CODA MAGAZINE

THE JOURNAL OF JAZZ AND IMPROVISED MUSIC * ISSUE 199 * THREE DOLLARS

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In The Next Issue

The next issue of CODA — ISSUE 200 — is a milestone in the publishing history of our magazine. To celebrate the occasion of our anniversary, we are going to dedicate an issue to the art of JAZZ PIANO.

The feature article will be one of the last interviews with the legendary BILL EVANS, who was interviewed by broadcaster TED O'REILLY in June of 1980, just two months before the pianist's unfortunate death.

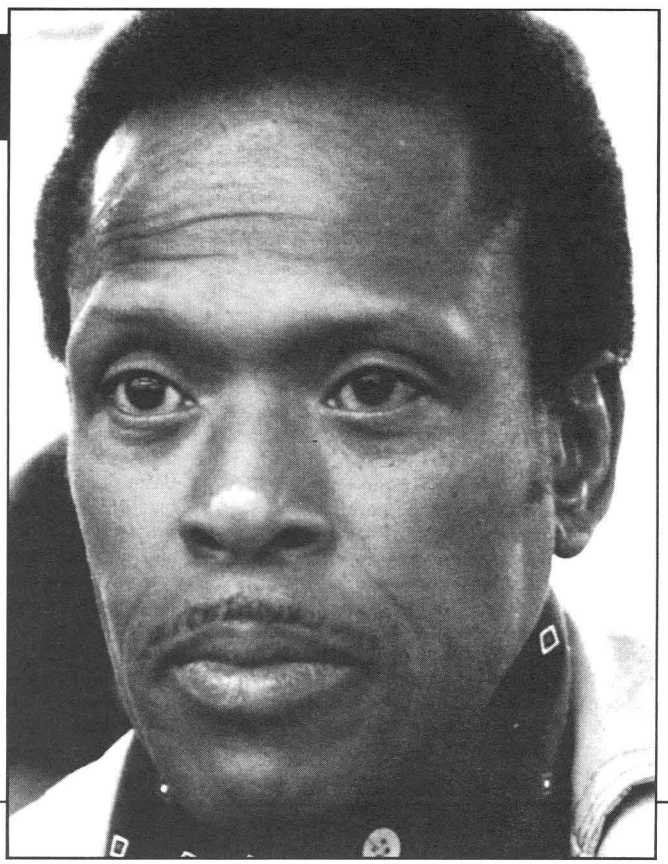
Publisher JOHN NORRIS constructs a profile of KENNY DREW, a great be-bop pianist who has lived in Denmark for the last twenty years.

KIRK LIGHTSEY, one of the Detroit musicians that is coming to the forefront of today's music, is interviewed by BILL McLARNEY.

Women in jazz have not been a common occurence. Pianist JOANNE BRACKEEN is one performer correcting that situation. She is interviewed by HAL HILL.

CECIL TAYLOR is profiled by BRIAN AUERBACH and DAVID LEE, based on recent European releases of his music by Hat Hut and Black Saint.

Plus a RECORD REVIEW section will concentrate on the numerous piano recordings that have been produced in the last year. And among the regular features will be the CODA WRITERS' POLL, BLUES NEWS and much more. Subscribe now to avoid missing all the fantastic information...



KENNY DREW (Photograph courtesy of SteepleChase Records)

A PORTRAIT OF PREZ..

Just all music, all day and all night music. Just any kind of music you play for me, I melt with all of it...

Lester Young has been described by the late novelist Jack Kerouac as "that gloomy saintly goof in whom the history of jazz is wrapped" and by jazz critic Bill Coss as "the solemn, slow, slouching enigma of jazz" — both writers sensing that there was something essentially ambiguous and melancholy about him, perhaps even something tragic.

The ambiguity of much of Lester's life is strangely typified by the fact that until recently so simple a vital statistic as his place of birth has never quite been known. Through the years two different birthplaces have been reported in reference books, newspapers and magazines: Woodville, Mississippi and New Orleans. Pres himself once said it was Woodville, and another time that it was New Orleans; and as late as fall 1958 he said that the ***real*** birthplace was Algiers, Louisiana, a small town a few miles outside New Orleans. According to the birth certificate, Lester Willis Young was born in Woodville, on August 27, 1909 — a Virgo not far from the Leo cusp. Part of the confusion about Lester's birthplace stemmed from the fact that the family was always on the move, travelling from town to town, depending largely on the availability of employment. The family moved to New Orleans soon after Lester was born.

Lester's musical training began at the age of five in the family band that consisted of his father (William H. Young: a blacksmith by trade, but also a skilled violinist and choir-instructor), his brother Lee and his sister Irma. The band did much travelling with minstrel shows and carnivals in the Midwest and Southwest. Lester's formative years were spent on the road, and his schooling was pretty much of a now-and-then thing ("It was schools and jobs. Packings and unpackings. You dig?").

For three years, from age ten to thirteen, Lester was the band's drummer. But inspired by alto and C-melody saxophonist Frankie Trumbauer, who was his early idol, he eventually switched to alto sax, and gave the drums to his brother Lee. Lester's profound respect for originality and cohesiveness, both of which were apparent in his best work, was evident even then ("Trumbauer always told a little story. And I liked the way he slurred the notes. He'd play the melody first and then after that he'd play around the melody. I did like Bud Freeman very much. Nobody played like him. That's what knocked me out.").

In addition to playing the alto for the family band, Lester was often called upon to sing (his interest in singing never died out. In 1944, Pres made a record of ***A Little Bit North Of South Carolina***, on which he's featured as a singer with a quintet that included his brother Lee; the record was never produced, however).

Lester made the band's yearly carnival tours until he was eighteen — enduring, in those years, all of the ills that blacks in the South and Midwest were (and sometimes still are) heir to. But his acute sensitivity made it impossible for him to continue in this routine. In 1927, his father made arrangements to play a number of dates throughout Texas and the rest of the South. The prospects of such a trip were frightening to Lester ("I told him how it would be down there and that we could have some fine jobs back through Nebraska, Kansas, and Iowa, but he didn't have eyes for that. He was set to go. I ran away.").

Lester's running away, at eighteen, was the first serious manifestation of an escape pattern that was to recur throughout his life. He ran away from home several times before, beginning at the age of six, but each of these flights was unsuccessful. In Salinas, Kansas, however, where he left the family band to join Art Bronson's Bostonians as a baritone saxophonist, his breakaway was for good; he would never go back.

The pattern of flight was repeated in 1934, when he left the Fletcher Henderson band because persons in it were trying to pressure him into discarding his thin, leanly-inflected tone, and playing instead like Coleman Hawkins who was, at that time, the predominant influence among tenor players ("They used to take me down to the cellar and play Hawk's records for me. Asked me couldn't I play like that. You dig?").

In 1940, Pres fled Count Basie's band not because a record date had been scheduled for Friday the thirteenth, as Lester sometimes told reporters, but because of a number of differences between Basie and himself, most of them financial. It was often thought that professional friction between Lester and fellow tenorman Herschel Evans had something to do with Lester's exit but again there is more conjecture here than truth. There was a certain rivalry between the two, but it was a lot like the rivalry between brothers — spirited, but not malicious. Herschel once told Pres, "Why don't you play alto, man? You got an alto ***tone***." To which Pres reportedly countered, while tapping his head for emphasis: "There's things going on up here, man. Some of you guys are all belly." Significantly, during Herschel's illness, when it was fairly clear that he was dying, Lester went to visit him quite often, and sat at his bedside during his last hours.

Lester's attitude toward Basie was as complicated and ambivalent as his attitude toward his father had been, and as his attitude toward jazz promoter Norman Granz would later prove to be. Pres needed the acceptance and the professional security that being a part of Basie's band gave him, but, on the other hand, his limited opportunity for soloing, his dissatisfaction with the salary he was receiving, and the boredom of being a sideman often proved unbearable ("Basie was like school. I used to fall asleep in school because I had my lesson and there was nothing else to do. The teacher would be teaching those who hadn't studied at home, but I had, so I'd go to sleep.").

In view of the many personality problems Lester was developing because so many people so often refused to accept him for what he was, it is amazing to realize that it was precisely in these years, from 1936 to 1940, that Lester produced the body of recorded work that was to establish his reputation — ***Taxi War Dance***, ***Twelfth Street Rag***, ***Dickie's Dream***, ***Pound Cake*** (Lester's personal favourite), ***Lady Be Good***, ***I Never Knew***, etc. His total immersion in his art during this period was noted by pianist John Lewis, who knew him then: "Lester used to hang his tenor saxophone on the foot of his bed so that he could reach it during the night if an idea came to him that he wanted to sound out."

Once established, Lester's reputation lay dormant for a few years, until the mid-forties. Then, through such diverse oracles as Stan Getz and Charlie Parker, it flourished wildly. Shorty Rogers once stated that Charlie Parker knew every note Lester played. Composer/trombonist Bill Russo said that Lester sometimes "Speaks with the gods." Benny Goodman, a notorious perfectionist, thought of him as "one of my favorite musicians." Historian Marshall Stearns called him "the Cezanne of modern jazz." And Lee Konitz said: "Then there was the sound of Lester on the old Basie records — real beautiful tenor saxophone sound, pure sound. That's it. For alto too. Pure sound. How many people he's influenced, how many lives!"

Lester's contribution to jazz was immense. Martin Williams called him the "most gifted and original improviser between Louis Armstrong and Charlie Parker." And it is generally agreed that the entire "cool" school of jazz developed from lines he set down. His influence was clearly discernible in dozens of young tenormen who were to gain prominence later on: Stan Getz, Zoot Sims, Al Cohn, Brew Moore, Allen Eager, Paul Quinichette et al ("Paul, maybe Eager, comes closest to me."). A large number of other musicians, regardless of instrument, were similarly affected by Pres, in varying degrees of directness.

In the February 1949 issue of ***Metronome*** one singer and two musicians were cited as "Influences of the Year." They were Sarah Vaughan, Lennie Tristano — and Lester Young. Barry Ulanov, in making the long-deserved award, wrote of Pres: "A dozen years after he was first heard on records with Count Basie, Lester Young really made himself felt, if not gelt. Bop arrived in 1948, and with it Lester, honk, line and sinker. Every tenor man in the bop groove blew Lester, the long melodic line, the honking accents, the sinker codas, trying as hard as possible to emulate his dead tone, often achieving as a result a comparative purity of reed sound, free of excessive vibrato. In addition, Young could look around him in 1948 and hear a whole school of music, ***the*** school, which grew out of his playing. Influence? He was more; he was the sire and dam, almost the man who made bop come true."

Lester objected to the terminology of Barry's citation. He particularly disliked the use of the word "honk," as well as the implication that he had anything whatever to do with bop. He was displeased with professional jazz critics

LESTER YOUNG (Photograph by Alain Chevrier)

in general, and for a long time refused to read any articles written about him. Nobody, he felt, ever described his playing properly, or understood his kind of tenor ("They keep saying cool jazz tenor or bebopper or something. But I play ***swing*** tenor.").

Lester was always aware of his role as an important influence in jazz, even if, through modesty, he gave you the impression that he was never quite comfortable in it. In a February 1956 interview, he told Nat Hentoff: "Of the newer tenors, I like all them little youngsters. I like to hear them play. About the finest I heard them play is on that "Four Brothers" record. Do I hear my influence in what they play? Yes, I hear a lot of little things from what I play, but I never say anything. I mean I hear a lot of little riffs and things that I've done. But I don't want it to sound like I think I influenced everybody."

After leaving Basie, Lester toured with his own combos in 1941 and 1942. He rejoined Basie in December 1943. In late September 1944, soon after appearing in the famous short film ***Jammin' The Blues***, he was inducted into the Army and for some fifteen months underwent the most traumatic experience of his life. ("One mad nightmare. They sent me down south, Georgia. It was a drag.") For many years, much of what actually took place during Lester's army time was obscured by deep fogs of rumour and conjecture — due mainly to the difficulty of obtaining the necessary military records, but also to Lester's understandable reluctance to discuss the matter.

However, judging from data just recently unearthed, it now seems pretty clear that Lester Young should never have served one minute in the U.S. Army — World War II or no World War II. In strictly military terms, he was a total, unmitigated fuck-up, God bless him — and too open and trusting to try to conceal the fact.

Writer John McDonough, who — with Ann Holler — was instrumental in finally bringing Pres's court-martial transcript to light (via the Freedom of Information Act) reported in the January 1981 ***Down Beat*** — that a medical examination revealed that Lester was syphilitic at the time of his induction, and told authorities he had used marijuana continuously for eleven years. "But the Army," wrote McDonough, "was accustomed to hearing tall tales from draft-shy inductees. On September 30, 1944 the 33-year-old Lester became Private Young, serial number 39 729 502."

According to McDonough's invaluable account, Lester had been ignoring draft notices for over a year when an FBI agent, posing as a jazz fan, served papers to Pres and drummer Jo Jones, in Los Angeles's Plantation Club, where they had been playing with the Basie band. "Few who knew him," wrote McDonough, "expected Young to pass the physical, medical and psychological tests. To no avail, Milt Ebbens, Basie's manager, and Norman Granz, then a Los Angeles area concert promoter, appealed the draft notice. Young may have believed that his reliance on alcohol and soft drugs would keep him out of the service."

Lester was sent to Fort MacArthur in California for five weeks of basic training and passed through two other bases before arriving on December 1 at Alabama's Fort McClellan, where his troubles were soon to begin. An

obstacle course injury in January led to minor rectal surgery and regular doses of post-op painkillers. While hospitalised, he was diagnosed by Dr. Luis Perelman, Fort McClellan's chief of neuropsychology, as being in a "constitutional psychopathic state manifested by drug addiction (marijuana, barbituates), chronic alcoholism, and nomadism." (yet – apparently in the face of his own findings – Dr. Perelman concluded that Lester had "a purely disciplinary problem and that disposition should be effected through administrative channels").

On February 1, Lester was arrested for possession of about an ounce of pot and about an ounce of barbiturates. Army psychiatrist Lawrence J. Radice, examining him, rendered a diagnosis almost identical to Dr. Perelman's, but also mentioned Lester's common-law wife Wrote Radice: "In view of his undesirable traits and inadequate personality, he is unlikely to become a satisfactory soldier."

In any event, a military court was convened on February 16: it disposed of the case in a brisk hour and thirty-five minutes. The sole witness for the defense was Pres himself, who admitted virtually everything. Near the end of the proceedings, during a series of questions about Lester's drug use, the court-appointed defense counsel, Major Glen Grimke, asked him, "Now if you do not take these drugs, smoke these things, does it affect you in any way physically?"

A: "Yes, sir, it does. I don't want to do anything. I don't care to blow my horn and I don't care to be around anybody."

Q: "Affects you badly?"

A: "Just nervous."

Q: "Could you do this training here if you left them alone?"

A: "No, sir. Because I tried, sir. I tried it truthfully."

Q: "Have you had any of these drugs...in the last few days?"

A: "Haven't...not since I have been in the stockade now."

Q: "Feel pretty nervous now?"

A: "I think about it all the time."

And with that the defense rested. Under cross-examination, Lester admitted he obtained the barbiturates without a doctor's prescription. The five-judge panel quickly found him guilty and sentenced him to a year in the U.S. disciplinary barracks at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas; dishonourable discharge thereafter; and forfeiture of much of his $50-a-month pay (he was left with $7.60 to pay for government insurance and $22 for dependents). First Lt. William Moffet, of the judge advocate's staff, reviewed the case and concluded: "The record of the accused both civilian and military shows that he is not a good soldier. His age as well as the nature and duration of his undesirable traits indicate he can be of no value to the service without proper treatment and severe disciplinary training...The sentence...is both legal and appropriate."

To a gentle soul like Pres, who seldom if ever had a harsh word for anyone, and who took harsh words very much to heart, the impact of this Official Pronouncement can well be imagined.

The sentence, eventually shortened to ten months, was served at Fort Gordon, Georgia, instead of Leavenworth. The only saving grace in the whole situation was Lester's being able to play music while confined, thanks to a regular Sunday dance for noncoms, for which he would be let out to play. Sergeant Gil Evans, assigned to nearby Oliver General Hospital, sat in on piano most of the time, generally bringing with him discreet bottles of whisky and perhaps other goodies as gifts.

In the first week of December 1945 Lester was released, a free – but never quite the same – man.

Lester, at any rate, was a radically changed man when he came out of the Army. His playing did not suffer immediately; he made a number of excellent records for Aladdin and Savoy, including ***Confessin'***, ***These Foolish Things*** and ***D. B. Blues***. But certain patterns of behaviour had been established at this time that were to seriously curtail the development of his musical powers. For one thing, his dependency on alcohol increased. He grew less articulate. His moods fluctuated more radically. Those who knew him slightly thought him a puzzle.

The word writers tended to use most often, when speaking of Pres, was "enigmatic." It seemed to have remarkable validity. His attitudes were usually unfathomable, his approach to reality impossibly inconsistent, and the chemistry of his personality somehow mysterious. He was a complicated, sensitive individual who paid dearly, in anguish, for his lack of resiliency.

While many of Lester's closest friends gave sharply conflicting views of him, most agreed that one of his major problems was simply that he took things too hard, that he hurt too easy. Billie Holiday said: "People think he's so cocky and secure, but you can hurt his feelings in two seconds." And Norman Granz once observed: "Lester is a strange guy. Sometimes the most productive of jazzmen; and, sometimes, seemingly barren of feeling. The reason, of course, is that his sensitivity often renders him unable to feel to play."

Most of the time, Lester was disinclined to be especially articulate, particularly in the presence of those he did not trust or know well. It became fashionable to think of him as the classic case of the man who "says it with his horn, not his words." For Standard English, Pres often substituted a colourful terminology similar to Slim Gaillard's "o-rooney" jargon. It was a terminology that fascinated those who were attuned to him and baffled those who were not.

In the early years, Lester's private language was a simple kind of shorthand, a harmless corollary of ***in***-ness. After his disastrous experience with the Army, however, a tendency toward even more privateness in Lester's language was detected by friends and associates who felt that he began to deliberately snarl the lines of communication between himself and the "Outside World." His fear of being hurt again, of being persecuted by whites, made him more suspicious than ever, and he always seemed to have less and less to say to people. But it should not be inferred that Pres, in his later years, was utterly unable to make himself understood, when he wanted to, and when he was emotionally capable of doing so. If he trusted you, and if he felt sufficiently comfortable at the time, he could speak with great

lucidity and warmth. A sampling of Lesterisms:

"How do the bread smell?" (How much money is involved?)

"Gray boy." (White male)

"Oxford gray." (Light-skinned Negro)

"Hat." (Woman)

"Pound cake." (Attractive young girl)

"Molly troller." (Rehearsal)

"Needle dancer." (Heroin addict)

"Bing and Bob." (The police)

"I feel a draught." (Somebody around here is Jim Crow. Or, simply: somebody here makes me uncomfortable)

Lester sometimes called his record of ***Afternoon Of A Basie-ite*** "The Afternoon Of A Baseball Player." Once, in the early fifties, when he was playing at Chicago's Blue Note, he continually referred to the musician who shared the bill with him as "Muddy Spaniels" – meaning, of course, Muggsy Spanier, the Dixieland trumpet player. Lester's unusual expressional forms reflected a sense of humour that was largely restrictive and restricting. It was a wry, ***inner*** brand of comedy that became almost prohibitively so during his Jazz At The Philharmonic period.

For Lester, Jazz At The Philharmonic was a bittersweet mix of pluses and minuses. He was able to make, in 1946, more money than ever before ($50,000 gross), but on the other hand, the often raucous crowd reactions, the frequent tendency toward sheer volume and repetition, disgusted him and tended to make him apathetic. His basic urge to be accepted as a highly original individual, frustrated on a musical level, found expression in less wholesome ways. If in 1936 he held his saxophone at chin level and

LESTER YOUNG (Photograph by Jean-Pierre Leloir)

blew langourous, wonderfully understated and inventive solos, in 1946 — discouraged by his environment and lacking the will to change it — he developed an elaborate series of mannerisms that pointed up, in an exaggerated way, his urgent need to not conform, to be thoroughly original. He shuffled effeminately; he wore bizarre hats and coats; he carried a bottle of gin with him wherever he went, zipped up in a little leather case he had specially made for the purpose.

Pianist John Lewis once said that Lester needed "first-rate musicians to play with him." This became increasingly evident during the Jazz At The Philharmonic period. In the presence of musicians he respected, he was often capable of playing well. And on ***The Man I Love***, recorded by a JATP group that included Dizzy Gillespie and Willie Smith, Pres blew one of his very best solos of all time, a marvellously subtle and lyrical performance. Other notable solos by Pres in the JATP context include those on ***Blues For Norman*** and ***Sweet Georgia Brown*** with groups that included Charlie Parker and Willie Smith. Lester's studio work for Granz's Verve Records, dating from this same general period, was uneven in quality, but at its best it was ***the*** best, as on ***I Found A New Baby*** and ***I Want To Be Happy*** (with Nat King Cole, piano, and Buddy Rich, drums — forming what might arguably be called a summit of the three best on their particular instruments). Other postwar Presian gems on Verve include ***Up 'N Adam*** (with Hank Jones, piano; Ray Brown, bass; Buddy Rich, drums) and ***Frenesi*** (with John Lewis, piano; Gene Ramey, bass; Jo Jones, drums).

Throughout the years, voters in all-star polls failed, generally, to support Lester in the manner in which he perhaps should have been accustomed. He won the ***Down Beat*** poll in 1944, and once or twice he was the number one in contests conducted by foreign magazines, but these were the only official tokens of recognition he ever received from the public at large. He fared much better with jazz writers and fellow musicians, however, winning several critics' polls and placing a solid first in Leonard Feather's 1956 canvassing of ballots from 101 musicians who were asked to name their all-time favourites in all categories. The top three tenors were: Lester with 52 votes, Coleman Hawkins with 34, Stan Getz with 17 (Pres voted for Hawkins, Ben Webster, Paul Gonsalves and Getz, in that order).

For two decades, Hawk and Pres were ***the*** influences on tenor players. They were never close friends, but a feeling of mutual respect existed between them. Hawk said: "Pres was limited, but always an original. He had ***soul***." Lester said: "Hawk can stand up anytime he wants and blow just pretty. They tried to make it sound as if me and Hawk, 'cause we didn't go the same way, couldn't stand each other. Now that wasn't right at all, you dig? It was only we had different ideas how to play."

In later years, Lester's reputation as an All-Time Jazz Great seemed to increase in direct ratio to his personal decline, creating a situation that was as disheartening for his friends to watch as it was bitter and ironic for Pres himself to endure. Except for a promising but all-too-brief musical resurgence at the Newport Jazz Festival and on tour with Basie's band, Pres had settled into an almost impregnable lethargy, fed by his various habits and by a cluster of personal problems that, since 1945, grew steadily worse. He was admitted to Bellevue in the winter of 1955 and to Kings County Hospital in the winter of 1957.

Pres realized that his alcohol problem was shortening his life; he tried to quit once, cold turkey. It was no use. His dependency had become too acute. His taste for food was practically gone; there were periods when he'd eat less in a week than the average person would in a day. He tried desperately to build up an appetite for food, and failed. The failures were often a little pathetic. Once, in a hotel, he called room service for a full ten-course Chinese dinner. When it came, he sat down and stared at the tiny cardboard pails until they were cold, just looking moodily at them with tears in his eyes. None of the pails was opened, and the next morning they were thrown out. Tenor saxophonist Buddy Tate, a longtime friend, remembers another moment with the Pres of this period: "After the 1958 Newport Festival, I drove back with him to New York, and he was really down. He was unhappy about money, and said he wasn't great. When I told him how great he was, he said, "If I'm so great, Lady Tate, how come all the other tenor players, the ones who sound like me, are making all the money?"

Some have said that Lester had premonitions of his death, yet as late as November 1958 he was looking forward to the possibility of a new contract with the now-defunct Dot Records. He had hopes of making a series of albums with woodwind and string accompaniment. And one of his recurring daydreams was to put together a little band for recording purposes only, a band that would have all his favourite musicians in it, including his all-time favourite vocalist, Frank Sinatra (Pres took a portable phonograph and a dozen LPs with him whenever he went on the road; more than half the records were Sinatra's. He never called Sinatra a "singer" or a "vocalist," incidentally; he always referred to him fondly as "My real own ***crooner***").

Lester's dream band was vividly picturable to him; he knew exactly how it would be, and what the band would record. They'd do plenty of jump tunes, where everybody'd be swinging hard together. And, of course, there'd be a lot of ballads like ***Everything Happens To Me*** and ***I Didn't Know What Time It Was*** ("One of the rules of the band would be that everybody would know the lyrics of anything they played."). When Frank sang, Lester would play little quiet things behind him, and maybe take a chorus on the break, all of it blending perfectly so that Frank's singing, Lester's playing and the playing of the others would melt together and sound just right. It would be a "nice small band," with Freddie Green on guitar and "maybe Miles or Sweets" on trumpet.

Although he realized that this particular dream would never come to pass, Lester harboured other, less impractical, ones. He was not as shorn of hope as some writers have made him out to be. When he left for Paris in February, tentative plans had been made for what he would do when he got back. A couple of dates had been set up for him on a tentative basis. Lester was determined that 1959 would be a far better year for him than 1958 had been.

But none of this was to come to pass. Lester died of a heart seizure in a New York hotel at 4:30 Sunday morning, March 15 — The Ides Of March. He had returned from Europe by plane only a few hours before. The owner of the Blue Note in Paris, where Lester had been playing a few days earlier, said: "Lester was very ill when he was playing for me. It was almost pathetic. He wanted to go home because he said he couldn't talk to a French doctor."

While in France, Lester gave Francois Postif an interview in which he shed some wry light on his famed tenor style: "In my mind when I play, I try not to be a repeater pencil. Always leave some spaces — lay out." Yet his pointers on craft were laced with some bitter reflections on life as a black in the U.S. "They want everybody who's a Negro to be an Uncle Tom, or Uncle Remus, or Uncle Sam, and I can't make it. It's the same all over: You fight for your life — until death do you part, and then you got it made."

On Saturday, March 21, French Radio broadcast a concert of the last recordings made by Lester when he was in Paris. When the news was out that Pres had died, the inevitable series of eulogies began. Sonny Rollins said: "I don't believe anyone will ever forget the way Pres played. Many will continue to copy him." Tom Scanlan wrote: "The number of top-rank musicians this tenor saxophone player inspired and influenced, directly or indirectly, is beyond estimation. Indeed, in jazz tenor playing today, it is unusual when you hear a tenor man who does ***not*** play more or less like Lester." The English paper ***Melody Maker*** gave the story of Lester's death bold-type, page-one treatment. Its lead paragraph stated quite simply: "Jazz lost its President this week."

Lester's tenor, first confiscated by the police, was turned over to his widow, Mary. It is the horn he had used for the last decade of his life, the horn he had nicknamed "Baby."

Lester's concern for his instrument, the great good care he took of it, is very nearly a matter of legend. He was not comfortable away from it, and tried at all times to keep it in sight. When he was on the stand and not playing, he held the horn cradled in his arms, with both hands curved around it.

A couple of months before Lester left for Paris, he played a date at the old Five Spot Cafe in New York's East Village. When a photographer who was doing a picture story on Pres felt it necessary, for a particular shot, to move "Baby" from the piano stool Pres had set it down on, he asked for permission to do so.

"O.K.," said Pres, "but hold it careful, you dig? That's my life."

Note: A number of Pres's quotations dealing with his early years are from ***Hear Me Talkin' To Ya***, the invaluable "oral history of jazzmen" compiled by Nat Shapiro and Nat Hentoff. His later quotes, including those dealing with his "dream band," were obtained in a series of interviews during 1958-1959. The quote at the head of the article is as quoted by Leonard Feather (1951). — ***Bob Perlongo***

ESSAY BY BOB PERLONGO

The Aesthetic Values Of Jazz

THE FOLLOWING IS A LECTURE GIVEN BY JOHN NORRIS AT THE 1984 OTTAWA JAZZ FESTIVAL

"When we have mastered space travel, then history, politics and our present ideas will be obsolete. It will become necessary to start from scratch. There will be no more music, no more books, only numbers and more numbers."

These pessimistic thoughts on the future by British novelist Anthony Burgess have relevance because jazz music is in a state of crisis. In fact it may well be even worse than that.

Superficially the state of jazz would seem to be good. There are festivals covering the length and breadth of the planet, there are widespread educational programs in school systems and the record bins are full of recordings — all proudly displayed under the banner of jazz. And that is where the confusion begins.

Jazz is a musical form which grew to maturity in the forties. A distinct musical form — and the only art form produced in the United States — at least that's what we are constantly being told. It is true that it *is* America's unique music but it was always as much entertainment as art. Only in retrospect is the music an art.

The parameters of jazz were shaped early and like all things of quality in this world there was a definite shape and form to the music. By the twenties it had evolved from its folk beginnings into music which relied on the structure of the blues — a twelve-bar form — and the 32-bar format of the American popular song as the foundation of everything which took place, What transformed it from an indigenous folk-dance music into something of extraordinary quality was the development of the improvised solo. And the man who was responsible for the success of this idea was Louis Armstrong.

All of the essential characteristics of jazz music can be found in Louis Armstrong's playing. The most fundamental and important ingredient which makes jazz special is the actual sound of the instrumentalist. Jazz tonality comes, in its most basic sense, from the human voice and, more particularly, from the vocalised inflections of the blues and gospel singer. That, in turn, comes from the African heritage of the creators of jazz music.

The second basic ingredient of jazz music is its rhythmic pulse. Jazz music is "felt" in syncopated four-four rhythm. It is not the stiff time sequence of marching bands or the precise time of ballroom dancing. It is a highly infectious pulsation based on those rudiments. The pulse — or heart beat — gives the player the freedom to phrase at will within the contours of that rhythm.

The blues and the popular song became the vehicle from which the jazz musician developed his highly personal musical expression. In its earliest days jazz was almost purely African in its expression. Its rhythmic and melodic intensity was little touched by harmonic sophistication. As jazz developed and as jazz musicians encountered other music and musicians of European extraction it incorporated harmonic progressions which diluted the African elements and eventually made jazz music a blending of

LOUIS ARMSTRONG (Photograph by Bill Smith)

two cultures. It then became possible for Horace Silver and Bill Evans to develop simultaneously into major performers of the music. The African heritage dominates in Horace Silver's music while the scales are tipped toward Europe in Bill Evans.

The "cry" of the blues was felt in all jazz music. It was an essential part of the nuances of phrase — indeed of every note — which was played by a pure jazz musician. This is what separates Louis Armstrong from, say, Harry James or Lester Young from Georgie Auld. This uniqueness of expression is there regardless of whether the musician is playing an actual blues or a popular song.

Until the middle sixties jazz developed as a continuum which was separated from the mainstream of American society despite its gradual acceptance by a broader audience. At first jazz music was an indigenous entertainment form within the black communities which nurtured the musicians. By the twenties there were white musicians making individual statements — such as Bix Beiderbecke — as well as others who mirrored those they admired — such as Benny Goodman. Even though, by the forties, some aspects of jazz music had spilled over into the larger marketplace of popular music it was still, comparatively speaking, only a handful of people who recognised the talents of the Ellington and Basie bands at a time when Miller, Dorsey, James et al held sway.

What always set jazz apart from other music was its uniqueness. It was created by the musicians who played it. They ***alone*** made it great — unlike classical music where the composition is the most important ingredient.

