CODA MAGAZINE

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CODA MAGAZINE investigates the world of the jazz saxophone. Features will include such legendary figures as Sonny Rollins, Coleman Hawkins, Archie Shepp, Frank Lowe and Steve Lacy. All this and more in issue 204. Subscribe NOW!

B.B. KING

B.B. KING is the household name in blues. Although purists may cringe at his recent recordings and shy away from the posh venues that he currently plays, his impact on contemporary blues cannot be denied. Just check Sheldon Harris' "Blues Who's Who" and note how many blues artists cite Riley B. King as an influence. Some artists have attempted to overtly clone B.B.'s style, whereas many have been content to mimic certain King nuances or guitar licks and incorporate B.B. King hits into their own repertoires. Then there are Albert Nelson, Alvin K. Smith and Andrew Odom who became Albert King, Al King and B.B. Jr. respectively. Wherever you happen to catch some live blues there is a high probability that you will hear some B.B. King. This holds whether it's New York City, Baton Rouge, St. Louis, Chicago, San Francisco, Portland, Toronto or Tokyo – the King stamp is out there.

B.B. King has spent about 38 years as a working bluesman, and is still out there playing over 300 nights a year. He has done more than any individual artist to bring the blues to a wider, mainstream audience, and by doing so has opened the door for many to follow. Aside from being very much the entertainer, B.B. is still an active musicologist. He still does his free prison concerts and takes the time to talk to people such as myself about his career and the history of the blues.

His early, highly influential recordings for the Bullet label out of Nashville and the Bihari Brothers are being reissued on Swedish and British labels like Blues Boy, Krazy Kat and Ace. Ace has also done us a great service by reissuing one of the all-time great, definitive modern blues classics – "B.B. King Live at the Regal." For an in-depth account of King's life you might want to pick up Charles Sawyer's "The Arrival of B.B. King."

DOUG LANGILLE – *Music has often been a ticket to a better life for a number of blues, soul, and even country and western artists. Was this a motivation for you?*

B.B. KING – Well when I think about my beginnings, I used to sit on the street corners and people would ask me to sing a gospel song and they would compliment and praise me, but they wouldn't tip. If someone asked me to play a blues they would praise me, and tip me. I started to think of the monetary values. But that was only the beginning. After that I started to think not so much about what it was doing for me, but how much I enjoyed doing it. I think during my early years I was trying to do what I was doing better. I guess in the back of my mind I saw it as a way out, and I have found it true that it has been a ticket for me to not be a farmer, to be a musician and play world wide. As a matter of fact, I have played fifty-seven countries now, and I know it's no way I would have visited that many countries had I still been a farmer.

I liked gospel and still do. I was brought up in church, and most of my people are very religious. Today I can enjoy gospel as much as ever.

The mark is in your music, it's in your singing, and the spirit hasn't left you.

I hope it never will.

When you first came to Memphis, was Bukka White an influence on you in those days?

Yeah, he was a big influence. More as a person. He had a personality that I was just crazy about. He was the type of guy that always had a good, big smile for you, and always had something nice to say. He had a way with kids that knocked me out. With me being younger, I loved to be around him. He was my mother's first cousin. I liked his playing, but I couldn't play like him. He used a slide and I couldn't use one. I still can't. I hardly know how to tell you, but he had a way of dressing. He always stayed dressed very nicely, and I liked that. I liked the way he carried himself. I lived with him for about a year in 1947. He taught me a lot of things at that time. A lot of things that helped me later on and musically today.

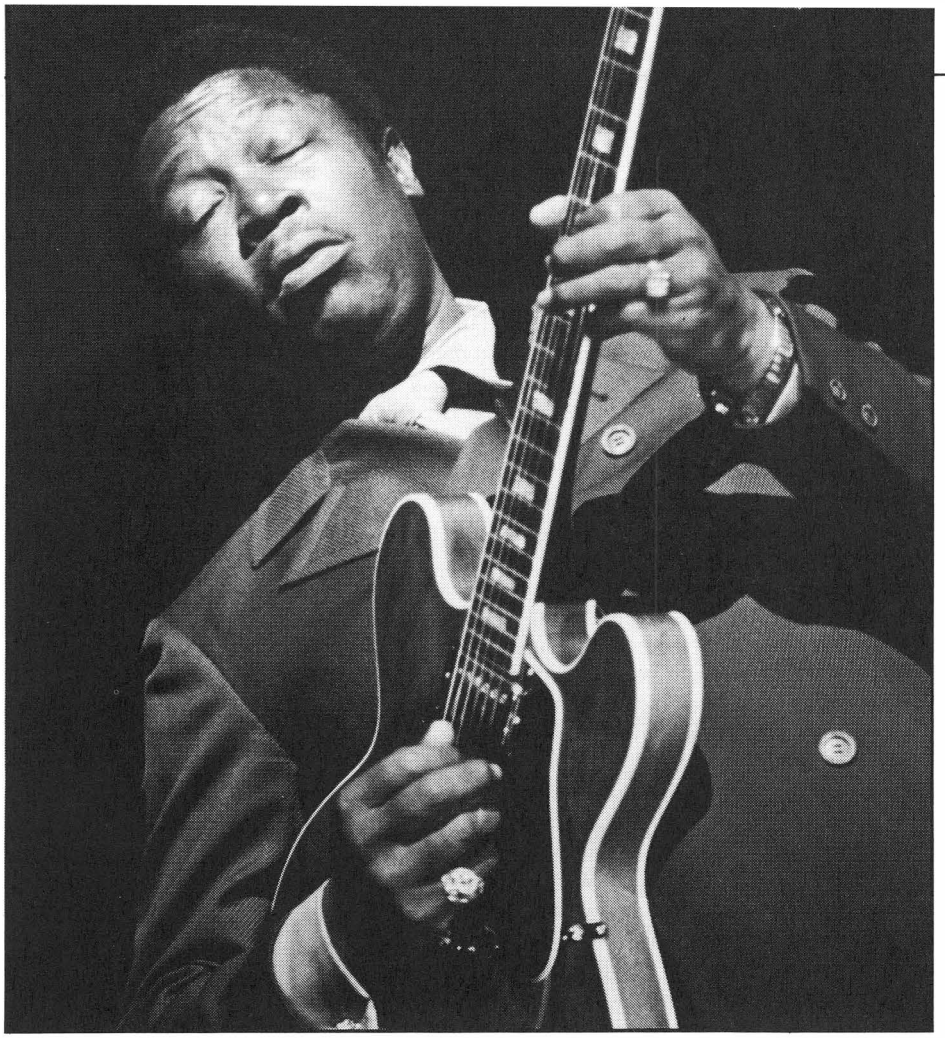
On your early recordings like Miss Martha King *and* Please Help Me *you took a much more slashing, chordal approach to playing the guitar. It's a style that I associate with Willie Johnson, Matt Murphy or other players around the Memphis area, and later guys like Guitar Slim. In your later recordings you seem to have left this approach behind, and got into the sustained single-note style – a much more sparse style. What influenced this switch?*

I was listening to Elmore James and T-Bone Walker and trying to play like them and couldn't do it. You could tell how I was being influenced by the electric guitar sounds. After being influenced by Blind Lemon Jefferson and Lonnie Johnson, and then I liked jazz and started listening to Charlie Christian and Django Reinhardt, and still couldn't play like them. Then I started to hear sounds that, to me, were part of the way Blind Lemon would phrase, for instance. Certain notes that he hit that I can hear now. Certain associations that I could hear between Blind Lemon and Lonnie Johnson. Then certain associations that I could hear, like the phrases of all four of the people I just mentioned. And then hearing T-Bone Walker play his style. T-Bone Walker would play chords every now and then. He would always play fill-ins behind himself. And I started hearing that, and I realized that at that time I couldn't play and sing at the same time. This is when I tried to sing as I sing through my guitar, as opposed to orally, if you will. I think that was the time that I started to concentrate on just trying to sustain it – not jazz it up, not to improvise a lot, but just trying to sustain it, and make it be as a voice. That came a lot from listening to the slides that Bukka would use, and the other guys. They could sustain those sounds. They take that slide and they still do it today. I still can't do it, and I wish I could. The stupid thing is I just can't make it work. But I trill it and trill it in an unorthodox way. I mean I don't trill like the books say you should, but just shaking from my wrist. By being able to sustain the sound I've sometimes been credited with helping people in electronics to do that. Because when I started doing it – holding those tones and sustaining those sounds – they didn't have electronics to do it at that time. And I guess I was the only one doing it.

I can't remember anyone else doing it. Finally I saw one day that this guy had put this lever on the back of the guitar, on the bridge, and it was the beginning of the sounds that I had been doing, not realizing I'd been doing. I could hear the human voice through the guitar.

In the 1950s, what influenced the big band direction that you took?

As I mentioned, listening to Blind Lemon and Lonnie Johnson. I also listened to Count Basie and Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Louis Prima. Many of the guys going at that time with big bands were playing blues tunes that would grab me like the jazz did. But I was more influenced by their bluesier things I guess. Count Basie had Jimmy Rushing, to me the grand-daddy of all blues singers. Jay McShann had Walter Brown, who is another fabulous blues singer. Then you had Wynonie Harris, Jimmy Witherspoon. Duke Ellington had Al Hibbler who was singing some blues. Louis Prima sang some himself – blues



I'm talking about. Louis Armstrong was singing some blues. And they had those great orchestras behind them. Oh man! And none to me surpassed Count Basie. His orchestra can really get in there and play some of the bluesiest blues. And they're sophisticated.

Some people will add vocals to a group. But to me if you can add two or three horns that can play harmony behind you, that is that church choir that I used to hear when I used to sing in the quartet. I use that instead of carrying the voices. Now carrying the voices and the horns is a luxury that I just haven't been able to afford. Believe me, I would have had it if I could have afforded it. After rock and roll in the 1950s, people didn't seem to pay much attention to my blues, so that's when I really went to a thirteen or sixteen piece band to intentionally try and get more of a jazz sound on the blues. Prior to that I was using two or three horns to get that little flavour, that little punch, that I feel is just like the icing on the cake. I still think that those couple of horns that I have now is that other little punch line that I need.

I like harmonica. In fact I used to play harmonica, and Shakey Walter and I used to play together. Just the two of us. Now in Muddy Waters' case yes, but in my case I never felt that the harmonica would do all the other things that I wanted to do. To me it doesn't blend with horns, and I always wanted horns. That's why I didn't use harmonica, because I couldn't get a guy who could play everything that I wanted to play that would blend. Now there are times when I miss it, and there are times when I have used it on records. What I think I'm saying is that I feel the horns are the most practical in terms of what I wanted.

Who were your specific vocal influences?

Not only were Blind Lemon and Lonnie Johnson good guitar players, they were good blues singers. To me the top of the line. Then later on there was T-Bone. God! There were so many – like Muddy Waters, Jimmy Reed, John Lee Hooker, Lowell Fulson, Roy Brown, Big Joe Turner, Eddie Cleanhead Vinson. Oh, there were so many – Dinah Washington, Ruth Brown. Even Ella Fitzgerald was singing some blues at this time. Nat Cole was singing some blues; Louis Jordan, whom I idolized. Oh man! There were so many at that time – Arbee Stidham, Big Maceo, Tampa Red, Lightning Hopkins.

It's often been said that you have synthesized so many different schools of music. You took in country blues, the urban blues of T-Bone and Lonnie Johnson, gospel and jazz, and you came out with this highly influential B.B. King sound.

Well, if that's what you call it, because I was influenced by all of these people mentioned. Everybody that I mentioned had something that I wish I had, and I tried to play like many of them but could never play like any of them. Sure the gospel bit, the country bit, the jazz bit, all that you mentioned I loved it and still do. Later on when the new trends in music came out, I incorporated a bit of that.

On some recent TV work I have noticed more improvisation, in the jazz sense.

Some of it's going to come out from time to time because you play what you think and feel. As far as the playing is concerned, you do practise, you do hear things. You don't practise to be like you was. You practise to be better than you was. Now the better, sometimes to some people may be worse. To me my playing is far superior today than when I was doing *Miss Martha King* or *Take A Swing With Me.*

Some of that early stuff was pretty crude.

Blues as a whole is never as refined as, shall we say, the trends of music that you hear today. It's always going to be rough. I guess that's why they don't open the doors and play our records like they do other people's. I've often thought that blues could be considered as elementary, with jazz, rock or soul as the more refined student that's going to college. Mind you, you can do a lot to make a twelve bar blues with three chord changes interesting.

I'd like to get Memphis Slim, Lowell Fulsom, Sunnyland Slim, Buddy Guy, Joe Turner and all the dudes that I can get hold of, and just bring them in, and for two or three days record anything we feel like doing. You know we're all dying out. We've lost Muddy, Lightning, Howling Wolf. There have been so many and we haven't done that. Let them play it like they feel it.

Where do you feel the B.B. King sound is going to go in the next couple of years?

I'll probably get into a little more electronics, because I'm getting interested in electronics.

Guitar or keyboards?

Both. I think there is a place for it. I'm hearing things that I've been wanting to play for a long time. I hear it, but I wouldn't recognize it unless I hear it. I'm trying to say that I hear things that I can't play now, and I don't know how to go about it unless I practise and practise. There are things that I've wanted to do for years and can't seem to get. Maybe electronics will help.

B.B.King (Photograph by Bill Smith)

Eddie Jefferson / Richie Cole

On April 4, 1977 (which happened to be my 25th birthday) I had the distinct pleasure of meeting and conversing with the late, great vocalese master, Eddie Jefferson. It is a night I will never forget.

I was, at that time, doing an all night jazz show on a commercial radio station in Ann Arbor. It was a Monday night/Tuesday morning, and Eddie was in town to do a series of shows at a club in the student village section of Ann Arbor called the Blue Frogge (now Rick's American Cafe). Eddie and Richie Cole came down at about 1 a.m. and stayed until 3:30 or so.

What impressed me the most about Jefferson was his friendly demeanor, his vast knowledge of the jazz legacy, and his total honesty. Here was a gentleman who had nothing to hide and everything to share. He was truly a delight to be with, and turned me on to many things about jazz, and of his own style. He even hipped me to people like Muhal Richard Abrams and the A.A.C.M. and the new musicians that were beginning to make an impact on New York, where he lived.

I did not see Eddie for two years, although he sent me a cassette copy in advance of his new Inner City lp "The Main Man", and kept in touch via phone and letters telling me of his itinerary. All of this, while I moved to Woodstock to work briefly as Public Relations Co-ordinator for the Creative Music Studio, then to Washington, D.C. looking for work, and then back to Ann Arbor where I was rehired at Discount Records.

In Ann Arbor, while working one day, we got word that Clarence Baker, proprietor of Baker's Keyboard Lounge in Detroit, had booked Jefferson for a Wednesday through Sunday stint. I was delighted at the prospect of hearing and seeing Eddie again. Myself and a few friends made plans to see Jefferson on that Thursday night. I recall being in the store that Wednesday, playing Eddie's records all day long, selling a few, and telling my customers that he would be back in the area.

Going to work on Thursday, and finding out that Jefferson had been murdered the night before outside the club was one of the most devastating moments of my life. I felt as if I had been cheated, deceived, double-crossed. It is still, to this day, inconceivable as to why anyone would want to harm as sweet a man as Eddie. Yet, May 9, 1979, Eddie Jefferson was shot down in cold blood on the streets of Detroit. Shock waves rippled through the jazz community. It was an occurrance that Detroit is only now starting to fully recover from. But the loss is tremendous. The killer has still not been found. After arresting, then releasing the main suspect, the police have given up the search for the murderer of Eddie Jefferson.

What you read below is a transcription of the interview on that all-night show in 1977. It was like a party, with Cole, Jefferson, local bassist Shoo-Be-Doo, and a couple of friends looking on while the interview took place. Later, Eddie autographed my copy of "Still On The Planet", ironically, and his words "To Michael, Keep playing that good music, peace, Eddie Jefferson" inspire me to bring jazz to as many people as possible. As you read the interview, I hope that it will give you some insight into a man whose kindred spirit and inner beauty is a testament to the strength of the human soul. He was truly one of a kind.

Michael Nastos — *First of all, you look quite well, very alive and active.....*

Eddie Jefferson — Beautiful.... absolutely..... feeling fine..... the music keeps you alive you know. The music.....

What got you into singing the way you do? It really is an innovation and not something you hear on the top 40. You're the first one to do this pretty much, aren't you?

Yeah, and it was a feeling. The music was so exciting during that era, that age, that I first heard so called be-bop, that I decided I had to do something. There were a lot of horn players, and I wasn't going to attempt that. So I said, "Let me sing my thing", and then with lyrics, I felt just like a horn player would feel playing standards.

I'm often stopped cold by someone who may not be into jazz that much, saying "What does that solo mean, I can't follow that." And it's nice to say to them, here's one thing it could mean, and put an Eddie Jefferson record on. Especially "So What."

Lyrics to "So What?"

