush work by Ted Daniel helped widen the responsibility. Nick DiGeronimo and Smith made the closing piece, ***High Priest***, sound like something from "Kind of Blue."

Back in Rhode Island on August 13, **Joe McPhee** dueted with Washington, D.C. drummer Abu Sharif. It was a pleasure to hear McPhee's reed work and sense of drama finally. His creativity on the tenor and cornet expanded the texture of their sound, but it was his soprano playing that was the highlight. Sharif, attentive and able to create a viable rhythm using almost any tool, took to the hand drums while McPhee's straight horn played the most tender, direct lines all night. Opening and closing the show were the resonating sounds of his cornet being blown directly into the open body of a Yamaha grand piano. McPhee's sense of history is intact. This show was also presented by New Best Friends and Jazz After Hours.

One week later, the relaxed **Max Roach** was enjoyed in Providence's Roger Williams Park. Several hundred people turned out to hear the "deep harmonies and sonorous melodies" of Max's solo outing. Roach danced through ***Six Bit Blues*** as well as his tributes to Big Sid and J. C. Moses. His demeanor was relaxed and relaxing, and he was right at home conveying anecdotes of past and present (he had spent the evening before partying at Sweet Basil with Archie Shepp). It was a splendid alternative to the Kool Jazz Festival that was taking place that weekend in Newport.

Three cheers for **Big Mama Thornton** who came to Lupo's Heartbreak Hotel with a pedestrian band in tow, but enough energy to shout the blues like nobody's business. Yay!!

— Jim Macnie

NEW YORK — After "Company" in New York, **Peter Brotzmann** extended his stay by two weeks and had four more concerts. Three of them were by the trio of William Parker and Rashid Bakr, and one by a duo with Andrew Cyrille at Soundscape on May 7. The trio demonstrated excellent interactions between Brotzmann and the prominent bass style of Parker, driven further by Bakr's powerful drumming. The second meeting, of Brotzmann and Cyrille, also turned out to be a great concert — their first collaboration was in Berlin last year which had been documented on the FMP label. In recent years, many musicians would arrange the sections of 'energy playing' into the perspective of their music, trying to realise a meaningfully controlled whole. However, this duo was presented as a challenge to the maximum level of valid energy, from the very beginning to the end. And so each section just led to another height, one after another. It was really an intense exhibition of their superb musicianship.

Kelvyn Bell's Funky Trio with Melvin Gibbs, electric bass, and Ronnie Burrage, drums, played at Soundscape May 21 and Jazzmania June 26. It was a powerful trio and, while maintaining its solid groove, could effectively shift the pace to realise some nice moments / freedom. Sharing the bill at Jazzmania was the **Billy Bang** Funk Band, including young musicians from the Bronx Oscar Sanders (guitar), Larry Gault (electric bass), along with Wayne Horvitz (synthesizer), Richard Baratta (drums) and a singer. They have just finished a successful date at 55 Grand Street on August 26 and 27 to a full Greenwich Village Jazz Festival crowd. Masahiko Kono, a young Japanese trombonist, sat in too.

Jemeel Moondoc's quartet with Roy Campbell (trumpet), Fred Hopkins (bass) and Rashied Ali (drums) played on June 17 at Soundscape and the **Claude Lawrence** (alto) Trio with Wilber Morris (bass) and Dennis Charles (drums) played at 55 Grand Street on June 21.

This year's series at Soundscape for the Kool Jazz Festival received a greatly improved attendance overall. The **Butch Morris** ensemble with Andrew Cyrille and Michele Rosewoman and **Univision** including Bob Stewart and Howard Johnson started the series, and the **Jimmy Lyons** Quartet and the **Charles Tyler** Ensemble concluded it.

Lyons, with his dry, personal alto sound played imaginative long lines with many jumps and made a good contrast with the bassoon of Karen Borca which by its nature played more portamento. The solid bass of William Parker supported the bottom and Paul Murphy added his explosive drum sound.