The language was passed from one musician to another on a personal basis. The aspiring musician worked his way towards recognition — first from his peers and then from the public. It was an apprenticeship system which nurtured the music's traditions and beliefs in a coherent manner.

All that changed in the sixties and nothing has been the same since. The importance of the social changes which have taken place in the last two decades has affected jazz music just as almost everything else in the world.

Despite many claims that the continuum of jazz continued, the reality is that it became something totally different. Most of the music called jazz today has as much relationship with the original music as Chaucer has with modern English. In fact it is even more dramatic than that. It is as different as English and Swedish are as languages. There are three main reasons for this.

One, the world marches to a different drummer. The rhythmic feel of most music today is dominated by the eighth note feel of rock music. The triplet came to popular music from black gospel music but to all intents and purposes it monopolises today's music. The rules were changed — to the extent that it was no longer necessary to have any real skills as either performer or composer. Popular music became a universal expression of amateurs — in the worst sense of that word. Stan Freberg's satire about the making of a hit rock 'n' roll record became reality. And this has multiplied as the children of the fifties grew to adulthood and positions of influence. Their whole environment has conditioned them to accept only music of this nature. They only feel rhythm in a certain way — and it doesn't swing — it jerks.

The irony of all this is that popular music — from Elvis Presley through the Beatles, the Rolling Stones and Bob Dylan — co-opted and made popular for the first time the blues form and then systematically destroyed its beauty and expressiveness through the sheer banality and insensitivity of their concepts. Simultaneously, it seemed, this signalled the termination of the blues itself, as a creative force within the black community. At least it can be safely said that the power of the blues has not been duplicated since the heyday of Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Sonny Boy Williamson and Little Walter in the cauldron of Chicago's South Side in the fifties.

Which brings me to the second point in all this. Perhaps blacks no longer need the old forms. Their lives, while by no means perfect, have changed considerably since those times. The social revolution changed forever the narrow focus of their lives in a legally segregated society. While integration is still far removed from Martin Luther King's dream there is no doubt that "equal opportunity" programs have at least made blacks somewhat equal if still separate in their own country. Their community is no longer a tight little world with no escape and blacks can aspire to many things. It has changed the focus of their dreams in many ways. Before the sixties a musician was one of the few professions open to a black. Musicians were respected members of the community and undoubtedly many of the most creative talents channeled their energies into music. This may well account for the outpouring of talent which made jazz so marvellous. Today that is no longer the case. Blacks can become astronauts, bankers, doctors and one may well be president of the U.S. before long.

Music, for blacks, is now perceived in the same manner as whites. It is a quick way to unprecedented wealth — all you need is luck and a good manager. Jazz music is no longer part of the community. The community's music is basically the same as that listened to by whites — the universally marketed formula known as pop culture.

The third major reason for this irreversible change is the break in the music's continuity. Up until the sixties, musicians spent their time on the road in bands and small groups. This was part of their apprenticeship — their way of gaining the necessary experience to become stylists, innovators, and, eventually, bandleaders. It kept the flow of musicians coming but in the sixties this stopped. The jazz world was overwhelmed by the power and greed of pop music. Clubs struggled to survive but their difficulties have been compounded by the growth of the "jazz festival" as a cultural entity. Jazz festivals have become the cultural support systems of governments and multinational corporations anxious to keep their citizens complacent or unaware of more difficult times ahead. The subsidies given these events has produced an elite group of musicians — the superstars of the jazz world — who are paid extremely well to appear at these events. These fees ultimately preclude them from working in their traditional environment — the club — which means the club owner has to settle for lesser known musicians. This, in turn, has made times tougher and virtually eliminated the circuit of establishments which kept musicians busy.

Subsidies generally mean lower admission prices and the public has become indifferent to paying the real price of their entertainment. They are conditioned to paying sixties prices out of their fat eighties salaries. Thus ten thousand people will attend Ontario Place (a government sponsored leisure palace) for Ella Fitzgerald but only a hundred support a club gig for Milt Jackson, Cedar Walton, Ray Brown and Mickey Roker.

The incentive to become a jazz musician has diminished. Other occupations, both inside and outside of music, are more attractive.

It is extraordinary, then, if one accepts this premise, that simultaneously we have seen a dramatic growth in what is termed the "stage band movement." High schools and universities in the U.S. and Canada have been staffed with musicians who, for the most part, didn't make it in the jazz world, and are there to teach their students how to play jazz. From small beginnings this industry has grown considerably but it seems to be missing the point about the very nature of the music.

Jazz was created and nurtured by several hundred performers who, in a few decades, through the force of their individuality, created a vital, living music. Now, their contributions are being recycled in academic ways to produce a music which sounds like jazz but really isn't it.

But then, an instant production line of jazz performers probably fits today's world. It complements iced tea, prepackaged hamburger patties, designer jeans and many other commodities which stifle the potentiality of individual thought and action.

Since the sixties the music has diffused to the point where there is no recognisable direction. On the one hand you have the kind of music which is called jazz but isn't. The kind of music which makes the jazz chart in Billboard and is played on most U.S. jazz radio stations. For the week of June 16 the top fifty records were by Wynton Marsalis, Earl Klugh, Pat Metheny, the Crusaders, Herbie Hancock, Jeff Lorber, George Winston, Kenny G, Linda Ronstadt, Branford Marsalis, Stanley Clarke, Weather Report, Steps Ahead, Pieces of a Dream, Tania Maria, Shadowfax, Michael Franks, George Howard, Rodney Franklin, Quincy Jones, Lee Ritenour, Al Jarreau, Spyro Gyra, Carla Bley, Andreas Vollenweider, Billie Holiday, Manhattan Transfer, Jean Luc Ponty, James Newton, Al Dimeola, Ella Fitzgerald, George Benson, Chick Corea, Sarah Vaughan, Alex Di Grassi, Sergio Mendes, Will Ackerman, Bill Evans, and Sadao Watanabe.

Several of these artists had more than one record on the chart and the list includes a few artists whose music is identifiable, using the original criteria, as jazz. Most of it is a kind of popular music which has taken elements of jazz in its fusion of various elements.

As more and more of the original jazz creators die their music becomes history. This doesn't mean that the styles they created cease to be performed. The early style, now called dixieland or traditional, has been adopted worldwide by thousands of amateur musicians who perform what they believe to be the real thing. Unfortunately they have turned original masterpieces into unflattering reproductions. Swing and bebop, to identify later styles by their generic names, are suffering a similar fate. None of the originators could have imagined that so many musicians in so many countries would be parodying their styles. A whole generation of tenor saxophonists now sounds like Coltrane — so much like him, in fact, that it is sometimes hard to tell the difference.

A handful of musicians have transcended the scenario enough to interpret the music of their heroes with enough style, grace and

conviction to become artists of stature. But they are few and none of them are graduates of a music academy. All learned their craft on the street.

The most significant music to emerge in the past two decades is the style loosely called the Avant Garde. To the members of the Art Ensemble of Chicago it is Great Black Music but now that that slogan has been co-opted by the most puerile elements of popular music it will have to be set aside. Perhaps a better label might be Creative American Music. It is certainly creative and American. It is also art. Often painfully so. In its higher forms it is very much an intellectual experience as much as an emotional one and the musicians are creating music far removed from the basic idiom of jazz. Its forms are varied, complex and unusual. Rhythmically it can have the percussive fury of jazz or the spaciousness of European chamber music.

Undoubtedly its greatest practitioners — from Cecil Taylor and Ornette Coleman of the first generation to Anthony Braxton, Roscoe Mitchell, Joseph Jarman, Leo Smith and Julius Hemphill of succeeding ones all have a common experience with parts of the jazz heritage. They use this heritage — tonality, phrasing, rhythms, improvisation — as they see fit in the creation of their music. But their creativity has taken them into another world. It is the difference between the Impressionists and the post Cubist school of contemporary art.

Because their music is art rather than entertainment it is difficult for them to reach and hold any size of an audience. Because they are linked to the world of jazz their difficulties are compounded. On the one hand they are unacceptable to most jazz listeners while they are too challenging and disturbing to be accepted in academic concert music circles.

Young musicians today are looking for an identity. But there are no leaders. Perhaps our society no longer can relate to an all powerful leader who takes charge through the sheer magnetism of his ideas and personality. Perhaps this is what universal education, the welfare state and a guaranteed income is finally producing.

Mavor Moore touched on this recently in the ***Globe and Mail*** (a Canadian daily newspaper) when he wrote about the relationship between governments and the arts. In part he said "To control all the arts, entertainment, news and access of knowledge — in a world increasingly populated and closely linked — is a task far more complex than most politicians have grasped. And I think, far more hazardous. They all sense the potential in using culture as a means to unite their people and to spread their way of life, but it seems to have occurred to few leaders (and even fewer technocrats) that, once harnessed, the creative arts and sciences may lose their potency — like caged birds that cannot or will not sing."

Pianist Barry Harris is another who is concerned about the lack of motivation to seek out different ideas of expression. He feels we are in the age of robotism — not machines but human robots.

Jazz music is a marvellous, uplifting and cleansing listening experience. It is the unique creative expression of the twentieth century — and given to us by several generations of highly talented human beings who overcame adversity and produced beautiful music from within an often hostile environment. I urge you, before it is too late, to hear as many of these musicians as possible. Most are now elder statesmen but there are musicians from the last generation of jazz expression who did not follow George Benson, Herbie Hancock and Wayne Shorter into the short-circuited world of pop culture. There are major talents still waiting to be heard.

The feeling — the expression — that is what counts most. It is always there in the blues and it is always put into a song — no matter how trivial it may seem — by the major expressionists of the music.

The New Jazz Tradition

AN OPINION BY DON LAHEY

Just for a minute, try to imagine life unencumbered with trends. Remember Latin jazz? Remember Indian jazz or, more recently, the African beat? Remember fusion, jazz's answer to the chronic unemployment among one-legged drummers?

The problem with trends in music, as elsewhere, is that they are quick grabs in the guise of exploration. Our restless search for new musical ideas is a maze of possibilities with many dead ends, but there's an irresistable urge to proclaim new horizons at each bend before we've seen what lies around the corner. The true explorers are few as has always been the case and, in the nature of exploration, they uncover as many blind alleys as they do shining paths. For the rest, however, the search is rarely more than a widening spiral with the seeker firmly tethered to the centre. New sources, usually ethnic, are constantly unearthed — new rhythms, new scales, unusual instruments — but they are examined cursorily, more for their enhancement of the centre than for the new ground they uncover. New sounds are investigated not for what they reveal but for what they can add to our own sounds. New instruments are appropriated and new rhythms are proclaimed but they are used superficially as ornaments and curios. We embrace a universal music but the intimacy is a false one, exploited more for novelty than substance. There is sudden awareness but no understanding; without understanding, the ornaments inexplicably fade and so does our interest. We burden our discoveries with false expectations, tarnish them with instant celebrity and then discard them because they are common, without ever exploring the essence of the original attraction. The restless search continues.

In jazz, this musical egocentricity reached new heights at the end of the seventies when another sweep of the spiral brought musicians face to face with themselves. 1979 was the year of roots and everyone was digging them up. Musicians frustrated in the search for something new looked back and discovered a wealth of ideas in the neglected music of their own jazz heritage. Avant-gardists, fed up with small audiences and no respect, came in from the cold to prove that they too could play ***Paper Moon***. Young horsemen, armed to the teeth with schooled technique but lacking a sense of direction "rediscovered" bebop for the sheer joy of speed and complexity. Older musicians found their careers back on track and themselves regarded as elder statesmen, guardians of the tradition. Everyone was playing "in the tradition" or trying to learn as fast as they could. Critics hailed artists who returned to the fold and predicted a jazz renaissance; audiences breathed a collective sigh of relief and sat back to wait.

As a trend, playing in the tradition has come and gone although there are murmurs of a mini-revival. Who knows, Laplander jazz may be next (***"His nasal legato squeals and bellicose fervour evoke the impatience of a rutting caribou buck..."***). What's ironic is not that musicians were retreading the past, not that young musicians were playing music older than themselves, but that so many required a label in order to recognise the richness of that music. What goes largely unrecognised is that jazz has always been played "in the tradition."

In 1939, Coleman Hawkins recorded a pop song written nine years earlier for the Broadway revue ***Three's A Crowd***. His version is strikingly different from the original penned by Johnny Green, for the saxophonist plays only the first seven notes of the melody before a flight of improvisation carries him through two choruses and a coda. With Hawkins's recording, ***Body And Soul*** became the quintessential jazz ballad; his version established a standard for improvisation that other musicians have been trying to reach for almost half a century. But they have been trying. In 1940, Charlie Parker cut his teeth on ***Body And Soul*** during his recording debut. Sonny Rollins used the piece as a solo saxophone vehicle in 1958; Thelonious Monk followed with a left-hand stride. John Coltrane, Archie Shepp and Anthony Braxton have all recorded it. Each of these musicians has been in the forefront of musical revolution; in his day, each has been criticised for playing that ran counter to the norm, music that, in many cases, was condemned for being "anti-jazz." Yet there is not a musician playing jazz today who has not been profoundly influenced by at least one of these men. Jazz has evolved as a result of their contributions as individuals; the music has prospered technically and spiritually on the impetus of such individuality and has continued to evolve. Through that evolution, the music and the men have become an integral part of a tradition.

So lots of musicians play ***Body And Soul***; lots play ***Sweet Georgia Brown*** too and most of them send me running for the door. Many do just run through the changes — no decade has a monopoly on mediocrity — but there are many others who still follow Count Basie's adage that every note has to mean something. The jazz tradition is not one of merely playing standards; it's a continual examination of the entire body of music and a search for means of expression that will allow that body to grow and remain

DAVID MURRAY (Photograph by Markus Di Francesco)

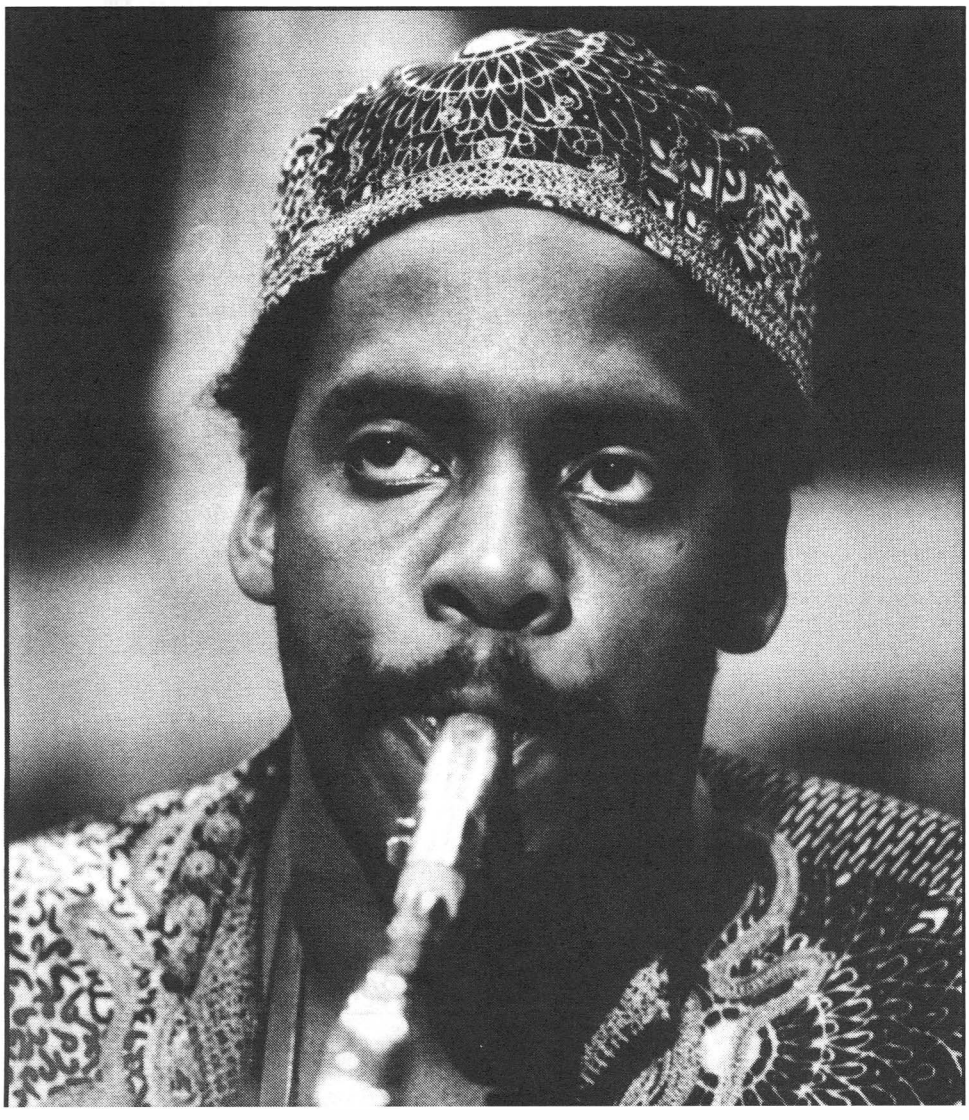
vital.

David Murray offers a case in point. An enormously talented young saxophonist, Murray has been a restless pursuer of that tradition through his involvement in an overwhelming number of groups. His gladiatorial solo and duet performances in the seventies explored the primacy of the soloist and his vocabulary. In the World Saxophone Quartet, that primacy was challenged through the forced coexistence of four powerful soloists, a challenge made more rigourous by the absence of a rhythm section. Murray, Julius Hemphill, Oliver Lake and Hamiet Bluiett have revealed a new versatility in the saxophone by refusing to limit its input to the solo and the head; in the same way, they have challenged our concept of what constitutes a "proper" jazz ensemble. Murray's octet and big band delve into an area largely neglected since the death of Ellington, the role of the composer as improviser. Murray, Henry Threadgill, Richard Abrams and others are re-examining the roles of soloist and composer and the healthy tension that has always existed between the two. This new ascendancy of the composition as something more than a springboard for soloists is a path well worn but one with many branches yet uncharted.

"Morning Song" (Black Saint BSR 0075) brings David Murray back to basics with a jazz quartet and, yes, ***Body And Soul***. Shifting time signatures mark the title track with a built-in tension and release that Murray plays from the heart, exploring the full range of tenor with a thoroughness that suggests there is nothing left to be said — until the next time. ***Body And Soul***, a duet with pianist John Hicks, begins with a breathy tenor of quiet reverence, the ghost of Hawkins at the younger player's elbow. By the second chorus, however, Murray begins to stretch, reaching through Hawkins, Coltrane and Rollins to the stratosphere, while Hicks frames his path with gilded chords. ***Off Season*** brings to mind a young Dexter Gordon, but it is undoubtedly Murray who weaves those long lines that run inexhaustably from basso grunts to high-register squeals.

Murray's facility with the bass clarinet has done much to reawaken interest in that instrument, making him a logical successor to Eric Dolphy. ***Jitterbug Waltz*** receives a straight reading here as Murray mines the tune for its structural beauty, leaving aside the more exotic tones that have made the bass clarinet a novelty in so many hands.

While the saxophonist is definitely in charge, the show is not his alone. Hicks, bassist Reggie Workman and Ed Blackwell are exemplary as soloists and as a cohesive rhythm section. Hicks, a pianist too long ignored, has superb technique and an adventurous outlook that put him at ease in almost any setting. His solo on the title track, with its raucous swing, is one of his best, an indication of much more to come. Workman is ever-present with a contribution that is as integral to Murray's music as it was to Coltrane's in the early sixties. Listen to how he emerges from Blackwell's solo on ***Off Season*** and to his own solo which resonates with such richness it seems like a dialogue between ego and id. Blackwell remains the orchestra of drummers, a polyphony of dancing toms, rattling snares and cymbals that splash like raindrops. On ***Duet***, which pairs him with Murray, Blackwell reveals his own tradition with a performance that extends from the tribal drums of Africa to the spooky drums of Baby Dodds and the creole call of New Orleans.



It is a recognition of that tradition as fluid rather than static that makes Pat Metheny's "Rejoicing" (ECM 1271) so interesting. The album is a tribute to the tradition, a nod to the music that has preceded and, in a sense, made possible Metheny's own music. Such albums are called standards albums, for they interpret the common vocabulary of the music, the anthems, the chestnuts and the warhorses of jazz. By recording an album of standards, the artist says effectively two things: "This is the music from which I have grown," and "My own music is a reflection of that heritage." Although Metheny's album does contain a number of originals by the guitarist, "Rejoicing" can be considered an album of standards, but with one big difference — the standards were written by Ornette Coleman.

Twenty-five years after Ornette Coleman recorded ***Rejoicing*** for his second album, "Tomorrow Is The Question!", Pat Metheny has provided the response that most have refused to acknowledge: Coleman and his music are as much a part of jazz's heritage as Ellington, Armstrong or Parker. What many still dismiss as avant-garde is now almost three decades old. Three generations of musicians have followed, heard, and been influenced by Coleman and his "new thing."

The differences between Metheny and Coleman only strengthen the argument. Metheny is a young, white electric guitarist, very talented and immensely popular for a music that owes as much to the driving energy of rock as it does to passionate improvisation. Coleman is black, in his mid fifties, a maverick saxophonist whose abilities are still questioned by some. Metheny is educated, having studied and later taught at Berklee. Coleman is self-taught; he studied theory in the elevator he operated for a Los Angeles department store. What do they have in common? You guessed it — a musical tradition.

That said, Metheny's album is still a shocker, outrageous in its demonstration. Three pieces by Ornette Coleman are found on side one — ***Tears Inside***, ***Humpty Dumpty*** and ***Rejoicing*** (in a clever twist, the album begins with ***Lonely Woman***, not Coleman's famous composition but a Horace Silver ballad of the same name). But death, where is thy sting? These pieces are not scandalously atonal or cacaphonous. Metheny's readings of them are smooth, almost gentle, devoid of bombast or rancour. ***Tears Inside*** is a straightforward twelve-bar blues which Metheny plays behind the beat, a slow burner with just a trace of the guitarist's mid-Western twang. Barney Kessel could be happy here. On ***Humpty Dumpty***, Metheny's lines are quick but fully formed; individual notes are rounded to belie the faster pace and the guitar is recorded with a slightly blurred sound to flatten the brightness. Charlie Haden and Billy Higgins, both Coleman sidemen when Metheny was but a child, are striking on these new interpretations. ***Rejoicing*** is just that, an uptempo exuberance that is played for the hell of it. After an opening dialogue between Metheny and Higgins, Haden joins them on the run as

Metheny leaps over bar lines with agility. Higgins's solo is the epitome of joy.

This is Coleman's music but not his style. The melodies glide, the angles are rounded and the burrs are worn smooth. Still, the essence is there even if Coleman's acrid edge is sorely missed. Listen to the originals through 1983 ears and you'll wonder what the fuss was all about back then. It is a measure of how far the music has come that 1959 Ornette Coleman seems conservative today, proof of how far Coleman and the entire free jazz movement have brought us. From our present vantage point it is clear that Coleman, Coltrane and Cecil Taylor have all become a part of our jazz tradition. Whether in reaction to it or not, their music has emerged out of the mainstream of their day and, in turn, has become an important element of our own.

Metheny's own compositions offer the corollary, one musician's sampling of what Coleman's lessons have wrought. ***Story From A Stranger*** begins with Spanish-tinged electric guitar held earthbound by Haden's bass. Metheny's guitar synthesizer is overdubbed onto lush acoustic chords and cries with a yearning reminiscent of Coleman's alto. ***The Calling*** is a refinement of ***Offramp***, a Metheny composition dedicated to Coleman. Both the guitarist's handling of the synthesizer and his understanding of Coleman have matured into a piece that brings open structure into gospel hymns. Ornette, Jimi Hendrix, revival meetings, blues and requiems are all ingredients in Metheny's attempt to extend not only the limits of his instrument, the nascent guitar synthesizer, but also the limits of his music.

The album ends with a two-minute reprise by Metheny and Haden. Perhaps I am reading too much into titles but it strikes me that ***Waiting For An Answer*** is a soulful urge to reconsider Coleman's original question. Metheny has made a point of spreading Coleman's music through his own popularity, dedicating an album to the saxophonist, recording his compositions here and on "80/81" and talking about and performing pieces by Coleman at every concert. You may not agree with Metheny's treatment of Coleman's music — personally, I like it with a lot more bite — but there is no denying the importance that Coleman has had as part of a tradition that has shaped today's music.

"You want to keep the tradition," says trombonist Craig Harris in the liner notes to his second album, "Black Bone" (Soul Note SN 1055). "You want to keep the swing, you want everything, but you want to challenge it, to take it on to the next level. It's about dealing with these forms here and moving them on to another space, another time."

Craig Harris knows whereof he speaks. Studies with Ken McIntyre and Warren Smith; apprenticeships with Sun Ra, Dollar Brand and Joseph Jarman/Don Moye; involvement in ensembles led by David Murray, Henry Threadgill, Olu Dara and Muhal Richard Abrams; and performances with his own groups have all preceded "Black Bone." Before it lie the collective talents of George Adams, Donald Smith, Fred Hopkins and Charli Persip, seasoned veterans whom Harris chose to work with on the album. That "Black Bone" remains stamped with Harris's personality is a testament not only to his abilities as a performer but also to his strong sense of where the music has been and where he is going.

Perhaps it is not surprising then that the most rewarding pieces on this album of originals are two tributes penned by the trombonist. ***Blackwell*** celebrates the spirit of its namesake with a tap step theme and singing drums that Persip handles with understated vigour. Harris shows the stuff he's made of, blowing long, velvety tones, chortled asides, hungry growls, silicon smears and throaty hollers; he even manages to mimic Adams's bluesy yodelling. Where Roswell Rudd was once described as tailgating on a spaceship, Harris is more earthy, breathing down the back of a Ferrari on a hairpin turn. Donald Smith spills forth beautiful phrases; unhurried by the polyrhythmic propulsion, he chooses to dance around the beat.

Song For Psychedelic Souls begins with Hopkins's bottomless bass and notes that hang suspended forever. A tribute to Jimi Hendrix, it is an eerie, halting waltz with rumbling chords, and vast arenas of space coloured only by Hopkins's lingering notes. Adams swoops and wails, but with more restraint than usual — my main complaint with the session. Throughout the album he seems a little removed, as if weighing each phrase through squinted eyes before proceeding with the next.

While growls and smears are ear-catching, Harris does possess the talent to back them up. ***September 10, 1953*** is a ballad for piano and trombone that shows the lyrical side of Harris, stripped of his bag of tricks. One listen will confirm both musicians' capabilities.

Do Harris, Murray and Metheny have something to offer? I think there can be little doubt, Their music is alive and energetic, filled with a spirit that is central to their playing and composing. It is a spirit inherited from Armstrong, Parker, Ellington, Charlie Christian, Robert Johnson and countless other explorers who have charted the shoals, the eddies and the fathomless pools of this music. The three may be better schooled than their precedessors, and perhaps can call from theory what others blew by intuition. And I would not argue the fact that our music schools are turning out hundreds of technically adroit musicians who will never be innovators. But there will always be innovators, musicians ready to stretch the boundaries. It's not important that David Murray record ***Jitterbug Waltz*** like Dolphy did before him, but that, in doing so, he shape the composition to reflect a tradition that encompasses Waller and Dolphy and extends to include a part of himself; that he be willing to take a chance and say, "Here is what has been, and here is what might follow." It is not as important that Steve Lacy played with Red Allen, Thelonious Monk and Cecil Taylor as it is that he learned something distinct from each of them and developed from his experiences a style that is uniquely his own, a style that is linked to all three but owned by none except Lacy. That is the jazz tradition.

Which brings us to the final question: is jazz, as we know it, dead? To quote Lester Bowie, "It depends on what you know."

Portions of this article are reprinted courtesy of ***Trans FM.***

Coda readers are invited to write to ***Coda*** about the opinions expressed in the preceding articles, ***The Aesthetic Values Of Jazz*** and ***In The Tradition***. The deadline for this correspondence is February 1, 1985. The most interesting letters will be published.

ANDREW CYRILLE

INTERVIEW BY JOHN GRAY * PHOTOGRAPHY BY BILL SMITH

JOHN GRAY: ***How did you start out on the drums?***

ANDREW CYRILLE: I remember playing on pots and pans in the back yard, etcetera, but I imagine that most kids fantasize at one point or another about being some kind of musician, playing some kind of instrument.

But why drums rather than, say, a horn?

Well, I have to say this, I had no predilection or leaning towards playing the drum or playing a wind instrument. I used to fantasize about playing a trumpet too. I think I probably thought about being a trumpet player before I thought about being a drummer, I mean in my childhood fantasy. I also remember fantasizing about playing the piano, you know, being the piano player. The piano's always intrigued me. In fact, I remember us having a piano in the house as a child and as with most children they play the keys percussively, so, you know, you're playing rhythms but you just don't know quite what notes to pick out, you just hit the piano randomly and you get these sounds but you're still playing rhythms. Then eventually you try to match the sounds and get some that you've heard on records or radio. But outside of that, just pots and pans in the backyard and the idea of just blowing something, some kind of toy instrument, thinking of Louis Armstrong, you know, someone of the time, Harry James or somebody, that's who I used to hear about. This is all pre-school, first, second grade kind of stuff. Just fooling around.

My real start, though, came with a drum and bugle corps and it wasn't necessarily because I was so interested in playing in a marching band or even really playing an instrument either. In fact, the reason I joined was really because it was an after-school activity and most of the guys I hung out with after school had already joined. So I joined too in order to have some company. Then, almost by default you might say, it was found out that I was a natural in terms of being able to play drums. They used to say that I had "natural hands" and I had a gift for remembering certain sticking patterns. Still I couldn't say that I felt like I had found an avenue of expression for myself or that I had fallen in love with the drums.

But as time went on and more of my peers began to recognize my ability, I started to gain a certain amount of renown. The guys started treating me a little bit differently and the girls definitely started treating me a little differently and you know I can't really say I didn't enjoy it! At the same time I began to really get into the music and I was able to meet some fine people as a youngster, people like (drummers) Willie Jones, Lee Abrams and Lenny McBrowne and through them Max Roach. And when I met Max — I was about eleven years old — we began talking about people like Shadow Wilson and Art Blakey and guys like that and he started turning me on to this music which was being put together with some of the same basic things that I was learning, rudiments, etcetera. So it became like a fascination for me and out of curiosity I continued.

Was it during this early period that you met Philly Joe Jones?

No. That was about five or six years later. after I had met Max and seen people like Shadow Wilson and heard records by Blakey and Kenny Clarke and so on. It was also after I had done some gigging with an adolescent jazz band I was part of at the time with Eric Gale and a piano player named Leslie Braithwaite. That was a nice experience because we would not only be getting some money from the weekend dances we would play but also new social contacts. We were able to play for our peers and be valued in the neighbourhood simply because of our ability to play this music which so many of them liked but for one reason or another just didn't do.

What kind of things did you play for the dances?

Popular music things, you know, something

using Latin or West Indian rhythms, calypsos, things like that. Maybe a Charleston or something for a Lindy hop or a foxtrot or something. But basically just things having a regular beat, something you could tap your foot to.

Were you learning jazz stuff at the same time?