Miles Davis walked off the stage
That's what the folks are all saying
Oh yes he did leave the stage
Soon as his solo was over
Coltrane he walked off the stage
That's what the folks are all sayin'
Oh yes they both left the stage
Clean out of sight now
They felt they had to rehearse
Although we know they are masters
They get a real groovy sound
And you will have to admit it
But yes they both left the stage
Soon as their solos were over
And if you can't figure out
Their groove
I'd like to help you

Well my friends
Now about Miles Davis
I never know why some people always try to
find some fault of this man and his horn
And when they go
to wherever he is playing
They seem to go to see whether he
is going to tend to business
Zap-bap-a-boo-dah-doo-a doodle-doo
a-doo-a-shoo-dwee-a-doo-gwap
Tiddle-bop-a-bop-a-see-yah
He never walks around the place and
speaks to all of the folks
he don't know, I wouldn't either
And neither would you friends
But I
I know he is friendly
I do, the rest of us we do
Oh yeah
We dig his beautiful soul
and we love him and his blue horn
And here's another thing now
About the clothes he wears
I'm sure his style is in the future
He is cool
The fit of his clothes are perfect
Just like the way he plays
He's not afraid of being different
And he has won most polls in this modern jazz
He and Gillespie are kings
Miles and his group are breaking records, yeah
Because they sure do swing

Miles Davis walked off the stage
That's what the folks are all saying
Oh yes he did leave the stage
Soon as his solo was over
Coltrane he walked off the stage
That's what the people are sayin'
Oh yes they both left the stage
Clean out of sight now
They said they had to rehearse
Although we know they are masters
They get a real mellow sound
And you will have to admit it
But yes they both left the stage
Soon as their solos were over
And if you couldn't figure out
Their groove
Well I have hipped you
Oh yes they both left the stage
SO WHAT!!

Miles was a story during those days.... "Oh, he walked off the the stage, where's Miles?" He'd get through playing a terrific solo, and go off maybe to oil his horn or something and let

the other artists have it. And people would say, "Oh, he's walking off the stage." So I was saying "So what?" Did you hear what you just heard? So what if he walked off, he'll be back when it's time to play again. So that's what prompted me to write the lyrics on that, in conjunction with Chris Hall, who I write with sometimes. So we came up with the lyrics to "So What?", and the melody was so nice and simple you know. And the changes on that... well, it came out.

Do you find it hard to find words to fit solos like that? Some of them are very literal transcriptions of solos, and you would never think that they would fit a word pattern.

Well, I guess you could say I live in a semi-dream world, because I learn a solo and learn it so well, and there is a period of time before all of a sudden I hear a story. It just comes to me, and I hear a story, and then if I can I'll talk to the musician about it: "Can you remember what you were talking about or thinking during that?" And if they can remember, my stories sometimes are about 80% right, he was in that mood. But I kick an instrumental around for months before I attempt lyrics. I must know every note, exactly. Because if you don't capture it as close to the original as you can then I think it's lost. Plus I like to teach while I'm writing lyrics, you know.... the history of musicians.

I have learned a lot of the bop legacy from listening to your tunes. A lot of it seems like a tribute to these other great artists. Have you appeared on stage much with them?

Most of the artists I have sung about I have appeared with, from Coleman Hawkins to Lester Young, the Bird, Trane, I've appeared on stage with all of these people.

Have you sung with a big band?

No, no big band thing. My thing was individual, a blowing thing, I considered myself as a horn to a great extent.

Interesting, in that people say that horns try to sound as much like the human voice as possible. You took it from the other end.

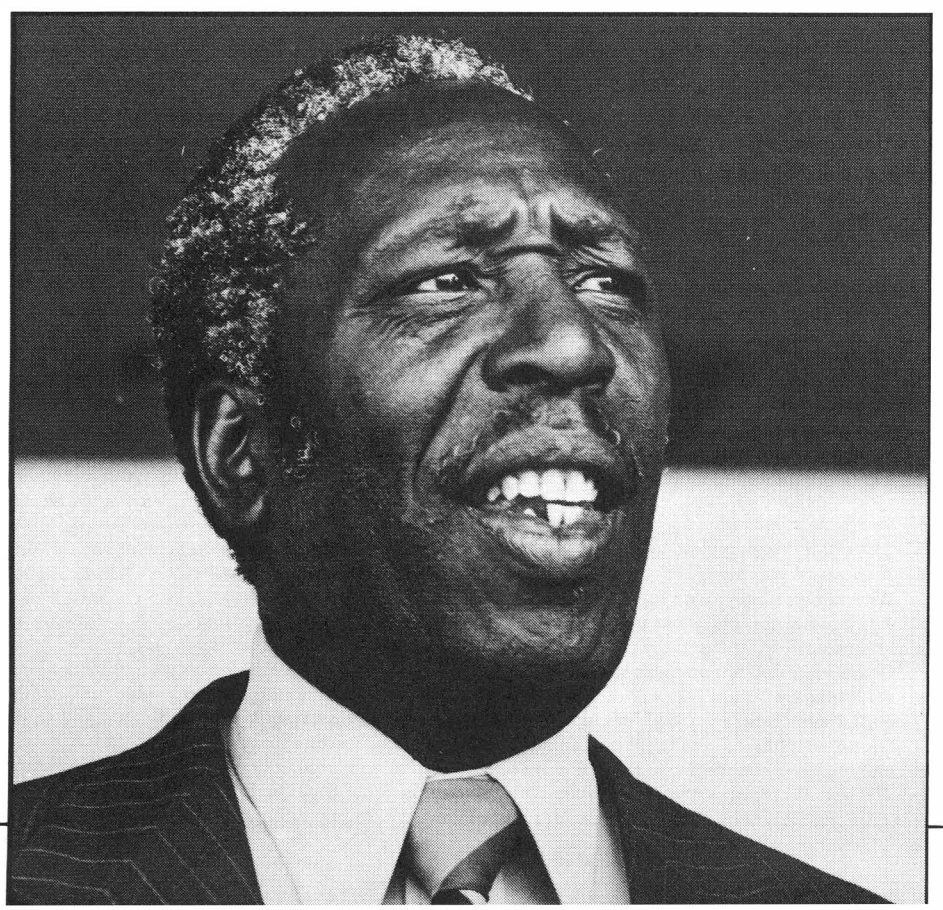
Right, that's true.

You do vocalese from your experience. Many vocalists would not attempt this kind of thing.

Well I danced for twenty-five years, as a rhythm tap dancer. I was opening singing, but then with this type of thing that I'm doing, you have to have perfect timing, you've got to know rhythms. To a person who is just a singer, who doesn't know how to bend rhythms, they couldn't ever sing this way. That was one of Charlie Parker's secrets.... timing. The way he would hold back on changes, and then burst through with them, and go over them. The timing was miraculous.

When did you decide to become a singer?

Oh, James Moody talked me into that. I was dancing on stage at the Apollo theatre in New York in 1953 with the James Moody band. The name of the team was Jefferson and Taylor. Irv Taylor was my partner who sings this stuff equally as well as I do. He's inactive in the business today. We opened up singing ***I Got The Blues*** before we started tapping, and Moody said "Gee, I like that, can one of y'all come and sing with the band?" Babs Gonzales had just left, so they needed another singer. I said "I'll go with you for one week", because we were off for a week before going to the borscht circuit in the mountains, my partner and I. I went with Moody to the Douglas Hotel, the Showboat in Philadelphia, and we sang ***Moody's Mood For Love*** and a few things I had written..... ***Birdland Story, I Got The Blues***.... I had about five tunes with the band. That engagement lasted sixteen years. 1953 with James Moody was where it began. I wrote my first solo however, in 1938, to the ***Nancy Stomp***, the Basie thing. And ***Every Tub.***



You've seen a large portion of the jazz history, and been a part of it for a long time. What about that time strikes you as so unique?

It was not mythology at all. It was a very exciting time. It reminded me, musically, of how it was like during the 20s or the gold rush days. Guys would come out very enthusiastically. Every town had a bunch of musicians that could play, and they would challenge each other. Clubs on every corner.... you know, it's too bad the bop era didn't last too long. A lot of the youngsters missed that era, and that's why there's a re-interest in it now. During the time after Dizzy's big band in 1947, when the Korean War came, rock 'n roll came in, and it dominated, so jazz started going on a decline right up to 1959.

Do you think it was more economic than a lack of good players?

Lack of good players, lack of interest, because the type of musician that was playing jazz could not be handled by the media. They went and got somebody they could handle. The guys who were singin' ooooo-wooooo-oooooo, and they built this thing into a big economic thing. So therefore, jazz took a second place, but it was still strong. We still had Birdland, every city had some place where you could hear jazz.

Mel Lewis said that what happened in the 60s was that electricity got to town and blew a lot of the old cats out of the studios.

That's true and it's still around. The silent musician.... Con Edison.... if you pull the plug there's no music. But still the basic of all of that stuff is jazz. You've got to keep developing. Look at George Benson. A jazz player. The other stuff he's done to make a living is incidental. Jazz was the first thing.

On the other hand, Leon Thomas for example, does not consider his music as necessarily jazz, but as a full circle music. You consider what you do as jazz.

That's the name the people, the masses can identify with. That's why I use the term jazz, let's face it, that's the name for that music. I maybe say jazz music, but that is it.

There are a lot of stories about how controversial bop was when it first showed up as opposed to swing, or whatever. Did you experience anything adverse, like a civil war, brother against brother?

Yeah. They said they had different personalities, and it wasn't acceptable. But it was the way they were improvising, they were daring. It was like with Van Gogh the way he was painting with colors. Everything was supposed to be in black and white, and they shunned him, as he came up with this bright sunshine. It was the same way with the music when it came along, because everybody was playing, there was Peter Duchin, and let's face it now, and Don Bester, and Wayne King, and here comes this other music and kind of maybe dated that, they thought, you know. And it was controversial plus it couldn't be handled. And another thing is that the musicians were independent, free livers, and no agent could say, "You be home at 10 o'clock because you got to get up to catch a plane at 9 in the morning." He'd stay up until 8:30 and catch the plane at 9.

Why was everybody so wild?

I think it was also the knowledge that the music had changed. We stayed in the swing era a long time, and automatically the music had changed. There was a new excitement. The music caused that, so-called bebop. Then the Jazz at the Philharmonic things, and the trends like Dizzy's bands, they were wearing tams and goatees, because Dizzy looked like that, they had a Beatle type fan club going on, all across the country with that. People had interest in the music and it was very high.

Was it a self-proclaimed rebel with a cause feeling?

You could put it in that term. But it's something that just settled into America. The American way of life is jazz. You can see all of your best pictures, movies and what not, and the music is predominantly jazz. Good music... I want to quit using that word for a minute... jazz.... good music... because, you know, Henry Mancini, Quincy Jones, Benny Carter, Tom McIntosh.... I've worked with all of these people, all jazz orientated, but it just goes further than that. It goes to show you that jazz musicians do elevate themselves.

It struck me in listening to your tunes how rich the jazz literature of the 40s and 50s really is. Do you find many contemporary artists whose tunes you like much?

No, there are not too many around. There aren't enough changes, not enough interest in the new music, supposedly new music. It's pretty bland, pretty much alike, repetitious. And then for me, maybe I haven't searched far enough so I shouldn't fully commit myself, but there are too many things from that area that I haven't dealt with yet. I know during my lifetime I'll never get into that thing. There is too much work I have to do with what has been around.

You must feel you're preserving something. But you also must feel it's a thriving entity, and that it will go on.

My thing has been documented, all you gotta do is have an interest in it. I taught a class at Bennington College for six weeks, and I put together a jazz choir for thirteen voices, singing ***So What?, Trane's Blues***, and I put up a sheet saying "Wanted! Voices!", and had forty names. That goes to show you the interest, and they knew what kind of music I was dealing with, and it came off beautiful.

When did you meet up with Richie Cole?

Richie and I were in a radio studio in Rochester, N.Y. at 4 am with Harry Abraham, Moody, Roy Brooks, and Richie was with Buddy Rich at the time. We all hung out with Harry. And then I didn't see Richie for quite a while. I was working in a place called the St. James Infirmary on 7th Avenue in New York, and Richie came down and played, and he said, "Why don't you come down to Washington and gig with me", and then a month later, he called me and I went down to D.C., and we've been working together ever since. He's from the Bird school, I'm from the Bird school, and it was a great relationship. This was a couple of years ago.

What is it like, Richie, working with Eddie, compared with a big band like Buddy Rich's?

Richie Cole — When you're with a big band you have to do the same things every night. With Eddie and what I do with the guys in our band, we've got complete freedom to do what we want. It's very enjoyable, we can express ourselves, do our own thing. I may be playing some Johnny Hodges one minute, Sun Ra the next.

Do you have any words to any Johnny Hodges solos?

Eddie Jefferson — No, but there are several lyrics to his stuff. There are words to ***Jeep's Blues***, and a few other things though. I heard Jimmy Rushing do them some years ago. And know some singers in New York doing some of his solos. One of these days I might hear something that I would like to write on Johnny Hodges.

Is there anyone else you're contemplating writing lyrics to?

I'm getting ready to do some Richie Cole pretty soon, knowing his changes like that, being able to play anyway he feels like playing. But I want to write off of one of his solos, an original improvised solo. He plays some pretty things.

You set lyrics to "Night Train."

I did those words something like 1960.. 1961. And I talked to Jimmy Forrest about it and he said "Yeah I'm waiting to hear it." He works with the Basie band, and a lot of people forgot that he wrote that. Good player.

You did "Summertime", and I thought that if I was ever going to hear an original "Summertime", this would be it, and I was not disappointed. It helps to see your depth in another way.

Lyrics to "Summertime"

Summertime
And the livin' is easy
Fish are jumpin'
And the cotton is high
Daddy's rich, and you're mama's
good lookin'
So hush little baby don't you cry
One of these mornings
You're going to wake up singin'
Then you'll flap your wings
And take to the sky
But until that morning
There is nothing can harm you
Cause your daddy and mommy are
standing by.

Summertime, summertime, summertime,
When the livin' is easy boy
Hey the fish are jumpin' out of the lake
Flop, flop, flop
Tryin' to give the fishermen a break, hey
Your daddy is rich, your mama don't care
Your sister's got dough, clothes to go
any old where
Splip-blip-blop-bo-br-dooba-doo-bah doo
little baby
don't you dare to cry
Say one of these mornins, one of these
mornins, one of these mornins
you gonna wake up singin' boy
Then you'll flid-diddy-yap your wings
And you'll take to the sky
Who knows where, who cares why
Till the mornin' there's nothin' can
harm you
Cause your daddy and mommy are
standing by
And they certainly lookin' fine in the
Summertime.

The funny thing about that tune. I heard that version in 1934. Leo Watson, a great scat singer, used to open his shows singing that version of ***Summertime***. That's where I learned it, that arrangement of it, that's how old it is. Now I don't know how long he had it before I heard it, he must have done it in the 20s. That was the way he interpreted Gershwin's ***Summertime***; Leo Watson, great jazz singer. I added a few things though. That's on an Argo/Cadet recording with Moody, from 1956. I can't remember the name of the album.

Where are some of your favorite places to play?

Oh, Storyville in New York, the Burgundy Room in D.C., and Jazz Uptown, the Rogue and Jar, Richie has a couple of set ups like New Hope, Pennsylvania, they love the music there, a beautiful little town in Buck County, John's Place, Richie started a jazz policy there. There's a Tuesday night thing in Richie's home town of Trenton, New Jersey. Richie started that too. There's a club in Annapolis, Maryland where they play the good stuff, all jazz.

Do you like playing college towns?

They're the best! I go to Amherst, we played Middlebury College in Vermont. The college kids have a bigger interest in the music. They're the saviours, the biggest supporters of the music in this country. To get better you've got to go to Europe. We play in Europe, and if we're hitting at nine that night, people are lining up at ten in the morning.

Are European audiences really more receptive?

Absolutely. You fell like you've reached the heights of your thing.

Have you ever thought of staying over there?

I couldn't. You ain't gonna get the same vibrations over there for creating that you get in America. This is the greatest country in the world. And the music is definitely in New York where I live. I can create there, you know what I mean, because I can always go out and hear the outcasts, like David Murray, Hamiet Bluiett, Julius Hemphill, Muhal Richard Abrams.... or I can hear Paul Quinichette with Buddy Tate, and Sam Price on piano. Or I can hear Richie Cole with George Coleman or Billy Harper. You can create with different types of music. I want to stay in New York, because it's not in Europe. It's the greatest place in the world for the music.

It certainly hurts the scene in the Mid-West.

It's a production line, like a finishing plant. And they only go there so they can come back out and be appreciated. We live in New York but we work out here. We get inspiration from New York, but we work out here, and produce our own promo by moving around. I think ***Straighten Up And Fly Right*** was written on a plane. You can create while you're on the move too.