Charles Tyler came out with Roy Campbell, Curtis Clark (piano), Kevin Ross (bass) and Steve Reid (drums), and performed six originals featuring his brilliant alto and baritone. He even sang on a swinging ***Lucifer Got Uptight***, dedicated to John Coltrane and Louis Jordan. He always maintained a sense of swing and the blues no matter how far the solos and rhythms stretched out. Group interaction, especially with Reid who alternated between sticks, brushes, mallets and bare hands to create great dynamics, were excellent.

Pharoah Sanders played swinging sets at Sweet Basil for the second week of July and Olu Dara and the Okra Orchestra played there for the second week of August. The three-man front line of Craig Harris and Henry Threadgill along with Olu was powerful and tight. Besides exchanging nice relaxed solos, Olu sang a lot and a young guitarist, Jean-Paul Bourelly, played impressively.

During the last week of July and the first week of August, the **Akbar Ali Assembly** played at The New Small's Paradise. The group included Joe Ford and Michael Carvin and presented a mixture of originals and standards. Ali has a distinctive violin sound and style, very much reminiscent of Ray Nance. Some of his songs, featuring Jessica Cleaves on vocal, have very pretty lines and he also added nice wow-wow-toned solos.

The **George Adams/Don Pullen Quartet** featuring Dannie Richmond played the third week of August at The Village Vanguard. They have very much established a hard, swinging style of their own, incorporating some very free playing. The duo numbers by Adams and Pullen, mostly ballads and spirituals featured between the more hard-blowing numbers, were beautiful.

Roscoe Mitchell performed at Sweet Basil for the week of the Greenwich Jazz Festival. His Sound Ensemble had Mike Mossman replacing Hugh Ragin.... Abdullah, this time with David Murray, opened the series at The Other End.

August 25 and 27 at the Manhattan Healing Arts Center, Takehisa Kosugi and Billy Bang (violins), Mototeru Takagi, Masakatsu Suzuki (reeds) and Sunny Murray (drums) performed. Kosugi is well-known for his works in more conceptual fields of music, such as his work with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company, and he is also an excellent improvisor. Takagi has been one of the leading figures in the Japanese free music scene but has never visited the U.S. before. The younger Suzuki has been playing here for some years. Altogether, they presented intense and interesting mixtures of elements. It was very much a collective improvisation throughout, although there were some sections where each individual came more to the fore. The two violins were very different in style and the areas each worked in and, although emotionally close, made a good contrast. Murray was superb, generating some strong statements from his very simple set.

— Kazunori Sugiyama

ODDS & SODS

George Russell's fourteen-piece New York Big Band takes to the road for a concert tour across the U.S. Watch for it if it comes to your area... Universal Jazz Coalition has signed the lease for a permanent performance workshop space at 380 Lafayette Street in New York. This is an expensive undertaking and they are seeking donations to finance the initial preparation and launching of the center. You can contribute by sending a donation to UJC at 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 434, New York, NY 10010...By now this year's Greenwich Village Jazz Festival is history. Apart from the stellar lineup at all the participating clubs there were free concerts and a jazz film series at the Bleecker Street Cinema. Major films like "Imagine The Sound" shared the spotlight with a cross-section of clips from the past as well as some recently found footage of such people as John Coltrane, Eric Dolphy, Charles Mingus, Bud Powell and Thelonious Monk.