Yes, because when I first began learning drum rudiments, etcetera, those same people who were teaching me those rudiments were also into jazz. They were also into bebop so it was kind of a simultaneous presentation, the popular music and the jazz. But still, the kind of intellectualism that you had to bring in terms of jazz was way above that required for the dance stuff so for me it was more important. It was something that I had to go to and I had to begin to understand. I had to know how they put this stuff together, whereas with the popular music, it was always just kind of *there*, you know, you didn't need to bring that much to it.

However, it wasn't until the late fifties that I realized that I wanted to do music full time. In fact, right after high school I had gone to Saint Johns University to study chemistry rather than music and for a while there I wasn't sure which one I should choose, but finally I was offered a chance to go to Juilliard and I took it. There I began meeting musicians of a certain caliber, people like Grachan Moncur and Gary Bartz, Roland Hanna, the drummer Bobby Thomas, bassist Morris Edwards and a whole host of others who aren't perhaps as well known now but were fine players nevertheless. So, in a sense, the late fifties began to see my maturity as a musician, as somebody who had by that time decided to play music as a profession.

Were you conscious at this time of some of the changes that were going on around you? I'm thinking specifically of things like the African liberation struggles of the late fifties and the Montgomery bus boycott as well as the music that followed, things like Mingus's "Faubus Fables" or Sonny Rollins's "Freedom Suite" or Max Roach's "We Insist: Freedom Now Suite." Also the efforts of individuals like Cecil Taylor and Ornette Coleman.

As you mention all of these things, you know, I remember them but only in pieces. Whether or not I could tell you when they happened is something else.

Right. What I was really interested in was whether you were aware enough of them for them to have had a definite influence on you, either musically or as an individual.

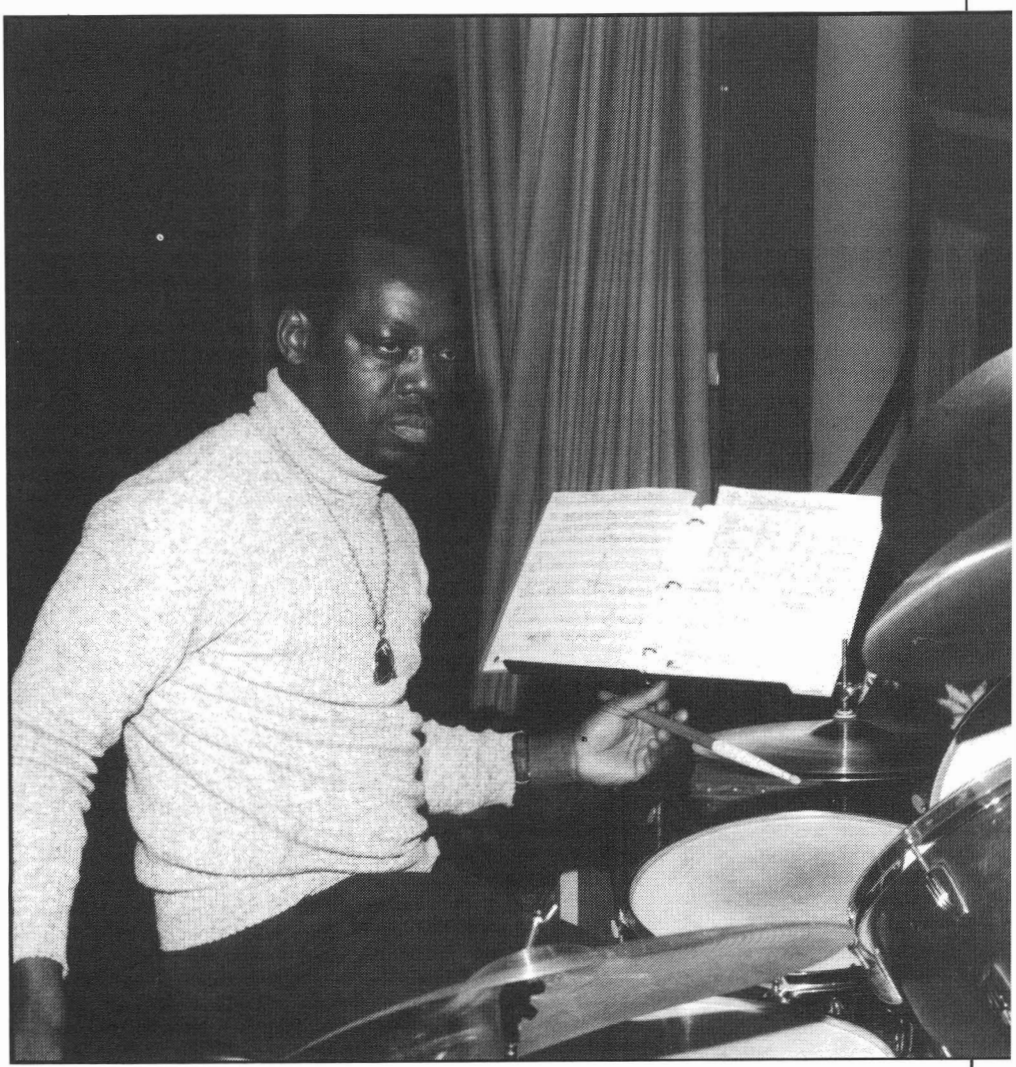
Well, let me put it this way, another very important reason for my entering into the music had always been the fact that those musicians who were responsible for my musical education had always also been the ones responsible for making me aware of my historical background too, so when I met guys like Willie Jones, Max Roach and Scoby Stroman, or Franklin Skeets and Leroy Standard, I began to learn not only about jazz but also about black history as well.

This resulted in a certain other kind of political awareness too as over time they would recommend certain books for me to read and I would read them and so I would begin to find out more and more of a positive nature about myself, something which had never occurred in any of the regular schools I had gone to before, all of which had been "good" Catholic schools. As far as the black man was concerned, most of the information I had gotten was that we were slaves and that it was a favour done to us that we'd been found in Africa and civilized, so to speak. We were, and I remember this chapter to this very day, "the white man's burden" and the pictures I would see would be of a black person with chains around his wrists and ankles, standing with his head bowed. That's where American history started for me. You know, it was as if it was great that we were captured or something and now we were part of this wonderful world... So I'm just saying, with the musicians I began finding out, from another point of view, who my ancestors were, more or less you might say from the black side of history.

Did this help you to accept the innovations brought about by people like Ornette Coleman and Ed Blackwell or John Coltrane and Elvin Jones any better than, say, you might have before your lessons with Max and Philly Joe?

Yes and no. I can't really say that anything that happens that is surprising, that is new, is always something that is immediately welcome. You know some things you see for the first time may seem very, very unusual to you and sometimes it takes a little while to digest it but as you know all of the people that you mention are great stylists, great musical personalities and all of them do what they do differently so as a young musician watching these guys play, all of them had something else that was happening, something that was very, very strong and very, very positive and very powerful and something that I wanted to be part of.

I mean, I had really come to the music around thirteen, fourteen years old, and at that time I was ready to get into listening to bebop heavy. I was listening to people like Horace Silver, I was listening to Max and Brownie, I was listening to Thelonious Monk, Charlie Parker, Miles Davis, in fact Miles is one of the first people whom I'd bought a record of. So I was really beginning to absorb this music, to listen to it over and over again, trying to understand it all from A to Z, and as I was introduced to it, then one door would open and that door would lead to another and another, until, before I knew it I was going all the way back to Minstrelsy to find out how all of this developed. This was just through my education and through talking to people and then also seeing certain things on the scene. I mean, people are born at certain times and they mature at certain times, so yeah, I saw Cecil Taylor, I saw Ornette Coleman at a particular

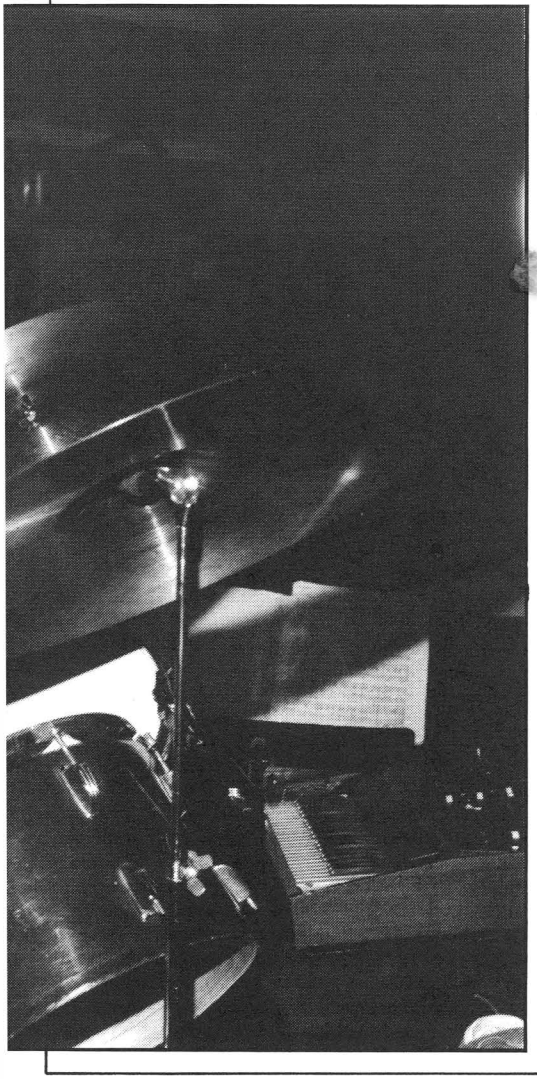


time in my life, I heard them. I saw Charlie Mingus, I saw Thelonious Monk. To say that all of that was the same, no, it wasn't all the same. It was different but thematically the same, just stylistically different.

Yes, but for many people it didn't seem thematically the same. In fact, as you know, many people wondered if it was music at all. In the case of Max Roach's dates with Abbey Lincoln, there was a question of whether or not it was really proper to be making such overtly political statements as "Freedom Now Suite" or "It's Time" through jazz music. In fact Dan Morgenstern even went so far as to call Abbey Lincoln a "professional negro." In the case of, say, an Albert Ayler or late John Coltrane it's only within the last few years that their music has been able to gain even a modicum of the respect it deserves. So the attitude that you describe, one that speaks of these musics as part of a continuum, seems to me to be one which would have been in the minority at the time. I was wondering if this was an attitude you shared with others your age, say those who were at Juilliard with you. Or was it that you were just interested enough in it to pursue it?

Well, I'd say the latter is true — I was interested enough in it to pursue it. But I would say this too, all people are different and you'll find musicians to this day who will say they like one thing and not another and that's their prerogative. I myself am a person who doesn't mind involving himself in things that are new and things that are creative. In fact I try to involve myself in these kinds of situations as much as possible. If they feel fine to me and I can understand them, there's no problem, that's the kind of mind I have. Still, I know there's a lot of people I knew who didn't like Cecil Taylor or Ornette Coleman.

I mean, I was down at the Five Spot the first time that Ornette played and I heard all the comments that were going on in the audience among musicians, I mean the place was packed with musicians! From the start you got this kind of pro and con thing with some cats saying "Yeah! Right on!" and other cats saying "Never! Never!" But I tell you now, to this day, right now at the age that I am and how I have evolved and found myself in a position in this music I still find that most of the younger musicians that come along seem to accept what they find on the scene, as most of us do. If you come on the scene and you find people who are doing things that are older than you and those things are established you have more of a tendency to accept them. If, on the other hand though, you're maybe twenty or thirty years older, let's say you're fifty, and then somebody who's twenty or twenty-five comes along and begins doing something, then I guess there might be some skepticism about it and it might take you a while to accept it. But I would say most people are this way naturally. That's why we have generation gaps between parents and children — and older and younger musicians. It's like anything else, you find those who are open and those who are closed.



So besides these experiences and your own particular outlook was there anything else which helped to prepare you for joining Cecil Taylor in 1964?

Well, again, yes and no. During the years previous to my joining Cecil, I had been making gigs with a lot of different people. I was making gigs with African bands like Olatunji and Joe Mensah, I was working with Walt Dickerson, Illinois Jacquet, people like Mary Lou Williams, Nellie Lutcher, Freddie Hubbard, Roland Hanna, Abdul-Malik, all sorts of people. So when I joined Cecil I had a great deal of musical information that I could bring to his concept which was wide open. So selectively I used what it was that I had to make music with him. My preparation was really having worked with so many people in so many different contexts as well as the fact that, as I said earlier, I'm an open person. Also I had known Cecil since 1958 and he was playing then, to my recollection, the way I heard him post-1958 until I joined the band in 1964.

We had also played together at that time (1958) and we had seen each other through the years, as musicians see each other, and we'd talk, have coffee or whatever, and finally what happened was that I was studying up at a school on 42nd Street called Hartnett, where Cecil used to come and rehearse all the time, and this one particular day he asked — it was right after they did that concert at Lincoln Center with Albert Ayler (New Year's, 1963) — if I wanted to join his group. Soon after that I did. Then between 1964 and 1975 I think I played on every job that he had, with the exception of one early on which Milford Graves played. All those jobs though were maybe only two or three or four a year.

When you joined Cecil were you influenced at all by other free drummers, say a Sunny Murray or Milford Graves?

Well, I don't ever recall saying to myself... "I'm going to play like that." I just did what I thought was right at the time, playing what I like to call "conversation rhythms." See, we don't talk in 4/4 time or 3/4 or 6/8 or 7/4, we just talk. So this is the way the music comes out to me when I play free. That's the prescription.

You make it sound very natural, as if almost anybody could have done it but, of all the drummers at that time, only a handful, Sunny Murray, Milford Graves, yourself, Rashied Ali, maybe a few others, seemed willing and/or able to play in this new context. In fact, up through 1975 you were only Cecil's third drummer.

Well, let's put it this way, maybe Cecil was just lucky [laughter] Maybe there were only five people who wanted to do that with him. As a matter of fact that's what he said. We were walking down the street one day and this was after a rehearsal toward the beginning of our association and he said, "Hey man, there's a lot of cats out here who are very loath to try and do things that are different, I'm glad to see you're not one of those people." So I mean, that's why he could appreciate it. And it was true, a lot of guys did not want to play like that because they thought that what he was doing was cacophonous and that it didn't swing."

I was of a different mind set, though, because really I had been wanting to do something different all along. The only problem was I couldn't find anybody to do it with. I remember having a conversation with Mary Lou Williams about this before I joined Cecil too. I said to her, "Gee, you know I'd like to find another way to play rhythm on the cymbal but at the same time swing and be right in with the music." And she said, "Well, you can try but if you do you'll probably find it very difficult to find somebody who wants to play with you." So even at that time I was thinking about doing something different, in a sense to make my contribution since that's how it's done in this music, you know, people do something that is different and so they add to the music. It was when I joined Cecil that I really got a chance to do this. He gave me a golden opportunity to go ahead and investigate and research and perform and help form some kind of language that would be representative of the period that I was living in. With him, as long as what you played was related to what he was doing, it was cool.

Up until that time the only other person I'd had that kind of latitude with was Walt Dickerson but all Walt's things up to that point had been metrical. But he was another one who let me play whatever it was that I heard. He never said play this, that or the other. Whatever it was was cool. Just with Cecil there was no meter so there it was really wide open. If I wanted to play meter though, which I did on a couple of occasions, that was cool too. He would just complement that and then we would go off again in terms of playing the

things we heard.

Did this alienate you at all from other musicians? You mentioned earlier how the music had worked to attract people to you and I was wondering if this didn't perhaps change when you joined Cecil.

No, I wasn't ostracized because you have to remember that by the time I began working with Cecil I was established to some degree. I had been playing for shows as well as for dancers so I had established certain credentials, and anyway, those people who didn't like him anyway or didn't like the music. Whether they didn't like me playing with him I don't know. Then again, too, because the jazz business is such a difficult one to make a living in, most musicians would be glad to hear that I was getting the gigs. I remember I used to see Cedar Walton all the time since we lived in the same neighbourhood and he was always very complimentary when he heard that I was doing a gig with Cecil. He'd say, "Oh fine, that's great, man. You and Cecil and those guys don't get a lot of gigs but every time you do it seems to be a good one and they seem to pay fairly well." So whether or not he liked Cecil or could appreciate what he was doing was another thing. Of course there were some guys I know who came out and said they didn't like what Cecil was doing but they could never put me down because if I had to play with them I would do what was needed to do that. So I can't say that I was ever ostracized by any of these people although on the other hand I can't say that I was the most popular player either. Looking back on it, though, I really feel that I did the best thing because it's turned out to be both a great musical and historical advantage.

You've said that the dates with Cecil were few and far between, maybe two or three a year. I'm curious as to how you were able to survive.

Well, for a living I played for dancers. I also did a couple of Off Broadway shows like one called ***The Believers*** which had to do with the black awareness of the sixties and used a chorus of trained singers doing songs out of the black tradition. I played drums for that and very often it would just be me playing with this chorus of voices. That was a great experience. Also I was doing some gigs on my own. I would put bands together every now and then and get a gig here, a gig there. Besides that there would be some rehearsals with Cecil, usually in anticipation of a job.

What were the rehearsals like? How did he run them?

Well, he'd have his music prepared. He'd give out the notes to the horn players, the bass player sometimes, essentially just the horn players, and they would begin to shape the music ensemble. Then very often Cecil would play the shape that he wanted and they would either repeat that shape or Cecil would play a shape of his own and give the group different notes in order to get a contrasting shape. Sometimes he would allow them to shape the notes according to their own rhythm. And with me, more often than not, he wouldn't tell me to do anything. So what I'd do is, after they'd shaped it I would get to hear how it sounded and then I would just add the attendant drum rhythms that I heard. He always had a phrase. I would say, "What do you want me to do here?" and he would say, "You know what drummers do," although every now and then he'd say play three against four, or, here I'd like you to play a particular rhythm, but that only happened once or twice in our whole association. So this I would say is the kind of trust he had in my ability, something which I'll always appreciate. He felt that I could infuse whatever it was I felt in his music and he would be satisfied with it. I remember the first record, the "Unit Structures" album. I just played what I played. In other words I heard that music and then I put all those rhythms and all those shapes to it — and he was cool. He was cool with that, he was cool with "Conquistador." When I wanted to use mallets I used mallets, when I wanted to use brushes I used brushes, and it was fine. Cecil gave me all the room I needed, and again, it's something I'll always appreciate.

A few years after those dates, however, the American scene began to close up as rock took over and the record companies began to show even less interest than usual in recording creative music. At the same time the people from BYG in Paris began offering American new jazz players, yourself included, a chance to record and play over there. I wonder if you could talk a bit about that.

For me it started in 1966 when I met a cat in Paris named Claude Delcloo, a drummer. He came down to the club where I was playing with Cecil and we hung out and got to know each other. At that time Claude said that one day he would be interested in doing something with the musicians if he ever had an opportunity. In 1969 he found the opportunity. Cecil, Jimmy Lyons, Sam Rivers and myself were doing a kind of residency in Saint Paul de Vence, France, that year for an art impresario named Aimé Maeght, and Delcloo, who I had corresponded with from time to time over the years, came down to the south of France to talk to us. He said that he had an opportunity to record a number of musicians, that there was money and would I be interested in recording. I said, "Sure, why not?" He told us what was happening in Paris and asked if after the gig was over we'd like to go there to record.

It just so happened that at that time there was a whole host of other cats in Paris too. The Art Ensemble was there, Archie Shepp was there after he had finished an African tour with Grachan Moncur, Sunny Murray, Alan Silva and Dave Burrell. Arthur Jones and Kenny Terroade were there. Philly Joe Jones, Jeanne Lee. So you had all these musicians recording in relatively the same time period and what happened was that we began crossing combinations. For instance Grachan asked me to do his "New Africa" date with Roscoe Mitchell, Archie Shepp, Alan Silva and Dave Burrell. Then Jimmy Lyons did his record "Other Afternoons" with Lester Bowie, me and Alan Silva and I was supposed to do two dates myself but with my natural skepticism, I said that I'd do one and then see how things turned out. I recorded the solo percussion album "What About?" and that turned out beautifully in terms of the recording but the business was lousy so this way I hadn't really lost anything. I remember they also asked Sam to do something but he refused, as did Cecil. So that's why you don't see them on any of those albums.

Now as far as my album was concerned, I felt that it was time historically that a sequel be done to a lot of the other solo records that had been done prior to 1969 by people like Baby Dodds and Max Roach, things like Baby's "Talking And Drum Solos" or Max's "Conversation On Drums." So I decided that I wanted to do a solo percussion record too. I had heard a lot of Indian drummers too and so I said to myself, gee, I could do something on the trap set which would document my particular time period with what it is that I'm doing and so I set about planning it out and getting the concepts together. Out of this came the "What About?" album [now on the English label Affinity].

Was it out of this that your "Dialogue Of The Drums" with Milford Graves came about?

Well again, in my sense of historical perspective I felt a need to document some of those things that I knew were going on at the time. I say this all the time but it's important. I had seen certain things at Birdland, at Newport and other places with drummers. They'd all get together and play in a certain format. Now in 1969 there were some other concepts happening and I happened to be one of the proponents of some of them, so in order to document them I knew I needed to get somebody who was a peer of mine and who I felt was intelligent enough to understand what I was saying and also creative enough to handle the music we were going to play. So I decided, along with Milford, that we should do some musical collaborating. Then I also thought about doing it as a trio, and for my own taste the first person that came to mind, aside from Sunny Murray, was Rashied Ali, because he had been with Coltrane and knew the music. So Rashied, I, and Milford got together on a couple of occasions and did some concerts as well as a short segment on the NBC show ***Positively Black***. As a result of that, Milford and I have been collaborating on projects ever since. We plan to do some more things in the future as soon as we can find some time to sit down and do some of the administrative work required. We may also do some things on the IPS record label because it's still alive, it's just dormant right now.

However, all of the things that go on with foundations, non-profit organisations, etcetera, involve paperwork, and sometimes you can reduplicate the same thing for a hundred different people who control funds. Sometimes too, you have to arrange meetings and go places to meet these people so they can find out what you're about verbally, and with only twenty-four hours in a day, things can get pretty ridiculous without a little outside help, and without grants it's nearly impossible to hire someone to do some of this paperwork so it can get to be a pretty vicious circle.

Talk a bit about your artist-in-residency at Antioch with Cecil and Jimmy Lyons.

That was one of the great periods in my musical life. For the first time I was given a chance to focus my energies, to develop things I had been thinking about both before and during the residency and share them with others. It gave me an opportunity to avoid some of the very problems that I was just describing to you, things like grant writing, constant travelling, and so forth. And, with the students and present them in different

contexts.

What kind of classes were you giving?

Well, the course was titled "The Black Aesthetic" and how it worked was that Cecil, Jimmy and I would split up the lecture program so that Cecil would speak on one day, Jimmy on another, and I on another. We'd have a ninety minute class and we would each talk more or less about what we wanted, covering various aspects of the music from our different points of view. My particular focus happened to be on the music and its relation to the drum, showing its importance to the music's development and so on. In that way I was also able to touch on a lot of the other instruments as well because it's almost impossible to talk about the drum without relating it somehow to the piano, bass, trumpet or saxophone, say, and indicating how those players' rhythmic ideas relate back to the original drum rhythms. Most of my classes centred on this type of relationship.

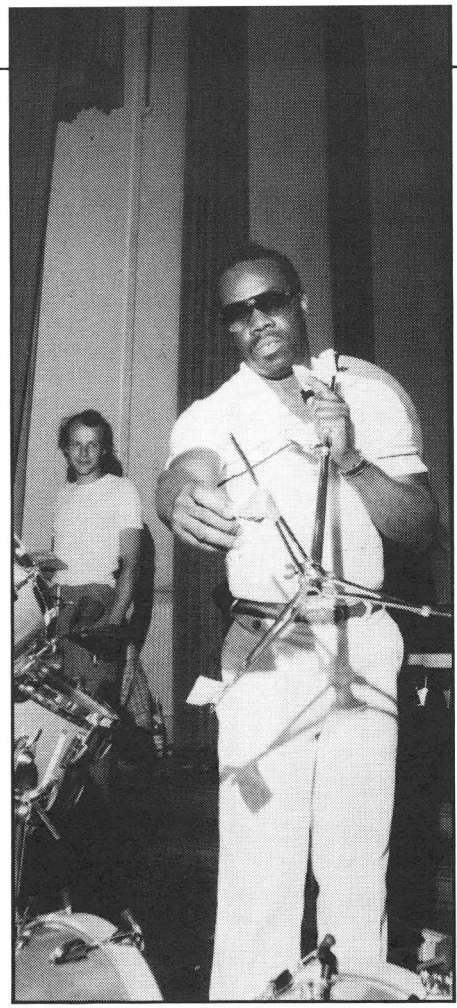
But I remember doing classes on spirituals, blues, gospel, all kinds of things. It was great. I did classes comparing African and Caribbean music, Caribbean and American music, American and African music, all kinds of musics. So this was a very positive experience for me, really the first chance I had had as a creative musician to work on a daily basis and receive a regular salary along with all the other benefits that most other people take for granted, i.e., medical insurance, unemployment insurance, paid social security, and so on.

One final question. During the early seventies, you were part of a movement with Rahsaan Roland Kirk to help bring about a change in the number of black musicians employed by television. Unfortunately, that "movement," like so many of its predecessors, e.g. Max Roach and Charles Mingus's Jazz Artists Guild, Bill Dixon's Jazz Composers Guild, etcetera, was unable to sustain its early energy and for a variety of reasons it fell apart. I was wondering if you still felt that something like this was needed, perhaps just with longer range goals?

You know that's an interesting question. From the time I was a young man, like when I was in my teens, I remember musicians organising to try and make things better for the whole and for one reason or another never seeming to be able to get much momentum after a certain short period of time. As you said, all these efforts were short-lived, despite the greatest of intentions and the noblest of values.

To answer your question though about is there a need for such a thing. If I had to use a broad brushstroke, I would say yes, of course, we do need to organise, we do need to do certain things. But the insides...the details, what's necessary in order to make things happen in an effective way...these are the things that are less clear.

The reality is that in order to take certain steps you need to gamble, and to gamble you need to be willing to take the chance that you might lose. The problem is many people don't want to take that chance. Let's say, for instance, that musicians stop working in clubs because maybe certain clubs are not hiring certain kinds of players. We "The Ensemble" say that nobody is going to work in clubs. Period. This becomes a question of politics and since politics is all about constituencies you're



going to have to find people to front those constituencies and within those constituencies you're going to have to find people who are willing to sacrifice so that whatever the main goal is it can be realised. The answer to that, though, is usually ***no!*** because you have one guy or one girl who says that they need the money because they haven't worked for so long, or they have a family or...just fill in the blank. Maybe someone else says they can't do it because they don't play that kind of music and the group that does never cared about them anyway. Who knows?.

Whatever the reasoning is, the fact still remains that as long as you have some cats making it over here, and fairly well in comparison to others, with some others able to go to Europe and work, and still others able to get record dates, it's going to be very, very difficult to get something to go down which would eventually be revolutionary enough to affect the whole scene, en masse. In fact the only way I can really see something like this happening is for you to have someone who is musically and spiritually ***very, very*** strong, strong enough to sway opinions and bend heads so that people will say, "O.K., I'm going to go along with this particular movement." Outside of that it's almost impossible to see just what could cross over the whole range of musical opinion.

For concerts and club dates Andrew Cyrille may be contacted at 18 River Street Extension, Apt. 321, Little Ferry, NJ 07643, (201) 440-8958. For drum lessons he may be reached at (212) 541-7600.

ANDREW CYRILLE Discography

As A Leader — Solo
"What About?" Affinity 75
"The Loop" Ictus ST0009
As A Leader — With Maono
"Celebration" IPS ST002
"Junction" IPS ST003
"Metamusicians Stomp" Black Saint 0025
"Special People" Soul Note SN1012
"The Navigator" Soul Note SN1062
As A Co-Leader
with Milford Graves
"Dialogue Of The Drums" IPS ST001
with Jeanne Lee/Jimmy Lyons
"Nuba" Black Saint BSR0030
with Walt Dickerson/Sirone
"Life Rays" Soul Note SN1028
with Peter Brotzmann — "Andrew Cyrille Meets Peter Brotzmann in Berlin" FMP 1000
with Milford Graves, Kenny Clarke, Don Moye — "Pieces of Time"Soul Note SN1078
With Cecil Taylor
"Unit Structures" Blue Note BST84237
"Conquistador" Blue Note BST84260
"Great Concert of..." Prestige 34004
"Student Studies" Affinity 74
"Bulu Akisakila Kutala" Trio PA 3004
"Spring of 2 Blue-J's" Unit Core 30551
With Walt Dickerson
"This Is Walt Dickerson" New Jazz 8254
"Relativity" New Jazz 8275
"To My Queen" New Jazz 8283
"Jazz Impressions of Lawrence of Arabia" Dauntless ST6313
"Unity" Audio Fidelity AFSD5131
"Peace" SteepleChase SCS 1042
"Tell Us Only The Beautiful Things" Why Not PA 71
With Muhal Richard Abrams
"Mama And Daddy" Black Saint BSR0041
"Blues Forever" Black Saint BSR0061
"Rejoicing With The Light"Black Saint 0071
With Leroy Jenkins
"Space Minds, New Worlds..." Tomato 8501
"The Legend of Ai Glatson" Black Saint BSR0022
With Coleman Hawkins
"Moonglow" Prestige P-24106
With Ahmed Abdul-Malik
"The Music Of Ahmed Abdul-Malik" New Jazz 8266
With Bill Barron
"Hot Line" Savoy MG 12183
With The Jazz Composers' Orchestra
"Jazz Composers' Orchestra" JCOA 1001/2
With Grachan Moncur III
"New Africa" Affinity 38
With Jimmy Lyons
"Other Afternoons" Affinity 34
With Charlie Haden
"Liberation Music Orchestra" Jasmine 55
With Marion Brown
"Afternoon Of A Georgia Faun" ECM 1004
With John Gordon
"Step By Step" Strata-East 19760
With John Greaves
"Kew Rhone" Virgin V2802
With Carla Bley
"European Tour 1977" Watt 8
With David Murray
"3-D Family" Hat Hut U/V
With Geri Allen
"The Printmakers" Minor Music 001

SAXOPHONES

RICKY FORD

Future's Gold
Muse MR5296

Ricky Ford, tenor saxophone; Larry Coryell, guitar (side B only); Albert Dailey, piano; Ray Drummond, bass; Jimmy Cobb, drums.

ELVIN JONES

Brother John
Palo Alto PA8039-N

Pat LaBarbera, tenor and soprano saxophones; Kenny Kirkland, piano; Reggie Workman, bass; Elvin Jones, drums.

TOMMY KOVERHULT

Caprice CAP1289

Tommy Koverhult, tenor and soprano saxophone, flute; Gunnar Bergsten, baritone saxophone; Bobo Stenson, piano; Ove Gustavsson, bass; Leroy Lowe, drums.

THE QUARTET

Dedications
Konnex ST5002

Gerd Dudek, tenor saxophone; Rob van den Broeck, piano; Ali Haurand, bass; Tony Oxley, drums.

One of the most obvious platitudes in jazz history concerns the development of the tenor sax. In simple terms, it's maintained that one side is Hawkins — rough, breathy, brawny, jagged, hot, and on the other side is Young — smooth, vibratoless, dancing, lyrical, cool. And all saxophonists tend to fall into one category, or another, with a little crossover perhaps in Dexter Gordon, and with a slightly uncategorical stance by Rollins and Ayler.