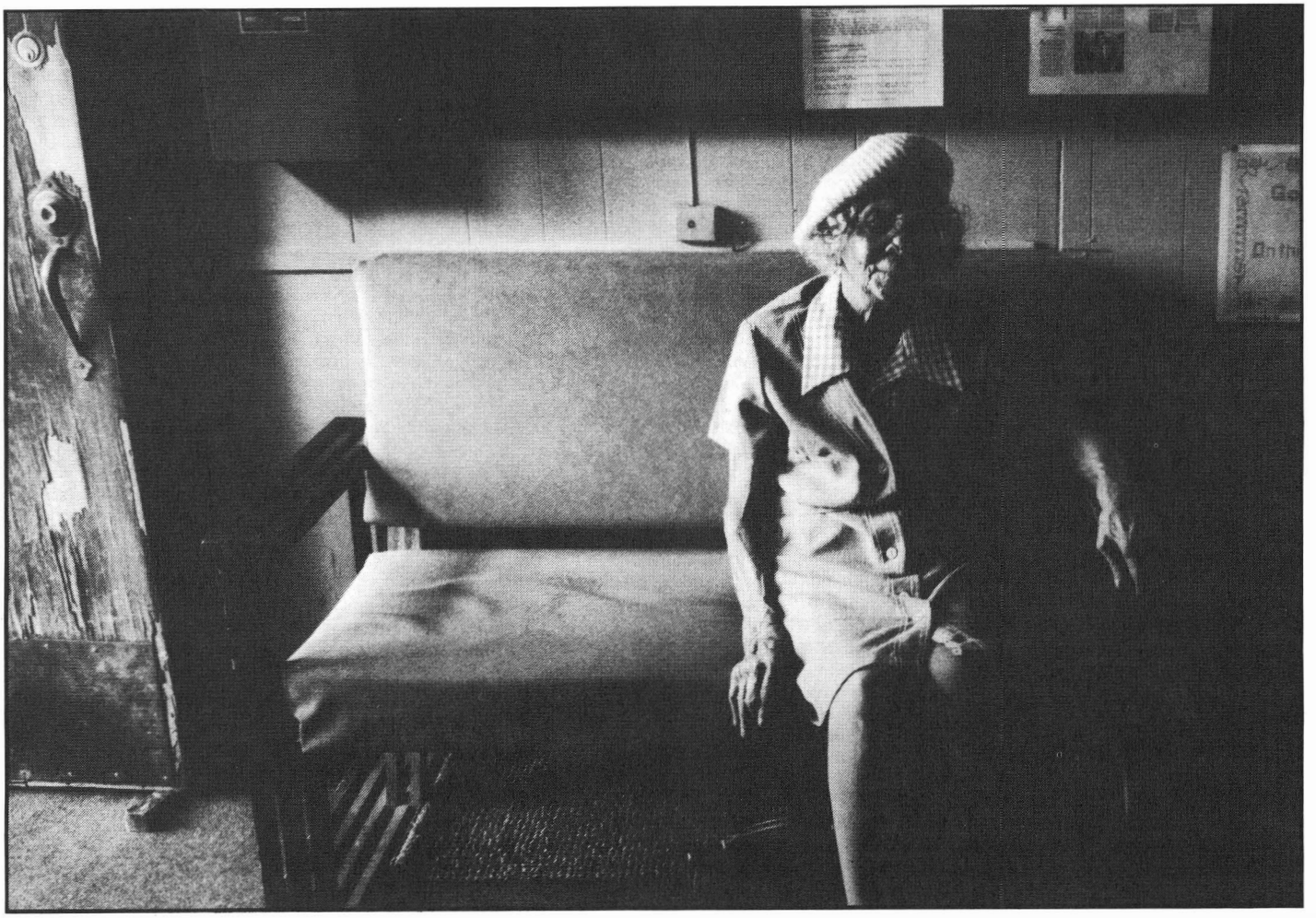
Michael G. Nastos

Michael G. Nastos is the jazz writer for the Ann Arbor News, weeknight host of "Jazz Scope" on N.P.R. affiliate WEMU in Ypsilanti, Michigan, and a local jazz musician. A University of Michigan graduate, he has studied and reported on jazz and other ethnic musics in Southeastern Michigan for the past fifteen years.

Lyrics to ***So What*** from "Body & Soul" lp on Prestige Records from 1968.

Lyrics to ***Summertime*** from "The Main Man" lp on Inner City Records from 1977.

THE JAZZ SINGER



Two widely divergent traditions came together in the formation of a branch of American music known as "Jazz Singing." It's a complex subject — one on which few people seem to agree.

Basically the jazz singer is a mix of elements common to the jazz dialect and the American song form established by Broadway composers during the first fifty years of this century. The music written by Jerome Kern, Irving Berlin, George Gershwin and Rogers & Hart defined the break from the world of European operetta (especially that of England and Vienna). Both the melodic lines and harmonic construction became something different - something specifically American. Neither Victor Herbert nor Noel Coward ever captured any elements of this style in their song writing — their music remained quintessentially European.

Alec Wilder, writing in his definitive book "American Popular Song" (Oxford University Press), noted that Jerome Kern "never could have been called a truly 'swinging' writer of songs. One can't imagine him being excited by Duke Ellington's music, let alone the experiments of Gerry Mulligan with a ten piece group." Yet some of Jerome Kern's later songs have become standard fare for jazz musicians and singers (***Dearly Beloved, All The Things You Are, Yesterdays, A Fine Romance, The Song Is You***). All those cited were written years after his most famous Broadway show ("Show Boat") — a musical whose subject matter relates to the Black world but whose songs are not suitable for performance in a jazz context.

Broadway musicals were the vehicle for these songwriters' creativity until they were hired away in the 1930s by Hollywood to do the same thing on the screen. The performance of their songs, both on Broadway and in Hollywood musicals, was rarely handled by singers with any sense of the rhythmic innovations introduced into American music by people of African descent. In general the performers came from an operatic background and sang with the "pure" articulation and timing which is so European. The irony is that one of that medium's few performers who still communicates with audiences is Fred Astaire — a singer of homespun qualities whose whole career is based on his ability to use black dance and vocal devices effectively.

By the time Gershwin and Arlen were hitting their stride in the 1920s there was already a whole body of popular songs in circulation which introduced to white society a different conception of song. Ben Harney (***You've Been A Good Old Wagon***), Creamer and Layton (***After You've Gone***), Charles Warfield and Clarence Williams (***Baby Won't You Please Come Home***), Tony Jackson (***Pretty Baby***), Shelton Brooks (***Some Of These Days***), Eubie Blake and Noble Sissle (***Wild About Harry***), James P. Johnson (***Charleston***) and W.C. Handy (***St. Louis Blues***) are some of the more successful writers whose music was inspired by and reflects the "folk" heritage of their community. That heritage and that community produced an original musical form known as The Blues. It was more than a musical structure. It was an entirely new way of expressing emotion in song. It became the key element in determining the vernacular of the jazz musician and established the differences which have separated singers trained in the European tradition from those whose roots are linked to the blues.

By the early 1920s there were outstanding performers of these songs appearing in New York at uptown theatres such as the Alhambra and the Lafayette. Singers like Florence Mills, Ethel Waters, Alberta Hunter and Adelaide Hall were demonstrating the qualities of these songs while entertainers like Sophie Tucker were trying to learn them in order to enhance their careers on the vaudeville and night club circuits.

Recordings, in the 1920s, began to slowly spread musical sounds to an ever expanding

MAMA YANCEY (Photograph by Lauren Deutsch)

audience. Those made by early jazz musicians were segregated on "race" recordings and only sold in black neighbourhoods. Their popularity ensured a steady flow of such material until the economic collapse of the Depression. Popular singers in the 1920s such as Irving Kaufman and Rudy Vallee show no understanding of the changes taking place in music. Bing Crosby was the first white singer to incorporate the phraseology and rhythmic lilt of jazz into his singing style.

Popular singing has never been the same again, and most singers have had to function, one way or another, in the field of popular entertainment. An assessment as to whether Lee Wiley, Mildred Bailey, Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, Jimmy Rushing, Billy Eckstine, Peggy Lee and Frank Sinatra (to name a few) can be described as jazz singers usually depends upon the background and viewpoint of the person making that judgement. All those mentioned (and hundreds more) would not sing in the way they do without having had come into contact with jazz music and (either directly or indirectly) with that music's antecedents — the blues and ragtime.

MAMA YANCEY is entirely of the blues. In **Maybe I'll Cry (Red Beans 001)** she evokes the heartfelt imagery of the basic functional language of the idiom. At the age of 87 when this set was recorded, her voice still has the acrid edge which made her Atlantic session of 1951 (with her pianist husband Jimmy Yancey) so haunting. Some of the material is the same here but it doesn't really matter. This is the foundation — the beginnings if you like — of a music which has spread around the world and fed into every other kind of music. But the simple, soulful truth of Mama Yancey's music is impossible to duplicate. She is a reminder of times long ago but she still has the magic to reach out and grab you. Erwin Helfer's piano, in the Yancey tradition, fits perfectly. He follows behind Don Ewell, Art Hodes and Little Brother Montgomery as a worthy accompanist for this indomitable and energetic singer who still sings with intensity on such numbers as ***Monkey Man***.

The kind of personal intensity which makes Jimmy and Mama Yancey, T-Bone Walker, Muddy Waters, Leroy Carr and Robert Johnson such original figures is a thing of the past. The early singers created within themselves a sound, a style and a language (including a body of lyrics) which have become part of the ever broadening source of inspiration for singers and musicians. Both **JOE WILLIAMS** in **Nothin' But The Blues (Delos DMS 4001)** and **JEANNIE CHEATHAM** in **Sweet Baby Blues (Concord CJ 258)** are convincing singers of the blues. Their backgrounds and life experience give them the wherewithal to handle the dialect with conviction. But neither of them can bring to the blues the kind of ache one experiences when listening to Joe Turner, Jimmy Rushing, Jimmy Witherspoon or Jay McShann. Both singers have chosen to sing standards from the blues repertoire and their very familiarity gives them challenges which they don't quite overcome. Williams tackles ***Just A Dream, Please Send Me Someone To Love, Alright OK You Win, In The Evening/ Rocks In My Bed, Sent For You Yesterday*** and ***Goin' To Chicago*** while Cheatham tackles ***Roll 'Em Pete, Ain't Nobody's Business, Muddy Water*** and ***Cherry Red***. The balance of both singers' repertoires is made up of traditional lyrics strung together in fresh ways.

Both singers are supported by small combos whose predilection is to jump the blues. Even at slow tempos both groups tend to sit on top of the beat — there's none of the "old time" feel to the way these musicians play the blues. Just as Miles Davis managed to move up the tempos of his tunes over the years, so do these musicians. Red Holloway and Cleanhead Vinson are the horn players on the Williams date with Jack McDuff wailing on organ. Snooky Young, saxophonists Curtis Peagler and Charles McPherson, clarinetist Jimmie Noone and trombonist Jimmy Cheatham are the hornmen on Jeannie Cheatham's date. The leader is an excellent pianist whose forthright blues style is the most exciting feature of this session. It's a long-overdue exposure for a very talented lady.

"Nothin' But The Blues" is but one aspect of Joe Williams' vocal style. He is one of the most complete singers within the jazz idiom and even though this record was good enough to get a Grammy award this year, a fuller view of his talents can be experienced if you get a chance to hear a rebroadcast of his Art Park concert with the Norman Simmons Trio on National Public Radio. It's been too long a wait for Joe Williams to receive this kind of recognition.

"Roots" by Jimmy Witherspoon and Ben Webster (Reprise), Johnny Otis' Monterey Festival concert (Epic) and Joe Turner's "Honeydripper" with Count Basie (Pablo) are on the short list of genuinely moving blues recordings of the past two decades. The same is true of **ARETHA FRANKLIN**'s definitive Atlantic recordings where she wailed the blues without restraint or pretense. **Aretha's Jazz (Atlantic 78 12301)** is a repackage of music recorded in 1969 and 1972 and originally released as part of Atlantic 8212 and Atlantic 7265. These were vintage years for Aretha and on the first side she gets first rate support from Junior Mance, Kenny Burrell, Ron Carter and Bruno Carr as she sings Big Maybelle's ***Ramblin', Pitiful, Crazy He Calls Me*** and ***Bring It On Home To Me***. There's also a version of ***Today I Sing The Blues*** where Aretha plays piano as well as singing. She initially recorded this outstanding song by Curtis Lewis at her first Columbia sessions and it was issued originally as part of "Aretha" (Columbia CL 1612).

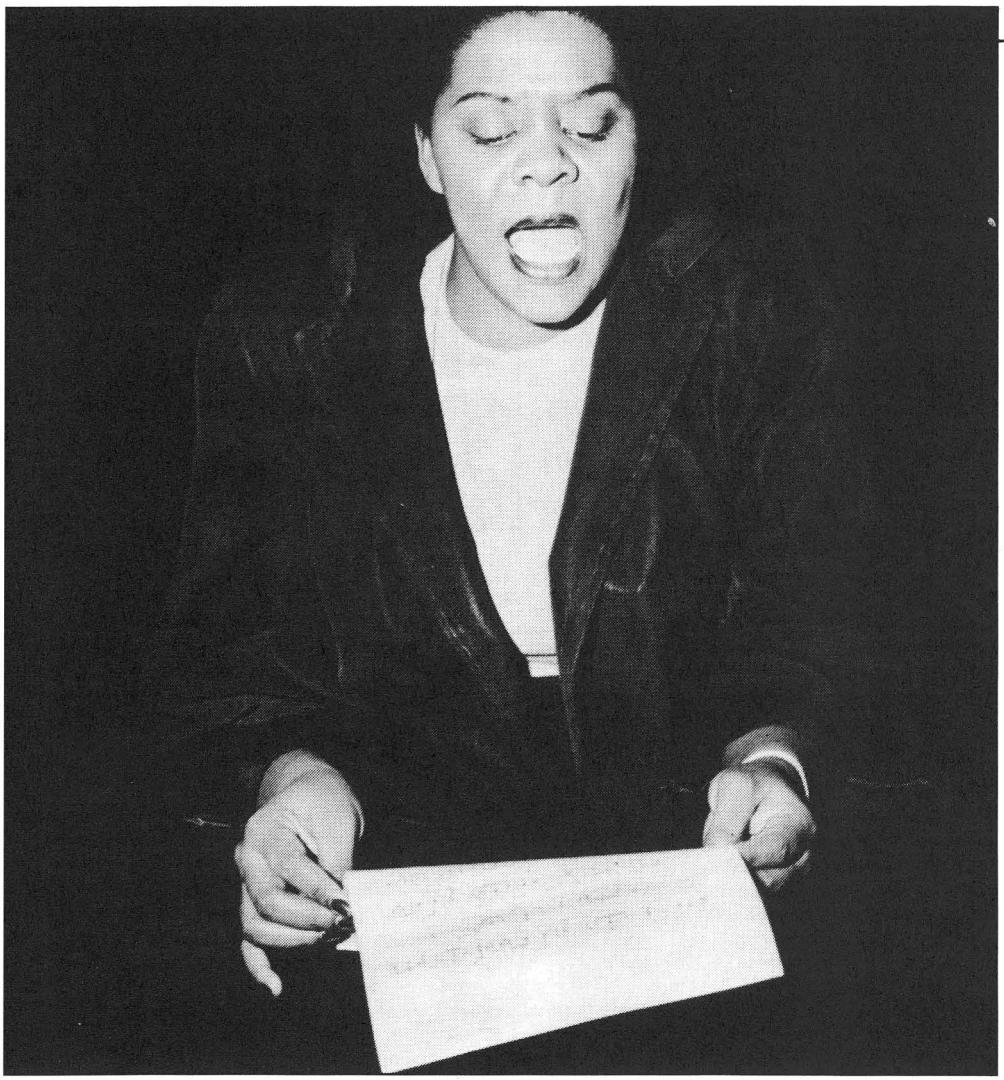
Brass and reed overdubs do nothing to dilute the magnificence of Aretha's passionate singing. David Newman, King Curtis and Joe Newman have solo spots on the aforementioned 1968 sessions. Already, by 1972, there had been changes and some of the raunchiness had faded from Aretha. Her material had changed — and not for the better. Quincy Jones' strings accentuate Leonard Bernstein's romanticism in ***Somewhere***, but Aretha's uniqueness still manages to turn this into a positive performance. Her qualities, like those of Billie Holiday and Dinah Washington, were such that she could transform the mundane into the significant. Phil Woods takes another of his ubiquitous solos here. He seems fated to be best known for his instrumental contributions with popular singers. ***Moody's Mood*** is a curio which transforms itself midway through from the innocuousness of Manhattan Transfer to a true vehicle for Aretha. It doesn't work. ***Just Right Tonight*** is a remake of Avery Parrish's ***After Hours*** by pianist Billy Preston tacked on to the front of the some traditional blues singing by Aretha dressed up in some subtle rhythmic changes.

Aretha Franklin in the most recent in a long line of soulful singers of genius, and like Billie Holiday her uniqueness makes it equally difficult for other singers to draw ideas from her without sounding like a caricature. Dinah Washington, on the other hand, seems to have given life to many singers who have utilised her distinctive way of handling a song. **DINAH WASHINGTON: A Slick Chick (On The Mellow Side) (Emarcy 814 1841)** is a cross section of her recordings between 1943 and 1954 — all of which were directed at what was then known as the Rhythm And Blues market. Most of the selections are blues-oriented and were issued originally as singles. There's quite a change between those made in 1943 for Keynote (***Evil Gal Blues, I Know How To Do It, Salty Papa Blues, Homeward Bound***) and the mature performances from the 1950s. This two-lp set really documents with clarity the development of one of this music's most expressive singers. Dinah Washington came up through the world of gospel music and elements of that style were crucial to the overall texture of her singing. It is not as evident in the earliest sides where she sings the blues with the kind of clarity that marked Billie Holiday's approach to the idiom.

Both the performance and lyric content of the songs in this set are superior to the vast majority of rhythm and blues recordings in the 1940s and 1950s. The inevitable sexual innuendos of so many of these blues are handled well but the later sessions give room for solos from such luminaries as Ben Webster (***Trouble In Mind***) and Paul Quinichette (***New Blowtop Blues, Fat Daddy***). The final three selections (***I Don't Hurt Anymore, Dream*** and ***Teach Me Tonight***) are examples of the mature artist at work. Her control, projection and emotional involvement overcome whatever commercial considerations were at work in expanding her audience.

The Fats Waller Songbook (Emarcy 818 930-1) was one of several special projects tackled by Dinah Washington during her highly successful years with Mercury records. She had finally overcome the racial bias of the day and her songs were being heard outside the ghetto world of rhythm and blues. This collaboration was a celebration. The ebullient quality of Waller's songs (or those associated with him) were ideal vehicles for Dinah Washington. She is in exhilarating form throughout this set as she wails in front of a big band playing Basie-styled charts by Ernie Wilkins. At 33 Dinah Washington was at the height of her powers. The tragedy is that only six years later she was dead. At least we have the recordings, and reissues such as this are a timely reminder of the uniqueness of her sound and how it spread throughout the music world through so many other singers. Originally released as "Dinah Washington Sings Fats Waller" (Emarcy 36119), this reissue has been digitally remastered and the sound is clean and full.