Pianist **Jack Wilson**, back in New York, was showcased at the Village Vanguard in July and the **George Adams-Don Pullen** Band was featured there in August...Sweet Basil's impressive September lineup featured **Chico Freeman, Dewey Redman** and **Cecil Taylor**...Uptown at the West End **Don Lanphere, Haywood Henry** and **Warne Marsh** were all featured...Pianist **Jack Reilly** is collaborating with actor Lloyd Moss in an unusual concert October 27 at Merkin Hall... The International Art of Jazz's summer activities included three free concerts in Long Island in August. **Jay McShann** and **Joe Turner** were featured August 6 and **Art Blakey** was heard August 20...Top Shelf, the group organised by bassist **Reggie Workman**, was at Struggles August 26/27. **Carter Jefferson** is now the featured saxophonist with the band and Howard Johnson, Mickey Tucker and Newman Baker complete the lineup. You can contact Reggie Workman at Suite 501, 110 West 40th Street, New York, NY 10018...The 1983 IAJRC Convention was held August 18-20 at the Ramada Inn in New Rochelle.

Tex Wyndham informs us that he was at the Central City (Colorado) Jazz Festival in August as a solo pianist as well as cornetist with the Rent Party Revellers. This band will appear at the 1984 Sacramento Bash and have a short New England tour scheduled for September of next year. Their initial LP, on Fat Cat, is now available providing you can find it. His own Red Lion Jazz Band shared the bill with Count Basie recently at the Sunnybrook Ballroom in Pottstown, Pa.

Washington's Loft Jazz Festival was held this July and featured **Joe McPhee, Byron Morris, Singh Neal** and other Washington area groups...a major concert series entitled "New Music America" will be held in Washington October 7-17. A cross section of contemporary music will include performances by **Ornette Coleman, Anthony Davis, Joseph Jarman, Con-**

nie Crothers and **Philip Glass**...The Kool Festival circuit continues through the fall with events in Detroit, Chicago and the West Coast...A festival of a different kind will be held in Chicago November 4-6. This year's headliner at the O'Hare Holiday Inn's traditional event will be **Wild Bill Davison. Milt Hinton, Kenny Davern, Pud Brown** and the **Original Salty Dogs** will be among those appearing...Concord's 15th festival took place August 5-7 with artists from the Concord roster such as **Art Blakey, Juggernaut, Carmen McRae** and **Woody Herman**, while **Ed Bickert** and **Steve Wallace** shared the stand with **Scott Hamilton** and **Dave McKenna**...Dick Grove's second All Star Music Festival took place September 11 at the Los Angeles Musicians' Union Hall...The Fourth Long Beach Blues Festival was held September 18 with **Clifton Chenier, Koko Taylor, Johnny Copeland, Bobby Blue Bland** and **Jimmy McCracklin** among the headliners...Palo Alto Records presented a summer series of free concerts in Palo Alto which wound up September 30 with **Mary Watkins** and **Full Faith & Credit Big Band**...

Morris Wearing reports that "Sarasota's The Jazz Club presented the Third Annual Jazz Festival May 10-12 in the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall. Hal Davis and Jerry Jerome welcomed trombonists **Slide Hampton, Bill Watrous** and **George Masso** while **Kenny Davern** and **Phil Bodner** joined **Bob Wilber, Buddy Tate** and **Jerry Jerome** in various reed combinations. **Jay McShann**'s piano technique was a brilliant contrast to the individual styles of **Dick Hyman** and **Derek Smith. Milt Hinton** and **Bob Haggart** on bass joined **Don Lamond** and **Butch Miles** on drums to provide a driving rhythm section. **Bucky Pizzarelli** provided fine guitar. On view were the artwork of Bob Haggart, the photography of Milt Hinton and the record covers of Alex Steinweiss, who also designed the festival poster. The Jazz Club of Sarasota meets nine times each year and the fourth festival will be held in early May of 1984. Further information may be obtained by writing Box 14155, Sarasota, Florida 33579."

Trumpeter **Plato Smith** has put together a band in New Orleans to play the repertoire of the New Orleans Rhythm Kings...The eleventh annual National Association of Jazz Educators Convention will be held in Columbus, Ohio on January 12-15...