Then there's Coltrane, rising like some latter day eagle (or Hawk?) among the lower flights of the cool school, unfashionable in the beginning but finally hewing out for himself a style that influenced the repertoire and sound of almost all tenor players through his major music of the sixties. He even filters into the cool side through Dexter's crossover and of course at the other end of the range he is at the back of the avant gardists.

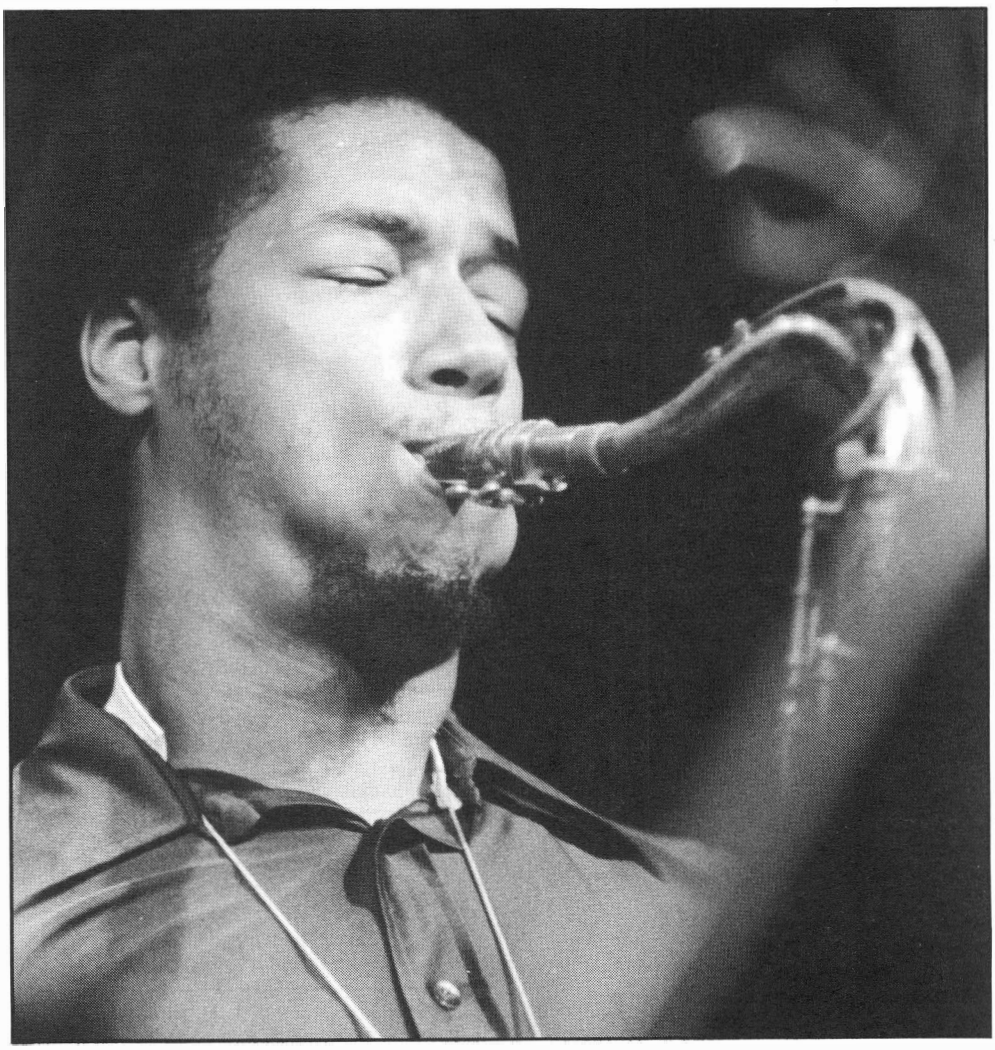
So Trane's presence is always with us from slavish imitation through boisterous and hectic blowing to reaction in the remaining cool players, though the cool school has a somewhat harder sound now — Getz and Sims both boot along forcefully or slide into Websterian breathiness nowadays. So the Hawk-Trane ambience is in most tenor players at the moment.

These four albums show in some way the Trane influence but significantly, apart from some flurries from Gerd Dudek, much of the playing by these tenor saxes stems from Trane's early and middle quartets, not from the more ferocious and nagging searching he did roughly after "A Love Supreme." For me, that's all to the good. I may be a heretic but I still find little of interest in Trane's music after "A Love Supreme." He never seemed to fix on a real direction: much of his playing seems simply powerful bluster with odd moments when the emotional force found its own shape, as on "Transition," parts of "First Meditations" and ***Peace On Earth***. I am thinking here of his working group, not of something like the players he used on "Ascension." I feel there is more genuine search to grapple with ideas on the marvellous extension of the two-bar tag on ***Bye Bye Blackbird*** on the Paris concert recording than almost anything in his last years. And there is still much to be developed from those sixties recordings, just as there's a lot open for investigation in the mid-sixties music of Miles Davis. In the present conservative state of jazz, provided it isn't allowed to stagnate or merely imitate, maybe that investigation and development will begin to happen, as it is already happening in the music of Chico Freeman, Jack DeJohnette, the Marsalis brothers, Steve Lacy, Sphere and others. And perhaps these four albums are also part of that expansion of a sixties tradition of the tenor sax that centres on Trane.

Ricky Ford has established himself now as a tenor player to be reckoned with, though for me his work remains uneven. He comes more out of a mix of Gordon and Rollins than out of Trane. He has a burly tone, he exudes confidence, yet at times an awkward stiffness surfaces, a jaggedness that is unlike the brave leaps of Rollins, for Ford tends to smudge the intervals, as in ***A Flat Now*** on this album. Ford has a winning way with mid-tempo lopes (there's a lovely relaxed cut on a previous album called ***Christmas Cheer*** in this manner) and ballads. The double Gordon/Rollins influence works well on ***You Don't Know What Love Is*** and hints of Webster rather than Young crop up on ***Goodbye Pork Pie Hat***.

The two most interesting cuts are ***Knowledge*** with its attractive theme and Ford playing in some fast-thinking doubling and halving of tempo which is held in place by the solid rhythm section. The other fine cut is ***Samba De Caribe***, for Ford's solo here seems to be based on a clearly defined compositional sense.

Ford is working out his own style, delving into tenor tradition but not overwhelmed by Trane. This album holds a lot of promise but it remains like other Ford albums, interesting without being fully realised.



RICKY FORD (Photograph by Gerard Futrick)

SAXOPHONE VARIATIONS

The title of the Elvin Jones album and the presence of himself would lead a potential listener to presume this will be a Coltrane clone, especially as bassist Reggie Workman also worked in Trane's groups. In fact, the John of the title is the brother of tenor saxophonist Pat LaBarbera who wrote several of the tunes.

But this quartet does remind me of the very early days of the Coltrane Quartet — straight-ahead power, digging in but with no extensive length in the solos. Kenny Kirkland's piano is florid in a more romantic, less percussive vein than Tyner's, and even Jones's drumming, though masterly in a springy rhythmic fashion, is less explosive and less dependent on poly-rhythms than he was in the middle Trane group. LaBarbera's tenor and soprano are both strong and fluid, the music rides along with an energetic flow but it never gets too intense or too hectic. Kirkland's piano is fine throughout and the ballads here are particularly effective. Though it evokes early Coltrane music, it has its own personal feel. It manages some tension and moves the music around though it never tightens into any highly charged expansion.

By contrast, the Tommy Koverhult group is heavier and tries to summon up that energetic charge. The group rolls along handily, grounded on the baritone sax. Koverhult himself is a fleet player, knows how to shape a solo and build its force, backing off only to rev up.

The echoes of the Trane Quintet are, however, a little too obvious. ***Global Secret*** gets into modal vamping with Bobo Stenson's piano in a distinctly Tyner mood. It is full of rolling, full keyboard playing though very occasionally his fingers let him down and he fumbles away from crispness.

Lowe's drumming lashes around but sometimes thumps into stodginess. There's heartfelt commitment and attack in this set, Koverhult adds soprano and flute, the group has variety in its tunes with the baritone at least moving the group away from a Trane sound. Yet the musicians hang a little too closely onto Trane's coattails. Still, Koverhult is a player to watch and his group has a good deal to offer already.

The best of this bunch of albums is The Quartet's. Gerd Dudek is a tenor player I'd never heard before. He's more adventurous than the other tenor players discussed here, charging ahead with fiery surges in the up-tempo pieces, driven by Oxley's varied drum rhythms and sounds which are not wholly dependent on the Jones approach with Trane.

There is, however, a certain sameness to much of the material — rhapsodic openings before the group settles into tempo. At other times it keeps the rhapsodic feel throughout a piece, out of tempo, but not too free and again giving Oxley space for some unorthodox drumming. Not everything works — the rhapsodic pieces meander and don't manage to move into a real tightening of intensity.

Yet Dudek and his cohorts seem to me to understand the Coltrane message and have managed to adapt it to their own ends. They are, I think, also trying to make sense of some elements in late Coltrane as well, though for me it's the in-tempo romping that offers the best music.

Dudek's on the Trane, his tone is full, he can skitter around cleanly, but he seems to be his own man as well. On the evidence of this album he's building on a solid base and is moving in his own positive directions.

— Peter Stevens

DEXTER GORDON

Lullaby For A Monster
SteepleChase SCS-1156

Dexter Gordon, tenor saxophone; Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen, bass; Alex Riel, drums.

FRANK FOSTER

The House That Love Built
SteepleChase SCS 1170

Frank Foster, tenor saxophone; Horace Parlan, piano; Jesper Lundgard, bass; Aage Tanggaard, drums.

These two records show how international the fraternity of top flight jazz musicians is. The Scandinavian players are not put to shame by their leaders. On the contrary, they often provide stimulation and inspiration for the horn at the same time as providing its rock-steady rhythmic foundation. Both records find the tenor players in great form, and the Dexter Gordon session has the added excitement of Ørsted Pedersen playing magnificently. Both sessions involve a mix of paces and moods, ballads and blues so that the range and variety of each saxophonist is well-displayed.

Gordon's session opens with his own ***Nursery Blues*** which is built around a simple, teasing arpeggio figure allowing Gordon to explore all the nooks and crannies of a blues progression without falling into any cliches. Riel kicks the piece along with some clean, crisp drumming, reminiscent of Roy Haynes, and Pedersen puts in a lovely loping solo. Pedersen's composition ***Lullaby For A Monster*** opens with an ostinato bass phrase with a Spanish-Arabic flavour, and then the piece moves into alternating passages of 6/8 and 4/4 time. Pedersen and Riel revel in the rhythmic switches but Gordon seems uneasy and never settles down with this piece. The other three titles, however, compensate fully for this one lapse. On ***Green Dolphin Street*** Gordon swings bouncily above the peppery, punchy rhythm secion; while ***Born To Be Blue*** is taken at a we-have-all-the-time-in-the-world pace. Here Gordon plays with warmth and gentleness — a model of ballad playing, while Pedersen's resonant bass and Riel's clean, subtle drumming add depth, colour and swing to a really mellow piece. Donald Byrd's composition ***Tanya*** has Gordon stating the simple melody over Pedersen's tongue-in-cheek blues riff before moving into a blues bolero with the bassist fairly dancing with graceful, witty walking phrases. The bassist's solo on this track is also outstanding, while Riel continues to contribute some zesty drumming.

Frank Foster's session is more purely a showcase for the leader and the rhythm section plays a more secondary, support role. All the pieces are Foster compositions and are similar to the Gordon selection in providing a nice mix of blues, ballads and tricky bebop heads to provide a range of tempo and mood. The opener ***I Remember Sonny Stitt*** is a tour de force demonstration of the bop sax tradition. Foster pours out cascades of ideas and phrases with many allusions to Stitt without being at all imitative. The pace is so fast and furious that Foster creates the frenzied atmosphere of the Granz concert saxophone battles all by himself. Though with Foster playing all the roles, the result is much more even and smooth flowing and he avoids the excesses and crowd-pleasing trickery of the Granz concerts. ***The House That Love Built*** shows that Foster can handle a ballad as well as a fast-paced bit of bebop. Foster's warm, resonant, full-bodied tone comes across beautifully in this track and Horace Parlan sustains the mood with a gentle, ruminative solo. ***John R And Garfield*** is a medium paced piece which allows Foster to move in and out of double- and triple-timed passages with ease. Here again Foster is exploding with ideas but by varying the pace and dynamics his long solo becomes a series of smaller movements, each flowing from the one before but quite different from it. At times Foster packs so many notes into each phrase that he seems to be drawing inspiration from Coltrane's "sheets of sound" period. Again Parlan contributes an elegant, sparse-noted solo over a swinging bass and drums accompaniment. ***Lightly Stroking*** exposes us to the competence of Lundgard. His tone is not as rich and resonant as Pedersen's but he has a sprightly dancing solo with Parlan comping nicely behind him before ushering in another fiery statement from Foster and some fine extroverted piano from Parlan. ***Dunbar's Delight*** is an up-tempo vehicle for some straight-ahead bopping by Foster where the high level of rapport within the quartet is displayed by the fast, tight, crisp rhythmic support for Foster's soaring, singing horn.

In sum, both these records are worthy additions to the stock of Gordon and Foster albums.

— Al Lewis

TONY CAMPISE

ram RS 3400-80

Tony Campise, soprano, alto and tenor saxophones, flute, bass flute; Joe LoCascio, piano; Bill Murry, bass; Keith Karnaky, drums and percussion.

ART PEPPER

Artworks
Galaxy GXY-5148

Art Pepper, alto saxophone, clarinet; George Cables, piano; Charlie Haden, bass; Billy Higgins, drums.

These two records are interesting examples of the persistence of West Coast cool jazz — the tradition originating with Tristano and Konitz, and developed by the alumni of the Thornhill, Kenton and Herman bands of the forties. Both

leaders have worked for Kenton and both have the characteristic horn styles marked by clear, limpid, vibrato-free tone and a penchant for smooth, liquid, melodic expression. The late, great Art Pepper's work, of course, is closer to the bebop tradition. Campise appears to be striving for a new synthesis with the developments of the sixties and seventies.

"Artworks" is the first of four albums to be issued (to include a reissue of "So In Love") containing the 1979 sessions for John Snyder's Artists House label. This is great news, for Art Pepper was not exactly an over-recorded artist, and he and his confreres were in grand form for this session. Two tracks, ***Body And Soul*** and ***You Go To My Head*** are unaccompanied alto pieces. I found these to be the least compelling tracks. They come across as fragmented, tentative explorations of possible points of entry into the material without yielding an ultimately satisfying statement. Too often here it seems that Pepper needs a rhythm section to needle him to the action he is capable of. Without such backing these tracks lack integration, focus and impetus. No such problems appear with the rest of the album, however. Pepper plays clarinet on ***Anthropology***, accompanied by bass and drums. His high notes have a beautiful, bell-like clarity while the middle and lower register have an attractive, whispery burr. This is an energetic and imaginative rendition of the old standard and Haden contributes a particularly nice solo. ***Donna Lee*** is a fast, glorious romp; a beautiful piece of classic bebop with Pepper at his playful, rhythmic best. The rhythmic support is first rate with clean, agile bass, a dancing piano solo, and a snappy drum-horn exchange before Pepper blows in the final choruses. It's clear that everyone is having great fun. Pepper's composition ***Blues For Blanche*** is a delight. The head has a sardonic Sonny Rollins quality to it which gives Pepper plenty of opportunity to demonstrate his rhythmic and melodic agility while the rhythm section really cooks behind him. Again Cables and Haden maintain the momentum with fine solos, while Higgins keeps everything jumping. I have never been a bossa nova fan but this session's ***Desafinado*** overcame my resistance. Haden in particular has a lot of fun teasing with the rhythm while Pepper teases with the melody. For those who love the mainstream of jazz this is an essential record.

Campise and friends are Texas-based musicians. As mentioned, the leader has played with Kenton, while Karnaky and Murry come out of the North Texas State band. As one would expect with these credentials, the level of musicianship is high and this, their first disc, shows a lot of potential. In contrast to the Art Pepper session there is no bebop influence. This is a post-New Wave cool, influenced by Coltrane, electronic manipulation, and modal improvisation. ***Little Falbert*** is a beautiful soprano tour de force. Campise explores the melody line flowing with a clear, singing, pure tone, shifting tempo with ease and moving in and out of Coltrane-like sheets of sound runs with marvellous facility. All the time piano, bass and drums ebb and flow with great suppleness, continuously feeding in an ever-shifting base of rhythmic fills and patterns beneath the horn. LoCascio's piano often seems to mimic the soaring, singing quality of Campise's horn, while Karnaky uses a wide range of percussion instruments to add colour and a great range of soft percussive dimensions to the proceedings. This is a magnificent track, the standout of the session, and suggests that the group is really something to get excited about. ***Theme For Terri*** is another bossa nova, which like Pepper's pleasantly surprised me. Again Campise plays soprano with a clear, bell-like tone, and the capacities of the rhythm section are well displayed.

Goodbye Again and ***Hey There*** feature Campise on tenor in a ballad format. They are curious tracks because they are so lushly romantic that they might be intended as sendups of middle-of-the-road swing band music. Yet Campise's tenor has a harsh, nasal, reedy quality to it so that the ultimate effect is a sort of "Gato Barbieri Plays For Swingers," involving a crude contradiction between the horn style and the ballad format. ***Son Of Hogfat*** is clearly a spoof — a bawdy, chicken 'n grits, down home vocalisation through the flute of the sort Roland Kirk made famous. Frankly I think Kirk did it better. Campise goes on too long and the joke wears rather thin in the course of the act. The two remaining tracks have Campise using dubbing and echo chamber techniques to superimpose flute and bass flute trills in a sort of repetitive arpeggio chant. If you like music to meditate by, these tracks might be just the thing. I found them boring.

This group of musicians is undoubtedly highly talented, but this record seems to lack unity and a sense of direction. The soprano tracks are really fine, however, and show that they deserve to be listened to. I hope we hear more from them soon. — ***Al Lewis***

ART PEPPER (Photograph by Gerard Futrick)

ANTHONY BRAXTON

Four Compositions (Quartet) 1983
Black Saint BSR0066

Anthony Braxton, alto and soprano saxophone, clarinet; George Lewis, trombone; John Lindberg, bass; Jerry Hemingway, percussion.

Braxton once said in conversation that he wanted ***all of his future music to be completely notated***. That's right, no improvisatory segments at all! Of course, I'm quite aware that this particular "kind" of thinking might seem pretty strange to those jazz aficionados out there who've come to see their indigenous classical music imbued with plenty of room... for hearty breathing. Yet, I must say, as I listen to this LP and scan the recent recorded history of post-modernist inclined improvised music — Braxton probably would have done well to have stuck by what he said.

I'm saying all of this (if you haven't already guessed) — in agreeing with Braxton's spoken statements — with reservations. But the fact of the matter is that I do happen to think that some of those located within the improvisatory camp (that is, those who already possess a substantial compositional/design formation — further: a compositional/design formation that has hardened into ***a frame of (musical) mind***) could do without the unchecked (re: ***"unframed"***) randomness — Braxton in particular.

Paradoxically, however, we should bear in mind that the problems we are encountering here are a bit more complicated than the thesis I'm trying to build. For example: I'm sure that a lot of the aesthetic-developmental problems one encounters in (the) creative musicians' progress are to a large extent materialist, re: "economically" based. I remember, coincidentally, reading an interview with Braxton in ***Jazz Times*** a few years back where he said that for every project ***he really wants to do*** he has to do at least five quartet recordings.

But now, let's take a look at the music — we'll get back to "my thesis" a bit later.

The first piece ***Composition — No. 105A*** — which consumes the entire first side of the recording — is in "standard" Braxtonian compositional form. Thematically I can hear Bach and Boulez (particularly in terms of "nuanced" attack) — with the entire history of early European march music emphatically given the dominant right of way.

The core theme of ***Composition — No. 105A***, a bawdy, march-like extrapolation, begins the music. This beginning section soon dissipates into a bravado calypso-inspired segment with explicit percussive/metric underpinnings. The piece then "falls" into a "quiet sonority" segment that is texturally as well as ***soundually*** quite attractive (actually this abbreviated, ab-

stracted, finely-tuned segment is a reworking of the core theme — and could be said to be the major "line" of this composition).

But Braxton isn't finished yet. The brief percussively derived calypso segment reappears and swiftly gives way to the march-like theme that began the music...only to finally slip back into an abbreviated reading of the calypso-inspired section. It is here where Braxton enters on alto to have his say. I should add, too, in light of description, that the musical environment in which Braxton enters is — by now — a terribly cluttered and confused one. The problems with this segment — this "improvised segment" are both numerous and various. Firstly, Braxton's prodigal ramblings on his "home" horn (the alto) seem totally out of tune with the tonal parameters of the "immediate" musical environment. Secondly, Lindberg's bass music is extremely muddled and unclear in its lower register. The one redeeming factor in Braxton's alto flight — and this segment as a whole — comes in the last few concluding measures. Notice the articulation and accentuation of both Lindberg and Hemingway in this portion — indeed, a commendable drive to direct the rocky, wavering rhythmic opacity of this completely "fallen" (re: "deteriorated") musical space.

After Braxton's alto spot, he switches to clarinet for — for want of a better phrase — an "improvised impression" of the sensuous-sounding "quiet sonority" portion. This, however, soon collapses into an ascending-descending scalar exercise with trombonist Lewis, Hemingway playing marimba and Braxton — who eventually switches to what I believe is a soprano saxophone. This segment, unfortunately, goes on far too long. Particularly for what it yields in terms of feeling and/or "thought."

When this section fades, Lewis enters — taking the lead with an abstracted melodic statement (with Braxton still on soprano) that develops into his trombone spot. Noteworthy in the trombonist spot is an agile awareness of the melodic possibilities inherent within the immediate musical environment. But still, in a musical terrain such as this there simply isn't an awful lot one can realistically do.

After Lewis, the sensuous "quiet sonority" returns and ***Composition — No. 105A*** parsimoniously closes.

Composition — No. 69M — which opens side B of the recording — finds Braxton on soprano saxophone, with the rest of the band manning their respective instruments. It too has a march-like air about it — but is not as ambitious a work (***schematically*** speaking) as the preceding composition. A kind of jerky, high-wire, circus-type of feel and pulse is generally administered throughout. Additionally, there are some very nicely chosen bass notes by Lindberg in the piece's mid-section.

The next work ***Composition — No. 69O*** is the prize of the entire date as far as this reviewer is concerned. Lewis on muted trombone and Braxton on clarinet enable Hemingway and Lindberg to render their most heartfelt playing of the entire date. Hemingway gets a chance, also, to exhibit in grand fashion what he has termed elsewhere his "...vocabulary of sound techniques" in the concluding moments of this piece. But before then...

Composition — No. 69O begins with a rushed, though evenly modulated, wavering figure that leads into a dark, texturally and rhythmically satisfying statement — that finds both Hemingway and Lindberg working the backwaters of fortune's last stand superbly. Braxton's statements on clarinet, too, exhibit a thickly drenched, mocking, "pedagogical" quality of enunciation that permits one the immense joy of lingering in this mnemonic rain forest long after this portion of the piece has vanished. Hemingway's solo spot — after the treacherously homologous thematic statement has lapsed — is also a bit of a wonder. You know, Hemingway had a lot to do with making this date somewhat interesting on the percussive level. He tends to gravitate toward the ***textural timbre(s)*** of the compositions instead of their explicit rhythmic transparency. Which, amazingly enough, allows for some really great music in places you'd least expect it.

The last piece ***Composition No. — 68Q*** has a bouncing, thematically elusive, melodic line that is deceptively quite engaging. This piece will undoubtedly remind some of the Lennie Tristano/Warne Marsh-Lee Konitz explorations of the fifties...

Yet the problem with this piece — and the vast majority of the music found here (with the possible exception of ***Composition — No. 69O***) is precisely the fact that the improvisatory segments weren't defined clearly enough.

And now, let's return to my opening statements. Why am I apprehensive about the improvisatory terrain this music covers? One reason might be, I think, that many improvisors/composers who have risen (i.e. "uplifted") their ***perceptions*** to a certain level (that is, beyond a more-or-less "standardised" one) have a responsibility to the art in general and to themselves in particular (and please forgive the annoying "proselytising tone" of that sentence) to begin to see improvisation as a kind of compositionally-induced interpretation. That's to say that I'm arguing for the interpretative virtues of the score.

Further enunciations stemming from this way of thinking would have to do with the fact that the customary, "normative" course of improvisatory activity today, can only yield what it has already yielded. In essence, what I'm saying is this: ***the situation and course of creative passage must be designated if one is realistically concerned with allowing new information and new pleasures the right of reality***.

As I say, it's amazing that Braxton has seen fit to somewhat renege on what he's historically instituted within the gardens of the improvisatory imagination. Even when putting all pragmatic considerations aside, I was betting that Braxton might — at some point — leave the "Jazz" arena entirely. Anyway, a good example of the kind of thing I'm advocating for latter-day formalists is Roscoe Mitchell's ***L-R-G***, found on his Nessa recording "S/II/Examples."

— Roger Riggins

PHAROAH SANDERS

Heart Is A Melody
Theresa TR118

On this live date, recorded at San Francisco's Keystone Korner in January 1982, Sanders reveals himself in all his strengths and weaknesses. The first side is taken up with a version of John Coltrane's ***Olé*** which starts off strong, but which gradually begins to feel flabby and formless. We are informed that ten minutes was cut to fit ***Olé*** onto one side of a record. The mind boggles at the thought of having to listen to over half an hour of this (although of course in a club one's experience of time is different). On the other side, though, Sanders's version of Tadd Dameron's ***On A Misty Night***, which weighs in at under seven minutes, is almost by that fact alone far more satisfying. Reined in by a strong melody and the necessity for some ensemble work, the solos by Sanders and William Henderson on piano are far more focused than on the first side, and say more in a fraction of the time. The title track, ***Heart Is A Melody Of Time***, a collaboration between Sanders and lyricist William S. Fischer which sees vocalists recorded in the studio over the live band playing a variation on Sanders's ***The Creator Has A Master Plan***, is an extremely beautiful piece which reveals Sanders's own flair for melody, even though, once it is established, Sanders (or Fischer) seems incapable of doing more than repeat it (among the vocalists is Andy Bey, brother of Salome). The closing

ANTHONY BRAXTON (Photograph by Fred Vandaele)

number is an exuberant chantlike ***Going To Africa (Highlife)***, featuring Sanders himself on vocals. — ***Chris Probert***

DON LANPHERE QUINTET

Out Of Nowhere
Hep 2019

I am very uncertain about this album. I liked Don Lanphere's early tenor work, especially those bop sides with a Fats Navarro group in the late forties. Though he's been off the scene, Lanphere has lost none of his chops, but that's one of the problems here. He plays some scary fast unison lines with trumpeter Jon Pugh — they run the scales and changes but they don't really add up to anything more than technical dexterity. There isn't much sense of feeling and involvement in them and the music comes across to the listener as an abstract mood.

And it isn't as if Lanphere and Pugh lack emotional feeling. There are one or two cuts that show that — a full and robust version of ***You've Changed***, for instance, as well as a little-known Hoagy Carmichael song, ***Blue Orchid***. These are two bright spots on the album but much of what is left is devoted to hectic display. At times the themes are overly tricky though the horns and pianist Marc Seales solo well. There is enough here to suggest that Lanphere and Pugh should record again but without their desire to show off their razzle-dazzle. An album of slow and medium ballads would fill the bill. In the meantime this album occasionally whets the appetite but on the whole is a disappointment. — ***Peter Stevens***

ROBERT WATSON SEXTET

Jewel (with special guest Dom Um Romao)
Amigo 846

Robert Watson, alto and soprano saxophones; Steve Nelson, vibes; Mulgrew Miller, piano; Curtis Lundy, bass; Marvin "Smitty" Smith, drums; Dom Um Romao, congas, percussion.

To See Her Face/Orange Blossom/Jewel/Karita/ You're Lucky To Me/And Then Again

After a lengthy and fruitful apprenticeship with Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers, saxophonist Robert Watson has finally begun to emerge as a formidable contender on the current jazz scene. Having recorded under his own name prior to this present date, his earlier efforts, while showing sporadic flashes of inspiration, were never quite able to hit the mark consistently. Here, however, Mr. Watson is right on target. He has been steadily developing and his work reveals a growing confidence and maturity which play a prominent role in the success of this recording. Another strong contributing factor is the firm support he receives from his very capable sidemen. The rhythm section in particular is to be cited for its driving, well-oiled cohesiveness. In fact it is not merely by chance that these three extremely talented individuals are showing up on an ever-increasing number of bandstands and record dates of late. Vibist Steve Nelson is another welcome addition. Owing a substantial debt to Bobby Hutcherson, his characteristically mellow solos ring with a graceful authority. Veteran percussionist Dom Um Romao is billed as the featured guest, but curiously he keeps a rather low profile. Only on Eubie Blake's lively and playful ***You're Lucky To Me*** does he surface effectively. With Lundy and Smith laying out, Romao's vivacious conga provides a stimulating backdrop for Watson and Miller. But elsewhere the real motivation is supplied by Marvin "Smitty" Smith, a young, dynamic drummer with boundless energy and drive whose vast potential is just beginning to be realised. There is a generally upbeat, exuberant feeling woven into the fabric of this session, but it does have its more subdued side as well. The title track, for instance, finds the leader in a tender, reflective mood which is further enhanced by a nice spot from pianist Mulgrew Miller. Curtis Lundy's duties are basically relegated to the marking of time; nevertheless he does step forward for a short but sturdy solo on his own somewhat-somber ***Orange Blossom***. Watson decides to pick up his soprano for the closing selection, a Coltrane-flavoured piece written by his wife Pamela. In the final analysis, this is a well-conceived, infectiously swinging record, well worth the attention of any serious jazz devotee.

Available from Amigo Musik AB, Box 6058, S-102 31 Stockholm, Sweden. — ***Gerard Futrick***

AMALGAM

Wipe Out
Impetus IMP 47901

Trevor Watts, alto and soprano saxophones; Keith Rowe, guitar; Liam Genockey, drums; Colin McKenzie, bass*; George Lyle, bass**.

Wipe Out* (15:18)***/Roller Coaster**** (28:52)/ ***Ongoing Situation*** (36:00) / ***Children*** (8:41) / ***Tribute To Mingus**** (39:17)***/The Golden Salamander**** (9:15) / ***War Dance*** (13:28) / ***Monk's House*** (4:18) / ***Homecoming**** (17:50)

"Wipe Out" is a four-LP set documenting the avant-garde trio/quartet Amalgam, recorded during a November 1979 tour. This short-lived English group consisted of three main improvisers. The best-known player, altoist Trevor Watts, has elements of Eric Dolphy, Arthur Blythe, and even Charlie Parker in his style but his sound most closely resembles Ornette Coleman's. Guitarist Keith Rowe is the most controversial member of this unit; his heavy metal rock sound and high energy interplay with Watts will be a surprise to many listeners expecting a more straightforward jazz set. Drummer Liam Genockey manages to keep up with the many changes of direction in the music and is quite versatile. Genockey and electric bassist Colin McKenzie are a bit more conservative in their playing than Rowe, and in fact McKenzie left the group during this tour (he

ROBERT WATSON (Photograph by Gerard Futrick)

SAXOPHONE VARIATIONS

preferred more structured music) and appears on only half of this set. Several selections feature just the alto-guitar-drums trio but Rowe's sound so dominates the rhythm section that the absence of a bass is not even noticed. McKenzie's replacement George Lyle appears only on ***Homecoming***.