Both Dinah Washington and Billie Holiday personify that elusive personality "the jazz singer." Their lives and careers have many parallels, but it is in their approach to singing



that they coincide most. Even though Billie Holiday rarely sang the blues and Dinah Washington recorded more of them than was really necessary, they both took their material and turned it into vehicles for their ***own*** personal expression. Popular singers usually sing songs without altering the notes but jazz singers change them in the same way as jazz instrumentalists.

The Billie Holiday Songbook (Verve 823 246-1) could just as easily have been called "the popular" Billie Holiday. It collects versions of her most performed songs (***Good Morning Heartache, My Man, Billie's Blues, Don't Explain, Lady Sings The Blues, God Bless The Child, Lover Man, Fine And Mellow, Strange Fruit, Travelin' Light***) from various Verve sessions in the 1950s (except for ***Lover Man*** which comes from Leonard Feather's Seven Ages of Jazz concert). The performances are typical of Billie's later years — full of anguish, erratic voice control and intense emotional impact. It is no better and no worse than many of her unauthorised performances which now clutter the record bins and lead astray the casual buyer. The definitive Holiday recording from the Verve years is "Songs For Distingue Lovers". It contains great songs which are given extraordinary interpretations by Lady Day and her fellow musicians (Harry Edison, Ben Webster, Jimmy Rowles, Barney Kessel). This set is only for the uninitiated.

Few singers before Billie Holiday and Fats Waller really changed the songs they interpreted. Singers, like early jazz instrumentalists, merely sang songs with rhythmic expression. The best of these were Ethel Waters and Mildred Bailey but there were others whose careers reached wider audiences. **Swing Is The Thing (Swing Records SW 8455/56)** is a two-record collection of songs by **VALAIDA SNOW** — a singer/trumpeter — who recorded them in London, England in 1936/37. There is a certain period charm to this music but Valaida's "little girl" voice and clear diction are best suited for musical comedy. Her vocals reflect the transitional nature of that period. Within one chorus she can sound like a legitimate theatre singer before slipping into growled phrases which could only come from the world of jazz. Her accomplished Armstrong-styled trumpet bursts through occasionally for a hot solo in this collection, but the British musicians have a more difficult time getting into the groove.

MAXINE SULLIVAN achieved early success through her swinging version of ***Loch Lomond*** while working with the John Kirby band. Even then her voice had more vibrato than singers like Valaida Snow and Ella Fitzgerald but she, too, did little more than sing songs with rhythmic flexibility and occasional bending of melody lines. Her voice has deepened with the years but her basic approach remains unchanged. Her career, like that of many of her contemporaries, has fluctuated wildly but she now is enjoying an Indian summer with concert, club and festival appearances as well as recordings in a variety of settings and locations. **It Was Great Fun (Audiophile AP-185)** should have been better. No date is given for the recording but it was probably made about five years ago. Doc Cheatham, Herb Hall and Red Richards add lustre to the occasion but everything is handled in a strictly ad lib manner. Time was not even spent on working out the beginnings and endings of tunes and everything sounds like it was done in one take. Which is a pity when you have musicians of this calibre on hand. The choice of material is outstanding and Maxine does the best she can under the circumstances. Her voice is strong and her phrasing is rhythmically pliant.

Her **The Great Songs From The Cotton Club (Stash ST-244)** is at the other end of the spectrum. It is an ambitious project to record Harold Arlen songs from the Cotton Club era. ***Ill Wind, Between The Devil And The Deep Blue Sea*** (also on the Audiophile lp) and ***Stormy Weather*** are all tunes which Maxine must have sung many times, but the rest of the material is obscure and less than memorable. The small combo under Keith Ingham's leadership perform admirably but everyone, including the singer, sound as they they are still reading the charts. It's a valuable documentation of the ***songs***, but the performance is charming rather than remarkable. Harold Arlen collectors will be interested to hear the very first recordings of ***'Neath The Pale Cuban Moon, In The Silence Of The Night*** and ***Primitive Prima Donna.***

On Tour with the Allegheny Jazz Quartet (Jump J12-14) is an indifferently recorded souvenir of a short tour Maxine Sullivan made in March 1985 with a specially assembled quartet under Keith Ingham's direction. Maxine sings ***As Long As I Live, I Thought About You, Just One Of Those Things, By Myself, Lady Is A Tramp*** and We Just Couldn***'t Say Goodbye***, there's a duet by Ingham and clarinetist Bob Reitmeier and quartet versions (Lynn Seaton on bass and John Von Ohlen on drums) of ***Rosetta, Blues My Naughty Sweetie Gives To Me*** and ***Jubilee***. There's an uncomfortable edge to the band which wasn't noticeable the night I heard them in action at a different location. Part of the problem is in the recording. The bass is under-recorded and you can only hear Von Ohlen's cymbals. Missing is any bottom. Clarinetist Reitmeier comes from the Benny Goodman/Peanuts Hucko/Henry Cuesta school. He plays fluently but lacks shape and imagination. Like others who have come to this music indirectly he plays notes rather than music. The one bright spot is Keith Ingham's piano playing. He is an inspired interpreter of the jazz idiom who has yet to have his talents properly showcased on disc. It will come I am sure. Maxine gets through the songs but the tempos just don't seem right for her.

The real gems of Maxine Sullivan's latter day career are the three Swedish lps on Kenneth Records. **The Queen Volume 3 (Kenneth 2054)** contains performances not used on the earlier volumes from recordings made in 1981 and 1982 plus two selections (***It Don't Mean A Thing, 'Deed I Do***) from 1983. All of the elements were in place at these sessions. Maxine was in excellent voice, the Swedish

DINAH WASHINGTON (Robert Asen Metronome Collection)

musicians were idiomatically perfect for her style and the music is full of warmth, expression and integrity. Maxine Sullivan is such an understated performer that it is essential to surround her with musical frames which enhance and highlight her contributions. This is what happens here. Each tune has a special arrangement giving a balance and shape to the performances. The instrumentalists share the spotlight equally with the singer and are equally lyrical in their performances. The music projects the same kind of warmth which made the Teddy Wilson sessions so successful in the 1930s, and are delightful examples of Maxine Sullivan's craft. Johnny Simmen, in his liner notes, sums up the music perfectly when he writes "She has that light swing in everything she sings and her inflections and phrasing are typically 'jazz'."

The Majestic Mildred Bailey (Savoy 1151) is a recently repackaged collection of recordings made in 1946/47 for the Majestic label. They were later purchased by Savoy who reissued them in the 1950s for their Regent subsidiary. This new and scholarly package also includes several unissued alternates as well as a selection not issued previously (***Gone On That Guy***). By the time these sides were made Mildred Bailey's life was in decline and the heavy handed arrangements of the date with Ted Dale's big band offer little insight into the qualities which made the singer so attractive. The small combo date with Ellis Larkins' band and the trio session from November 1947 are better. Mildred Bailey's clear enunciation, excellent phrasing and predilection for swinging rhythmically made her a favourite vocalist of musicians from that period. In a sense she combined the differing qualities of Ethel Waters and the Boswell Sisters into a winning style where expression and feeling were mixed together in the interpretation of the popular song. Her best recordings are to be found elsewhere ("The Mildred Bailey Story" - Columbia C3L 21) but these sessions will be welcomed by her admirers.

As jazz matured it was inevitable that singers would do the same. Billie Holiday, in her unique way, was the first to really exploit the melodic transpositions of the 1930s. Likewise Sarah Vaughan reflected the ideas of her time - the 1940s - by the way she handled the popular song. She is a formidable singer who is blessed with a magnificent voice and the musical sophistication to hear the harmonic subtleties being introduced by musicians during that period. **Time After Time (Musicraft MVS-2001)** is a collection of **TEDDY WILSON** small group recordings made in 1946 and 1947. There are octet performances with Buck Clayton, Scoville Brown and Don Byas; two different quartet dates with Charlie Ventura and Buck Clayton, the sole horn players, and a marvelous trio (***Whispering, Chinatown, Bess You Is My Woman***) date. On three selections there is the bonus of Sarah Vaughan's wonderful singing. Her rendition of ***September Song*** is still one of the best around. Even then her voice was rich and full and her poised delivery brought out all the nuances of the song. The same is true of ***When We're Alone, Time After Time*** and ***Don't Worry About Me***.

Albert Marx worked hard to develop both Teddy Wilson and Sarah Vaughan's careers during this period but outside circumstances eventually led to the company's collapse and only now are some of the unissued sides being released for the first time (***Just One Of Those Things, Bess You Is My Woman***).

A constant difficulty facing singers in the development of their careers since the 1940s has been the constant tug of war between the purity of their art and the demands of the music business to broaden and expand their audience. Inevitably this has meant compromise. The best singers (Sarah Vaughan, Ella Fitzgerald, Joe Williams) can usually overcome these situations without anything too disasterous occuring. But there are pitfalls. Both Ella and Sarah have recorded material from the post rock era which was totally unsuitable. They have all had to struggle through the syrupy strains of violins and other accoutrements of show business. That they manage to survive reasonably unscathed is a testimony to the depth of their commitment to their music.

By the time **SARAH VAUGHAN** recorded for Musicraft the maturity of her voice is evident. The company decided to dress up her talents in an orchestral setting and **Lover Man (Musicraft MVS 2006)** is the third volume of numbers drawn from various sessions in 1946 and 1947. The only exception to this is the 1945 recording of ***Lover Man*** (a classic) with Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker. Sarah Vaughan's readings of these songs is sublime but time somehow does not seem to have been too kind to them. The orchestral settings sound dated and the lack of spontaneity takes away from the timelessness of the music.

Sarah Vaughan is like a well oiled machine. The flow and grace of her singing is never better than in ***What A Difference A Day Made***. Her harmonic choices are as adventurous as her vocal range and yet she doesn't turn the song into something personal - as Dinah Washington was to do a decade later. It's a reflection of differences in approach which have been part of the music since it began to expand its horizons.

Sarah Vaughan worked in Billy Eckstine's band but I'm sure they never thought to perform medleys of Irving Berlin songs. In 1957, when both were major artists and recording for Mercury, they were put together to sing the best of Irving Berlin. That session has now been repackaged as **Sarah Vaughan & Billy Eckstine: The Irving Berlin Songbook (Emarcy 822 526-1)**. The treatment is pure Broadway. Hal Mooney's arrangements for large orchestra (and strings) are pedestrian but competent and Sassy and Mr. B have fun with Berlin's sugary lyrics and melodies. Few liberties are taken and the best that can be said about this production is that all Broadway productions should utilize singers who are as outstanding as Billy Eckstine and Sarah Vaughan but this recording should only be filed under Broadway Music!

To experience the qualities which made Sarah Vaughan one of the best singers of her time you need to turn to the Columbia session with a small group that included Miles Davis **(Sarah Vaughan In Hi Fi - Columbia CL745)** or, more recently, to an extraordinary 1982 session released as **Crazy And Mixed Up (Pablo 2312-137)** with Roland Hanna, Joe Pass, Andy Simpkins and Harold Jones. This is a dream session by a really great singer — unfettered by arrangements and pre-set conditions. She tackles some outstanding songs in a manner which suggests

there was a high degree of spontaneity by all involved. That is the standard by which jazz musicians are judged and it is how they produce music of lasting (and magical) quality. This recording by Sarah Vaughan is the one to look for if you're tired of elaborate arrangements and production. The musicians interact with the singing in the same way they would with an instrumentalist and that, in fact, is the role which Sarah Vaughan handles to perfection and that is why this is a great jazz recording.

Both Sarah Vaughan and Ella Fitzgerald are blessed with magnificent instruments as well as a finely tuned musical sense. They both learned their trade with big bands and similarities remain between them. Sarah may be harmonically a little more astute but Ella probably has the edge when it comes to simply swinging. Ella's qualities were never heard to better advantage than in the three lps she recorded together with Louis Armstrong for Verve. They remain definitive examples of the way in which jazz musicians interpret (vocally) the popular song.

ELLA FITZERALD was recorded prolifically by Norman Granz following the termination of her Decca contract in the mid 1950s. These many recordings, like those of Oscar Peterson, played a major part in transforming her career into that of a major artist. One of his most successful projects was to have Ella record collections by the major songwriters. These "songbooks" became popular with people who previously had never listened to singers of her calibre. The music would be neatly dressed up by Nelson Riddle (who also enjoyed enormous success in Frank Sinatra's rejuvenated recording career during his period at Capital) to highlight the consummate musicianship of Ella's singing style. By 1964 she got around to recording **The Johnny Mercer Songbook (Verve 823 246-1)** — the only compilation to salute a lyricist rather than songwriter. In one sense this gives this collection greater variety because Mercer wrote lyrics for many different songwriters. Included here are ***Trav'lin' Light, Midnight Sun*** and ***Laura*** — all musical compositions which had enjoyed an independent life as instrumentals. Ella's interpretations of these songs (like those of other songwriters) stay close to the original melodies but her innate rhythmic sense and extraordinary vocal flexibility makes them definitive performances despite the heavy handedness of the orchestrations.

All the big bands had vocalists and these artists defined the style and approach of the

SARAH VAUGHAN (Frank Driggs Collection)

idiom for quite some time. Most bands had a ballad interpreter as well as someone to handle the more swinging numbers. A handful of these singers became exceptional concert artists (Frank Sinatra, Billy Eckstine, Peggy Lee, etc.) but many of them disappeared into obscurity once the time span of the big band era ended. The individual sound of someone like Billy Eckstine became a role model for others. His deep voice, clear articulation, good pitch and clever phrasing opened the doors for a whole generation of singers. Herb Jeffries, Al Hibbler, Johnny Hartman and Earl Coleman were among these. None of them enjoyed Eckstine's success or were blessed with the same kind of originality. Earl Coleman is the least known of these singers but his association with jazz instrumentalists is as long as his career. His best known work was with Charlie Parker for Dial (***Dark Shadows, This Is Always***) but he also recorded with Fats Navarro, Sonny Rollins and Art Farmer. Now, returning once again from obscurity (there was an Xanadu lp a few seasons back) **EARL COLEMAN** is in good form in **Stardust (Stash ST243)** where he weaves his way through some exceptional ballads (***Stardust, Serenade In Blue, I Hear A Rhapsody, I Surrender Dear***). There are also some brighter numbers but this style of singing lends itself best to the ballad where the tonal depth of the singer gives the music its richness.

Melody is the core of Earl Coleman's focus and has remained that way since the 1940s when this style was developed. Simultaneously there emerged a vocal approach which mirrored more closely the improvisation of the musicians. Leo Watson pointed the way and then Eddie Jefferson and King Pleasure spearheaded this movement by writing lyrics to the cadences of recorded improvisations by major instrumentalists. Jon Hendricks, in the 1950s, developed it further with the formation of Lambert, Hendricks and Ross which, in turn, has led to the recent success of Manhattan Transfer, the Pointer Sisters and many others.

MEL TORME is a versatile singer who is blessed with good pitch and musical taste. His long career has had its ups and downs but his enthusiasm for jazz is evident in everything he tackles. Elements of both the big band era and the Jefferson/Pleasure school are noticeable in **The Duke Ellington and Count Basie Songbooks (Verve 823 248-1)** where such instrumentals as ***Never No Lament (Don't Get Around Much Anymore), Take The A Train, Reminiscing In Tempo, Down For Double, Blue And Sentimental*** and ***Softly With Feeling (Oh What A Night For Love)*** are given vocal treatments by Torme. Torme has similar qualities to Ella Fitzgerald – the ability to handle all the harmonic and melodic demands of a song. He also has great vocal flexibility. His voice (instrument) is instantly recognizable but he doesn't really reshape the material and he is rhythmically predictable.

These Ellington and Basie tunes were recorded in late 1960 / early 1961 in Los Angeles. Johnny Mandel wrote the charts and all the West Coast session players were there as well as such individuals as Teddy Edwards, whose tenor saxophone solos bring authenticity to the occasion. The music is exceptionally well crafted but the personal touches which made Ellington and Basie (and their bands and singers) so unique are smoothed away here. Torme somehow always seems to be working ***at*** the material rather than being inside it. It's a subtle but important distinction.

Extending and distorting the melody line has been part of jazz for a long time. It has also become part of the vernacular of the jazz singer. A classic demonstration of this approach, both vocally and instrumentally, was the RCA recording by Ran Blake and Jeanne Lee in 1961. Sheila Jordan is another singer whose iconoclastic style has always been intriguing (check out her **Portrait** on Blue Note) and Abbey Lincoln radically changed her style to become not only a major performer but also a writer of highly personal songs.

The same is true of **SATHIMA BEA BENJAMIN**. In **Memories and Dreams (Ekapa 003)** she rewrites to her own satisfaction two standards (***Till There Was You, I'm Getting Sentimental Over You***) and brings out the inner nuances of two haunting Ellington themes (***In A Sentimental Mood, Day Dream***). Sathima is not a great technical singer but she infuses all the material with her personal imprint and, in the process, weaves a musical web around the listener. What makes this recording so special, however, is the three part ***Liberation Suite***. It's a poem for the oppressed people of South Africa, her homeland. Here she sways listener emotions with the rightness of her message and the lyrical way in which she communicates it. Crucial to the music's success are the contributions of Carlos Ward (alto saxophone), Onaje Allan Gumbs (piano), Buster Williams (bass) and Billy Higgins (or Ben Riley).