Vienna's Musik Galerie presented **Andrea Centazzo**'s Mitteleuropa Orchestra June 13... Sienna Jazz organised their Eleventh National Jazz Seminar July 25-August 5...**John Fischer**, now living in Switzerland, has released three records on Re-Entry. Two feature him while the third is a solo saxophone LP. His piano *Concerto Imaginaire* was premiered May 6 in Dusseldorf and in July he appeared with Interface Europe at the Bregenz (Austria) Festival... A major music festival took place in Strasbourg between September 17 and October 9 with the **Steve Lacy** and **Anthony Braxton** groups among the participants...A festival in Wuppertal October 6-9 included **Tony Oxley, Derek Bailey, Han Bennink, Misha Mengelberg, Irene Schweizer, Andrew Cyrille, Fred Frith** and **Dudu Pukwana**.

Living Blues Magazine will now be published and distributed by the Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi. From what we can gather Jim O'Neal will continue to edit the magazine...Jazz New England is the name of a new sheet devoted to jazz from that area. It is published by Peter Lansdowne at 143 Main St., West Upton, MA 01587.

New discographies of **Booker Little** and **Joe McPhee** have been published by Jazz 360, c/o Gustave Cerutti, 8 Av. du Marche, 3960 Sierre, Switzerland...Tetsuya Tajiri has compiled a **Gil Evans** discography in Japan. It will be available through specialised outlets...Bob Weir, 18 Tydfil Place, Roath Park, Cardiff CF2 5HP, Wales (Great Britain) has compiled and published a new discography of **Clifford Brown** which is available for US$6.00. Bob is also working on a **Buck Clayton** discography and would appreciate hearing from collectors interested in Buck's work..."Views on Black American Music" is a booklet containing some of the presentations at the 10th and 11th conferences held in Amherst, Mass. Among the contributors are **Oscar Brown Jr., J.R. Mitchell** and **Max Roach**.

From West Germany comes the news that MPS Records has ceased operations...Sony's initial three Video LPs featuring **Lionel Hampton, Bill Watrous**'s Refuge Band and **Rob McConnell**'s Boss Brass are now available in selected markets in the U.S. and retail for $19.95. These are the first commercially released videos of digitally-recorded performances...New from Discovery are LPs by **Charlie Shoemake** (with Tommy Flanagan and Tom Harrell) and **Milcho Leviev** as well as a reissue, on Musicraft, of **Teddy Wilson** sides with Sarah Vaughan...Fantasy has issued another thirty titles in their Original Jazz Classics series. The rarities are two **Brubeck** LPs ("Jazz at Oberlin" and "...College of the Pacific"), **Red Rodney**'s Quintet and **Brew Moore**. It's also nice to see the **Wardell Gray** LPs back in print and an **Art Farmer** Septet date...Fantasy has also found still more tapes in the Prestige/Riverside vaults. There's a **Miles Davis-Jimmy Forrest** live date from Saint Louis with dire sound and studio material by **Red Garland, Wes Montgomery** and **Bill Evans**... Revelation Records has LPs by **Jack Reilly, Carmell Jones, Bill Prince** and **Alan Broadbent** in the works..."Lightnin'" is the title of the new LP by the **Valley Big Band** which comes from Northampton, Mass...The Mosaic Box Sets of **Albert Ammons/Meade Lux Lewis, Thelonious Monk** and **Gerry Mulligan** are now out. The wait has been worthwhile so you shouldn't hesitate to acquire them. Foreign postage charges also apply to customers in Canada...Hat Hut has released New Music LPs by **Michel Redolfi, Musica Libera** and **Donald and Peggy Knaack**. They are also joining the increasing number of labels to offer their material directly to the public. Further information is available from Hat Hut, Box 127, West Park, NY 12493... The **Ethnic Heritage Ensemble** has released an LP on Finland's Leo label...**Maynard Ferguson**'s band recorded live at the Great American Music Hall in San Francisco. No label has yet been firmed for the music...**Joe Carter** has recorded a second LP for Empathy with Harvie Swartz and Lee Konitz...Palo Alto has leased Nautilus recordings by **Maynard Ferguson, Victor Feldman, The Generation Band** and **Lalo Schifrin**. Other new material from Palo Alto includes LPs by **Marv Stamm, Sheila Jordan** and **Richie Cole**... Elektra/Musician includes an LP of trio music by **Lennie Tristano** from 1955-56 in its latest release. Second LPs by **Mose Allison** and the **Red Rodney/Ira Sullivan** band are also part of this release...French RCA has released 2-LP sets