The music, although not derivative, explores many of the same areas as Ornette Coleman's Prime Time and Ronald Shannon Jackson's Decoding Society, combining the sound and fire of rock with free jazz improvisation. ***Wipe Out*** begins with some roaring rock guitar that will immediately scare away the faint of heart. Trevor Watts blows freely over a simple rhythmic pattern during the bulk of this intense track. ***Roller Coaster***, which like ***Ongoing Situation*** and ***Tribute To Mingus*** is stretched out over much of two sides, has Watts playing a high-powered solo over a relatively quiet funk rhythm that builds in intensity until the interplay between Watts and Rowe is quite furious.

The tension and release pattern is also utilised on the lengthy ***Ongoing Situation*** which starts with a mysterious guitar intro, setting the stage for Watts to play melodically over a rumbling rhythm section. After the inevitable explosion of sound, things calm down and return to the ballad mood. ***Children*** follows a similar pattern in a much briefer period of time. ***Tribute To Mingus***, the high point of this marathon package, has Watts emulating Dolphy in spots and the quartet exploring a variety of interesting rhythmic patterns. Of the remaining pieces, ***Monk's House*** and ***Homecoming*** stand out. ***Monk's House*** features a very ghostly sound and is the most organised (and shortest) selection on this set. In contrast, ***Homecoming*** is pure high energy group improvisation until near its close when Amalgam returns to the original ***Wipe Out*** theme and gradually quiets down.

Amalgam broke up shortly after this tour, pulled apart by differences in musical aspirations. This four-LP set, which should not be consumed in one sitting, is a rewarding listening experience to those with open ears and a strong constitution. — ***Scott Yanow***

Distributed by Impetus Distribution Ltd., 587 Wandsworth Rd., London SW8 3JD, U.K.

EVAN PARKER

Tracks
Incus 42

Evan Parker, tenor and soprano saxophones; Barry Guy, bass; Paul Lytton, percussion.

The transitional nature of the improvised form is one of its most vital characteristics. Yet, we shouldn't forget, too, that this idea of transition corresponds to the documented history of the individual player as well. That's to say, at still another level, that the work of an artist should probably be assessed in light of what he has previously presented (I should confess at this point, however, that I'm not familiar with Evan Parker's entire recorded output — only some of it).

Parker said — in these very pages in 1979 — that his thematic thinking manifests primarily at the level of instrumental technique as opposed to a more standardized or conventional concept of thematic statement. This is never more evident than on this recording, but all of his recordings really (at least the ones I've heard), and is a clue to how to listen to his music. In a sense he wants an organic music from the very beginning, from the very start. Which means, from still another angle, that Parker and his men play with a high degree of consciousness. A degree of consciousness, interestingly enough, that might be unprecedented within the contemporary improvised music scene.

The key to this music might be said to be its ***manipulation of language into a technique***. Which is why we have working here ***instrumental expressiveness*** as opposed to a high degree of ***emotional expressiveness***. The bassist and percussionist on the date, although "...both use amplification and live electronics to extend their acoustic instruments," might remind some of what was happening on Steve Lacy's "The Forest And The Zoo" with drummer Louis Moholo and bassist Johnny Dyani. The difference here, though, is that everyone is an equal partner in the making of a new non-idiomatic musical language. The only other example I can render where quasi-melodic voices deviated from the standard stock-in-trade of the improvising vocabulary was at a recent concert by the Explorations band in New York that included two Japanese players: reedist Masakatsu "Mabo" Suzuki and violinist Takehisa Kusugi along with African-Americans William Parker and Rashied Ali.

Of the four pieces included here I would cite ***Fire*** as an excellent introductory piece in terms of Parker's methods; ***Light*** as exemplary of the rocking no-holes-barred "swing" that Parker and company (particularly percussionist Lytton) are capable of generating when they are genuinely inspired; and the meditative, almost mantra-like gall of the nineteen-minute ***Sidetrack*** — which features some absolutely amazing manipulations of embouchure by Parker in its mid-section. — ***Roger Riggins***

OLIVER NELSON with ERIC DOLPHY

Straight Ahead
Fantasy OJC-099

Oliver Nelson, alto and tenor saxophones, clarinet; Eric Dolphy, alto saxophone, bass clarinet, flute; Richard Wyands, piano; George Duvivier, bass; Roy Haynes, drums (formerly on New Jazz 8255)

The teaming of Oliver Nelson and Eric Dolphy in the early sixties was brief, a mere intersection of musical paths. It resulted, however, in some memorable recordings released under Nelson's name: "Screamin' The Blues," "Blues And The Abstract Truth," and "Straight Ahead," the latter a 1961 session recently re-released as part of Fantasy's ambitious reissue series.

In the liner notes to "Straight Ahead," Nelson explains that his main task as soloist on the album was "not to sound like Eric." His concern is understandable given the strength and individuality of Dolphy's playing and the fact that both men shared the alto sax as their main horn. Nelson is successful in his task, however, and this album is rewarding as much for the saxophonists' differences as it is for their common ground.

Nelson's sound is solid, confident with an unshakeable bluesy swing that almost threatens to swagger. Debts to Coltrane and Rollins are filtered through Nelson's love of the blues and his elegance of economy. Nelson chooses his notes carefully with an arranger's logic that gives his solos precision and completeness; always sensible yet never predictable.

Where Nelson is relaxed, Dolphy is restless, driven with an urgency that seems barely able to wait out the theme. Urgency is abetted by an inquisitiveness that spills each composition onto the floor in order to see how it is constructed. Pushing tempos, tugging at phrases, rearranging notes, Dolphy assembles jagged solos from the pieces at his feet. Elegance be damned; his improvisations careen and teeter but, in the end, they are architectural marvels of sound.

Six And Four, built on repeating segments of 6/4 and 4/4, sets the two musicians in relief. Nelson solos with an articulate elaboration on the theme, building each phrase from the ones that precede. He delights in the transitions, swinging neatly from 6 to 4 then climbing back to 6. Dolphy aims for the stars using the transitions as springboards to launch torrents of hot notes over the heads of the rhythm section.

On the title track, a buoyant two-alto chase, Nelson is fleet but controlled while Dolphy blazes with a smoking edge. Trading fours, they volley ideas back and forth in a "You say tomato, I say hot pepper" routine that is startling for the gusto with which the two compare notes. ***Images*** is a haunting melody presenting two faces of melancholy; bittersweet for Nelson, stark for Dolphy.

Too strong a contrast can turn an intended dialogue into two opposing monologues. There is no danger of that here. On ***Ralph's New Blues***, the dying notes of Dolphy's searing bass clarinet solo are snatched up by Nelson on tenor who plays them sweetly and then wrestles them to the ground again. ***Mama Lou*** is a marvel of telepathy from its quiet reflective opening to its joyful midsection where Dolphy playfully tosses Nelson some of the latter's phrases.

The rhythm section is excellent throughout the album. Richard Wyands is graceful if somewhat in awe of the two hornmen. Bassist George Duvivier is unswerving in his dedication to the melody, a solid beacon in the dangerous shoals of Dolphy's improvisations. Roy Haynes as always is a master, the perfect complement to Nelson's swing and Dolphy's sting. But the album belongs to Nelson and Dolphy, the former with a microcosmic delight in the inner subtleties of composition, the latter with a macrocosmic hunger to find in each piece a key to a wider world of sound. — ***Don J. Lahey***

THE VIENNA ART ORCHESTRA

VIENNA ART ORCHESTRA

The Minimalism Of Erik Satie
Hat Art 2005 (2-record set)

Side A — ***Reflections On Aubade / Reflections on Méditation / Reflections On Sévére Reprimande / Reflections On Idylle / Gymnopédie No. 3***; Side B — ***Gnossienne No. 3 / Reflections On Gnossienne No. 2 / Reflections On Gnossienne No. 1 / Satie Ist Mir Im Traum 3x Nicht Erscheinen***; Side C — ***Vexations 1801 / Vexations 1611***; Side D — ***Vexations 2105***

It seems only fitting that the rebellious and unorthodox life and music of the French composer, Erik Satie — exerting, as it did, such a deep influence on other musicians of his day (Debussy, Honegger, Milhaud, Poulenc, Virgil Thomson) — should continue to fascinate and sustain today's performers in their quest for originality. "We should have a music of our own," he wrote to Milhaud, and proceeded to fashion countless compositions guided more by instinct and eccentricity than by any desire to leave behind some legacy of works to be mulled over by doting critics or admiring performers. Titles were often deliberately grotesque and satirical: ***Morceaux En Forme De Poire*** (Pieces In The Form Of A Pear), a concession to those who criticised his lack of musical form; ***Préludes Flasques*** (Flabby Preludes); ***Affolements Granitiques Autour De Treize Heures*** (Granite-like Distractions About 13 O'clock); ***Piéces Froides*** (Cool Pieces). One work bore the strange epigraph, "Play like a nightingale with a toothache," a dilemma, surely, for any performer. His love for sounds, for simplicity of expression, and for flagrant harmonic dissonances, together with his affiliations with Parisian bohemian life (Dadaism, Surrealism — Cocteau, Picasso, Diaghilev), set him apart from others and against anything that took itself too seriously. Yet his music retains a clarity and beauty in its very efforts to provoke. Behind the bravado lay a profound awe for ritual and ceremony; his ***Gymnopédies*** and ***Gnossiennes*** were vaguely inspired by an interest in ancient Greek life; his solemn ***Mass For The Poor*** was dedicated to those struggling masses with whom he shared existence and to the church itself, a force in his life he never totally abandoned. Nevertheless, it is for that independent spirit, running counter to the powerful Romantic and Impressionistic outpourings which shaped the musical world of his day, for which he is best remembered. "I wish I knew what sort of music will be written by the children who are four years old now," he once told Milhaud; these two recordings serve, in part, as a long-awaited answer to that question.

The Vienna Art Orchestra reflects here the true spirit of Satie. The progression of compositions, as presented on the two recordings, is a logical projection of those artistic influences which fascinated and influenced him, ranging through the paradoxical and satirical collages of the Dadaist, to the fanciful, irrational patterns of the Surrealist; what follows is a perfectly natural, conjectural extension of what might have been an evolutionary stage in Satie's search for simplicity and uniqueness; the hypnotic, stripped-down style of the Minimalist. Indeed, his musical companions of today, had he survived, might well have been the likes of Philip Glass, Steve Reich and Terry Riley.

The opening numbers, ***Aubade*** and ***Meditations***, drawn from Satie's ***Avant-Derniéres Pensées*** (Penultimate Thoughts) and dedicated respectively to composers Paul Dukas and Albert Roussel, are musical inversions of what their names suggest. ***Aubade***, with its opening circus-like rhythms and instrumentation, reminiscent of an Art Ensemble of Chicago performance, is most undawn-like; rapid staccatos and brassy guffaws laid down over a strong orchestral ground swell are hardly in keeping with the pensive mood of meditation. This is characteristic of Satie's tongue-in-cheek humour, evident, for example, in his orchestral work ***Parade*** with its raucous tin whistles, engine roars and the unexpected clacking of a typewriter; here, too, the sudden descents to a paired trombone and flute, or a blending of wordless voicings with tinkling percussive sounds retain that Dadaist determination to force the unanticipated upon us.

The remaining performances on Side A (including ***Idylle***, the third portion of Satie's ***Avant-Dérniéres Pensées*** and dedicated to Debussy) and all but the last number on side B, might readily be deemed strongly Surrealistic in nature. Though brief introductory passages tend to be faithful to Satie's original compositions, the "reflections" that grow out of them are more automatic than reflective, drawing heavily upon the imagination and improvisatory skills of the performers, so that the old is made new, just as Satie's works themselves were fresh and innovative approaches to the music of his day. Whether it be through the unexpected interplay of vibes and tuba (***Sévére Reprimande/Gnossienne No. 1***), the mournfully rich and plaintive trombone solo (***Gymnopédie No. 3***), or the sudden conjunction of sopranino and tarabuka (***Gnossienne No. 1***), capturing some ancient eastern rhythm, the results are always unusual and captivating as one subjective pattern flows freely into another.

Satie Ist...Erscheinen seems, to me, a pivotal number. Loosely translated as "Satie thrice did not appear to me in a dream," it is not a Satie original; dependent upon tamboura and soprano sax (wouldn't Albert Ayler have enjoyed this!), it appears, as its title implies, to end without any final resolution, tokening, perhaps, the three ***Vexations*** to follow. The ***Vexations*** are numbered sequentially, so that the movement is always forward, with the last (***Vexation 2105***) displaying the most pronounced minimalistic effect in its beautifully blowsy bass clarinet set against the vibes. I suspect that a John Coltrane, a Jimmy Giuffre, or an Eric Dolphy would have sensed the logic of the unfolding pattern.

The musicianship throughout is superb, and the vocal nuances of Lauren Newton, Ella-like on occasion, conjuring up comparisons with Kay Davis or Adelaide Hall at times, are ethereal and fitting. A word of praise must go, as well, to the recording engineers who have produced a package of exemplary quality. It is

MATHIAS RÜEGG (Photograph by Wolfgang Grossebner)

THE VIENNA ART ORCHESTRA

a recording that defies categorisation; its appeal lies beyond the boundaries imposed by the labels "jazz" or "classical" music.

— John Sutherland

VIENNA ART ORCHESTRA

The Spectrum, Montreal
October 15, 1984

Mathias Ruegg, leader, composer and arranger, with Lauren Newton, voice; Wolfgang Puschnig, Harry Sokal, Roman Schwaller, reeds, flutes; Karl Fian, trumpet, flugelhorn; Herbert Joos, bass trumpet, flugelhorn, alpenhorn; Christian Radovan, trombone; John Sass, tuba; Woody Schabata, vibes, percussion; Uli Sherer, keyboards; Heiri Kaenzig, bass; Joris Dudli, Wolfgang Reisinger, drums and percussion.

In my first review (Willem Breuker's Kollektief concert), I mentioned the Vienna Art Orchestra (and not "Ensemble" as I mistakingly wrote) as a leading exponent of the new creative music taking place in Europe; little did I expect that this very group would be the very subject of my next concert review. Coincidences aside, it's now time to face the music.

For starters, it should be made clear that this orchestra should not be equated to or pigeonholed into the traditional big band mould. As a case in point, the instrumentation is unorthodox so far as big band standards are concerned: a tuba anchors the brass section, a voice tops off the reed section, three percussionists (drums, vibes and what not) create a polyrhythmic backdrop and a conductor appears here and there to give an ensemble cue along the way. Moreover, short ensemble passages, more extended compositional passages and both solo and collective improvisation frameworks are juxtaposed in ways that enhance the music by various instrumental and timbral combinations.

Beyond the specifics of this group's special sound, the music they brought to their recent Montreal concert was entirely new, most of which will be appearing on an upcoming Hat Hut release entitled "Live At The Dead Sea," which was the opening piece of the evening. Not having heard "The Minimalism Of Erik Satie," I can only surmise that the music played on their first North American concert tour is quite distant from the minimalist genre.

The group's music that night was much more of an expansive nature, frequently shifting moods in each piece, allowing for a lot of improvisation throughout and presenting compositions with non-repetitive structures. All pieces except one were group originals: only the standard ***Round Midnight*** was included, and a dark rubato arrangement featured some intriguing flugelhorn work by Herbert Joos as principal soloist. He was featured on yet another piece, this time playing alpenhorn, of all things. After a solo which generated a good deal of applause, the piece segued into a rock beat which was a minor inconvenience to the otherwise excellent music.

Yet, for all the interesting elements that form their music, there is still a certain restraint or coolness in their approach, which seemed much more apparent in the first set. It may have been attributable to a gradual warming up process, because the level of energy rose as the set wore on and was brought over into the second one. In the latter set, the trumpet players were featured as soloists instead of sticking to ensemble work. Their contributions may have been one of the reasons for a much livelier and engaging second set.

Other noted contributions were the solos by an excellent Austrian multi-instrumentalist, Wolfgang Puschnigg. His decidedly irreverent speech-like solo on sopranino saxophone on his own composition ***Sights Of South Carinthia*** had the crowd cheering and chuckling at the same time. Lauren Newton's delightful soprano voice was like the all-important glazing on the Sachertorte. Using the full range of her vocal abilities, she was featured on two numbers; in one of them (***Lady Day***), she first expanded on a short motif all by herself, then set her voice in counterpoint to John Sass's tuba from which the piece expanded into a growing structure involving the whole orchestra. A most effective exploration of sound and texture, highlighted by an interweaving of the voice with the instruments. In fact, every musician in the group deserves some mention, either for solo contributions or for composer credits.

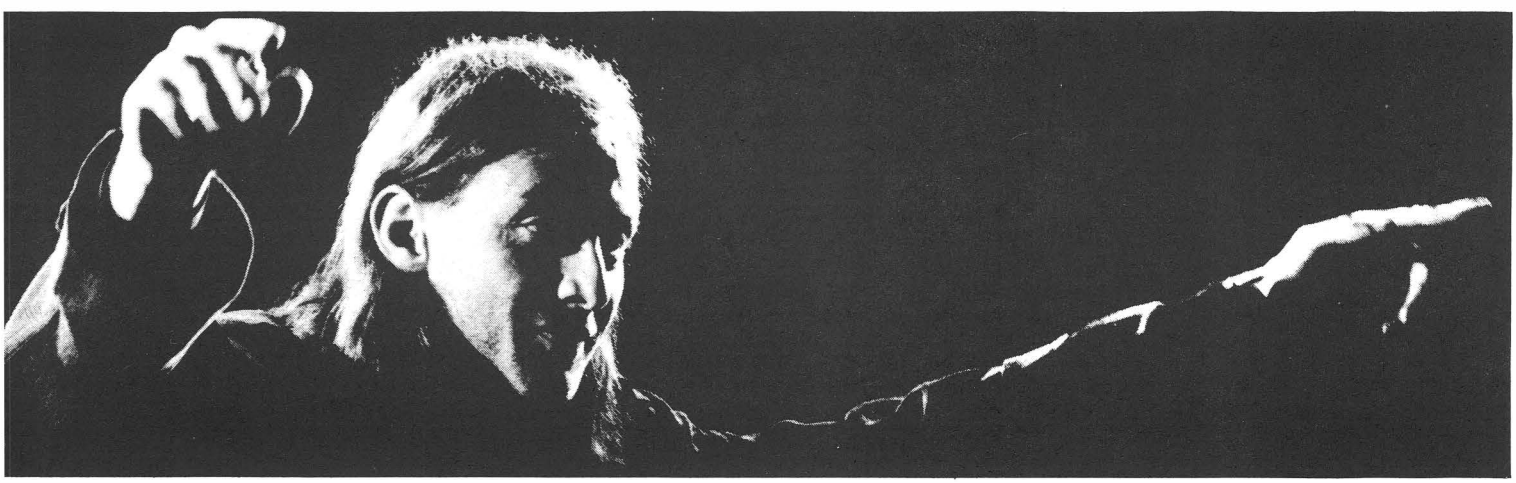
To put the VAO's music into perspective, it is yet another fine example of the music coming from Europe. Yet, to talk of a European style would be oversimplistic. In contrast to the antics displayed by Breuker and his Kollektief, the VAO reflects a more controlled atmosphere where the lines between compositional form and improvisation seem neatly organised. Even though there is plenty of space given to soloing and some amount of free playing, a certain cerebral feeling pervades the music. As much as the music here in North America displays a good deal of intestinal fortitude, I can't help but feeling an underlying intellectualism that transcends the European approach to creative improvised music. It all boils down to the dichotomy between a music played from the heart and one played from the head.

But don't get me wrong. I'm not knocking one or the other: both are necessary and one can always accomodate the concepts of the other. That is what seems to be happening nowadays.

In any event, it is most welcome to see more and more European groups coming to North America and spreading the word. Over the last year, we have seen the likes of Steve Lacy's sextet, the Portal-Jeanneau-Humair-Texier group, Martial Solal, Willem Breuker and now the VAO all come to our shores, most of them for the first time. After years of greeting the jazz masters of America, the Europeans are now coming to see us with their own thing, showing us a thing or two at the same time. One can only welcome such a trend and hope for more in the future.

— Marc Chenard

Other Records by the Vienna Art Orchestra —
"Concerto Piccolo" hat ART 1980/81
"From No Time to Rag Time" " " 1999/2000



BLUES

A COLUMN BY DOUG LANGILLE

BYTHER SMITH's first ever LP, **"Tell Me How You Like It" (Grits GR-100)** is a welcome release. I remember way back in the early to mid seventies being impressed with Smith's emotive vocals and burning lead guitar work when, serving as house leader, he used to tear things up at Theresa's Lounge. Smith is in the Magic Slim tradition of raw, no compromise straight ahead Chicago ghetto bar blues. The music here is definitely in that genre. Smith is in excellent form, cooking up a storm in front of a tight, driving quartet. This ensemble gives the impression of being a working unit having put everything into place before stepping into the studio. The program is over forty minutes and all are vocals. Highlights include a burning interpretation of B.B. King's ***Hold That Train*** (check the lead work), and the driving originals, ***Tell Me How You Like It***, ***Walked All Night Long***, and ***You Ought To Be Ashamed***. With a strong, well-engineered sound and clean pressing, this is a definite must for contemporary Chicago blues guitar fans. Can't say enough good about this one, as it certainly satisfied my expectations about what a Byther Smith LP should be. Contact Grits Records and Artist Management, 4909 Park Drive, Houston, Texas 77023, USA.

Also from the first-ever feature LP department comes **A.C. REED**'s **"Take These Blues And Shove 'Em" (Ice Cube IC 1057)**. Tenorman A. C. Reed (Aaron Corthen) is internationally known for his sideman and warm-up vocal role with the likes of Junior and Buddy, Son Seals, and Albert Collins. On his own he has had a number of 45s on small Chicago labels plus a feature on the Alligator "Living Chicago Blues" series. Even Byther Smith records one of his compositions, ***This Little Voice***, on the Grits LP reviewed above.

"Take These Blues..." is the focal point of A.C.'s more recent attempt to be his own man. What we've got here is a driving, well-produced, funky Chicago blues program. Plenty of freedom for A.C. to wail on tenor while laying down good strong vocals with a slight Jimmy Reed shading. Casey Jones serves as co-producer and tight drummer. Other sidemen come from the Ice Breaker alumni with guests Phil Guy, Lurrie Bell, Carl Snyder and Billy Branch dropping in to lay down a contribution here and there. Seven of the eight cuts are originals, showcasing A.C. as a perceptive lyricist with a tongue in cheek wit. Check out ***Things That Get Me Off*** and ***I Am Fed Up With This Music***. The latter is a product of being a no-return-on-your-investment musician, crashing in roach villas and returning to Chicago broke, tired, and hungry for a wide range of amenities. The remaining titles are also worth a listen. Included is an outing of the Willie Dixon via Otis Rush ditty ***Howling For My Darling***. Please note there is not a version of ***Going To New York*** on this release!

I'm really impressed with this release — strong, wailing electric blues, good lyrics, variety and a clean mix and pressing. My only complaint is that the playing time is on the short side, just creeping over thirty minutes. Ice Cube is A.C.'s label, and distributed through Rooster Blues Records at 2615 N. Wilton Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60614 or P.O. Box 148, London W91DY, England.

Now here is a reissue that has really made my day. Delmark has finally gotten around to reissuing **MAGIC SAM**'s best ever LP, **"West Side Soul" (DS-615)**. It has come out in the same cover with the same notes. The music is superb, for this LP when it originally came out in the late sixties truly caught the magic of Sam's music. There was the relentless, driving guitar on rockers like ***I Feel So Good*** and ***Lookin' Good***, and soaring, spine tingling vocals on ballads like ***My Love Will Never Die***. Also included is the benchmark recording of ***Sweet Home Chicago***. Solid backing comes from the likes of Mighty Joe Young on rhythm guitar, Mac Thompson, Ernest Johnson and Odie Payne. A number of cuts feature Swede Per Notini on piano. In summary, "West Side Soul" has to be one of the all time great contemporary Chicago blues classics.

Also in the Chicago vein comes **THE LEGENDARY BLUES BAND**'s **"Red Hot 'n Blues" (Rounder Records 2035)**. The L.B.B. is essentially the pre-Lovie Lee/John Primer Muddy Waters Blues Band. The band has been consistently kept alive and on the road with old core members, pianist Pinetop Perkins, drummer Willie Smith, bassist Calvin "Fuzzy" Jones, and harpman Jerry Portnoy. A number of guitar players have come and gone since Luther Johnson cut out on his own a few years back. At the time of this, their second LP, Peter Ward was the unit's guitarist. Now, this group sort of reminds me of the Aces — a good, solid, functional unit brought to life by some hot piano and harp by Perkins and Portnoy.

For "Red Hot" the basic unit is joined by ex Roomful Of Blues guitarist Duke Robillard, and the Roomful reed section (baritone, alto and tenor). Vocals are divided up amongst Perkins, Jones and Portnoy with Perkins nicely emphasizing the roots with ***Come Back Baby*** (Carr), ***How Long*** (Crudup), ***I Almost Lost My Mind*** (Ivory Joe), and ***High Heel Sneakers*** (Tucker). Jones and Portnoy stick to some Portnoy originals with ***Do The Get Down***, having a real World War II jump feel to it, and ***Crazy About That Thing***, having a real post-war Chicago sound. The program closes with a slow, late hour Walter Jacobs inspired instrumental featuring some nice harp by Portnoy. All in all the vocals and playing are warmer than on the Legendary's first Rounder release. The horns add some punch, and, you know, there are some good moments to be had. Don't take this release for granted. Give it a listen.

Also Rounder deserves some praise for some recent reissues and airing of some previously overlooked material. Firstly, the anthology

SONNY BOY WILLIAMSON (Photograph by Val Wilmer)

"Angels In Houston" (Rounder 2031) should be a welcome addition to any serious blues fan's collection. The focus is on not readily available Duke singles from **Bobby Bland**, **Larry Davis**, **Fenton Robinson**, and as a bonus, the more obscure **James Davis**. With a few exceptions, the dubbing is from masters, resulting in a generally clean sound. As such, any duplication with the long forgotten Python Robinson/Davis boogleg reissue is irrelevant.

These are really classic, plush sides ranging from Bland's churchy ***Yield Not To Temptation*** and self confident ***Ain't Doing Too Bad*** to Larry Davis's hard-edged ***Texas Flood***, and Robinson's tasty ***As The Years Go Passing By*** and ***You've Got To Pass This Way Again***. The real bonus is James Davis with his superb interpretation of ***Blue Monday*** and his Little Johnny Taylor inspired blues ***Your Turn To Cry***. All have the classy Duke touch – hot lead guitar and punchy horn charts – firmly rooted on the urban blues/R&B side. Check this one for sure.

From **"L.A. To L.A." (Rounder 2037)** is a most enjoyable compilation of Bruce Bromberg produced sides by **PHILLIP WALKER** and **LONESOME SUNDOWN**, cut between 1969 and 1981. Four cuts are devoted to the down-home swamp sound of Sundown, with Walker and/or variants of his band at the time of the session providing backing. This humid swamp sound is personified in cuts like ***This Is The Blues*** and ***Crawl Back To Opelousas***. Somewhat out of this mould is the reflective blues ***My Bad Habit*** with some beautiful lead work from Tony Matthews. Vocally, Walker and Sundown combine for a jumping interpretation of Jimmy McCracklin's ***Steppin' Up In Class***. The remaining six cuts are devoted to Walker's more modern West Coast blues sound complete with this high register soulful vocals and stinging single note lead guitar work. To mention a few highlights – there are the classic ***Trouble In My Home***, the relaxed shuffle instrumental ***The Trace*** and the stone blues ***The Train***. This last cut is the pick of the entire program. The backing on this collection varies with West Coasters like George Smith, Tony Matthews, and Nat Dove making some solid contributions. ***The Train*** features some strong, atmospheric contributions by Llew Mathews on organ and Hollis Gilmore on tenor. Again, this Rounder compilation is worth picking up. Quality electric blues.

To say **GATEMOUTH BROWN**'s Peacock sides are hot Texas jump blues is somewhat of an understatement. For many, including myself, this was Brown at his cookin' best. Rounder's **"The Original Peacock Recordings" (2039)** presents 12 vintage Gatemouth Brown sides drawn from Don Robey sessions from 1952 through 1959. The sound is superior to previously released bootlegs, as the material is dubbed directly from (mostly clean) masters. Included are the classic violin and guitar instrumentals ***Okie Dokie Stomp***, ***Just Before Dawn***, and ***Ain't It Dandy***. Gate really tears things up in front of these full force Duke/Peacock session bands. Personal favourites include the scorcher ***The Midnight Hour***, ***Depression Blues***, ***Dirty Work At The Crossroads***, and ***That's Your Daddy Yaddy Yo***.

Now this first class Rounder reissue has been complemented by the Swedish Gatemouth reissue **"Atomic Energy" (Blues Boy Records BB-305)**. While the sound is not as good as the Rounder, "Atomic Energy" presents sixteen sides including some of Gate's early 1947 Aladdin efforts with the Maxwell Davis band (a real T–Bone stamp here), plus additional Peacock sides from 1949 through 1959 (no duplication). Again, there is some cookin' Texas jump here in the form of the instrumentals ***Atomic Energy*** and ***Gate Walks To Board*** (smoking interplay between Gate and tenor sax man Johnny Board), and vocal blues ***Two O'Clock In The Morning*** and ***Taking No Chances***. As with the Rounder, the Blues Boy has extensive notes with everything you ever wanted to know about Gatemouth Brown and his early classic jump sessions.

While on the topic of Gatemouth Brown, it is likely a good time to take a few lines to cover his recent release on Stony Plain Records (in Canada) and Rounder (in the rest of the free world) – **"One More Mile" (Stony Plain SPL 1064)**. Recorded in 1982 with a full horn compliment, it is typically high energy Gatemouth Brown with plenty of hot lead guitar and sizzling violin. There are also some nice horn arrangements in the Peacock tradition. Some were arranged by the Joe Scott alumnus, Homer Brown, who is also featured on tenor. The mood varies from the blues/R&B side with an interpretation of Roy Milton's ***Information Blues*** and ***Stranded***, to jump instrumentals including a remake of ***Ain't That Dandy***, to cajun in the form of the swamp variant of ***Country Roads – Sunrise Cajun Style***. The cut I really like is Gate's C&W interpretation of the Cecil Gant classic ***I Wonder*** – complete with pedal steel (sans horns). In summary "One More Mile" is hot, contemporary, and eclectic Gatemouth Brown served up in a well produced package. Possibly a pinch or two spicier than his earlier "new" Rounder release "Alright Again."

Also from Rounder (elsewhere) and Stony Plain (Canada) comes **JOHNNY COPELAND**'s **"Texas Twister" (Stony Plain SPL 1072)**. ***'Twister*** is full force Texas jump blues. Copeland pulls things along with his characteristically hot lead guitar work and strong vocals. Backing is from a driving rhythm section (in particular note Jimmy Wormworth's drumming), with a healthy horn compliment featuring trombonist, George Lewis. Archie Shepp sneaks in for some tenor on the blues ***North Carolina***, while current superstar Stevie Ray Vaughan shows up on a couple of cuts. Programwise there is a good mix of the type of pressure cooker jumps that Copeland et al are so good at, and nice, slow intense blues. Again, a strong release by Copeland along the lines of his first two Rounders. So much so that some critics may mumble about "sameness."