A return to tradition in the 1980s has seen a renewal for many singers. Once again their talents are being sought in clubs, concert agencies and recording companies. Helen Merrill, Carol Sloane, Nancy Harrow and Ann Marie Moss are all singers who missed the big band era but whose approach to the song is based within that tradition. **NANCY HARROW**'s most impressive record remains her Candid lp (**Wild Women Don't Sing The Blues**) from 1960 but she has recorded once or twice since then. **Two's Company (Inner City 1159)** is the most recent of these. It's an adventurous project - just voice and the guitar of Jack Wilkins - and it only works on some of the numbers. There's a nasal edge to some of Ms Harrow's phrases and the two performers lack the inner rhythmic ease to pull off the up-tempo numbers successfully. On the other hand there is a great deal of sensitivity to the ballad selections. Her singing style is quite direct and there is a slight touch of the blues to some of her phrases which gives the songs a distinctive touch.

HELEN MERRILL's impressive debut in the 1950s in a recording session with Clifford Brown was but a beginning. Her mastery of voice, harmonic ideas and melody is nowhere more marked than in her most recent recording, a collaboration with pianist Gordon Beck. **No Tears... No Goodbyes (Owl 038)** is an expansion of musical concepts which began to flower in 1966 with her collaborations with pianist Dick Katz but is taken much further. Her approach is different to both Betty Carter and Karen Krog but all are dedicated to stretching the boundaries of the song form within the tonal and improvisatory boundaries of contemporary music. Here she rewrites entirely such well known songs as ***The Thrill Is Gone, By Myself*** and ***Poor Butterfly***. Helen Merrill, like Ran Blake, has redefined the rhythmic and harmonic boundaries of the songs she performs.

By the standards and definitions of the 1980s (Bobby McFerrin) singers like Susannah McCorkle have little direct relationship with the contemporary world of jazz and she certainly has no relationship with what could be called popular music. Out there in limbo, it seems, is a genre of singer having to struggle hard to find a niche. Not even Tony Bennett can get a recording contract but at least he can work at prestigious clubs in Vegas and Atlantic City. Carol Sloane, Blossom Dearie and Susannah McCorkle have to look elsewhere for work. Their repertoire and stylistic preference appeals largely to older people - those who no longer frequent clubs and record stores in any quantity. That they persist in their work is a credit to their conviction that what they do is right; sing quality songs with the musical sophistication of their background in jazz. **The People That You Never Get To Love (Inner City 1151)** is **SUSANNAH McCORKLE**'s fourth lp for the label. The earlier ones focused on the work of individual songwriters. This collection is broader in scope and includes contemporary songs by people who can really write ***songs***. The quality that impresses immediately with Susannah McCorkle is her ease of phrasing. Like good instrumentalists she floats over the rhythm and never seems hurried or out of breath. Her voice is intimate and on the small side but she uses this to advantage. Keith Ingham (piano), Al Gafa (guitar), Steve LaSpina (bass) and Joe Cocuzzo (drums) are full participants in this music - and their contributions are perfectly attuned to the nuances of the singing. It's a delightfully refreshing set of songs by a subtle and understated singer.

Singers bring many qualities to the execution of their material. Those who have the inclination, background and feeling have utilized various aspects of the jazz tradition in the music they perform. A handful can truly be said to be ***jazz*** singers. But they are in a minority.

The most remarkable jazz singing, through the years, has been part of the makeup of the instrumentalists who create the music. When you think of the talents of Louis Armstrong, Jack Teagarden, Nat Cole, Ray Charles, Jay McShann and Roy Eldridge (as well as the blues singers) it is impossible not to be captivated by their playing ***and*** singing. **Roy Eldridge's Happy Time (Pablo 2310.746)** is a classic example of the complete integrity of voice and trumpet with the music. Roy's singing is just like his trumpet playing: hot, rhythmically exciting, full of personal expression and melodic reshaping of the material. Like Ella and Louis a decade earlier he tackles some of the great standards (***Willow Weep For Me, Makin' Whoopee, Gee Baby Ain't I Good To You, All Of Me, Sunny Side Of The Street, I Can't Get Started***) as well as a blues (***Stormy Monday***) and his only hit recording (***Let Me Off Uptown***). This record is an unheralded gem which was made in June, 1975. It sounds as though it was recorded yesterday and, like the Sarah Vaughan recording discussed earlier, captures the creative spontaneity of a great musician/singer at ease with his peers (Oscar Peterson, Joe Pass, Ray Brown, Eddie Locke).

And that, in essence, is what jazz singing is all about.

JIMMY RUSHING • Mr. 5 x 5

Jack Winter — *What year was it that you joined Count Basie?*

Jimmy Rushing — In 1935 Basie had a small combo and he asked me to work with him in this club in Kansas City, called the Reno Night Club. I did, and that gave him the first idea about forming a band. Up to that time he had no intention of doing that — he was just working to be working.

So one time I asked him: "Why don't you get a band of your own? Do you think we could make it?" "Well sure we could try." So we began to seek around, pick different fellows. He had seven or eight pieces in this club; we all used to understand each other and we all were good friends. We used to just come up and get our money, it wasn't under Basie's or anybody's name.

That time, the early thirties, were the very bad years of the Depression. Was Kansas City avoiding the Depression? Was it the wide-open town we hear about so much, where every musician worked; there was never any lack of work and bars were open to all hours?

Very much so; it was really wide open. That town... I don't remember any "depression" during the Depression time because I was in Kansas City. It was popping.

I believe you had your first encounter with Duke Ellington in Kansas City.

When the eastern bands used to come to Kansas City, we would have to have a standby band. It was a union rule, in order to keep the eastern band from taking work away from the home town band. Clifton Shaw, from the union, told Basie that he would be the standby band for Duke Ellington next week. So we got union scale for playing the intermission. Duke would be off thirty minutes, we'd play thirty minutes. We had a lot of head arrangements and we were shouting all we could. We had a pretty good band, and I think we needled old Duke, the old maestro, a little bit. When he came back on the bandstand it was terrible!

What kind of reception did the band get in New York when it first hit town?

We first worked down at the Roseland Ballroom. They accepted the band because it was good to dance to, a good rhythm band. People in New York were quieter than they were in Kansas City. We weren't used to people coming up and saying, "that was good, very good!"

Woody Herman was playing on the next bandstand. He had just started his band. He used to come over and ask us, "What is that you're playing? What is this number?" Basie would say, "It isn't anything but the blues, what the hell"... or what the heck! We hadn't named it *One O'Clock Jump* yet.

Eventually, Woody would play that particular number every night — walk across the bandstand and play this with us every night. *One O'Clock Jump* — it's blues chords you know, and it's such a terrific shout. Basie would give him three or four choruses and he'd take them and blow and blow and blow on them. People would applaud; his band would all have gone upstairs. I guess we played there about two months. Then we had to leave town: we played a one-night gig, came back to town and there was a sign up: Woody Herman, The Band That Plays The Blues. I kid him about it every time I see him.

You worked steadily with Count Basie right up until 1950. What made you decide to go out on your own?

We had a bad slump for a while; and you know how those booking agents are. They wanted Basie to cut his band down, cut out the high-priced men. When he cut the band down to eight pieces, I wouldn't work with him. So he said, "Look Jim, I've got a little debt I've got to pay off, so I'm going to hibernate for a few weeks, but *I will be back*. Take it easy, don't you do nothing." I said okay. But after I started working for myself — and I had always wanted to work for myself anyway — by the time Basie came back to pick me up, I had organized a band of my own. After he re-organized his big band, he played several nights up at the Savoy. That's where my band was playing: he was on one bandstand, I was on the other. He would play and I would play and we'd laugh and talk to each other about it. He went out on a one-nighter and found Joe Williams in Chicago. I had heard him sing before and I told Basie I thought he was a good guy.

Just before you came here to Denver you worked at the Monterey Jazz Festival. Did any jam sessions come out of that?

Oh yes.

It's nice that jam sessions are still happening, but I guess it's nothing like it was back in the old days.

When I came along jamming was great. If a guy comes out of a conservatory, and he can read the dots off that paper... now that's one thing. Another teacher he'll get is if he goes into a jam session. When he comes out of that conservatory he will not be as familiar with that horn as he'll be through jam sessions. Because the jam session includes all types, in all keys. We used to have a guy come to a jam session, and he'd be a big man, we'd let him play a while, then we'd play eight bars and jump to the next eight bars in another key! He'd be fiddling around trying to play... or if he could follow us through all the keys we'd say man, you're in!

Everyone used to get around; Prez and Hawkins used to play together. We used to run Charlie Parker out of the rehearsal hall, he was so young. The fellow who was in our band, the Blue Devils, was who Bird copied after. Buster Smith.

Of the modern mainstream people, who are your favourites?

I like Miles Davis, some of the things that Coltrane did, and that Cannonball Adderley does. Andre Previn... I like music, period, if it has a beat.

Speaking of that "beat," you were very influenced by Bessie Smith, yet Bessie rarely recorded with a drummer. There was never a heavy, pronounced beat on her records. Did this bother you?

No. I was just listening to the phrasing, and the way the blues really went — or the way the blues really *go*. You could carry the rhythm along with it, you could dig it, because they had a beat. Bessie Smith had such a powerful voice — so did Mamie Smith, who around 1921 recorded *Crazy Blues*. I recorded that too.

There are a couple of bluesmen I particularly wanted to ask you about. One is Champion Jack Dupree.

I ran across Jack in London. Of course in order to work Jack had to get up off his original stuff a little bit, to go with the trend.

Do you think that's because he didn't have the name... [that would allow him his own choice of material]?

Well if you've got "the name" somebody comes along and wants you to record for them or record with them, and maybe they've got what they call the blues or something written out; there are a lot of pressures to just go along with the program. My contention is that if a guy's hiring you to record, he should let the artist have half the record date to record his own tunes with his own feelings; rather than to push six or seven numbers on him to sing, which aren't in his category at all. I come in and say, I want to record so and so and so and so; they say "Let me hear it." And after they hear it they say, "Awwh, I don't think that would sell any records." But I don't think their ideas are any better than mine. I think if they let the artist do his or her number, they'll get a better *feeling*. And sometimes when they think they're going to hit, they miss, don't forget that!

This is not a great period for jazz, but there's a lot of talk, and a lot of hope, that there's going to be a very strong revival of interest in jazz.

I haven't the slightest idea what would cause the American people to lose interest in jazz. Only that during 1946, '47, when they started doing this bop and everybody got excited, because someone was doing something different, and maybe they were just looking for a new trend. Because I've seen people shaking their heads, because they wouldn't know what was happening: "What is it he's playing or she's playing, or she's singing or he's singing?" Then they stop and realize: "I don't know; I just know it sounds good." I've seen that really happen.

At one time the trend was everybody dancing, clapping their hands and keeping right up with it. But in the late forties, when they started into this bop, and the guys started wearing their little white-rimmed glasses and dressing like that. I remember the time Basie started buying bop arrangements. They booked Basie down there where all the boppers had been playing. Duke Ellington sent him a great big package, and he stripped this package apart, took it out, and found a box, and he opened that box and there was another box, and another box... he finally got down to the bottom and there was a little bitty bop cap in there! And a card saying "I hope you have much success."

What about the blues from the South Side of Chicago? The type of blues there is quite a bit different from the type of blues that you sing.

I wouldn't say it was too different, because people like Lester Smith were brought up in Chicago. When I first went to Chicago in the early twenties, there was so much blues around I can't even remember it all. There were just as many blues singers in Chicago as there were in the Middle West.

Did you ever hear much of the late Otis Spann?

Oh sure! I knew him very well. Good blues player, and a great guy. He worked with Muddy Waters a long time – in fact he's probably responsible in some ways for Muddy Waters' success. Spann was a southern boy but he was brought up somewhere around Chicago.

Spann was someone who the record companies rarely let sit down at the piano and sing and play what he wanted.

That's *exactly* what I'm talking about! The A&R man says no, nobody will like it, nobody will buy it – how does he know? And they throw a lot of good stuff in the wastepaper basket.

Do you think there are young people coming up, thinking the same way you did when you were young, thinking "I'm going to be a blues singer"?

I heard a little blues singer in Detroit prior to my coming here. She was singing in a choir in a church there, and she was very very good.

A lot of blues singers, including white blues singers, the European people I find relate more to Bessie Smith and the traditional stuff. I went into a place in England where this guy says, we don't care for this other stuff, we only want traditional stuff. When I was in New Zealand, I listened to ten or twelve bands in one night, and not one of them played bop. They all played like the music used to be in America. There's a lot of very modern music being played in France. I had a session there and the band was so far *out*. But the tenor player, he understood me, he could play both ways, and he could speak a little English, so I said to him, when the pianist gets finished playing his chorus, you hit a riff and let me know where I am!

You plan to keep on singing, don't you? You sound the same, or better, now than you did when you were first coming up.

I have thought of retiring... but a lot of people have made that remark. I was listening to you talk, a few minutes ago... it has a lot to do with a person doing what they want to do, and what they feel like. You see, there isn't a person in the world who doesn't feel that they have something to offer. With Basie, I would suggest something and Basie would say, "Oh no, I don't think that will do." But he wouldn't know any better than I would. I'll never forget one thing I suggested to him, and that was putting the saxophones in harmony behind me singing the blues. But he said no, we don't want to try that. And a year or so after that, here come all the singers doing the same thing I had asked him to do. Now that I've got a thing where I can do what I want to do, sing what I want to sing. I'm entertaining, and I still feel that people feel the music, and I know that pretty soon the overlay's going to be blue. Then when I get in the mood I just stay there. Because I know if I do everything, then I'll get everybody. I got a call from some guy to do *Misty* last night. I said, of course I could sing it, but I don't know *Misty*. I could get the band to play it for you, but I *do* know *Going To Chicago*. So he said, "Well, sing that then." So I sang *Going To Chicago* and he was *pleased*.

Denver, Colorado; October 7, 1970

"Although he was born in Oklahoma City, Jimmy Rushing was a true representative, the Senator, from the Kansas City jazz-blues community you found around Eighteenth and Vine, where Joe Turner was Mayor, Pete Johnson the Majority Leader, Julia Lee the Corporation Counsel, Walter Page the School Superintendent, Bennie Moten the Treasurer, Jay McShann the Commissioner of Public Works, Harlan Leonard the Chairman of the Board of Estimates, and Piney Brown the Public Health Superintendent. Jimmy was closely identified with my very dear friend Count Basie, who is the Swinger of the Swingingest, or the Swingingest of the Swingers. Naturally, Jimmy fit right into his band context, because their pulses were together.

"Jimmy was a great artist, an original, and, as Pastor Gensel said at his funeral service in 1972, he still retained a child-like – not to be confused with childish – quality right through to the end of his long professional career. That, of course, was virtue manifesting itself.

"We were never able to hear enough of him. He recorded with us once, and on several occasions he came by where we were playing and sat in with us. But never often enough! That's it, the whole story of Jimmy Rushing. He wasn't an aggressive man, so there was never enough heard of him." – Duke Ellington

"Music Is My Mistress"
Doubleday & Co., 1973

REFLECTIONS IN ELLINGTON

"ALL FOR THE LOVE OF DUKE"

The Third Annual Duke Ellington Conference * Oldham, Lancashire 23-26 May, 1985 * by Jack Chambers

"Why Oldham?" one of my colleagues asked, when I told him I was going there for the third annual Duke Ellington conference. It seemed a fair question. The first two conferences were held in Washington, D.C. and Chicago. Those cities appear to have little in common with the cool valley in the north of England that had its heyday during the Industrial Revolution.

The uncommon link is Duke Ellington. The Oldham-Manchester conurbation is fertile ground for Ellington enthusiasts, with Eddie Lambert, Mike Hazeldine, Ray Ibbotson, Jim Lowe, Elaine Norsworthy and Derek Webster among the most enthusiastic. In Chicago, when Lambert and the others volunteered to host Ellington '85, their visible assets were a venue, Ibbotson's Birch Hall, and a slogan, "All for the love of Duke." At the event, Birch Hall provided a comfortable, self-contained setting and the love of Duke suffused three days and nights of joyful noise.

Ellington's alumni came from all over – Jimmy Hamilton from the Virgin Islands, Willie Cook from Denmark, Alice Babs from Spain, Adelaide Hall from London, Herb Jeffries from California and June Norton from New York. So did his chroniclers – Eddie Lambert from Manchester and Pat Willard from Los Angeles announced that their books should be in print in a year or so; Jerry Valburn from Long Island brought news of disc releases of Ellington broadcasts and a progress report on his mammoth listing of all the extant Ellington music; Klaus Stratemann from Germany distributed an Ellington filmography, and Sjep Hoefsmit from the Netherlands handed out cassettes of Ellington rarities, courtesy of the European Duke Ellington Music Society.

About seventy participants rubbed elbows at each of the 16 daytime sessions in the conference hall, and at least 200 squeezed into the ballroom for the three nighttime concerts. They came from Australia, Canada, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Scotland, Sweden, the United States and Wales.

For someone like me, whose academic day-job entails a fair share of trekking to conferences, Ellington '85 was a striking reminder of what conferences are supposed to be all about. Too few of them measure up to this one in coalescing people with similar interests, disseminating useful information, or putting the information into action.

Two of the presentations focused on musical analysis. Bob Zieff, who wrote some memorable arrangements for Chet Baker's quartet with Richard Twardzik in 1955, fit Ellington into his complex scheme of musical evolution. Zieff's unique musical perspective would easily fill a book, and in conversations afterward he promised that the book is in the works.

Where Zieff offered a global view, Andrew Homzy, professor of music at Concordia University, Montreal, offered a specific one, dissecting Ellington's 1938 recording of *Battle Of Swing* in ingenious detail. Homzy isolated 14 themes, ranging from one to four bars, and with a neat and (to my knowledge) original graphic notation traced their interplay throughout Ellington's arrangement. His explanation of the parts ended with a playing of the recording, and left the audience buzzing enthusiastically about both Homzy's clarity and, more important, Ellington's genius. Let's hope that Homzy, who presented a comparable analysis in Chicago last year, will soon fill a book as well.