in the Jazz Tribune series of **Jack Teagarden**, the complete **Sidney Bechet** volume 5, **Django Reinhardt, Louis Armstrong**'s Town Hall Concert and a Ragtime collection. There is also a three LP set of West Coast Jazz and a two LP set of The Birdland Stars on Tour...Polygram Classics continue to import and distribute Verve material from Japan. The most recent are **Lester Young**'s "Laughin' To Keep From Cryin'" and **Billie Holiday**'s Carnegie Hall Concert. They now have twelve titles from French Verve including LPs by **Stan Getz, Roland Kirk, Tal Farlow, Billie Holiday, Bill Evans** and **Dizzy Gillespie**...George Buck's most recent release includes **Carrie Smith, Alan Vache** (Audiophile), **Yarra Yarra Jazz Band** (GHB), **Don Ewell, Ernie Carson** (Jazzology) and **Jimmy Maxwell** (Circle)...The 1983 Arhoolie catalog is now available from 10341 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530...JSP Records has released a third **Al Casey** LP as well as further material by **John Lee Hooker** and **Phil Guy**.

Sammy Price played *Deep Forest* at the funeral service for **Earl Hines** at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco on April 28 and trumpeter **Walter Fuller** offered *After All You've Been To Me*...Pianist/blues singer **Roosevelt Sykes** died July 11 in New Orleans...Trumpeter **Harry James** died July 5...Pianist **Don Ewell** died August 9 in Deerfield, Florida of pneumonia at the age of 66. *— John Norris*

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Kenny Dorham, Wardell Gray, Hank Mobley, Bud Powell, Ike Quebec, Lee Wiley. DISCOGRAPHIES of the above artists are available from Mr. Claude Schlouch - Les Hesperides, Bat C6-Bd des Alpes - 13012 MARSEILLE, FRANCE. All discographies with full artist and title indexes.

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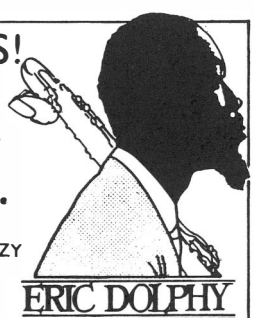