Getting back to the welcome release department is the new showcase LP by West Coast blues giant, **JOHNNY HEARTSMAN – "Music Of My Heart" (Cat'N Hat Records CNH-1001)**. Heartsman's early playing and arranging with West Coasters like Al King and Ray Agee have long been held in reverence. On this release Heartsman's versatility and talent as a composer, vocalist and multi-instrumentalist are demonstrated. While hard, West Coast blues are well represented on the likes of ***My Time After Awhile*** (featuring Texas blues vocalist Frankie Lee), ***My First Mind*** (featuring vocalist Curtis Salgado), ***Cleanhead's Blues*** and ***Move On Down The Line***, the program is varied enough to include a bayou sounding ***Goose Grease***, and poppish instrumentals like ***Besame Mucho***. Heartsman sings in a mellow baritone with an approach reminiscent of Dave Alexander. Instrumentally he mixes things up on guitar, keyboards and flute, with his clean, precise guitar work and organ accompaniment appealing more to my basic R&B tastes. My pick of the pack is ***My Time After Awhile*** – straight ahead hard blues. The rhythm section and horns provide solid, tasteful backing allowing Heartsman to shine. Don't be frightened by the ***Besame*** stuff. This is a classic release worth picking up. Cat 'N Hat Records are new, and can be contacted at 3435 Army Street, Suite 203, San Francisco, California 94110 USA.

Finally, there is the second **SONNY BOY WILLIAMSON** Storyville reissue, **"The Blues Of Sonny Boy Williamson" (SLP-4062)**. Recorded in Copenhagen in 1963, the format and ambience clones the earlier reissue, "Portrait In Blues" (SLP 4016). Sonny Boy demonstrates a certain easygoing sophistication in his two solo harp/vocals, the most interesting being ***When The Lights Went Out***. On several cuts he duets with either Matt Murphy on acoustic guitar or Memphis Slim on piano. The end result is some good, sympathetic, interactive playing, as illustrated on the plaintive ***Why Are You Crying*** with Murphy, and ***Same Girl*** with Slim. The remaining ensemble sides are characterised by a relaxed swing. For these Matt Murphy plugs in, and Bill Stepney materializes on drums for some trio and quartet renderings. Chicago ensemble fans will like ***Movin' Out*** and ***Chicago Bounce*** with solid input from all. Like the first Storyville, "The Blues Of Sonny Boy Williamson" is a good addition to any Sonny Boy collection.

IN PERFORMANCE

MILFORD GRAVES

Milford Graves Duo and *Black Musical Extravaganza of the 40's* by filmmaker Bill Miles. "Jazztrack" Series, Greenwich House, New York City — September 15, 1984

> The history of jazz did not start in North America but in Africa and the Caribbean. Most people know this intellectually, but people don't get enough of an opportunity to hear it. — *Milford Graves*

Sound as ritual. Ritual as the act. Milford Graves, master drummer/percussionist, stalks behind the curtain at Greenwich House in the Village, New York City. Sh—Sh—Sh—...Sh— Shakare faintly permeates the atmosphere. Sh—Sh—Shh——Shhh.

The master dances through the curtain, on stage; continuing to fill the room with quiet vibrations — Sh—Sh...ShShSh. At first the audience is caught off guard. Nervous giggles bounce off and flatten out against the master's wave. A healing wave, filling the room — all eyes, ears, hearts are now his — Sh—Sh...ShSh — Mr. Graves is giving us a history lesson, spiritual lesson and again, a ***healing*** lesson.

Primal sound — heartbeat — internal drum. Second sound, external force as nature joins in song. The wind gathers us to ourselves, grasping with its interlocking power — huuahuuu — chorus of heart and wind — internal and external nature create the one. If Graves is the internal order, heart and vital organs, then his accomplice, Hugh Glover on woodwinds, is the structure of the environment; the house in which we live. Next sound, waves of the ocean unfolding against the coastline. In this place I wonder if blood makes waves, streaming to its appointed place, the juice of life pumped by the heart.

Graves sits low behind his drum set (two bass drums, high-hat, bottomless snare, cymbals, hand drum, bongos on a rack, Chinese gong) just off center stage at one of the finest non-club settings in Manhattan. The Steinway on stage serves as resting place for Glover's tools (alto, tenor saxes, bass clarinet, flutes). Graves dances, the leather soles of his white shoes strike rhythm against the hard wood floor. Glover chants prayerfully.

We are at the season premiere of "Jazztrack," a series of significant, special programs. These are events (eight in all) tailored by producer Kwame Shaw to suit the broadest possible audience, providing the richness of the African-American creative experience. Tonight's program focuses on the diversity of African-American musical contributions in this century. The opening "act" is Bill Miles's ***Black Musical Extravaganza Of The 40's***. A filmmaker and producer, Bill Miles is known for his award-winning public television documentaries, ***I Remember Harlem*** and ***Men Of Bronze***. Mr. Miles crafted a series of musical shorts (Delta Rhythm Boys, Waller, Basie, Mills Bros., Calloway, Armstrong, Bill Robinson, Slim Gaillard, Lena Horne et al) into a seamless voyage in time. As if those weren't enough, the great chef of celluloid added as gravy CBS-TV footage of Miles Davis's Sextet (Coltrane, Adderley, Kelly, Chambers, Cobb) backed by Gil Evans's Orchestra: ***So What***. Well, that just set 150-plus hearts of the most diverse, blended jazz crowd I've ever seen fluttering with joy.

HARRY EDISON and BUDDY TATE (Photograph by Paul Hoeffler)

Milford Graves was born in Jamaica, Queens, New York in 1941. He had access to drums from an early age. From that point, he has pursued, non-stop, his development on percussive instruments. His initial exposure to drumming was with hand drums. He later developed the facility of playing the hand drums with sticks. By the early sixties he was playing congas and timbales, leading Latin music bands in the New York City area. Around this time someone suggested that he play jazz drums, so he borrowed a friend's set (this was 1962) and in two years he was in the forefront of the music, playing in the October Revolution of 1964 (the concert series was produced by Bill Dixon and others, featuring unexposed new music of the day). Graves has a lifelong connection to the healing arts. He is a knowledgeable herbist, learning from the elders around him. He is also director of the Institute of Percussion Studies (IPS) which also has a subdivision called the Center for the Study of Psychological and Physiological Effects of Sounds. He is constantly exploring music with reference to the healing arts. He has recorded and performed with Albert Ayler, the New York Art Quartet, Andrew Cyrille, and Don Pullen, just to name a few. He currently teaches in the Black Music program at Bennington College, Vermont. Hugh Glover, also a member of IPS, has been associated with Graves for a long number of years. They appear on the LP "Babi Music," an independent release.

Milford Graves is a total sound percussionist. His concern for the medicinal qualities of music is expressed through the balance he exudes. His command of dynamics and colour so sure, rooted in the firmness of earth beneath our feet. I liken it to Tai Chi Chuan and other Eastern movement arts, forms Graves practices with a control equal to his playing.

Form into feeling. Feeling as form. Open stretches of desert bush, forest and coastline. Wide open spaces, community around the fire. Thus a simple song, melody slowly fills our beings with sweetness. The idyllic does not last long. There is the chase, the capture, the voyage. Then a new place; thatch-roofed huts contain our bodies but not our souls. Our souls are the shells of our wisdom from ancient times. This information we protect dearly, and pass it on to each ascending generation. Its purity shaped, refined and added to, but never lost or forsaken. Now it is called jazz, someone else's word. But we know no category, we know no bounds. And we instruct in the tradition of the ancients from every epoch. A simple method: dig the hole, plant the seed, tend the garden so that all may feed on our harvest. This is the spirit within Milford Graves and the experience of his music. Strong as iron, flowing as the rivers, soft as a morning sunrise, quiet as the night. — ***Brian Auerbach***

COUNT BASIE ALL STARS

Crest Theatre, Toronto
September 21, 1984

All star aggregations have proliferated in the past thirty years. Usually they are put together by promoters anxious to maximise the possibility of attracting a large audience. Musically they can range from the predictable to the extraordinary depending upon the chemistry of the occasion and the motivation of the participating musicians. All too often the musical content is slim, at best. The repertoire is drawn from the short list of overplayed standards which are mutually familiar.

All these factors seemed destined to come to pass when this particular group was assembled. Harry Edison, Buddy Tate, Al Cohn, and Al Grey are veterans of this situation. They were united with what turned out to be a most cohesive and interesting rhythm section — Norman Simmons, Milt Hinton and Butch Miles.

Friday's concert was the second of three and attracted a reasonable audience. Perhaps people were confused by the lack of personality

inherent in a band known as the Basie All Stars. Those who made the trek to the theatre were rewarded with some of the most explosively powerful music these men have delivered in some time. The energy level of the rhythm section was the foundation. Norman Simmons's sparkling piano was full of surprises besides being fundamentally right for these hornmen. Butch Miles kicked the band with the smoothness of Jo Jones or Sid Catlett in their prime while Milt Hinton is a fundamentalist whose primary purpose is to provide lift and swing.

It was apparent from the opening chorus of Lester Young's ***Let Me See*** that the musicians were up for the occasion. Harry Edison and Buddy Tate, in particular, were in a take-charge situation. The energy and power of their playing overpowered everything. Their solos were sharply defined, full of their enduring individuality but marked by a deeper sense of belief. It was an awesome occasion for the deliverance of the jazz message. Al Cohn and a surprisingly subdued Al Grey counterbalanced the intensity of Edison and Tate with finely honed, yet understated improvisations which gave this band an interesting depth and balance.

Jive At Five and ***Tickletoe*** were other band numbers which framed solo features for each band member. Both Tate's deeply melancholy ***Blue And Sentimental*** and Cohn's expressive version of Duke Ellington's ***Do Nothing Till You Hear From Me*** were individual highlights.

In many ways this concert was a surprise. One expects excellence from musicians of this calibre but they do not always work together with the commitment and enthusiasm they showed here. After all, most of them have been doing the same thing for more than forty years. It is hard to get uplifted all the time but the spirituality of what they do ensures that moments such as this can still take place.

— John Norris

UNITED FRONT

Great American Music Hall, San Francisco
August 23, 1984

With pianist Rudi Mwongozi as a new recruit and the Middle Passage string section of violinist India Cooke and cellist Cash Killion providing strong support, United Front gave another fine jazz performance coming from an ancient-to-future internationalist perspective.

George Sams's opening composition, ***'N Harmony And 'N Balance***, revealed to us that blues/life experience is not static, but a struggle of contradictions. Sams's working class brass was so nasty, it shoved the wax out of my ears. But wait! That bluz saliva from his horn suddenly flowed into a gentle blue stream of passionate lyricism.

Sams's other piece, ***Lost Legacy***, served as an appropriate closer for the concert, reminding us that Street Music is not a lost legacy. Lewis Jordan earned his spare change with a lively alto saxophone solo based on his concrete "live" experience as a former street musician in San Francisco.

Rudi Mwongozi and bassist Mark Izu both contributed well-crafted compositions and fine playing. Mwongozi, a sensitive accompanist and soloist, utilised the entire keyboard extremely well. Izu's selection of attack/touch and pitch was amazing. He has created a distinct voice that no bassist could copy.

Multiple percussionist/composer Anthony Brown's ***Incantation Suite*** is a five-movement masterpiece. When it comes down to dealing with two or three pitches, Brown does it well. Whether he deals with African drum talking melodies, Anton Webern cells or Thelonious Monk riffs, Anthony Brown is a sophisticated composer and a bitch on the traps. In the last movement, ***Monk Strut***, the composer out-Monks Thelonious with a hard-swinging 11/8 groove which complements the preceding spiritual movement, ***Song Of Sorrow***.

To sum up, United Front continues to share an ancient-to-future internationalist perspective with other high level art ensembles. However, we must be clear that their art ensemble sound/experience comes from the Bay Area, not Chicago. Mark Izu's Oakland series piece tells that story. Lewis Jordan's convincing recitation of Langston Hughes ***Landlord*** poetry also tells us that United Front ain't going to be evicted from the music world, even though the Great AmeReagan Music Industry has tried.

Because United Front knows where they are coming from, they know where they are going.

— Jon Jang

THE BILL SMITH ENSEMBLE

Faculty Of Music Recital Hall, The University Of Western Ontario, London, Ontario
October 27, 1984

Bill Smith, sopranino and soprano saxophones; David Prentice, violin; David Lee, bass, cello; Arthur Bull, guitar.

Passions exploded in the soporific insurance capital of Southwestern Ontario, forcing some Londoners to wake up and think.

It's about time. Now that Eric Stach is on the road most of the year, and the kazoo-toting Nihilist Spasm Band is self-exiled in a Gallery cubbyhole, the creative music environment has languished seriously in the last few years.

Enter The Bill Smith Ensemble. The debut concert by Canada's foremost improvisational unit heralded the launching of "New Directions," London's first showcase of avant-garde jazz on Radio Western, CHRW-FM. More significantly, the concert was the morphogenesis of improvisational music performance in the Forest City. Trying to counteract classical gas stifling the Faculty Of Music Recital Hall (home of recitals by repressed classical saxophonists) Smith gave the Hall nothing short of a musical catharsis.

An eclectic audience of around forty might not have realized this was a catharsis yet they listened intently, applauded enthusiastically and welcomed the opportunity to mingle with the musicians during intermission and after the concert rather than scampering away like scared rabbits.

One reason for this warmth may have been the Ensemble's stage presence. When London's avant-garde came out of hiding two evenings earlier for a concert by the Philip Glass Ensemble, they witnessed motionless, expressionless freezes by performers seemingly producing android music for androids. By contrast, whether drolly revealing the conceits of a classical music school, making a hip crack ("Where's the 'chic' singer?"), lampooning their 'tight' organisation, or explaining the concepts behind the music, the effervescent Smith maintains an honest, humane and often zany rapport with his audience. The time never drags.

The first half of the concert consisted of a mixture of jazz-influenced, totally free, and chamber style selections which proved how expertly the Ensemble is able to meld compositional approaches with improvisational ones. The energy easily flowed back and forth between the players as, on an almost telepathic level, they picked up on each idea initiated. A first time audience member, I was highly impressed with the warm, lyrical intensity created by the group and the explorations of areas of the imagination and sound that most performers never attempt.

The opening selection, based on a trilogy of children's poems by E. E. Cummings, featured the full rich serpent-like saxophone of Smith, supported by the ethereal bass of David Lee. Later, the pairing of David Prentice and Arthur Bull suggested a chance science-fiction encounter between the mournful beast of humanity (violin) and a cosmic percolator (guitar). Bill Smith's ***Configuration***, dedicated to Leo Smith, showcased the Ensemble's art of restraint, a compression of shimmering, unified sound. The first half of the program was rounded out by a feast for the soloists, with David Prentice's ***If I Don't Fall*** and Smith's ***Interludes***.

It might have been entitled ***The Grinch Who Stole Honeymoons***. After a fifteen-minute intermission to work up a frenzy for mixed-media performance, Smith returned with a wickedly acerbic satire on ***Marriage***, a Gregory Corso poem. Black comedy and pathos suffused throughout, the sound-poem potently evokes Gothic nightmare imagery reminiscent of film director John Nance (***Eraserhead***). For the anti-hero of the tale love almost never raises its frightened head, burdened down by instances of paranoia ("winking bellboys and whistling elevator operators" perniciously anticipate the climax of Marriage, American Style) and humiliation (a sixty year old with pee-stained underwear, a boy meeting his girlfriend's parents, asking "Where's the bathroom"). Whether focusing on toothless eighteenth-century hags, a rat-infested New York tenement, or the dark caves of Niagara Falls (where the Grinch lives) Smith is an incisive actor of dark imagery.

More grisly and more difficult to stomach is Smith's sound-poem ***Future Perfect***, originally recorded with Maja Bannerman. A narrative about the shattered illusions of war, it contains one of the most nauseating images of all — kids in Mickey Mouse plastic bags zipped up by priests so the radiation wouldn't spread. But then Smith is uncompromising in his pursuit of the truth, a responsibility that most 'entertainers' shirk off with candy-coated excuses.

The program concluded with one of my personal Smith favourites, ***Up (A Love Song) For Captain Robot***. Dedicated to Steve Lacy, the composition contains some of the most haunting opening strains in new music.

In a pre-concert interview over CHRW-FM, Bill Smith said "The Revolution is about making people ***think***." This evening with Bill Smith made a lot of people ***think***.

— Brian Hannigan

AROUND THE WORLD

CANADA

TORONTO — As 1984 rapidly draws to a close it seems appropriate that this column, the writer's first for ***Coda***, might dedicate itself at least in part to a brief backward-forward glance at the local jazz panorama, reflecting on some of the pleasant and perhaps not-so-pleasant music happenings of the current year.

On the club and concert scene the volatile, flux-like conditions of the past year or so finally appear to be stabilising themselves in the jazz-core area that exists within Yonge and Queen Streets' mile or so radius. While the lights at Lytes have not shone in almost a year and those at the Bourbon Street venue have dimmed considerably in the same time frame, more than a glimmer radiates from time to time from several close-by spots with more recently adopted jazz policies; notably the Bamboo, Meyer's, Remo's, 2 Elm and the recently opened East 85th...

While jazz ventures often entail the type of financial risk that can turn a timid bank manager's hair gray overnight there are, fortunately for the fan, promoters such as Goo-Goo Productions (Dan Gugula) who continue to promote artists of the calibre of **McCoy Tyner**, **David Holland**, **Art Blakey**, **Woody Shaw**, **Art Ensemble Of Chicago**, **Randy Weston**, **Abdullah Ibrahim** and their respective, talented henchmen, all of whom have appeared in the city during recent months...

Plaudits too to the Cafe des Copains, and to producers John Norris and Jim Galloway, for the now firmly entrenched solo-piano artist policy that has, in recent months, brought in **Tommy Flanagan**, **Kenny Barron**, **Ray Bryant**, **Kenny Drew**, **Art Hodes**, the late **Albert Dailey**, **Barry Harris** and a veritable who's who of internationally recognised pianistic elite. Showcased in a room that (a few occasionally loud-mouthed patrons aside) appears to have the atmosphere and clientele ideal for this format, its successful continuance seems assured...

Tough economic times extant, George's continues to maintain a policy that enables the city's premier jazzmen — veterans and up and coming alike — to display their considerable talents...

Congratulations to the sixteen-month-old radio station CKLN-FM (88.1). With a wavelength exceeding its total power by more than six times, this tiny station's staff who are small in number but huge in enthusiasm has more than successfully ventured into a territory where the local giants (AM and FM) have long since feared to tread — only if you are as old as I am will you probably remember when! Defying current, conventional rules of successful(?) broadcasting they have 'dared' to programme four consecutive hours of ***daytime*** jazz on a Monday to Friday schedule, showcasing everything from Bechet to Cecil Taylor and a lot of stuff before, after and in-between. This is the kind of pioneering from which legends once sprang. With both wavebands already saturated to capacity with pop, rock, punk and you name it, it's not extraordinary that jazz fans are opting or adopting to the station's own bannerline and 'New Source Radio.' Special weekly feature programmes are hosted by such well known and respected personalities as ex-CKQT broadcaster Hal Hill, Ted Davis, and ***Coda***'s own Bill Smith, and the whole becomes one of 1984's salubrious jazz triumphs... Fans shouldn't allow '84 to pass without also hoisting a glass' to the likes of Jack Cole (CHWO Oakville), Ted O'Reilly (CJRT Toronto), Brian Turner (CFMX Coburg), Gord Field (CKLA Guelph), CBC's Katie Malloch, and all the the others that put on those late night shows. The airwaves would indeed be a sorry place without them.

By the time this is being read a lot of good November gigs will be just a memory: **Artie Shaw** making an appearance with his own, Dick Johnson-led Orchestra at Royal York's Imperial Room (5th to 10th), **Gil Scott-Heron**'s group at the Bamboo (8th), **Rob McConnell**'s Boss Brass at the Bamboo (21st to 24th), **Elvin Jones**'s Quintet at the Diamond Club (12th), the legendary **Ornette Coleman** with his Prime Time Band for two shows at Larry's (25th), to name but a few.

December is already 'looking good' — one of the must-see events being the two-week gig by the great **Randy Weston** at Cafe des Copains. **Keith Jarrett** makes a return visit with present Trio members Jack DeJohnette and Gary Peacock in at Massey Hall (18th). Another one to whet the musical appetite is CJRT's Sesquicentennial/Bicentennial bash at Massey Hall (1st) with the combined Orchestras of **Paul Robinson** and **Rob McConnell**'s Boss Brass, or (if the credit card can take the heat) a rare opportunity to see and hear the work of famed **Gil Evans** and an orchestra augmented, we understand, by some of Toronto's finest musicians, at the new Music Gallery location (1087 Queen Street West) on December 2nd.

Last-minute info has a long-awaited return visit by **Sonny Greenwich** who comes into town on November 14, and, for lovers of the more traditional sounds, word that the Molson's and Harbourfront jazz series will be presented on slightly different format starting November 25 and continuing with a last-Sunday-of-the-month feature entitled "Molson Jazz Band Ball" to proceed throughout the winter. Jim McHarg, organiser, is intent on getting everyone dancing at these events and kicks things off with the **Rainbow Gardens Orchestra/Swing Sisters/Climax Jazz Band** for the opener, followed by the **Excelsior Jazz Band/Silver Leaf Jazz Band/Jim Galloway Quartet** taking care of business Sunday December 30. The New Year's season will start with **The Savoys/Hot Club Quartet/Maple Leaf Jazz Band** 'trio' on January 27...

And, finally; a plague on those media modes (they know who they are) who assail all of us unmercifully with ghoulish rock and pop videos, or devote column-upon-column to description of nightmarish concerts, but fail to acknowledge that Jazz even exists... — *Geoff Wilkinson*

The fall of 1984 began on an upbeat note and points to the promise of a busy winter for Toronto's jazz community.

An orchestra comprised of Count Basie sidemen held court in a 600-seat theatre for three nights late in September. **Buddy Tate** and **Harry Edison** headed the lineup which performed to half capacity audiences each evening. The main thrust behind the increased activity, however, has been due to Goo Goo Productions as major performers have appeared weekly at Toronto's BamBoo Club.

October saw the likes of **Dizzy Gillespie**, **McCoy Tyner** and **Art Blakey** within a three-week span. Gillespie's touring quintet now includes bassist **John Lee** who last greeted Toronto audiences as a profound element of McCoy Tyner's ensemble last July. While the solos are somewhat shorter, the reliance on the other members of the quintet greater, Gillespie retains the integrity and antic blend that has made him a living legend. That same evening, Michael Jackson played to over fifty thousand outdoors at the CNE stadium. Members of Toronto's Black Music Association presented Jackson with an award honouring his contribution to and proliferation of Black Music. Admirable intentions aside, it is this person's opinion that if an award was due to anyone on that evening it should have been presented to John Birks Gillespie, acknowledging his forty years of contribution to Black Music. A matter of profile for profile's sake, one might suppose.

McCoy Tyner's two nights were met with an enthusiastic response as he appeared with bassist Avery Sharpe and veteran drummer Louis Hayes. Tyner appeared at ease with this trio, more so than in his recent quintet shows.

The professor of jazz's school of high acclaim brought New York's Second Line to the BamBoo late in October. Art Blakey maintains his ageless presence preserved in part by the youthful influence of Terrence Blanchard and Donald Harrison. Yet Blakey reciprocates with the wisdom, experience and exposure that, for these musicians, would be elsewhere unparalleled.

After an absence of eight years, bluesologist **Gil Scott-Heron** made a triumphant return to Toronto for two sold-out shows. Backed by a quintet, Scott-Heron drew from material as far back as ***Winter In America*** and as recent as this summer's funk-rap single ***Re-Ron***. In the maelstrom of political music, Gil has always been a forerunner, yet the recent wave of pop protest songs may allow him the wider recognition so justly deserved. His band, Amere Facade, includes bassist Robert Gordon and tenorman Ron Holloway who has been with Gil since 1979. Both men appeared in Scott-Heron's 1982 film ***Black Wax***. The Facade's lineup also features synth player Kim Jordan (from Washington, DC) who tastefully injects funk riffs around and through Holloway's solos. The band goes into the studio in January.

Finally, as the future of Bourbon Street remains tenuous a new club called East 85th And Front has emerged. Featured performers include **Red Rodney**, who opened the 100-seat venue in mid-October and legendary guitarist **Sonny Greenwich**. — *John W. Jones*

CANADA — The new Music Gallery is now in operation at its location of 1987 Queen Street West. It remains home for the CCMC as well as a showcase for a wide variety of contemporary musical expressions. **Freddie Stone** was show-

RANDY WESTON (Photograph by Jean-Jacques Pussiau)

cased in a rare appearance November 2 and **Gil Evans** was artist in residence November 28 through December 2 in a program organised by Tim Brady. Evans fronted Toronto's Composers Co-operative Jazz Orchestra in open rehearsal as well as a concert.

1984 has been a year of change for Toronto's jazz scene. Part of the evolution has been the renovation of George's Spaghetti House. The jazz room is now on the second floor in a nicely furbished room which somehow seems better suited to the music than downstairs. The music program remains much the same with Moe Koffman in residence on a regular basis. Other recent incumbents have been **Brian Browne**, trombonist **Rob McConnell** and **Ed Bickert**, **Aaron Davis**, and **Doug Riley**.

David "Honeyboy" Edwards was the first in a series of acoustic blues artists to be presented at the Rivoli by West Coast Productions. **John Cephas** and **Phil Wiggins** came up from Washington, DC November 22-24 and the initial series ended with **Archie Edwards** December 6-8.

Jim Galloway, **Peter Appleyard**, **Ed Bickert**, **Rob McConnell** and **Guido Basso** performed at the Malvern Recreation Center October 19 in an Arts Scarborough presentation...Both Rob and Ed were also among the performers at the 1984 edition of the Canadian Music Show held November 8-11 at the CNE...**Nick Cerulli** substituted for Terry Clarke with the **Boss Brass** at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa and at Toronto's BamBoo Club. Terry will be out of action for several months after slipping on dry ice at a CBC soundstage and breaking his leg in several places...The **Rainbow Gardens Orchestra** will enjoy a winter break in January when they perform on board the Nieuw Amsterdam in a cruise organised by Brotherton's.

Export is the name of a new Montreal based quartet featuring Charles Ellison, Steve Holt, Fred Hamilton and Pete Magadini. Their debut engagement was at L'Air du Temps October 18-20. The new **Wray Downes-Dave Young-Reg Schwager** Trio were there in November as was saxophonist **Nick Ayoub** and guitarist **Nelson Symonds**.

Stu Broomer and **John Mars** toured regional centres in southern Ontario in October while Paul Cram's **Kings of Sming** were out west in Saskatchewan, Alberta and B.C....**John Handy** performed for the Edmonton Jazz Society October 30-November 3 with the **Tommy Banks** Trio and **Art Farmer** and **Clifford Jordan** followed behind for performances November 20-25. These and other events take place at Yardbird Suite (103 Street and 86 Avenue), the new home of the Edmonton Jazz Society.

Final nominations in the jazz category for the 1984 Juno Awards reflect the altered format. Independent companies will find it more difficult to have their records nominated: the winner will be determined from two Concord LPs by **Fraser MacPherson** and **Ed Bickert**, two from Innovation (**The Brass Connection** and The **Boss Brass**) and **Steve Holt**'s Plug LP "The Lion's Eyes"...**Oliver Jones** received PRO Canada's Jazz Award for 1984...**Ed Bickert** and **Rob McConnell** have a duet LP on Innovation Records. WEA Canada is now releasing the **Ornette Coleman** Atlantic catalogue in Canada following good response to its Coltrane and MJQ releases. It only took twenty years for this to take place! — *John Norris*

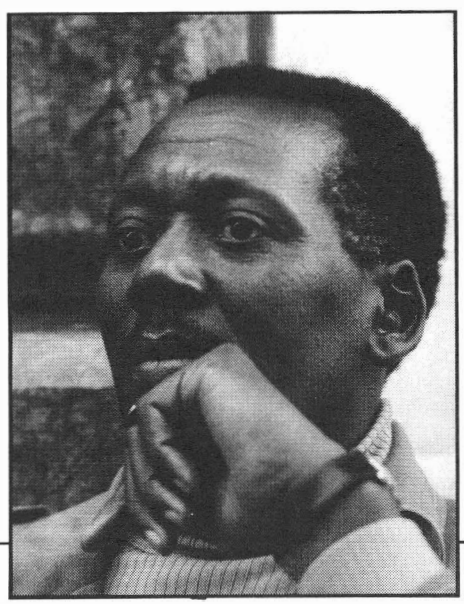
AMERICA

BALTIMORE — The Soviet film ***Jazzmen*** (also known as ***The Jazz Man*** and ***We Are Jazzmen***) which is a state-sponsored feature directed by Karen Shakhnazarov was screened in Baltimore on October 27, as part of this year's Claire Walker Festival of Russian films. Like many (most?) Soviet popular movies, 1983's ***My Iz Dzhaza*** — scripted by Shakhnazarov and Alexandr Borodyansky — is rather blatantly a film with a message or two, and here the message to the general public is that it's okay to like jazz, since it is the music of the oppressed Negro. No matter what Stalin and company may have said about decadent noise.

The story begins in the twenties in Odessa, a seaside city caught up in what appears to be the Russian version of the roaring twenties: there are gangsters afoot, barroom brawlers who nonetheless dig ***jass***. Our mythical hero Kostia Ivanov (toothy, earnestly personable Igor Sklyar) is a conservatory pianist whose love of jazz earns him reprimands from his teachers. Saddened but determined, Kostia recruits two skeptical street musicians, banjoist Stepan and drummer Jora, and they start a novelty trio. A fortuitous meeting with an aging, non-progressive 'legit' alto saxophonist leads to the formation of Ivanov's classic quartet.

They journey to Moscow, where the group's sentimental adventures are interrupted periodically by encounters with (short-sighted) party members who do not perceive the music's revolutionary implications, and with (visionary) 'jazz experts' who do.

As music history, ***Jazzmen*** is the worst/most perversely amusing muddle since Hollywood's 1947 ***New Orleans***. The soundtrack (by Anatoli Kroll, conducting the Sovremennik Jazz Orchestra) contains hopeless anachronisms and invisible instruments; there's always a tuba or bass that's heard but not seen. During one episode, the group meets Cuba's Clementina Fernandez, "one of the world's most famous jazz singers" — played by a portly, presumably Russian woman (Larisa Dolana) in brownface makeup — whose music is a bizarre amalgam of twenties classic blues material, forties R&B arranging and sixties Aretha vocalising. At another point, an Odessan gangster fondly reminisces about seeing "the great Mitchell" in Chicago in 1908. If he means George Mitchell, the trumpeter would have been nine years old at the time and ten years shy of hitting Chicago.



The only aspect of the jazz tradition the film deals with at all accurately is the problem of showboating. Whenever the music/presentation gets overly theatrical — with too many wood-block breaks from drummer Jora, or too many funny hats — some right-thinking authority figure sets them straight. It would seem that the present-day Soviet leadership likes its jazzmen sedate, and it's hard not to see here a cautionary message aimed at the USSR's new wave: musicians like Vladimir Chekasin, whose performances are not always strictly musical — including humourous and spoken elements — and are thus somewhat unpredictable and uncontrollable. It's significant that, among the few American jazz musicians mentioned in the film, Kostia's favourite is the symphonic jazzman Sam Wooding, whose orchestra Gunther Schuller has called "Harlem's answer to Paul Whiteman."