Several presentations documented the Ellington legacy aurally and visually. Jack Towers recalled the night in 1940 when he recorded the Ellington orchestra in Fargo, North Dakota, and played generous excerpts from his Grammy-winning efforts. Klaus Stratemann introduced several souvenirs of Ellington's film career (with films from Dave Bennett's collection), and with his anecdotes relived the Hollywood mawkishness that was the Duke's lot no less than any other black star's. Alice Babs positively glowed while recalling her role in the Second Sacred Concert and then she lit up the room with a video of its 1969 performance at Gustav Vasa Church, Stockholm.

Erik Wiedemann outlined the contents of seven cartons of tapes donated to Danish Radio by Mercer Ellington. The bequest is a discographer's dream, and Wiedemann eagerly volunteered his services when Danish Radio were puzzled about how to handle the treasure trove of some 700 reels of studio tapes and assorted other goodies. It took him a week to move the reels from cartons to shelves, and cataloguing them may take years, but he has already uncovered some surprises. One of the selections he previewed for the conference delegates is a rambling modal piece with an insinuating ostinato recorded in the early 1970s. It clearly echoes Miles Davis' style in the 1969 *In A Silent Way*, and just as clearly marks a little-known experimental period for the septuagenarian Duke.

Perhaps the most startling discographical revelation of the conference came from Brad Kay and Steve Lasker, under the suspicious title "Ellington in stereo, 1932." Those of us expecting a discussion of electronic simulation from the young Californians sat bolt upright when we heard instead about a legitimate, though accidental, binaural recording almost 25 years before its time. Their story bears repeating. Two years ago, Lasker obtained a second copy of a rare microgroove pressing of an Ellington medley made by RCA Victor in 1932. When he and Kay listened to the rare discs alternately, they detected audible differences and suspected they were different takes, hitherto unknown. But further listening convinced them that they were actually hearing the same take recorded on different microphones. Sometime in the late 1920s RCA Victor, they later discovered, began recording large groups (symphonies as well as Ellington) simultaneously on separate mikes and then selecting the better balanced version for issue. In the rare cases where both versions were issued (and, of course, have survived) it is now possible to synchronize them and create a binaural recording. Kay spent ten months synchronizing the two versions of the Ellington medley and ended up with more than 40 splices in his master tape. But the stereo effect is real, as Kay proved to all doubters when he played the tape.

Kay and Lasker then alerted Jerry Valburn to their discovery and he located both versions of a second medley recorded six days later. The two sessions together yield about 14 minutes of 1932 Ellington in stereo, playing *Mood Indigo, Creole Love Call, East St. Louis Toodle-oo, Black And Tan Fantasy* and two lesser known works. Valburn has issued

both stereo medleys on "Reflections In Ellington" (Everybodys 3005) along with some (monaural) 1940 rarities. Not surprisingly, the lp became an instant best-seller at the conference.

The three evening concerts, directed by Bob Wilber, interpreted Ellington's arrangements from several eras without attempting to clone the sound of the band or its soloists. The results were superb, with each concert full of spirit and spunk.

On Friday, Paul Munnery's eleven piece band called Harlem played the earliest Ellington, from *Foggy Bottom Stomp* to *Warm Valley*, with reedman Zoltan Sagi taking several star turns. The British band had the audience bubbling before the guest soloists arrived. Wilber, Willie Cook and Jimmy Hamilton raised the temperature, and the boiling point came when Alice Babs rushed out of the audience to request an encore of *Jeep's Blues* so she could improvise a wordless vocal on the Johnny Hodges line.

Saturday's concert focused on small band Ellington with an all-star cast. Wilber took charge of the Jazzopators, with Cook, Hamilton, trombonist Roy Crimmins and the powerful tenor saxophonist Danny Moss sharing the solos. An impromptu parade of vocalists put pianist Chris Holmes on the spot as accompanist, and he rose nobly to the challenge of supporting the diverse styles of Alice Babs, Joanne Horton, Herb Jeffries and June Norton. The stage was full for the closing jam session, and if the finale had more in common with JATP than Ellington, no one was complaining in the queue for taxis at the end of a long day.

Sunday's big concert, with Wilber in charge of the 15 piece Alan Hare orchestra, might have been a perilous venture, coming after three solid days of talk, several hours of Ellington's classic performances on tape, and the two preceding concerts, both of which had ended with standing ovations. Instead, it was the climax to which all that had gone before provided the crescendo. The soloists of the night before seemed, if possible, more energetic, and they had the advantage of Ellington's full orchestrations to set them off. Wilber never wavered in his tasteful direction, keeping Ellington's notes and voicings intact without trying for his sounds and textures. The band had a ball, and the audience was tumultuous.

Everyone took away some indelible personal impressions that the programme for Ellington '85 could not anticipate. Certainly Alice Babs pops up in many of them. She arrived at the conference from her retirement haven in Spain having exacted a promise from the committee that she would not be asked to sing, but after a few hours in Oldham she couldn't stop singing, even when the bands were idle. Sitting on a panel with Adelaide Hall, she adoringly replicated part of Hall's classic vocal from *Creole Love Call.* Presenting Jimmy Hamilton with a cake on his 68th birthday, she launched into a coloratura version of *Happy Birthday*. At 61, she remains attractive and youthful – younger looking, many thought, than she appeared in the 1969 video – and her vocal range and purity seem unimpaired. Add to that her capacity for stratospheric swing and you can understand why everyone present thought her retirement to be premature, and a little unjust.

The most indelible impression was made, of course, by Duke Ellington. Eleven years after his death, his music continues to be stimulating and fresh. Miles Davis once said that, "I think all the people in jazz should get together on a certain day and get down on their knees to thank Duke." Instead of one day, we had spent three at it in Oldham, Lancashire. *– Jack Chambers*

Jack Chambers is the author of **Milestones**, *a two-volume biography of Miles Davis, published in September 1985 by the University of Toronto Press in Canada and by William Morrow & Co. in the United States.*

DUKE ELLINGTON photograph by Val Wilmer

DUKE ELLINGTON
Reflections in Ellington
Everybodys EV-3005

This is the recording which caught the fancy of Ellington connoisseurs at their UK conclave earlier this year. Transforming two 1932 medleys into stereo is quite a feat – but it works. The original performances were recorded simultaneously with two microphones placed a few feet apart in front of the orchestra. Mixing the two takes together on two channels gives you a stereo effect. There's no question about the enhanced presence of the final music and confirmation of this can be quickly attained by playing a previously issued one channel version. What we actually have, now, is a fuller version of the performances – two medleys by Duke of some of his best known tunes. They were recorded February 3 and 9, 1932 with slight variations in placement of musicians and sound balance. The second date, where the microphones are placed on either side of the piano seems to have been designed to give greater separation (if in fact the engineers were really aware of what they were accomplishing – the basic premise seems to have been to record the music twice as a precaution against lacquer damage in those pre-tape days. Did they place the microphones so far apart to get alternate balances of the band or were they really experimenting in early stereo?). The stereo effect is most noticeable in the spread of Duke's piano in *Lots O' Fingers* and in Arthur Whetsol's solo in *Black And Tan Fantasy* but continued enjoyment of these performances is now permanently enhanced by the additional fullness of the band's sound.

Brad Kay and Steven Lasker have opened up new vistas with their discovery for it was common practice to record performances with two microphones (as pointed out in Brad Kay's detailed, and fascinating, liner notes) at both Victor and HMV. Who knows how many other identical tests exist in the holdings of private collectors and the recording companies. It's a whole new area of research. The results, like Robert Parker's sensational digital reconstruction of the Armstrong/Hines recording of *Weatherbird*, can only mean enhanced listening pleasure for everyone fascinated with this music.

Jerry Valburn has come up with some unissued gems from 1940 to enhance and complement the technical wizardry of the 1932 sessions. The ten selections span three months and all derive from NBC location recordings. Highlights include exhilarating performances of *Jig Walk* (an early Ellington composition not recorded

commercially) and *Stompy Jones* where the ensemble drive of the band is superbly captured. There's also a marvelous version of *Riding On A Blue Note* which showcases the talents of Cootie Williams and Johnny Hodges (on soprano sax). The alterations to this tune are many from the version recorded (and frozen in time) two years earlier. The soloists have transformed the original conception into something quite different. The version of *All Too Soon* (known and announced here under its original title of *I Don't Mind*) is more complete than the Victor recording with the addition of Lawrence Brown's coda. *Harlem Airshaft, Rose Of The Rio Grande, Boy Meets Horn, Rose Room* (soon to be transformed into *In A Mellotone*) and *Little Posey* are more familiar in their presentation but the performances are exceptional.

The proliferating issue of location recordings by major performers from the past has merit when the material is as well chosen as these are. Quality and uniqueness of performance should be the criteria for release rather than exploitation of the artist and listener through the availability of shoddily recorded one-nighters which constantly rehash the same material.

This is a model issue which will delight Ellington fanatics as well as being a rewarding experience for anyone wishing to hear great music by one of the major artists of the century. *– John Norris*

KENNY BURRELL
"ELLINGTON IS FOREVER"
Comstock Memorial Union, Moorhead State University
Moorhead, Minnesota
Thursday, April 18, 1985

Al Aarons, trumpet; Kenny Burrell, guitar; Buster Cooper, trombone; Sherman Ferguson, drums; John Heard, bass; Llew Mathews, piano; Jerome Richardson, reeds.

Anticipation. The Fargo-Moorhead area is not overrun, at any time, with visiting jazz musicians. So, when it is announced that one of the greats of jazz is to perform here, we get ready. That means that we talk about the impending event, share views and opinions and, most of all, try to assure an audience for the event. Kenny Burrell is well known, of course, in sophisticated jazz circles, but he is not exactly a household name. Thus, the local public radio station was encouraged to help the jazz audience become acquainted with Mr. Burrell. That was not a difficult request to make, since the station already has a jazz format. I had heard Kenny Burrell before in a concert of Duke Ellington music and was aware of what was in store for us.

The Old Vic. Sometimes you need only one little bit of evidence to know that jazz will survive. The Old Vic Theatre of London cancelled its tour in the United States for the spring of 1985. They were to perform at Moorhead State University in the Series for the Performing Arts. With just a little encouragement, the director, Dr. Robert Badal, booked the Burrell concert unit. What a pleasure for the local jazz fans. It meant that the local season, for two universities and a college, which included The Four Freshmen and the Red Wolfe Quartet, would include as fine a performance as one could wish for, as the closing concert of the season. Jazz to replace the Old Vic Theatre performance, however, represented a coup for the local jazz lovers.

The group. The performers secured by Kenny Burrell, who had an open night between engagements in Denver and Minneapolis, was excellent. Some of these were names we knew but never expected to see: John Heard and Jerome Richardson, for example. Some were not well-known to us, but after the concert we wondered how we could get to know Sherman Ferguson's and Llew Mathews' work better.

On the stage we saw seven very handsome men. All were dressed in blue suits, with individuality being shown only in their selection of cravats. Why is this mentioned? I do not know, except that in the past year or two, some jazz musicians seem to have returned to an older period when they were sharp in their attire, and made a great deal out of the experience. Billy Taylor, Wynton Marsalis and Bill Berry have been among those performing in Minnesota who showed impeccable stage presence. The men with Burrell were given all kinds of accolades as many persons, during the intermission and after the concert, marveled at that handsome group on stage.

Ellingtonia. Kenny Burrell gives the title "Ellington Is Forever" to his concert. He began with a request, to the audience, to relax and enjoy themselves because he and the musicians were going to do so. And they did. From the opening number to the finale, there was an avalanche of emotional expression coming from the music and the musicians. Burrell reminded us of the wealth of material left to posterity by Duke Ellington and the huge task that confronts one in attempting to select a small part of his output for a concert.

The first selection, *C Jam Blues*, was designed to warm up both the group and the audience. There was a pattern set for the rest of the night in identifying the improvisational prowess of these artists. The tunes for the rest of the evening were utilized not only as vehicles for all to play, but for spotlighting individual performances – each tune presumably selected by the instrumentalist in question. The program was as follows, with the name of the solo performer in parentheses: 2. *The Jeep Is Jumping* 3. *In A Sentimental Mood* (Mathews) 4. *Rocking In Rhythm* (Richardson) 5. *I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart* (Aarons) 6. *A Theme From The Perfume Suite* (Heard) 6. *Don't Get Around Much Any More* (Cooper) / Intermission / 8. Medley (Burrell) *What Am I Here For? - Daydream - Azure - Love You Madly - Squeeze Me - Satin Doll* 9. *Main Stem* (Ferguson) 10. *Carnegie Hall Blues* (Richardson) 11. *Cottontail* 12. *Take The A Train* 13. *Come Sunday* (Richardson and Mathews).

Nothing but superlatives apply to the performances. The interpretations of the works were individualistic and represented the best of improvised jazz. Probably the most impressive factor of the evening was the lack of "leaderitis" expressed by Mr. Burrell. He was simply a side man, outside of his role as commentator. He told us much about Ellington and his own good feeling about a special relationship to Ellington's music. If an award went to the crowd-pleaser, it would probably go to Buster Cooper. The most emotional effort came from Jerome Richardson and Llew Mathews, who closed the concert with a near religious feeling, in this non-church setting. Jerome Richardson sang *Come Sunday* with a quasi-theatrical concept, that was truly moving and inspirational.

The setting. The concert took place in the ballroom of the Student Union instead of in the auditorium of the arts complex. The acoustics left a little to be desired, the lights were not the best but, after it was all over, the people in attendance felt a greater degree of closeness and felt comfortable in expressing their feelings, in opposition to the staidness expected in the more formal setting of the theatre.

The aftermath. I know of no concert, performance or activity that has been on our campus, in years, that has brought as much post-concert comment as did "Ellington Is Forever." Burrell won a lot of converts to jazz from Old Vic devotees. He inspired the young students and the season-ticket holders, who tend to be a bit older. The local jazz station, in its public radio role, seems to have found a lot of recordings featuring the visitors. It seems that Burrell, as well as Ellington, will be forever in the Fargo, North Dakota, Moorhead, Minnesota area.

– James F. Condell

The Twisted Tale Of Annie Ross

"My analyst told me
That I was right out of my head."
Annie Ross be-bopped her way into musical history when she sang those words in 1952. Her hip interpretation of Wardell Gray's saxophone solo flipped traditional jazz "vocalese" back on its ears and established a new way of singing the band music of that age. Along with King Pleasure, Eddie Jefferson and precious few others, Annie Ross staked out a new stratosphere for vocalists to improvise in, scatting lyrics to lines devised by instrumentalists. She liberated singers, suggesting to them that they soar with the improvisers and create words to enhance the ensemble performances of the period.

"He said I was the type
That was most inclined
When out of his sight
To be out of my mind."

So where did Annie go from there? She split from her memorable New York Prestige recording session and was gigging with Blossom Dearie the next night in France. Annie Ross was no ordinary big band singer, and her story is as twisted as her tune. She was born Annabelle Macauly Allen Short into a famous Scottish vaudeville family in 1930. Annie left her native Surrey, England at the age of three to stay in Los Angeles with her aunt, the singer Ella Logan.

"Now I heard little children
Were supposed to sleep tight
That's why I drank a fifth of vodka one night
My parents got frantic
Didn't know what to do
But I saw some crazy scenes
Before I came to
Now do you think I was crazy
I may have been only three
But I was swinging."

Raised near Hollywood, the film capital, Annie grew up a stage-struck child. She was signed by MGM and became a player in the "Our Gang" comedies as Anne O'Neal. Her film career reached an apex in 1942 when she portrayed Judy Garland's sister in *Presenting Lily Mars*. The red-headed English girl was sent to New York to study acting at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts. Annie Ross has since spent much of her career as a thespian – as well as a chanteuse.

"They say as a child
I appeared a little bit wild
With all my crazy ideas
But I knew what was happening
I knew I was a genius..."

From 1947 to 1958, Annie Ross flitted back and forth across the Atlantic, acting and making music. In France you could

have heard her with a vocal group called the Blue Stars. English audiences discovered her as a musical comedy actress in the show "Burlesque." Before recording *Twisted* she had already done a Parisian nightclub act partnered by Hugh Martin and sung with Continental dance bands led by Bernard Hilda, Emil Stern and Jack Dieval. During those years she studied vocals with Luther Henderson and toured with Lionel Hampton. Some weeks she would appear on stage, other weeks in clubs, still others she would work on television either in London or Paris or New York.

"They all laugh at angry young men
They all laugh at Edison
And also at Einstein."

Twisted happened and sent a shock wave through fifties hipsters. Years passed. Annie Ross starred in "Cranks," a musical revue which won her a London Critics' Award. When "Cranks" toured New York, Annie got a spot on the Patrice Munsel television show. Then one day she signed on for session-work for a proposed choral jazz album. Vocalists Dave Lambert and Jon Hendricks had convinced producer Creed Taylor to hire twelve singers to work on a record called "Sing A Song Of Basie." Pretty quickly Hendricks discovered they were in deep trouble because "there was no concealing that those well-trained singers couldn't sing Basie with that spiritual feeling – except one – a silent, beautiful red-headed girl" named Annie Ross. Lambert and Hendricks fired the other eleven vocalists and kept Miss Ross. They became, in 1958, "the hottest new group in jazz."

"I have got a thing
That's unique and new
To prove it I'll have
The last laugh on you
Cause instead of one head
I got two."