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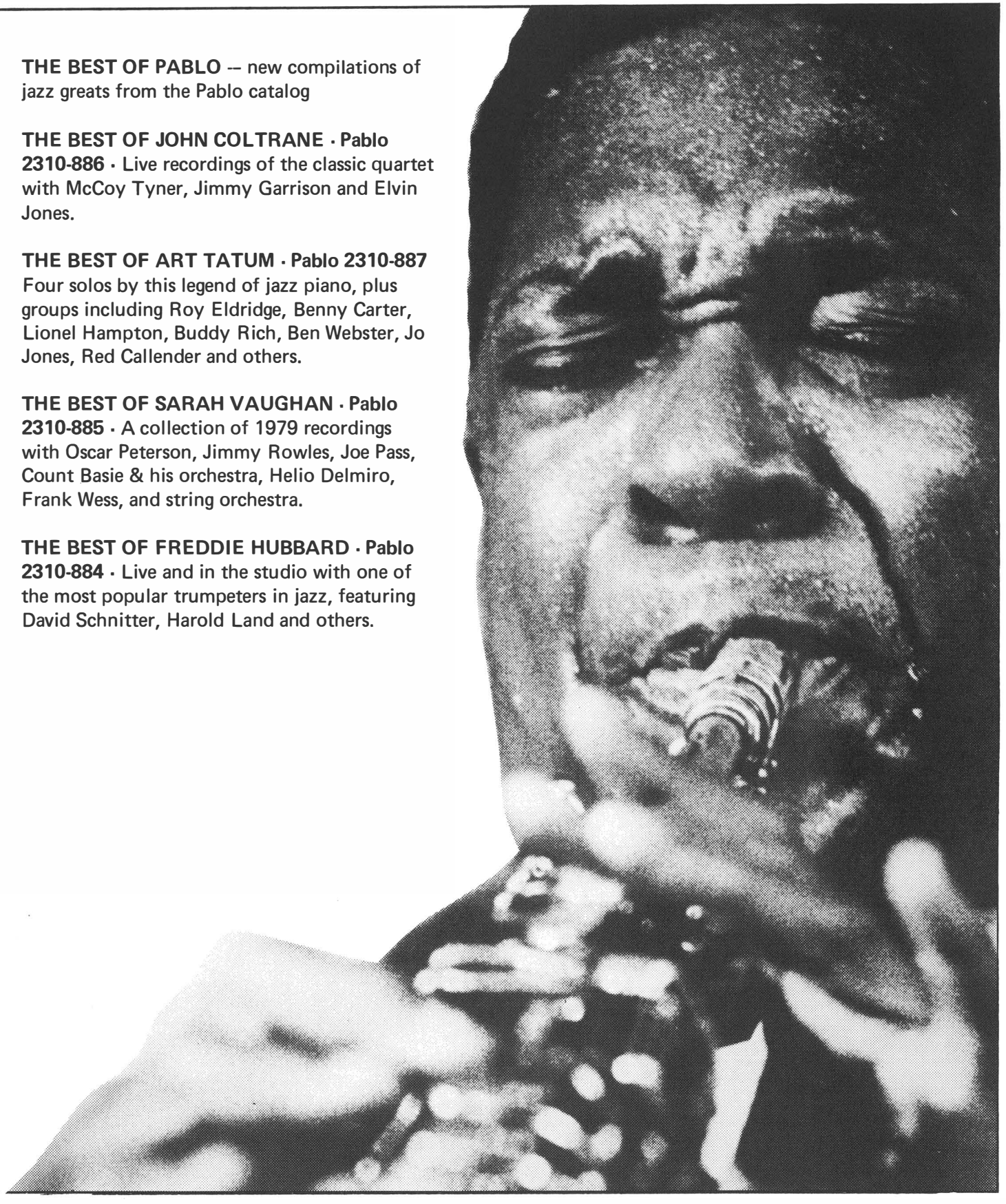

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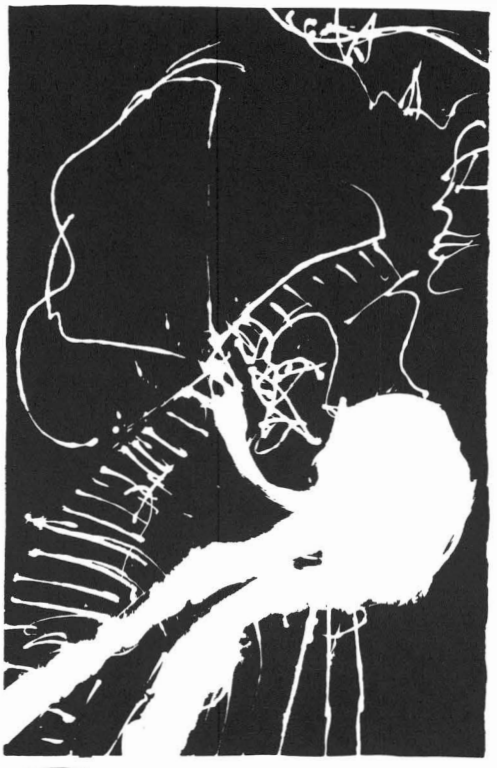

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