To underscore the point that a non-flamboyant style breeds success, we jump ahead at the end of the film — after the group's first big Moscow concert has been officially squelched — to the quartet's ultimate vindication. We see them, decades later: plump, grey-haired, well-behaved and tuxedoed, playing to a packed, enormous hall at a Moscow Jazz Festival. Stepan has traded in his banjo for a trumpet, and the group's new music is a rather staid and pretentious cousin to hard bop. The players have arrived, but their music has lost its original crude vitality. Remote from the audience on a giant, high stage, our heroes look far more like representatives of the decadent bourgeoisie than like standard-bearers for the oppressed.

A couple of remarks about a recent **Sonny Rollins** concert, to supplement David Lewis's observations in ***Coda*** 198: at Morgan State University on September 21, Sonny played with less abandon than my colleague noted at his Ottawa show. Rollins seemed to be consciously conserving his energy. Buoyant and animated, he wasn't loafing by any means, but one got a sense that he understands the physical/psychological necessity for keeping some energy in reserve, perhaps because he's mindful of other tenorists who played more intensely but enjoyed shorter careers.

Most of the tunes he elected to play during his two short sets (in which he was backed by pianist Mark Sloskin, electric bassist Jerome Harris, and drummer Tommy Campbell) feature strong, recurring melodic hooks: the bouncy calypsos ***Can't Stop The Carnival*** and ***Mava Mava***, the riff tune ***Tenor Madness***, his blowzy original ***Best Wishes***, and Stevie Wonder's ***Isn't She Lovely***. In his solos, Rollins largely eschewed harmonic improvising to mull over these pieces' characteristic tag phrases, with almost obsessive persistence. There seems to be a link between this practice on Rollins's part, and the way Albert Ayler dwelt on the fanfare-like figures at the heart of his compositions. Although the two tenorists' respective sounds admittedly have little in common, Sonny seemed to be mesmerising himself with happily reiterated phrases, much the way Albert did. The music, while extraverted, seemed to serve a mantra-like function, played for purposes of spiritual purification as much as for our pleasure.

And his own. If Rollins didn't work extra hard on this night, he did seem to be thoroughly enjoying himself, and this listener came away satisfied if not wowed.— ***Kevin Whitehead***

BOSTON — Since Labor Day a handful of clubs, arts organisations, and promoters have created a musical renaissance in the Boston area and for the first time in recent memory, the fan of improvised music is faced with sometimes difficult choices between concurrent, worthwhile events.

The 1369 Jazz Club's new management consistently books the most creative international and local talent, both mainstream and avant-garde. **Sathima Bea Benjamin** sang in an unusual duet setting with **Buster Williams** on Labor Day weekend. In September **Ken Werner** and his trio, Cecil McBee on bass and Rashied Ali on drums, played from the 6th to the 8th, On the night I saw them they stuck primarily to medium tempo standards and originals, cutting loose only on the sets' final numbers, when Ali really dug in. McBee, a model of strength and melodicism, quieted the noisy audience with some attention-grabbing solos. **Raphe Malik**'s trio with special guest **Frank Wright** did two nights on the 12th and 13th. Wright's uninhibited blues shouting cum free jazz screaming was a good foil for Malik's more intellectual, though passionate, trumpet. William Parker and Syd Smart completed the group. September's "Celebration of the Avant-Garde" continued with a night of totally improvised music from **Joe McPhee**, **Bill Smith**, guitarists **Raymond Boni** and **Joe Morris**, and violinist **David Prentice**. The pointillistic dartings of Smith and Morris played hide and seek among the clouds of sound generated by Boni and McPhee (who was trying out a newly purchased echo pedal for his soprano), and Prentice travelled at will through the intricate textures.

In October, the **Dewey Redman** Trio with John Betsch on drums and last-minute choice Miroslav Vitous on bass played before sellout audiences on the 12th and 13th. The set I caught was an eclectic one consisting of a bebop standard, a Middle Eastern flavoured musette number, and a surreal blues on which Redman alternated singing and talking through his tenor and playing notes. Although Vitous was somewhat of a mismatch, Betsch was superb throughout. Guitarist **Joe Morris** and his trio opened for them on Friday before heading to New York on Saturday for a gig at Inroads. Morris, bassist Sebastian Steinberg, and drummer Lawrence Cook had the stage to themselves on October 3. October closed at the 1369 with **Clifford Jordan** on the 26th and 27th and the **Kenny Barron** Quartet on the 29th.

At other clubs, the Willow Cafe over in Somerville continues to give The Fringe every Wednesday night and booked Andrew Hill for a rare East Coast appearance on October 21st and 22nd. **James Williams** bid farewell to Boston (he moves on to New York City) at the Willow with a quintet on the 27th. The **McCoy Tyner** Trio was at Jonathan Swift's on October 3 (opposite Morris at the 1369) and the **Phil Woods** Quintet was there on the 22nd. The **Art Ensemble Of Chicago** paid their yearly visit to Swift's on the 20th of September, the same night McPhee and company were in town.

The **Vienna Art Orchestra** stopped in Boston on October 17 for a spectacular Jazz Coalition-sponsored concert, an afternoon workshop for high school students and some unscheduled, informal blowing at the 1369.

Coincidentally, **Art Farmer**, who regularly uses the VAO's Harry Sokal and Joris Dudli in his European quintet, played the Starlight Lounge the night before, and taught a master class at Harvard the day after. A little bit of Vienna on the banks of the Charles!

Mobius Theater, an alternative arts space in Boston, presented **David Moss**, solo percussion, on the 24th, and **Lowell Davidson** in solos and duets with Joe Morris on the 25th, as part of their "5 Nights/October" music series.

Out in Waltham at Brandeis University on the same night as Davidson, **Jemeel Moondoc** and **Dennis Charles** played a free concert sponsored by WBRS. **Gunter Hampel** and **Jeanne Lee** are scheduled for November 15 as part of that same series.

Finally, **Ornette Coleman** and Prime Time will appear on December 15 in a concert produced by Modern Productions. — ***Ed Hazell***

DEWEY REDMAN (Photograph by Peter Danson)

DETROIT — This past year marked the fifth anniversary of the Montreux-Detroit Kool Jazz Festival, and there were more than a few special notes played to dispel the gloom of a sporadically damp Labor Day weekend. **Dizzy Gillespie** poked the bell of his trumpet into the air in front of J.C. Heard's fifteen-piece orchestra. At Music Hall the thing was swing, in a mix-and-match set combining the varied skills of saxophonist/trumpeter **Benny Carter**, pianist **Teddy Wilson**, bassist **Arvell Shaw**, guitarist **Remo Palmieri**, vibist **Red Norvo** and drummer Heard. **Tania Maria** attracted good crowds to the Ponchartrain Hotel, and **Betty Carter** brought them all the way out to Eight Mile and Livernois and Clarence Baker's venerable establishment. Baker was honoured at the final concert (Detroit Jams V). Stroh Breweries underwrote the nonstop free concerts at Hart Plaza as well as a series of records displaying performances by the Detroit contingent from the past four festivals. The festival did well, and it no longer is a question of whether there'll be a next year, but of who gets invited.

Montreux-Detroit brought **Cecil Taylor** for a solo performance at the Detroit Institute of Art's Recital Hall on September 1; **Sam Rivers** had been there the night before. Cecil is not for the faint of heart (or closed of ear) and the small crowd grew smaller as things progressed. It seemed to me, nonetheless, to be one of the more accessible of Taylor's infrequent Detroit appearances.

Cecil started out of sight, reciting poetry and vocalising over an off-stage microphone — "you are ego descended on the mother's side" was one of the more interesting fragments. Suddenly the voice fades, the man appears on-stage, stretch cap covering Rastafarian dreadlocks, Army fatigue shirt, white tennis shoes. More poetic fragments, the words repeated, syllables oddly stressed, Taylor all the while moving through different poses like Chinese shadow-boxing performed by a jerky robot. Finally, at the piano: landmarks like "time" (a regular pulse) are absent, harmony becomes colour, melody gets buried somewhere in the succession of sounds. Some free music seems unplanned, undirected, fingers flopping randomly on the keys. Taylor by contrast is always in complete control; everything, even those smeary up-and-down runs, has a feeling of clarity and precision about it. The music is almost claustrophobically dense, riotously jungled sonic islands separated by narrow channels of silence.

The performance — a long set, a shorter set and three brief encores — seemed to be one composition, held together by repeated internal elements (chord patterns, fragmented bass lines, textures). Cecil makes you hear differently. You can't tap your toes — so you learn to feel a pulse in the stop-and-start rhythm of the music itself. There are no singing C-major melodies — so you learn to hear echoes of melody buried in the repeated chord patterns and figures. After a while you realize that the dance and the recitations share the music's characteristics — quick leaps followed by sudden freezes, familiar elements (chords, movements, words) pulled/pushed/stretched out into unfamiliar shapes.

More than most, Cecil drives some people to ask "but is it jazz?" I myself always thought jazz was a lot like the English language itself — difficult to master, easy to use; tolerant of wide deviations; polyglot, international, inherently subversive in its variety of viewpoints; a borrower, transforming other languages' common currency into golden coins. Taylor's music fits in because it is rooted in the history of the music, addresses the same concerns, pushes at the boundaries the way his predecessors always did. Like all good jazz its essence is the unexpected.

The next afternoon we stopped at the reopened Palms/State Theatre to catch the reunited **Modern Jazz Quartet**. Ironic that something called "Modern" (connoting short-lived) should be among the most enduring associations in jazz — 29 years without a personnel change, almost forty years of joint creativity. An odd setting, too — the P/S is another old theatre, gone to seed, saved near the end and under restoration (the lobby was a real mess, with the original sixty-year-old ceiling, damaged in a modernisation, looking ready to crumble at any minute).

Milt Jackson and John Lewis are perfect complements, opposites who take different paths to the same endpoint. Jackson has always been the exuberant speaker-in-tongues, weaving sinuous, melismatic lines around a central blues emotionality, threatening to overflow whatever harmonic vessel temporarily contains his solos. Lewis, by contrast, stiff-backed, lips pursed as if he were blowing a stopped-up trumpet, forces that same emotion out through simple, almost tinkly lines — but the simplicity is deceptive, the delicate structure fashioned from wrought iron.

There have been some subtle shifts in the personal dynamics of the MJQ in this reunion edition. Jackson now shares announcing duties with Lewis, and he performed alone on ***Nature Boy***. Both Percy Heath and the deceptive Connie Kay were given solo spots, albeit unaccompanied. The repertorie here (at least) emphasized song forms and the blues over the neo-baroque favoured by Lewis. A new Lewis composition, ***That Slavic Smile***, opened the set. ***Connie's Blues***, from the new album, was at a perfect tempo for Jackson's extroversions. Percy Heath's feature was ***TNE***; preceded by ***One Never Knows***, followed by the ballad ***Echoes***. I was hoping for ***Bags' Groove***, but the encore was ***Django*** — almost unrecognizable except for the bass theme in the middle. A joy to have those four together onstage again.

The Creative Arts Collective's concert series at DIA opened on September 19 with the **Art Ensemble Of Chicago**. Bassist **Richard Davis**, last in town with Elvin Jones, showed other facets of his talent on November 3, backed by several CAC members. The **New Chamber Jazz Quintet** (which includes saxophonists Faruq Z. Bey and Anthony Holland) closed the series there on November 24. Meanwhile, Baker's moved into its 51st fall with three weeks in October devoted to pianist **Johnny O'Neal**, followed by Eddie Nucilli's big band **Plural Circle**.

In Ann Arbor, our friends at Eclipse Jazz opened the fall season up with the **David Murray** Octet on September 7, in what was probably the last Eclipse concert at the University Club — problems with the club's status and liquor license forced Eclipse to move **Abbey Lincoln**'s September 29 appearance upstairs to the much less congenial confines of the University Ballroom.

We missed Murray due to schedule conflicts, but we did catch Abbey Lincoln's first set. Lincoln (Aminata Moseka) has a remarkable stage presence and a more remarkable voice. I only recognised ***God Bless The Child*** of the eight or so compositions she sang; the rest are probably originals. Both music and lyrics were always interesting, and sometimes more than that — a 12/8 piece with something to do with "rivers on the freeway" was a delight. Delight is also a good word for her accompanying trio, all new names to me — James Weidman, piano; and brothers Billy Johnson, bass and Mark Johnson, drums. The drumming Johnson seemed to be the dominant force, but that may well be the result of the ballroom's swallowing of the other two instruments. They provided Ms. Moseka with excellent support, especially on the medium tempoed second-from-the-last composition (title unknown), for which she kicked off a tempo that swung perfectly.

Eclipse picked a local group, the piano/vocalist duo of **Kathy Ozer** and **Stephanie Moore** (augmented by bassist Bruce Dondero) to open the concert. Nice idea in theory, two vocalists — not so good in execution; the material was close enough in style to lead to inevitable comparisons which did not flatter the local contingent. Aminata Moseka Abbey Lincoln, however, can hold her own with almost anyone, and our only disappointment was the 45-minute length of her set. Recommended.

A few weeks later (October 20) I stopped off at Power Center in Ann Arbor to hear **Claude Bolling**'s Trio/Quartet/Quintet, including the irrepressible Larry Coryell on guitar. It was Bolling's show, part of a month-long US tour with Coryell, flutist Pamela Sklar, bassist John Goldsby and drummer Jean-Luc Peon. Bolling is an honest-Baroquer, mediating between the early seventeenth century and mixed-vintage jazz; the compromise here often seemed a little bland for my taste. DIA had, at the last minute, scheduled a very rare concert appearance by pianist **Alice Coltrane**, with bassist Reggie Workman and drummer Roy Brooks, on the same night.

The rest of Eclipse's season had the **Odean Pope** Trio at the beginning of November; **McCoy Tyner** on November 15, and **Pat Metheny** to help ring the cash register, on December 12. Eclipse ran a jazz lecture series again this fall (at WCBN-FM this time); lecturers included James Dapogny, Hazen Schumacher, Kim Heron and yours truly.

In Detroit, Dummy George's had vocalist **Spanky Wilson** and **Teddy Harris Jr.**'s Quintet through November 11, followed by **O.C. Smith**. The **Count Basie Orchestra** played Jamie's on 7 in Livonia on November 19. Odd gig of the month: **J.C. Heard**'s Orchestra playing a pregame concert at Eastern Michigan University's Homecoming game back in October. Drummer **Frank Isola** led a trio on Mondays at the Cafe New York; **Johnny O'Neal** played J. Michael Bottom's in Windsor at the end of October. The Soup Kitchen had bluesmen **Jimmy Johnson** and **John Hammond** in November. **Wynton Marsalis** performed at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor on November 29. **Steps** (Mike Brecker, saxes; Warren Bernhardt, keyboards; Mike Mainieri, vibes; Tom Kennedy, bass; Peter Erskine, drums) appeared at the State Theater in Kalamazoo (way west of here) on November 9, and followed with a concert with **Sonny Rollins** in Detroit November 11. — ***David Wild***

HARTFORD — The Hartford Jazz Society launched its 1984-85 season with a September 16 cruise down the Connecticut River. 1300 people packed the four-deck riverboat for an eight-hour excursion filled with music, drink and dancing. **Frank Foster** joined the **Don DePalma** Sextet in a hearty romp through the traditional jazz repertoire. Updating the repertoire with their original compositions, the **Joy Spring Jazz Quintet** played with the freshness of spirit that gives meaning to its name. Pianist Terry Eisen is the group's most distinctive soloist, modifying her linear approach with dashes of Monkish angularity and Pullenesque dissonance. Will Bartlett displays a remarkably lucid sense of structure on tenor, alto and soprano saxophones. Vocalist **Kitty Kathryn** and her trio create a party mood wherever they perform; her easy stage manner and effortless singing sent her audience stepping. I don't know what riverboat travel was like when Fate

Marable played the Mississippi from New Orleans to Saint Louis, but from Middletown to Long Island Sound and back, let me tell you: it's the way to go.

James Moody kept the Society's current flowing with his October 7 concert at Hartford's Holiday Inn. Apparently, the saxophonist has assimilated some of the onstage zaniness of his former employer, Dizzy Gillespie; his vocal parodies and free-associational raps veered between slapstick and surrealism. But Moody and his men were all about music when they blew. He opened the show with a high-powered tenor solo on ***Au Privave*** and Harold Mabern followed with an energetic piano solo. The mood the group established on the opener set the tone for the evening's music, which culminated with the most swinging version I've heard of ***The Shadow Of Your Smile***. Vocalist George Johnson added some inspired scatting on ***Night In Tunisia***, sustaining the rhythmic tension in the break before improvising lyrics as well as lines in his solo. Johnson also sang the Eddie Jefferson version of ***Body And Soul*** and supplied his own lyrics for ***My Little Suede Shoes***. Bassist Todd Coolman and drummer Eddie Gladden rounded out the group.

Wesleyan University opened its concert season with the newest edition of Leo Smith's **New Dalta Ahkri** October 13 at the school's World Music Hall. You might call Smith's latest music reggae-jazz fusion, since it incorporates the rhythms of reggae with the textural explorations that characterise his work. Some listeners might object to Smith's latest direction, but to my ears Smith has retained his musical integrity. Granted, he's trying to communicate to a more diverse audience. But his lineup of musicians as gifted and individualistic as James Emery, Marty Ehrlich, David Bindman, Thurman Barker and Michael Mills underscores his commitment to a music that does not sacrifice quality for communicability. Smith's Rastafarian chants, intoned in the dry voice of a Delta blues singer, simply lend a different emphasis to the quality that has always prevailed in his work: his abiding faith that human and divine love will triumph over social injustice.

The following Friday, October 19, Wesleyan featured its music faculty at Crowell Concert Hall. **Bill Barron, Bill Lowe, Fred Simmons, Wes Brown, Ed Blackwell** and Wesleyan alumnus **Jay Hoggard** presented two sets of first-rate music, highlighted by ***Thad's Whole Hog***. This Bill Lowe composition challenged the soloists with its changes in tempo and mood in much the same way Charles Mingus challenged his sidemen. ***Variations In Blue***, a Barron composition, impressed me with its almost geometrical lines. Normally a relaxed player, Barron soloed with a delightful but uncharacteristic intensity.

Although the music is doing well at the Hartford Jazz Society and at Wesleyan, the All Star Jazz series at the 880 Club has suffered from declining attendance. Nevertheless, **Melvin Sparks**'s return visit was a musical triumph. Admitting that he doesn't like to play out of one bag all night, Sparks ran his customary gamut of bop, Benson and blues with a technical facility that would send most guitarists back to the woodshed or into retirement. At one point, he just strummed his guitar, dropping licks from ***Eleanor Rigby***, ***Goin' Out Of My Head*** — whatever came to mind — with a musical sensibility that gave continuity to what would be rambling in the hands of a less accomplished musician.

Frank Strozier's return August 23 to the 880 was months overdue. Over the years, Strozier has become a more intense player, using his dazzling command of the alto saxophone to burn his way through Tranelike terrain. Which is not to dismiss him as derivative, but to say that his passion is comparable.

Equally impressive but in a slightly different way was **Bobby Watson**, who appeared at the club October 4. He builds to the same climactic heights as Strozier, but uses a more gradual approach to get there. The rhythm section of Don DePalma, Nat Reeves and Mike Duquette challenged Watson with deft shifts of tempo and strolling — a flexibility that has become the trademark of the house rhythm section.

Also featured at the 880 Club were vocalist **Paulette Chion** (August 30), **Benny Powell** (September 6), **Charles I. Williams** (September 14), **Warren Chiasson** (September 20), **Randy Johnston** (September 27), **Bill Saxton** (October 11) and the always exciting **Carter Jefferson** (October 18).

The 880 Club features the fusion music of **Street Temperature** (recently voted Hartford's most popular jazz band) on Fridays, **Matt Emirzian**'s quartet with vocalist Connie Di Natale on Saturdays and open jam sessions on Sundays. One Sunday night session stands out because bassist **Mario Pavone** prodded the normally straight-ahead rhythm section into exploring free improvisation. Pianist Don De Palma sounded very comfortable and expressive when he added dissonance and tone clusters to his eclectic stylistic range.

Resuming its weekend jazz bookings after a summer layoff, the Hillside Restaurant in Waterbury encountered the same dismal fan participation as the 880 Club. In September, **Tiny Joe** and **Ed Hickus** played for the walls and the hardcore contingent. In October, **Joe Fonda** and **Mike Mussalami** reached the same audience.

I'm hoping that the lull in attendance at the 880 Club and the Hillside ends with Indian Summer. If the clubowners can't pay the musicians, they might have to book more commercial entertainment to keep their doors open. For many years, the Hartford area was the home of talented but unemployed musicians. It was a drag to live in. To maintain the improved quality of jazz life in the area, only five percent of the people who rode the HJS riverboat would have to show up at the clubs on a given night. If the fans don't support the music, they can only blame themselves when they complain, "Man, this scene is a drag" and sit at home with their stereos turned up.

In Massachusetts, the **Archie Shepp** Quartet performed September 21 at the Iron Horse in Northampton. Appearing with the saxophonist were pianist Emery Smith, bassist Wade Nikklo and drummer Claude Aranius. Shepp's quartet also travelled to Philadelphia to play at the Afro-American Art Museum August 24. Avery Sharpe and Beaver Harris replaced Nikklo and Aranius for the Philadelphia engagement, and noted poet **Amiri Baraka** read his work with the group. Jazz Unlimited presented the **Avery Sharpe** Quartet October 6 and the **Al Terry** Quartet October 7 at the Eastfield Mall in Springfield, Massachusetts. The **Charles Green-**

lee Quartet appeared in concert at the Springfield Civic Center October 13. In addition to performing as a sideman with the above groups, pianist/educator **Emery Smith** played solo piano at Northampton's Avenue Restaurant several weekends in September and led the trio of bassist Earl Wormack and drummer Emmett Spencer that backed vocalist **Darlene Francis** in a September 30 concert sponsored by the Springfield Mayor's Office on Community and Cultural Affairs. Smith's trio also played at the Marriot Ballroom in Farmington, Connecticut October 23.

Northwestern Community College in Winsted, Connecticut hosted the Jazz History Narration Performance series sponsored by Jazz, Inc. Smith led the quintet that provided the music for the program. Appearing with Smith were saxophonists Judson Watts and Harold Holt, Wormack, and drummer Johnny Grieco. Smith and Wormack played as a duo at Raffa's Restaurant in Glastonbury Thursday evenings from August to October.

In addition to his heavy performing schedule, Smith teaches improvisation at the Artists Collective, jazz piano at Trinity College and the University of Hartford and the Community Music School of Springfield. While Archie Shepp was on tour recently, Smith taught Shepp's "Concepts In Afro-American Music" class at the University of Massachusetts.

The **Charles Best** Quintet, with trombonist Bill Lowe, plays Sunday evenings at A Touch Of Class in Hartford. Trumpeter Genghis Nor sat in with the group one night in August. **Paul Winter** premiered a new work, ***Sun Singer***, at Immanuel Congregational Church October 14. The **Mitchell-Ruff Duo** performed at the Chester Meeting House October 12. Pianist **Claude Bolling**, guitarist **Larry Coryell** and flutist **Pamela Sklar** appeared October 12 at Stamford's Palace Theater Of The Arts. Pianist **Barbara Frauenglass** began a solo engagement at Hartford's Municipal Cafeteria in October. Shenanigans features pianist **Chuck Blanchard** on Fridays and Saturdays. Sunday evenings in October, the club booked pianists **Charles Gigliotti** (7th), **Paul Bisaccia** (14th), **Peter Brown** (21st) and **Ray Cassarino** (28th). The New Britain Jazz Society featured a sextet of **Ken McIntyre, Bill Lowe, Trudy Silver, Cameron Brown, Philippe Crettein** and **Aaron Scott** at its October 28 meeting. The **Chic Cicchetti Big Band** plays Monday evenings at DePalma's Rockinghorse Cafe. Pianist **Don McKeever** plays Friday and Saturday nights at the Griswold Inn in Essex. — *Vernon Frazer*

NEW ENGLAND — The tail end of the summer found **Leo Smith** and his electric version of New Dalta Ahkri playing at the Martin Luther King school in Providence, RI, for a sizeable appreciative crowd. The band was made up of Thurman Barker on drums, Marty Ehrlich on reeds, Wes Brown on electric bass, and Alan Jaffe on guitar. Leo's electric sound features a strong emphasis on rhythm, and Barker's fluid percussion work was perfect for this outing. The snaky, semi-modal lines of Smith's newer compositions were no problem for the front line of Ehrlich, Jaffe, and Leo. Using both soprano and alto, Ehrlich soloed strongly all afternoon, and it reminded me that if any player has consistently improved over the last two or three years, it's Marty. His strength is in his direction. It seems he always knows where he is going with his solos, and like Henry Threadgill's alto work, this helps the flow of the compositions immensely. Leo's well-known brass sound has sharpened in the last year also. The pure energy that came out of his trumpet that day had people talking for weeks after. He is about to record this band, so be on the lookout.

In mid-September the **Art Ensemble Of Chicago** came through Boston celebrating their 20th anniversary together. Showing up a trifle late to Jonathan Swift's in Cambridge, the band had little time to set up their full array of equipment, so the waiting crowd was treated to one of their stripped down hard bop shows. They wailed through a version of ***Old Time South Side Street Dance***, and showed their double decade-long empathy on a loosely strung together version of ***Jackson In Your House***, which featured some hilarious Mitchell vocals. Malachi Favors proved that he is still one of the major joys of Great Black Music, and Don Moye's triple time cymbal work was also a highlight of the night.

Back in Rhode Island at the end of the month, **Jerome Cooper** gave a solo percussion performance sponsored by New Best Friends Productions. Entitled ***North American Ritual Drumming***, Jerome filled Providence's Prospect Park with a subtle energy that was hypnotic to say the least. The drama that can be experienced while listening to Cooper's drum voicings is quite strong, and using only trap kit, balafon, chiramiya, and other small percussive tools, he created a historical landscape full of life.

Dewey Redman brought a trio of John Betsch and Miroslav Vitous to the 1369 Club in early October, and the Texas tenor player treated the place to a roadhouse blues show. With a leisurely feel, Redman shout/squeaked the revival of a strong sense of melody in his work, and mouthed blues vocals through the reed of his tenor, just like in his old days. Betsch kept everything together with his steady, buoyant swing, and his bump-and-grind tom tom work. Miroslav provided quick witted (and quick fingered) high octave flights on his bass, but wasn't afraid to groove steadily when Dewey's lines called for it. During a short duet where Betsch used mallets and Redman played musette, the sound of the African countryside was brought to the fore.

Opening that night was the **Joe Morris** Trio who played the best I've ever heard them.. On ***What Do You Mean By That?*** it didn't take the guitarist long to get to the fireworks. In Joe's music what initially seems like a disparate linking of individual notes often reveals itself as a well planned network for improvisation. Morris's lines curved, swirled, and built in intensity throughout the piece, and Sebastian Steinberg's thick bass playing, along with Lawrence Cook's mercurial drumming, helped keep the energy level on high at all times. The trio seems to be progressing at a rapid rate.

During their first tour of America, the **Vienna Art Orchestra** came to the Cambridge Ringe and Latin School mid month, and offered their brand of decidedly swinging jazz to an appreciative audience. Leader Mathias Ruegg gave only minimal direction, standing aside much of the night, allowing the group to openly improvise. Ruegg's tightly sewn arrangements helped keep the orchestra on course though, and the solo space that was available all night was well taken advantage of. After a competent (but not thrilling) first set, the feisty trumpet of Karl Fian gave the VAO a kick in the pants and the music started to take off. Lauren Newton (with tuning fork in hand) was on target all night long, and Wolfgang Puschnig's sense of humour came to the fore more than once in his solos. Roman Schwaller waxed gutsy on tenor, and Herbert Joos brought the house down with his alphorn improvisations.

On October 28 **Jemeel Moondoc** teamed up with Dennis Charles at Grant Recital Hall in Providence to blend his openly playful alto sound with the drummer's sparse mix of African and West Indian roots. Dennis does more with a snare, tom, and sock cymbal than most drummers do with a double-sized kit. On ***We Don't***, a Virgin Island song of rebellion, his Caribbean influences were obvious and tuneful. Jemeel's alto playing turned funky during a dance piece he had written for a play. Both had relaxed, unhurried feel about them, and their work together let it show.

Also on the bill that day were **LaDona Smith** and **Davey Williams** whose instant intensity transformed the whole afternoon. Bowing thorny overtones, violinist Smith is redefining the instrument's language, and the relationship she has honed over the years with longtime partner Williams has become quite efficient. Davey's guitar improvs varied in attack and texture, always keeping the listener intrigued. His 'semi-prepared' guitar technique is full of surprises, and uses kitchen utensils, stones, toy mice, and bullet casings to get the desired sound. During a Halloween tribute LaDonna added her voice to the already intense sound storm that was taking place. "I look into my black cat's eyes and I see myself," she wailed. Quite an afternoon.

Also coming through town in the last few months have been **Clifford Jordan, Kenny Barron, Phil Woods, Kevin Eubanks, McCoy Tyner, John Lee Hooker, Son Seals**, and **Keith Jarrett**.
— *Jim Macnie*

PHILADELPHIA — The Jazz "Live" Series at the Afro-American Museum continues to be responsible for some of the finest music in the Philadelphia area. September 21 marked the triumphant return of the **Art Ensemble Of Chicago** as the group celebrated its twentieth anniversary and delighted the capacity crowd with a stunningly brilliant performance. Slated for the end of October is a rare appearance by the enigmatic vibist **Walt Dickerson** who will be fronting a trio featuring his longtime friend and associate **Andrew Cyrille**. The swinging hard bop of the **Junior Cook/Bill Hardman** Quintet is sure to satisfy on November 16, and closing out the series for 1984 will be another longtime Philadelphia favourite, vocalist **Betty Carter**. A tribute to Charlie Parker opened the Trane Stop Resource Institute's annual series of concerts on September 8 at LaSalle College. On hand were altoist **C Sharpe, Bootsie Barnes** on tenor and alto, pianist **Uri Caine**, bassist **Tyronne Brown** and drummer **Duck Scott**. Other key events were a lecture demonstration by **Andrew White**, noted musician, lecturer, and authority on the music of John Coltrane, and a final program highlighted by the appearance of **Alice Coltrane** in the company of Reggie Workman and Roy

Haynes. **Abdullah Ibrahim** and "Ekaya" held forth at International House on September 16. The Painted Bride Art Center promises a strong fall and winter lineup with the likes of guitarist **Monette Sudler**, **Quest** (Dave Liebman, Richie Beirach, George Mraz and Billy Hart), jazz bagpiper **Rufus Harley** and on January 5, the **David Murray** Quartet. Off the scene for quite some time, guitarist **Pat Martino** is in the midst of making a comeback, gigging most recently at Grendal's Lair. **Branford Marsalis** and his band were at the Chestnut Cabaret in mid October. The **Vienna Art Orchestra**, one of Europe's hottest new music ensembles, stopped off in Allentown, Pennsylvania on October 18 to open Improvco's 1984-85 performing season. The next evening this dynamic band travelled to Haverford, Pennsylvania to launch the Alternative Concert Series of Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges. Improvco in Allentown has tentatively scheduled the **Rova Saxophone Quartet** for November 21. The **Art Farmer-Benny Golson** Jazztet was at the Sheraton West Ballroom in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania on October 21, courtesy of the Central Pennsylvania Friends Of Jazz. This growing organisation also plans to bring in the **New York Jazz Quartet** on November 25. Long a popular haven for big bands, Sunnybrook Ballroom in Pottstown, Pennsylvania played host to **Artie Shaw** and his Orchestra on September 14. **Gerry Mulligan** and his quartet collaborated with the Reading Symphony on September 16 at the Rajah Theater. Usually in company of vocalist Kim Parker, the pianist/composer **Larry Gelb** has been working solo for the past several weeks at the Mifflin Inn in Shillington, Pennsylvania. — ***Gerard Futrick***

ANDREW HILL (Photograph by Enrico Romero)

EUROPE

ENGLAND AND BELGIUM — In further pursuit of my peregrinations — for previous patter, see ***Coda***s 194 and 198 covering time past to medio June '84 — from Hong Kong I flew to Liverpool, where, to relieve the monotony of unemployment, leading occupation of the area, the authorities invented the "International Garden Festival...not just flowers," there was an events programme covering such things as "folk, sport, theatre, puppets and jazz" in which latter connection the general programme announced "International Jazz Festival — August 25th-Sept 2nd. The IGF is proud to boast the '3 b's' of British jazz — Kenny Ball, Chris Barber and Acker Bilk. They will provide their distinctive brand of music for this attraction and will be joined by the New Black Eagle Jazz Band from the USA and Merseyside's own Blue Magnolias and Merseysippi Jazzmen and many more."