And you know two heads plus one red-head equals three! With Lambert and Hendricks providing lyrics and exciting arrangements, the glory years were upon Annie Ross. The group sang with top big bands, recording hit albums with Duke Ellington, Count Basie and Louis Armstrong. Their hip patter fit naturally to the rhythms and tonalities established by the best jazz musicians. Even when accompanied only by the Ike Isaacs Trio, Lambert, Hendricks and Ross contrived to sound like a big band. Each singer was a virtuoso at vocalizing different musical instruments. Hendricks could be a Harry Edison trumpet line in one song, while Lambert impersonated a trombone and Ross a saxophone. They sang in tight harmonies, imitating a swinging big band but – but like any great jazz instrumental group – allowing each other to stretch out in solo passages. For five years, Lambert, Hendricks and Ross dominated every jazz vocal poll. They sang their unique arrangements with an effortlessness that belied the difficulty that they must have encountered in orchestrating their endeavours. They completed as a group the revolution in vocal music that Annie and the other bebop singers had started a decade earlier. Their brilliantly fast jazz vocalizing has inspired a new generation of pop-oriented singers, notably Manhattan Transfer, the Pointer Sisters, the Nylons and – thanks to Annie – Bette Midler and Joni Mitchell.

All too soon, it was over. Annie Ross left the group in 1962 to return to England.

"Why should I feel sorry
If they couldn't understand
The idiomatic logic
That went on in my head."

She gave an interview to Melody Maker, declaring, "Don't forget that I'm British too." For a while during the 1960s, Annie Ross worked out of her own club dubbed "Annie's Room." Although she has continued to use England as a home-base, Annie Ross has made the occasional foray to North America during the past twenty years.

"You know I'm not that easily led."

During this summer, Annie Ross will continue to entertain audiences with her unique and soulful vocalizations. She will be appearing in New York and London, as is her wont.

"I knew all along
That he was all wrong
And I knew that he thought
I was crazy
But I'm not."

Oh no.

(Note: All lyrics from *Twisted* by Annie Ross, 1952. The quotation about Miss Ross is from a Jon Hendricks article in Down Beat magazine.) – *Marc Glassman*

BLUES

A COLUMN BY DOUG LANGILLE

I would like to begin with a consideration of the young but growing Red Beans Record catalogue. Red Beans is a Chicago based label dedicated primarily, but not exclusively, to piano blues. In Coda, we have already covered Sunnyland Slim's solo release, "Sunnyland Train" (RB002). now I would like to start with their more recent release and work backwards.

Johnny "Big Moose" Walker's "Blue Love" (RB005) will come as a surprise to his fans. In contrast to his hard driving extroverted ensemble work, this solo release finds him in a laid back after hours mood. The stamp of Ray Charles is everywhere, and not limited to Moose's relaxed reading of *Hallelujah, I Love Her So*, or his reference to *Blackjack* in the long, slow blues *Losin' Game*. While the title cut (a ballad) is not exactly to my raunchier leanings, the rest of the program is most appealing. I even like the sanctified, soulful reading of *Tennessee Waltz*. On the eight cuts Moose stretches out comfortably in the 3.5 to 6.5 minute range. Mercy Dee would have certainly been proud of Moose's interpretation of *One Room Country Shack*. On the jump side there is the reworking of a traditional theme in *Who's Been Foolin' With You*, while after hours, emotive blues are furthered in *Drown In My Own Tears* and Louisiana Red's *Don't Cry*.

Although in a more introspective frame, Moose's vocals and playing are very strong. This is a side of the Moose that has sadly not been explored before. With excellent technical production this therapeutic release is a must for piano fans. One nice feature is that there isn't yet another reading of *Pinetop's Boogie Woogie*!

In contrast to "Blue Love" is the extroverted jive of **Buddy Charles'** "Jive's Alive" (Red Beans RB006). For some 30 odd years pianist Charles has been entertaining North Side Chicago club patrons with his off-beat menu of 1940s loony tunes a la Calloway, Waller and Jordan. I would imagine this solo release is but a mere sampling of his club act. His raspy, mimicking vocals and solid stride piano are well-suited to this genre. Included are ditties *What's The Use Of Getting Sober, Your Feet's Too Big* and *Jim Jam Jumpin' Jive*, plus even a Jim Croce tune, *Big Jim Walker*, and a raunchy *Pets*, loosely borrowed from Cole Porter.

From his uninhibited performance, it is obvious that Charles has lost himself in his medium. "Jive's Alive" should find ready takers among jive afficionados and patrons of the absurd.

"Live At The Piano Man" (Red Beans RB003) features highlights from a 1983 Spring evening at Chicago's North Side Piano Man Bar with pianist **Erwin Helfer**, vocalist **Angela Brown**, soprano saxophonist **Dean Clark**, and veteran drummer **Odie Payne**. The atmosphere is relaxed and friendly. The programming is typical of a live gig, starting off with a solo boogie by Helfer, followed by a warm piano, sax and drums reading of *Georgia*. Clark then goes down and classic blues stylist Angela Brown steps up for five vocals. Then she steps back to make room once again for Clark as the trio closes out with three mellow instrumentals. Of these Clark and Helfer's reading of Jelly Roll Morton's *Winin' Boy* and the Helfer original *Stella* hit a particular chord with me. The latter is a tribute to Mama Stella Yancey. Angela Brown is new to record and cuts a form true to the spirit and style of the classic women blues singers of the 1920s and 1930s. She shows a particular reverence to Bessie Smith through her relaxed readings of *Gulf Coast Blues, T'Ain't Nobody's Business* and *Need A Little Sugar In My Bowl*. Helfer's backing is reminiscent of Little Brother Montgomery on these cuts.

All the typical reviewer comments about "breathing new life into old standards" apply. All four individuals are competent and engaging performers. In particular, there is really some nice work between Clark and Helfer. This lp also works because of the warmth radiating from the live club setting. It is well recorded and provides a good opportunity to catch a side of living Chicago blues often lost behind the stacks of guitar, bass and harp amps.

Going right back to the first Red Beans catalogue is the superb **Mama Yancey** release, "Maybe I'll Cry" (RB001). Recorded in 1982/83, the 87 year old Mama Stella Yancey is backed by a skillful and attentive Erwin Helfer on piano. While being reminiscent of the year old Mama Stella Yancey is backed by a skillful and attentive **Erwin Helfer** on piano. While being reminiscent of the 1951 Atlantic sides she did with her husband Jimmy, I feel that the overall quality of her singing has improved and become stronger over the years. There actually seems to be more expression. To say Helfer's backing is sympathetic is somewhat of an understatement. He is certainly true to the Yancey/Ammons school.

While some of the material is familiar and stock vinyl Mama Yancey, there are some nice originals in the form of the slow blues *Maybe I'll Cry* and the mid-tempo *Kitchen Sink*. The tempo is also bounced up on *Weekly Blues* and *Monkey Man*. The slow, late hour blues piano/vocal tradition is amply upheld with *Trouble In Mind* (with detours into Back Water Blues), *Pallet On The Floor, 4 O'Clock Blues, Sante Fe* and *How Long*. The more vaudeville melancholia of the classic blues tradition is covered in the relaxed *Baby Won't You Please Come Home*.

"Maybe I'll Cry" is a must. Not only superbly performed, but equally well produced and mastered, with a sound clear enough to be there. If you like this one, check out the Riverside reissue "South Side Blues" (RLP-9403) that Mama Yancey shares with **Little Brother Montgomery**, vocalist/harp player **Henry Benson**, and a 1961 variant of the Mississippi Sheiks featuring **Walter Vinson** (vo/gtr), **Sam Hill** (gtr), **Earl Watkins** (drums), and **Jesse Coleman** (piano). Although the backing is different, three of Mama Yancey's four titles also appear on the Red Beans – not to mention the Atlantic release.

The Red Beans list is rounded off with "Where's My Money" (RB004) by the **Sons of the Blues**. This band, sometimes called the Sons of Blues/Chitown Hustlers has been working as a unit since the late 1970s. Recorded in 1983, **Billy Branch** (vo/hca), **Carlos Johnson** (gtr), **J.W. Williams** (vo/bs), and **Moses Rutues** (vo/dr) form the core unit with baritone and tenor sax added on one cut. Veteran **Jimmy Walker** is a featured guest vocalist/pianist on two straight ahead Chicago sides, *Third Degree* and *Small Town Baby*. With solid backing from the S.O.B.'s this is about the best Walker has done on record. Billy Branch is featured on four vocals ranging from a loyal interpretation of Sonny Boy's *Eyesight To The Blind* to strong originals like *Where's My Money* and *Sons of Blues* (a collective we-are-here statement). Bassist Jay Williams turns in a strong vocal on his modern blues original *Tell Me What's On Your Mind*. Moses Rutues leads the band through a funky reading of James Brown's commentary, *Sex Machine*. It's fun, if not a bit on the longish side. Each side closes off with solid instrumentals. *Son Of Juke* lets Billy Branch pay tribute to a major influence, while *Take Out The Time* gives Carlos Johnson a chance to carve out some territory as a stinging modern blues guitarist. Basically, this is a solid Chicago ensemble release characterized by some good original material, a blend of traditional funk, and some

strong playing and singing. Over the years Billy Branch has certainly matured as a performer, and Jay Williams is a powerful vocalist. The only weak link in the program is the poppish *You Want It All.* I personally like this release, and have recently been impressed by the powerhouse live show that the S.O.B./Chitown Hustlers put on. Pick up the lp, and by all means catch this unit live.

The blues world lost an innovative harmonica player with the passing of **Big Walter Horton** in December, 1981. When he was up for it, he was phenomenal live. He has also left us with some strong recorded statements. My favourite has to be the Alligator lp he did with **Carey Bell** (AL4702). A recent Blind Pig release "Can't Keep Lovin' You" (BP-1484) is a good reminder of his smooth virtuosity. The music comes from his days with guitarist **John Nicholas**, with Nicholas featured throughout on guitar. I have always felt that his days with Nicholas were musically rich. Nicholas himself is a skilled instrumentalist, and provided Walter with sympathetic, high quality backing.

The bulk of the program features a full ensemble including sax and **Ron Levy** on piano. While Walter performs superbly throughout, the material is rather familiar. Included are *Hard-hearted Woman, Tin Pan Alley, Walter's Boogie, Honeydripper* and *Careless Love*, with Nicholas taking vocals on this last number. The real gem here is *West Wind*, a slow, reflective blues with Walter backed by Nicholas and drummer **Martin Gross**. There are also three harp/guitar duets taken from the out of print John Nicholas lp "Too Many Bad Habits". Included are *Can't Keep Lovin' You*, the very relaxed *Careless Love*, and the harp boogie variant *Gettin' Outa Town.* This duet stuff is particularly good.

Walter is presented here in top form, with good backing, and the production is better than his first Blind Pig release, "Fine Cuts." Although the material is familiar, "Can't Keep Lovin' You" is a good statement of Walter Horton's greatness.

Also for harp and downhome blues and R&B fans, Rhino Records has put together a collection of fourteen **Slim Harpo** ditties, "The Original King Bee" (RNLP 106). Of course, all the material comes from Excello, and featured are Slim's biggies like *I'm A King Bee, Baby Scratch My Back, Tip On In, Raining In My Heart* and *Mohair Sam*. Slim was on the commercial edge of the Louisiana swamp blues sound, and while the Rhino sampler covers Slim's early 1957 session for J.D. Miller to some late 1960s and 1970 Nashville, Los Angeles and Baton Rouge sessions with different production focuses, his own singing and playing (guitar and rack harp) never really ventured too far from the swamp.

This Rhino collection has good sound and detailed, informative liner notes, and if you have not got the many Excello releases, it might be a good way of catching the infectious Slim Harpo sound.

Harping right along, we have "Mouth Of Steel" (Stony Plain Records SPL1076) by Canada's **King Biscuit Boy** (Richard Newell). Originally recorded in 1982 and initially released by Red Lightnin' in 1984, it heralds Newell's return to the blues scene. King Biscuit Boy's peak was during the late 1960s and early 1970s with three lps that sold rather well, critical acclaim in the major trade publications, and a busy touring schedule.

Newell's a strong player, but not an overly expressive vocalist. Backing is solid, and of the hard-driving bar band variety. There is some nice work by pianist **Stan Szelest** and guitarist **Jack Dekeyzer**, both Ronnie Hawkins Band alumni. The material is diverse and heavy on the under-tapped Southern blues vein, with titles coming from Clifton Chenier – *It's My Soul, Tabby Thomas – Hoodoo Party*, and Clarence Garlow – *Route 90.* Essentially this is a good full force party lp, but as a blues harp release it is second string behind the Blind Pig Horton release and the Cotton release discussed next.

I tend to like **James Cotton**'s recent efforts on vinyl, while I do not really like his live superharp hype shows. His latest release, "High Compression" (Alligator AL4737), keeps me rocking in the same old boat. Cotton divides his program between two bands and two approaches. For half he fronts his funky/boogie road band featuring **Michael Coleman** on guitar, and **Douglas Fagen** on tenor, with additional punch from tenor and trombone. These sides are representative of his road sound – contemporary blues funk – with the high energy, punchy *Superharp*, and the relaxed *Easy Loving* providing good bench marks.

On the remaining five cuts, Cotton drifts closer to his roots with a more downhome band featuring **Magic Slim** and **Pinetop Perkins**. I tend to favour these sides, and really like Cotton's confident readings of Roosevelt Sykes' *Sunny Road* and Eddie Boyd's *23 Hours Too Long*. A Cotton lp would not be right without a powerhouse harp instrumental rocker such as the title track.

"High Compression" offers up solid powerhouse, yet unpretentious Cotton in a well-produced and engineered package. Like I said – good variety, solid backing, strong straightahead harp, and relaxed, controlled vocals that harken back to simpler, presuperharp days.

From the same school comes **Jimmy Rodgers**' "Feelin' Good" (Murray Brothers MB 1006). Jimmy is in superb vocal form and has strong, very sympathetic backing from the Mighty Flyers of L.A. In particular there is nice work from **Honey Alexander** on piano, **Jr. Watson** on guitar, and **Ron Piazza** on harp. Rodgers thrives on a tight band. Given his own supportive background, he is best when he is working with another competent guitarist and pianist who understand the value of a cohesive, collective sound. The titles include old Jimmy Rodgers stock such as *Chicago Bound, You're So Sweet*, and *Rock This House*. Everything is done so well and true to that old Chess sound that Rodgers and his 1950s colleagues epitomized. Technically this is also a good production. For information, contact Murray Brothers Blues Records at 4426 Linwood Place, Riverside, California, USA 92506.

Of general note, Jimmy Rodgers currently has a good show on the road featuring **Wild Child Butler** and **Hip Linkchain**. Jimmy's voice is still as rich as it was on the 1950s Chess recordings, and the interactive guitar work between him and Linkchain is pure Chicago blues heaven. If you get a chance, check him out.

Doug Langille

Drawing of Johnny "Big Moose" Walker by Alice B. Crawford

ANATOMY OF A FESTIVAL ONE

ANATOMY OF THE JAZZ FESTIVAL – BERN AND TORONTO

Jazz festivals are major events on the calendar – both for musicians and audiences. Launching and maintaining these events is an awesome undertaking. It has become unthinkable that they can exist without financial collaboration between organisers and corporate/government sponsors. And yet most of them are dream projects of groups of individuals whose varied motivations drew them into this activity. Usually the financial rewards fall far behind the energy and hours extended in their creation.

No two events could offer greater contrast than the festivals held this spring in Bern, Switzerland and Toronto, Canada. A gulf separated both events – musically, organisationally and in presentation.

The experience of nine previous events was an obvious advantage for the Bernese organisers. Their event runs smoothly and few wrinkles become visible to the public. Hans Zurbrugg heads their organisational committee. It is made up of jazz enthusiasts whose business interests range from hotel management and travel consultants to the official tourist office of the city. They commit their services on a voluntary basis – and so do the army of helpers. It's the one week of the year when the people of Bern can experience the joys of jazz music – as viewed by the organisers.

Toronto's International Jazz Festival emerged from a similarly titled but musically different event held last year. Dan Gugula, its organiser, has been presenting one-night events in various club locations for some years and the basic concept of his festival grew out of this experience. He started from scratch and his inexperience was almost his undoing. For months it seemed to be touch and go whether everything would fall into place. Finally, only four weeks before the event, the program was announced and the corporate sponsorship of DuMaurier gave it the stability to survive. Administratively there were problems and concert cancellations (Joanne Brackeen, Lionel Hampton, Blood Ulmer) plagued the event – a characteristic of Gugula's previous activities and symptomatic of the laissez-aller dictates of contemporary popular music presentation. Performances of jazz can be heard in Toronto throughout the year but this was a one-week celebration of musicians who rarely come to town – those in keeping with the views of the organiser.

Few festivals are truly eclectic. In Bern the basic premise is to showcase music from within the jazz traditions – a backward look, if you like, to the era when the music's parameters were defined. Toronto, on the other hand, takes that tradition as the starting point for the music which is more contemporary in flavour – the music, in fact, of Dan Gugula's generation.

The Bern Festival started ten years ago with many of the remaining giants of traditional jazz (Wild Bill Davison, Sammy Price, Ralph Sutton etc.) but for its tenth anniversary few of them were present. The focus was those giants of swing and bebop who are now in the same situation as their predecessors were a decade ago. The best music, and the most predictable, was supplied by the Count Basie Alumni (Harry Edison, Buddy Tate, Benny Powell, Nat Pierce, Freddie Green, Eddie Jones, Gus Johnson) and the Giants of Jazz (Dizzy Gillespie, James Moody, Gene Harris, Ray Brown, Grady Tate). Everything these musicians play is stamped with authority and in their individual sets as well as a combined jam session at the final concert they exuded the essence of what jazz music used to be. Harry Edison, in particular, was in masterful form. His playing gave the impression of total freshness and there was a continual stream of well constructed and technically controlled solos from this veteran.