On the opening evening of this Festival of Trad, with several old friends, aled and aling, prerequisite for such convivial light entertainment, I got to hear the **New Black Eagles** at the "Arena Theatre...a spectacular 1500 seat covered theatre based on the traditional design of the Greek Amphitheatre of over 2000 years ago..." and, on the Monday (August 27) to see and hear a full afternoon of **The Reds & Blues Marching Band** — allusions to the main preoccupation of Liverpudlians, soccer and the local major teams "Liverpool/Reds" and "Everton/Blues" — as well as the amphitheatricals of the **Panama Jazz Band** (foreigners from the Wirral, over the water), **Blue Mag**'s and **Merseysippi**, from whose ranks the members of the Marching Band are drawn. This was Liverpool's first international jazz festival but not its last as plans were announced to do it again next year, utilising the same venue; let's wish them success — and ope that the breadth of material will be increased.

Other Liverpool venues continue to offer jazz and I would mention * The Coffee House, a Wavertree alehouse wherein the Blue Mag's weekly wow (Tuesday evenings) a bursting back room of enthusiastic followers; * The Hunts Cross Hotel, another suburban public house which has no resident band but manages to put on, due largely to the efforts of the licensee, a diversity of jazz (Thursday evenings). Here I heard a trad band, the **Twin Rivers** (for the Mersey and the Dee) one evening (July 26) and, one week later, to good effect, the tenor saxophonist **Danny Moss** with local rhythm section; * The Philharmonic, mentioned in previous dispatches (***Coda*** 194), where useful things happen on Monday and Tuesday evenings; **Gary Boyle**, electric guitar, and his modern/fusion group, was well-received (July 30); * Chaucer's, in the city, on Leece Street, where the **Merseysippi** play on frequent occasions, as they do regularly at — * The Cavern, a completely new basement hostelry occupying the site of the club of the same name immortalised by Liverpool's most known sons, The Beatles.

In complete contrast to the distractions of declining port city Liverpool, an excursion to the considerably more active Belgian port of Antwerp, executed (August 9-13) in company with a newly-passported elder son Dom, age 14. Met on arrival by New Think-er (see ***Coda*** 194) Hugo de Craen, we were shown the old town, which included a visit to the delightfully named three-hundred-different-beers-in-stock establishment "I het Grote Ongenoengen" (The Great Discomfort!).

And the next day (Friday the 10th), we made our way to Keizerstraat 38 for the first of three consecutive nights of the Eleventh International Festival of Improvised And Composed Music at 'King Kong,' organised by The Working Group of Improvising Musicians (WIM).

The affair was opened, around 9:30 p.m., by the **WIM Fanfare Trio** — Paul Vlaminck, tenor saxophone; Fred van Hove, accordion; Ivo Vander Borght, percussion (all Belgian). The piano, and its practitioners, were given a certain prominence through these three days, and on this first evening, after the overture, came two solo-pianist sets by Belgians **Walter Hus** and **Eddy Loozen**. As can be gleaned from the 20-page Dutch-language programme notes made freely available to Festival participants, Hus is out of the Conservatory classic tradition while Loozen is essentially "autodidakt," self-taught. Next on the evening's agenda was the **Trio Tartini**, the Swiss dancer **Anne Martin** (of the Pina Bausch Dance Theatre), who also employed her voice to some effect; **Joelle Leandre** (of France), bass and voice, and **Peter Kowald** (Germany), bass and harmonica.

The first night closed with the **Guus Janssen** trio from Holland — Ab Baars, soprano and tenor saxophone, clarinet; Guus Janssen, piano; Wim Janssen, percussion. This group performed eleven items, including a piano solo, a soprano solo and a duo for soprano and drums which incorporated extended (in relative terms) solo drum work; it seemed to me that the group output stemmed from predetermined material; concentration and restraint were epithets which suggested themselves to me during these closing performances. The 'King Kong' is a pleasant venue for such spectacles; it has a separated entrance area, where selected records reflecting the festival performers were available for purchase, and from which it is possible to proceed either into the rear performance space (for an audience of some 200) or to the spacious bar/lounge area, which remained open as long as there were customers (at least until dawn!).

Here, with careful education from Hugo and friends, I acquired an almost insatiable taste for a local brew, 'De Konink' – best when served in a 'balloon glass,' to order which, simply ask for "bolleke!"

Saturday night's sessions opened with a duo – **Charles Gayle**, tenor sax and **Peter Kowald**, bass. It seems that Kowald has a bursary from the Goethe Institute with whom he resides in New York. There, inter alia, he has a quartet which includes Charles Gayle, described in the programme notes (loose translation) as "an Aylerian tenor player picked up off the streets." At a certain point of this opening excursion, the duo was joined by Anne Martin. Next on the stage was "De Kollektieve Zelfmoord" (The Suicide Collective), a Dada-esque sextet of madly-apparelled characters involved, it seems, in the ultimate parody, that of life itself; principally for a home audience, if uncontrolled laughter/tears down the cheeks was their objective, then they succeeded well. Third on the programme, piano duo of **Fred van Hove** and **Christian Leroy** and, to close, permutations of four pianists, two to a piano, they being van Hove, Hus, Leroy and Loozen.

The final night of this three-day extravaganza opened with New York-born pianist **Borah Bergman** who, it appears, has devoted quite some effort to left hand technique. Later, he was joined by van Hove when the two played together for the first time and seemed well pleased with their efforts. The ICP (Instant Composers Pool) duo of **Misha Mengelberg**, piano and **Han Bennink**, drums/anything/everything slid through their routine: banality, intensity, sanity, madness, threat, laughter...

The night and the festival were brought to a close by the good-humoured East German **Doppelmoppel** quartet, a pair of trombones – Conny and Johannes Bauer – and a pair of guitarists – Joe Sachse and Uwe Kropinsky – made exciting ensemble and solo sounds to the obvious approval of their audience.

Thanks particularly to Hugo, Lydia, Joos and Lilian for making our stay such a pleasant one. Those responsible for making the events of these three days available are to be congratulated. There was an open-air jazz festival going on in Antwerp simultaneously with the Festival here reported; some cooperation between organizers may have enabled more people to attend both events, ultimately, I would have thought, to the advantage of all.

While in Antwerp, Hugo de Craen made available to me – (1) Details, en francais (my translation) of "***Futurities***, a musical spectacle in twenty scenes conceived and 'realised' by Steve Lacy and Elsa Wolliaston, for eight musicians, one singer and two dancers, on the poems of Robert Creeley, with decor by Kenneth Noland and lighting by John Davis, to be previewed at the Festival de Lille in October, 1984." Described as "a marriage of jazz, celebration/ritual played and danced about an altar (an abstract object, painted and illuminated) created by Noland, one of today's masters in painting... [with]words – on life and love – by Creeley, the most eminent American poet of the present day," the musicians are Irene Aebi (voice), Lacy, Steve Potts, George Lewis, Bobby Few, Barry Wedgle (guitar), Gude Knebusch (harp), Jean-Jacques Avenel and Ooiver Johnson. Wolliaston and Harry Sheppard are the dancers..." Reports on this would be most welcome!; (2) A disc, "Musique Improvisée – Improvised Music" under a striking cover, and with inserted French and English "warning to the bold listeners of Inaudible" (this being the title of the release) which makes stimulating and amusing reading. There are ten tracks of diverse ensembles performed upon various dates (February 1979 to April 1982); instrumentation is given for each item, but not personnel, although a separate listing of some eight musicians appears. Available from Inaudible asbl, 16 rue A. Delporte, 1050 Brussels, Belgium.

I will close these notes with best wishes to all who made read them; as we make our entry into the post-Orwellian era... – *Roger Parry* (Contact at HKJRS, PO Box 10536, GPO, Hong Kong)

SOUTH AMERICA

CHILE – The southwestern end of the American continent had a fairly active jazz scene in September and October of 1984, Aside from routine local activities, such as the Saturday sessions at the Club de Jazz de Santiago, the Tuesday meetings of the Jazz Committee of the Chilean-Northamerican Cultural Center, and the four regular jazz shows on Santiago's radio, we had the visit of master bassist **Barre Phillips** who performed on September 7 at the Teatro de la Universidad Católica with dancer/choreographer **Dominique Petit**, sponsored by the Alliance Francaise. On September 21, under the joint sponsorship of the US Embassy and the local Agrupación Beethoven, about thirteen hundred fans attended a spirited show by the **Preservation Hall Jazz Band** from New Orleans. With young Wendell Brunious on trumpet, John Royen on piano, veteran Narvin Kimball on banjo, Frank Demond on trombone, Manuel Crusto on clarinet, boss Allan Jaffe on tuba and Frank Parker on drums, they accomplished a proper mixture of art, folklore and showmanship, performing a selection of workhorses, from ***Hindustan*** to the inevitable ***When The Saints Go Marching In***.

On October 11, an audience of almost two thousand attended two performances by the spectacular **George Gruntz Concert Jazz Band**. Pianist and arranger Gruntz brought to Chile an all-star personnel with Bill Pusey, Marcus Belgrave and Tom Harrell on trumpets, Tom Varner, Sharon Freeman and Vincent Chauncey on French horns, Janice Robinson, Jimmy Knepper and Charles Orieux on trombones, Howard Johnson on tuba and baritone sax, Ernst-Ludwig Petrowsky, Urs Bloechlinger and Seppo 'Baron' Paakkunainen on reeds, Dino Saluzzi on bandoneon, Mark Egan on bass, Adam Nussbaum on drums and Sheila Jordan on vocals. Two compositions by Argentine artist Saluzzi, ***Buenos Dias, Dona Maria*** and ***El Chancho***, featured amazing trumpet solos by Tom Harrell, one of the deepest jazzmen on the contemporary scene. Among the many highlights – including a brilliant arrangement of Charlie Parker's ***Confirmation*** with great Sheila Jordan, scatting and virtuoso Howard Johnson on baritone sax – it was Jimmy Knepper's ***Body And Soul*** that brought tears to my eyes and the audience to their feet.

The Jazz Committee of the Chilean-North-American Cultural Center, with Eastern Airlines and local magazine ***Cosas***, brought from Chicago to Chile young guitar prodigy **Fareed Haque** with the excellent acoustic bassist **Marlene Rosenberg**, and from Manhattan the great alto and soprano saxophonist **Arnie Lawrence**. The three Americans formed a quartet with Chile's greatest living jazz musician, drummer **Alejandro Espinosa**. The Fareed Haque Trio with Arnie Lawrence performed at a Santiago discotheque, at the National Museum of Fine Arts, and in the city of Concepción, four hundred miles south of Santiago. They also recorded a master tape which includes Chilean folklorist Violeta Parra's beautiful song ***Gracias A La Vida*** and a haunting Lawrence 24-bar minor tune played over an incredibly complex and swinging 6/8 cueca rhythm laid down by Alejandro Espinosa. Hopefully an album of this great music will be issued in Chile and in the USA.

–José Hosiasson

ODDS AND SODS

Andrew Hill came east in October to receive an award from BMI as a "jazz pioneer." He also performed at Sweet Basil on October 29 after appearing October 21/22 at Boston's Willow Jazz Club...The Universal Jazz Coalition's office is now located on the premises of their Jazz Center of New York at 380 Lafayette Street. They organised a three-day presentation of Asian/Asian-American artists October 19-21... **Terrence Blanchard** and **Donald Harrison** debuted their quintet at Lush Life the week of October 9...**Borbetomagus** is a trio consisting of saxophonists Don Dietrich and Jim Sauter and guitarist Donald Miller. They performed at the Shuttle Theater September 21 before departing for a three-week European tour which took them to Germany and Switzerland and an appearance at the Actuel 84 Festival in London. The **Rory Stuart** quartet with pianist Armen Donelian were at Mikell's October 2...The **Muhal Richard Abrams** Orchestra shared the bill with **Hamiet Bluiett**'s Clarinet Family October 26/27 at the Public Theater...A night of jazz and poetry with **Amiri Baraka** took place November 5 at Sweet Basil. That club had **Arthur Blythe**, **Buddy Tate/Al Grey** and **Archie Shepp/Horace Parlan** in residence during November...**Steve Tintweiss**'s Space Light band gave a performance November 13 at Queens College...**Cecil Taylor**'s Unit performed November 17 at Irving Plaza.

"The Sound I Saw: The Jazz Photography of Roy DeCarava" is on view until December 28 at CRT's Craftery Gallery, 1445 Main Street, Hartford, CT. The opening celebration featured **Joe Lee Wilson** with the Walter Bolden Trio and special guest **Jackie McLean**, while **Bill Hardman** was on hand November 11...The **Marilyn Crispell** Trio performed at Boston's Studio Red Top November 30 as part of the fall "Jazz Women In Concert" series.

The 14th Pitt Jazz Seminar took place November 7-10 with **Freddie Hubbard**, **Sonny Rollins**, **Ron Carter**, **Monty Alexander** and **Emily Remler** among the participants. Their much-criticised Hall of Fame program apparently still chooses to ignore the contributions of Pittsburgh's own Erroll Garner, Earl Hines and Mary Lou Williams...The Library of Congress has expanded its listening hours in the Performing Arts Reading Room in the James Madison

Memorial Building...The 1985 Mid-America Jazz Festival takes place next March 22-24 and features **Ralph Sutton**, **Jay McShann**, the **New Black Eagle Jazz Band** and an all star band of surviving veterans of Bob Crosby's Bobcats... The 5th Annual National Blues Music Awards Show was held November 18 in Memphis... Clarinetist **Herb Hall** is the Sunday night attraction at The Landing in San Antonio's Hyatt Regency Hotel, with **Fred Salas** the featured pianist in the quartet. The clarinetist also serenades the passing throngs along the river walk Friday evenings between 5 and 8 p.m. and Sunday afternoons between 1-4 p.m. **Jim Cullum**'s Happy Jazz Band remains in residence at the Landing through the week.

Even though it is now ancient history it would be remiss not to give **Tommy Vig** some kudos for his presentation of the Olympic Jazz Festival in August in Los Angeles. A wide cross-section of local and international music was presented...**Horace Tapscott** was at Santa Monica's On Broadway Jazz Club October 9 and was followed a week later by **Vinny Golia**'s Quintet. Vinny also performed October 19 with pianist **Wayne Peet** at Bebop Records in Reseda...Jay Clayton, Julian Priester, Gary Peacock and Jerry Granelli, known as **The Quartet**, performed October 21 at the Cornish South Theater in Seattle.

The National Association of Jazz Educators hold their 12th convention in Dallas-Fort Worth January 10-13. Workshops, clinics and performances will be the main thrust of the event. More information from Matt Betton, Box 724, Manhattan, KS 66502...Trombonist **Grover Mitchell** has launched his own big band which has already recorded an album for Hemisphere Records (PO Box 3578, New York, NY 10185), a live date at New York's Red Parrot — and is described by the leader as being "a sophisticated blues band." Booking is through the Dave Brumitt Agency, PO Box 3502, Tallahassee, FL 32315...Young Japanese pianist **Makoto Ozone** who has been working with Gary Burton is getting the new star treatment from CBS Records. Their publicity describes him as "a twenty three year old genius"!

Home video is part of the entertainment revolution now taking place. Audio discs will soon be going the way of the 78 and everyone will have to convert to CD and video. Playboy Enterprises has produced a ninety minute video from the 1982 Playboy Jazz Festival and a second volume is promised for later release. ***Jazz Comes Home To Newport*** is a one-hour video special which was to be aired in the US on PBS sometime in early December. It features performances from the 1984 event by Dizzy Gillespie, Dave Brubeck, Stan Getz and Michel Petrucciani.

Ndikho Xaba, artist extraordinaire, who made his home in Canada for a while, returned to Africa to assume the post of cultural officer for the ANC school in Mazimbu. In July he was stricken with cerebral malaria and remains in serious condition in the Morogoro Hospital in Tanzania. September 23 was the date for Vuka (Get Up) concerts to be held throughout the world in an effort to spiritually move Ndikho towards recovery. These efforts are being coordinated by Nomusa Xaba, PO Box 680, Morogoro, Tanzania...

Trumpeter **Keith Smith** masterminded another successful "World of Louis Armstrong" tour of the UK this fall. Barrett Deems, Arvell Shaw, Johnny Mince, Bob Havens and Marty Napoleon were the musicians who joined Keith in this month-long endeavour...A benefit for ailing pianist **Fred Hunt** was held at London's 100 Club on November 21. Al Casey, Kenny Davern, Benny Waters, Neville Dickie, Acker Bilk and the Humphrey Lyttelton band were on hand.

Werner Panke reports that **Peter Kowald** has recently been awarded the Eduard von der Heydt prize. The forty-year-old musician is the third native Wuppertaler to receive this prize. Kowald responded in his own way with Charles Gayle and Andrew Cyrille — a free improvisation...The 1984 Berlin Jazz Festival was held November 1-4 and presented a cross-section of music from all disciplines of jazz. Concurrent with this event was the Total Music Meeting '84 held in Berlin's Quartier Latin under the guidance of FMP. This year's event was called "The Piano Project" and included **Bobby Few**, **Misha Mengelberg**, **Alexander von Schlippenbach**, **Howard Riley**, **Fred van Hove** and **Per-Hendrik Wallin**. FMP's financial crisis continues but the continuity of their work is still being pursued. Their recordings are being handled worldwide by Verlag and they have established a record store and mail order service at their former office under the direction of Dieter Hahne. Jazzcock, Behaimstrasse 4, 1000 Berlin 10 will carry all FMP records as well as such other labels as Bead, BVHaast, Incus and Moers Music. Write them for a complete catalog..."A Night In Harlem: Jazz in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s" is the theme of the 1985 jazz film program taking place in Vienna March 15-23. Ars Nova publishes a booklet (in German) each year and these are available from them at Schlagergasse 5/14, A-1090 Vienna, Austria...Zurich's Widder Bar, one of Europe's leading jazz establishments, continues its imaginative mix of travelling US musicians and European residents. **Thad Jones** (listed as playing trumpet — that's good news) and **Jerome Richardson** were there at the end of October with Horace Parlan, Red Mitchell and Sangoma Everett. **Oliver Jackson**'s Sextet with Sahib Shihab, **Astrud Gilberto**, **Henri Chaix**, **Monty Alexander**, **Judy Carmichael** and **Ralph Sutton** were set to follow. The club is located at Widdergasse 6.

The 1984-85 edition of the Jazz Festivals ***International Directory*** is now available for $26.50 postpaid ($11.50 postpaid for members) from Jazz World Society, PO BOx 777, Times Square Station, New York, NY 10108... DaCapo's fall listing announces paperback reprints of ***Jazz: A History of the New York Scene*** and ***Jazz Masters of the Forties***...A revised edition of Arne Astrup's ***Stan Getz Discography*** is now available. North American distribution is being handled by the Yeoman Group, Box 3015, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10017...The Baton Press has published Paul Oliver's ***Blues Off The Record*** — a collection of essays and articles by the author which cover thirty years of blues commentary... Blues fans can join a number of organisations: The Ohio Blues Society, PO Box 91224, Cleveland, Ohio 44101 and The Oklahoma Blues and Jazz Society, PO Box 60241, Oklahoma City 73146 are two such organisations. They both publish newsletters and so too does ***Living Blues*** magazine as a filler between issues for its subscribers...***Sound Choice***, PO Box 1251, Ojai, CA 93023 will pick up the slack now that ***OP***, the leading alternative music voice, has completed its alphabetical circle...***Discographical Forum*** has gone to offset production and is appearing more frequently. It's an invaluable reference source to post-forties jazz recordings. Three pounds sterling gets you three issues. Send your subscriptions to Malcolm Walker, 44 Belleville Road, London SW11 6QT...***The Wire***, England's alternative publication to ***Jazz Journal***, has gone monthly as well as becoming

JACKIE McLEAN and MILES DAVIS (Photograph by Roy DeCarava)

visually more glamourous since becoming affiliated with the Namara Group who publish Quartet Books. ***The Wire*** is available from 51 Beak Street, London W1R 3DH, UK...Polygram Classics has made a serious effort to not only broaden the US availability of the worldwide Verve catalogue but to reissue itself long-dormant Verve material as well as handling the productions of such labels as Enja. They also oversee (in a different department) the US distribution of Black Saint/Soul Note material but that label's production is not included in the September 1984 catalogue of jazz recordings. Copies can be obtained by writing Polygram Classics, 810 7th Avenue, New York, NY 10019.

Guitarist **Peter Leitch** recorded November 17 for Uptown Records with Pepper Adams, John Hicks, Ray Drummond and Billy Hart. The session, appropriately, took place in Rudy Van Gelder's New Jersey studio...**Sal Salvador** is recording two albums for Stash Records. That label has just released a well-presented studio date of tenor saxophonist **George Kelly** who is now reaching a broader audience through his performing/acting role in ***Moscow On The Hudson*** — a warmly humourous movie about the trials and tribulations of the adjustments made by a musician exile from Russia...**George Wallington**, inactive for twenty years, is back on the recording scene. He has recorded thirty new compositions of his own and the first 12 of these are to be released soon in Japan by Nippon Columbia..."Album Album" is the title of the newest ECM recording of **Jack DeJohnette**'s Special Edition. Howard Johnson joins David Murray and John Purcell on this occasion for an exploration of the drummer/pianist's compositions...Elektra/Musician issued **Albert Dailey**'s duet recording with **Stan Getz** in the fall along with a new album by **Chico Freeman** called "Tangents"...**Archie Shepp**'s "The Good Life" is on Varrick Records (a division of Rounder)...Xanadu's latest releases look backward in time with LPs by **Coleman Hawkins**, **Red Norvo** and **Sonny Criss**...Pianist **Oliver Jones**'s most recent Justin Time release is a solo effort entitled "The Many Moods of..." Polygram Classics has released a ten-LP box set of all Charlie Parker's Verve recordings. This Japanese import is an impressive-looking package. Other Japanese Verve LPs now in the US include Getz's "Jazz Samba," Ella and Duke "At Duke's Place," "Very Tall" by Oscar Peterson and Milt Jackson, "Empathy" by Bill Evans and Shelly Manne and two EmArcy volumes of unissued Clifford Brown material. Polygram's acquisition of MPS records has resulted in yet another recycling of this material. The low price of these Polygram reissues makes sense but there are a couple of previously unissued MPS sessions in the initial series: "I'm All Smiles" — a series of duets by **Hank Jones** and **Tommy Flanagan** — and **Monty Alexander**'s "The Duke Ellington Songbook"...Palo Alto has signed **Phil Woods** to an exclusive contract. They have also issued the 1981 Japanese production of **Quest** by Dave Liebman, Richie Beirach, George Mraz and Al Foster as well as a two-record collection of material from the Monterey Festival which covers performances from 1958 through 1980...Fantasy Records has finally acquired Contemporary Records and is reissuing thirty titles in the OJC series. Half of these titles have not been available for quite some time. A deluxe 18-record boxed set of the complete **Bill Evans** Riverside recordings is also in the works...A third volume of **Freddie Hubbard** material from the Keystone Korner is now available under the title of "Classics"...Previously unissued LPs by **Red Garland**, **Art Pepper** and **Duke Ellington** were also scheduled for November release..."Ten Gallon Shuffle" is the latest release by **Toshiko Akiyoshi**'s Jazz Orchestra. Both Lew Tabackin and Frank Wess are featured...Many regional big bands release their own records. Cincinnati's **Blue Wisp** Band has a new recording made at Carmelo's last February which is available from MoPro Inc, 5950 Beech Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45238...The **Jazz Members Big Band** is from Chicago and SeaBreeze has released the band's initial album under the title of "May Day"...A new (rather than a reissue) recording on Jump Records documents the spring tour of **Maxine Sullivan** with the Allegheny Jazz Quartet...Boston's stride piano stylist **Henry Francis** has a new LP on Mephistopheles Records (16 Sunnyside Lane, Lincoln, MA 01773)...Stomp Off Records has added a further ten titles to its impressive catalogue of contemporary traditional jazz. The complete listing is available from the company at PO Box 342, Dept L, York, PA 17405...More obscure 78s are being reissued by Harrison Records. LP-T features the Casa Loma Orchestra while LP-U is titled "Dance Bands Play Hot." A catalogue of Harrison Records is available from 229 Oak Street, Wakefield, MA 01889...Don't be fooled by the glamourous new cover RCA has given to its first Basie tribute titled "Kansas City Style." It's a reissue of the Bennie Moten material once available on the Vintage series... Alligator has new LPs from **James Cotton**, **Fenton Robinson** and **Son Seals**...New from England's JSP Records are LPs from **Johnny Shines**, **Louisiana Red/Sugar Blue**, **Lowell Fulson** and **James Booker**..."Wilber Force" is a new concert recording issued in Japan by Disc Union with **Wilber Morris**, Dennis Charles and David Murray..."Tea For Four" is a new LP on Finland's Leo label featuring **Charlie Mariano**, Jasper Van'T Hof, Arild Andersen and Edward Vesala. Leo Records are now available in the US through Northcountry Distributors, Cadence Bldg., Redwood, NY 13679...West Germany's Circle Records (Moltke 6, 5 Koln 1) has released a **Chet Baker** Quintet LP from the Salt Peanuts Club with Jon Eardley, Bob Mover, Dennis Luxion and Rocky Knauer as well as a 1984 concert performance by **Archie Shepp** and **Jeanne Lee**.

Death has taken a heavy toll on the jazz community over the past few months. This listing is a documentation of the facts. It cannot express our feelings at the passing of so many unique musical sytlists who gave us so much. Blues artists **Bobo Jenkins**, **Big Mama Thornton** (July 25), **Tuts Washington** (August 5), **Esther Phillips** (August 7), **Percy Mayfield** (August 11), **Hammie Nixon** (August 17), **Bessie Jones** (September 4), **Alberta Hunter** (October 17); jazz musicians **Frank Butler** (July 24), **Babe Russin** (August 4), **Lennie Breau** (August 12), **Trummy Young** (September 10), **Shelly Manne** (September 26), **Herman Sherman** (September), **Budd Johnson** (October 20); jazz impresarios/supporters **Arrigo Polillo**, editor of Italy's ***Musica Jazz*** (July 17), **Willard Alexander** (August 28), **Symphony Sid Torin** (September 14), **Teddy Reig** (September 29).

— John Norris

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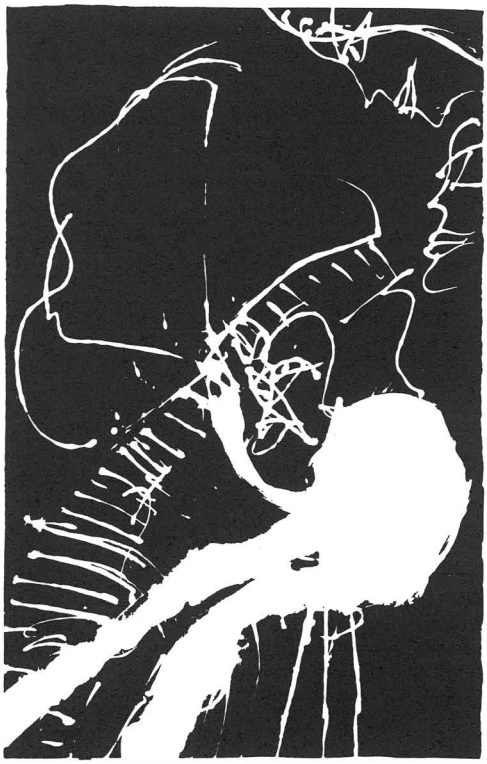

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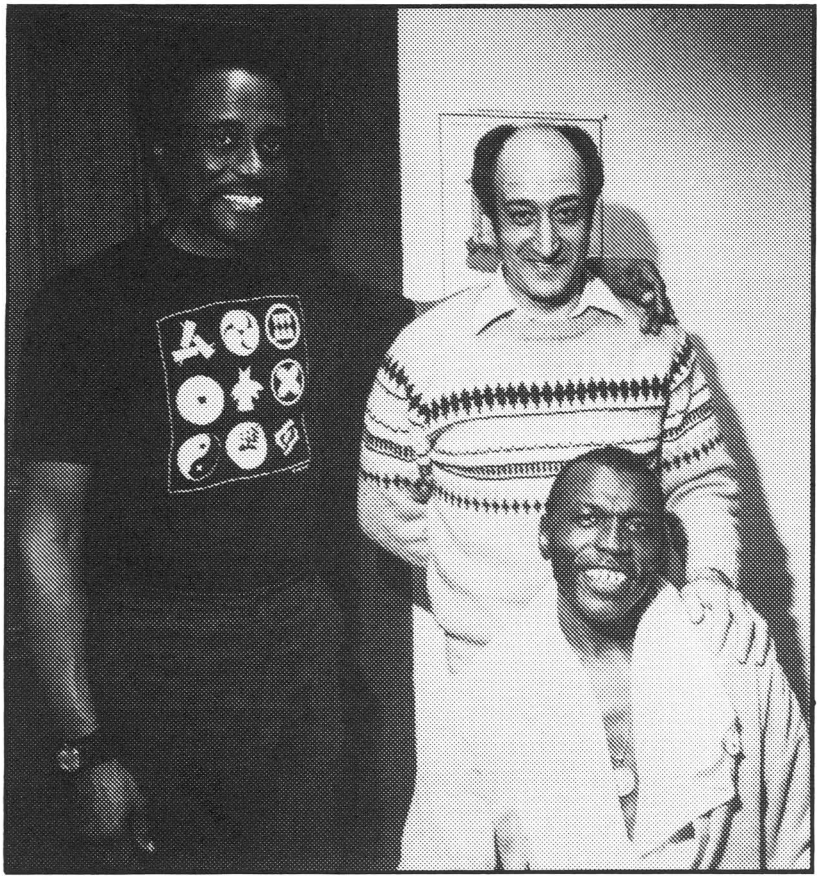

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