The Giants of Jazz introduced to European audiences the considerable talents of Gene Harris whose main credentials in the past were as a member of The Three Sounds – which managed to turn soulfulness into cocktail music. There's nothing contrived about Gene Harris' playing today and his blues-tinged piano work was a major delight. It would have been even more exciting if a jazz drummer of Mickey Roker's calibre had been on hand in place of Grady Tate whose elegant style is perfect for the studios but lacks the rhythmic edge which is so critical in the spontaneity of jazz music.

Thematically, Bern devotes a night to different aspects of the music's traditions. The opening blues night reflects the direction this music has taken in the past decade as well as what the audience expects of it. Blues performers enjoy success in direct relationship to their capability to masquerade as popular (rock) artists. Johnny Copeland filled the prescription to perfection as he strutted about the stage, guitar slung like a machine gun, and excited the audience with his up-beat licks and lyrics. Ruth Brown had opened the show in lukewarm fashion. She shouts rather than sings and it was a strained and uncomfortable set. Only Lloyd Mayers' ability to play blues piano in an uncontrived and relaxed manner saved that part of the program from being a complete waste.

Brought specially from New York to epitomise "swing" was Butch Miles and his Jazz Express. It's personnel were drawn from the newer generation of musicians who play in this style – Spanky Davis and Dan Barrett as well as musicians who are more eclectic – Gerry Niewood and Harold Danko. Their music was well organised, expertly performed and very cold. How much better-served the festival would have been to have the kind of pickup group put together by Red Richards for the Waterloo Village segment of this year's Kool Festival. George Kelly, Harold Ashby, Irving Stokes and the other musicians in this band are stylistically real. Their jammed ensembles and authentic solos are part of the music's dialect – something they helped invent. There are many others more worthy of a place in this program. Frank Wess and Frank Foster, for instance, have been working regularly in New York as co-leaders of a wonderful quintet.

Lionel Hampton's big band, just as it did ten years ago, romped and stomped all over the place, but the leader did acquit himself well in the solo department and found something to play besides *Flying Home*.

Bern devotes only one night to contemporary sounds – the music which is the backbone of most other festivals today. Sonny Rollins was the headliner this year and, for once, the Kursaal was almost full. His extended solos were redolent of the music's traditions. His ballad feature, just as on his recent records, was the highlight. His rhythm team tried earnestly to play time but were obviously more comfortable in grinding out funk rhythms – which Rollins simply ignored in his improvisations. Eventually it became too much as Sonny worked and reworked his solos interminably. He is one of the music's masters but his inability to edit himself is quite a deterrent for many listeners.

Other mismatches occurred at the so-called Jazz Band Ball. The virtual disappearance of traditional jazz (except

as a hobby music) severely strains the choice of the organisers but the audience was thrilled by the Basie Alumni and wanted to hear a great deal of Jay McShann's magic. But after a couple of warm-up numbers and a perfunctory vocal he became part of the support for Carrie Smith – another singer whose roots lie in gospel as much as the blues. Her repertoire has broadened and expanded over the years but as a performer she is like so many others of her generation when confronted by a large concert hall audience. Instead of relying on the quality of their singing to win over the audience they relegate that to the back burner and strut and holler as if they were in church.

The Carl Fontana/Jim Galloway Traditional Jazz Band was a misnomer if ever there was one. Its musical cohesion was set up with a smooth rhythm section of Brian Lemon (piano), Dave Green (bass) and Terry Clarke (drums). Thrust into this group was trumpeter Rod Mason whose credentials are as leader of several European style "trad" bands. His playing is static, non-rhythmic and inflexible. Even worse are his vocals which come out of the British Musical Hall tradition and which further emphasise the basic parody of what he does.

One of the festival's musical highlights was Jay McShann's all too short collaboration with Jim Galloway at the Sunday morning Kornhauskeller session. Bassist Reggie Johnson (an understated but rhythmically sure footed musician) and Terry Clarke assisted in the creation of some of the most inspired and imaginative playing of the week. But it ended all too quickly as Carrie Smith, dragged protestingly from her bed, altered the tone and nature of the occasion with a deeply etched version of *Georgia Grind*.

The musical cohesion, organisation and single location of the concerts make Bern's festival an attractive and exciting place to be. More than 2000 people jam into the Kursaal nightly to listen to the music in a concert setting but with the informality of a club environment (tables, chairs and refreshments). In the lobby are booths selling records, photographs, paintings and festival souvenirs. Open air concerts in the daytime highlight the feeling of being in a city which not only welcomes the jazz event but believes it should be prominently displayed.

Toronto, on the other hand, has consistently shown ambivalence to such an event. George Wein came here in 1959 – and never returned despite having nightly crowds in excess of 5000 at the CNE Grandstand. The 1984 festival was sponsored by Molson's but became embroiled in political hassles which were as much an attack on its basic philosophy of only presenting traditional jazz as it was a racial issue.

The DuMaurier International Jazz Festival of 1985 is now history. It's a miracle that it actually took place, and attracted a respectable audience. Dan Gugula juggled and mixed his options to ensure that there actually was a festival when he obviously didn't have the kind of financing available to go through with it. $400,000 was the figure mentioned as the final budget for the event but when you look a little closer you realise that the festival was really an umbrella for many individual concerts – with the risk spread among a number of different entrepreneurs. The "showcase" concerts at Roy Thompson Hall (Oscar Peterson/Boss Brass and Miles Davis) and Massey Hall (The Big Seven) were presented by outside organisations and the clubs shared in the expenses of much of the music featured at their locations. Additionally, both East 85th and The Brunswick House came under the festival umbrella without altering their regular programming. When you get right down to it the actual festival organisation presented concerts at the Diamond Club and Basin Street with many of the same artists who have come here under Dan Gugula's sponsorship over the past two years. The major difference of course, was that they were all here in one week. The artistic lineup at Garbo's and Bourbon Street was also their responsibility while the Art Gallery of Ontario's noonhour series was programmed with the collaboration of guitarist Tim Brady.

The conundrum facing Gugula, of course, was that the festival couldn't go ahead without financial sponsorship and that was difficult to obtain without some indication of what he had to offer. The inevitable delays in the negotiation of all this undoubtedly altered the lineup and certainly affected the attendance. People need to see a program before making a commitment to attend an untried festival. The many lessons learned from this event should make next year's festival (and there were more than enough positive assets to justify its continuance) much better. The lessons learned in staging, sound systems, media coordination, publicity, artists relations and the ability to work with the local jazz community must be put to better use.

Basic to the festival's presentation was the philosophy of having events at various club locations at staggered times so you could catch more than one group a night. The logistics of this required all

BILLY HIGGINS (Photograph by Gerard Furick)

the music to start at its prescribed times and this is something which never occurs at a Dan Gugula presentation. Consequently it wasn't possible to get to McCoy Tyner at Basin Street. The 8 p.m. start advertised at Garbo's was changed to 9:30 p.m. due to the club having a dinner show of unrelated music. Telfer's, one of the local restaurants featuring Canadian performers turned out to be a disappointment. Wray Downes and Dave Young played in a large converted warehouse without the benefit of a sound system, and the piano was virtually unplayable. The restaurant was busy – with people who had come for the music – but the management and staff of the restaurant made it quite clear that they were unwelcome.

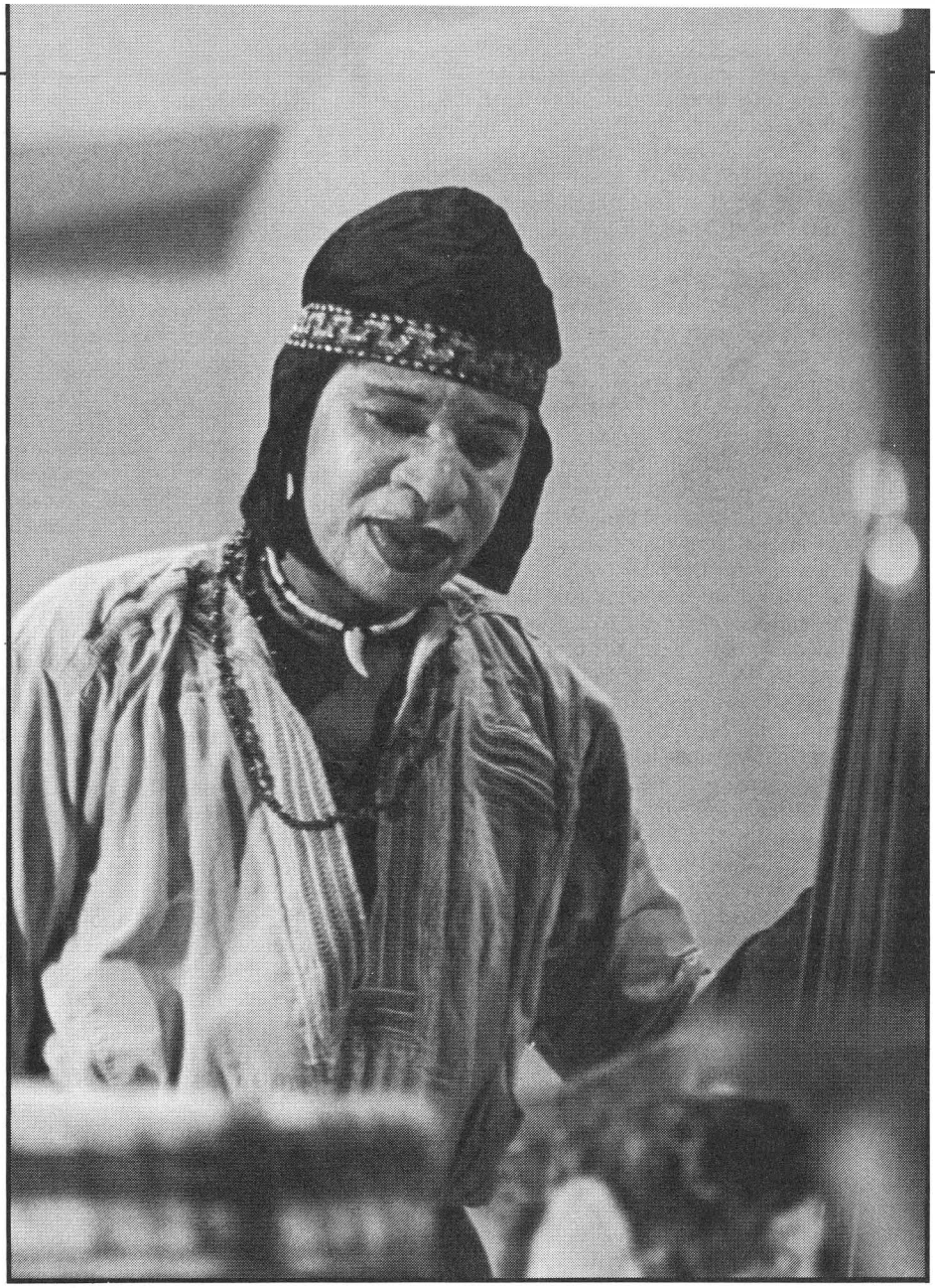
By the time Garbo's got going time had run out for McCoy Tyner. Sathima Bea Benjamin is one of a handful of unique singers in the jazz idiom. Her treatment of standards is highly personal and very musical. She alters the contours but not the body of the songs to suit her own vision and what she sings is highly personal and very expressive. What made the evening doubly enjoyable was the opportunity to hear the "dream" rhythm section of Kenny Barron, Buster Williams and Billy Higgins. Even though their role was as support for Sathima and solos were minimal, everything they played became part of the integral nuances of the songs. It was a joy to hear such exceptional musicians in the intimate and acoustically suitable setting of Garbo's. Kenny Barron is one of today's most fluent performers. He exudes the same kind of effortless lyricism which marks Hank Jones, Wynton Kelly and Tommy Flanagan. The rich, true bass sound of Buster Williams is a well-kept secret in this electric age. His tone and touch are marvelous and his choice of notes complemented the directions taken by the singer or his fellow musicians. He is a contemporary realisation of the directions laid down by Pettiford and Mingus so long ago. As for Billy Higgins – what can one say except to note that he is one of the music's superb rhythm men. He has the gift of making the music dance – an indescribable part of the music's mystique and something which few drummers are blessed with. It was a continual joy.

Night two began with a visit to Gracie's to hear the Rainbow Gardens Orchestra do their recreations of old recordings from the 1920s. They are a period piece triggering reminders of past creations rather than making fresh statements within the idiom. Garbo's was hosting the Karen Young / Michel Donato duo and after an interminable sound check they got under way for a brief set which displayed their cohesion, breadth of repertoir and highly skilled musicianship in a program which draws its inspiration from Annie Ross and the technically demanding vocal styles developed to sing bebop lines.

Sphere was the main event – their first Toronto visit, for two shows at Basin Street. While waiting to hear them there was time to catch a little of Paul Bley's decorative spacialness downstairs at the newly refurbished Bourbon Street. Paul abandoned any pretentions to swing a long time ago but his harmonic choices and melodic richness give his music a wholeness which saves it from being sucked into the vacuum of Windham Hill. This has been his way for many years and it still shimmers.

Sphere, by reputation and recordings, is one of the few organised bands still working together within the traditions developed in the 1940s/1950s. The motivation for their organisation was the music of Thelonious Monk – for whom Charlie Rouse and Ben Riley worked for a number of years. On this occasion they played few pieces by Monk – instead they played originals which can be heard on their Elektra Musician lps. Each number was well executed but the solos were long and varied little in dynamic range. Eventually it appeared as if the music was merging into one continuous stream. Fully grasping the music of this band was an impossibility that night. Basin Street is a notoriously unsatisfactory place to hear music and the sound engineers who work there have demonstrated often enough that they do not know how to handle this music. The sound varies depending on where you sit, but at no time was it possible to hear Charlie Rouse clearly and Ben Riley might just as well have left his bass and snare drums at home. The wonderful sound of Buster Williams' bass (so beautifully demonstrated only the night before at Garbo's) was changed into an electronic nightmare. Perhaps the music was great. It's hard to tell.

An even worse fate befell those who blew twenty bucks to hear The Big Seven (Cedar Walton, Freddie Hubbard, Ray Brown, Milt Jackson, Mickey Roker, Stanley Turrentine, Slide Hampton) at Massey Hall. The independent promoter, in his wisdom, cancelled the sound system and the music became all but inaudible. Cedar Walton was visible on stage but his piano playing couldn't be heard. Ray Brown's bass, connected to a small bass speaker, boomed out and over everything else. The horn players stuck their instruments into the microphones which took their sound through the wires and out into the auditorium



via the same tinny speakers that were a disaster as long ago as 1959 when Duke Ellington was there. They were probably there when the original Jazz At Massey Hall concert took place in 1953.

Milt Jackson, Cedar Walton, Ray Brown and Mickey Roker work together regularly and their cohesion was always apparent. By the second half they had begun to find some way to overcome the difficulties of the situation and began to set into a groove. The chemistry which makes these musicians catch fire is indefinable but part of the secret is in their mutual understanding of the blues roots of the music. This is what gives their playing its vitality and unending resourcefulness despite differences in stylistic choices. Freddie Hubbard's non-appearance threw a wrench in the works. Instead of simply working without him, someone had the "bright" idea of adding Herbie Spanier to the lineup. Spanier is something of a legend among Canadian musicians – as much for his strangeness as for his musical abilities. In the past he has often performed brilliantly and he was up for this occasion. Unfortunately his conception is so far removed from his U.S. counterparts that it effectively precluded the possibility of any sparks being turned into a conflagration.

Stanley Turrentine, one of the few big-sounding tenor players since the 1940s (Houston Person and Plas Johnson are others), was reduced to a whisper without speakers but did manage to build up some heat and imaginative twists in his solos. Slide Hampton was fluent and energetic, but his solos do not remain in your mind too long.

Things Ain't What They Used To Be was the concert closer. The audience obviously believed in that philosophy for they clung to every whispered note which reached their seats as they paid their respects to the music and the musicians who have transformed their lives in different ways over the years. This event, the only one of the week for that generation of jazz lovers (apart from Jim Galloway's nightly sessions at the Sheraton with Warren Vache), was the connecting musical link between the events in Bern and Toronto.

Events at the Diamond Club are covered elsewhere in this issue and strong support was shown for Max Roach, the Art Ensemble, Freddie Hubbard/Michel Petrucciani and Cecil Taylor, but none of the club performers drew more than 400-600 people. Each of the clubs were comfortably full but the widespread locations tended to isolate the audiences and minimalise a contagious festive atmosphere. The success of festivals at Bern, Nice, Monterey and many other locations is the central focus of the events. This is what Toronto's festival needs most to generate the kind of audiences to sustain financial support in the future. It stimulates the public's interest, gives them a better focus and reduces considerably the administrative headaches of the organizers.

Despite these reservations Dan Gugula's DuMaurier International Jazz Festival was a brave beginning. By the time they reach their tenth anniversary it should be running as smoothly as the event in Bern and should offer programs which have a better focus on its potential audience.

For Bern, the challenge is to develop audience interest in newer artists who reflect the parameters of the music's traditions which are pertinent to that city's tastes and ideals. In this way they will be working successfully towards the conclusion of their second ten year cycle without radically changing their philosophy. – *John Norris*

The DuMaurier International Jazz Festival
Toronto, Ontario
June 18th - 22nd, 1985

Personally, the idea of going to a jazz festival has never really inspired me. It seems because of the circus-like character of these events, a personality that manifests itself more and more over the years, there is a great deal of difficulty to focus on the real reason for being there. That being to listen to creative music. Festivals seem, like so many parts of modern life, to have simply become a spectacle, which is quite unlike my first experience of this kind of event, some 25 years ago. In recent times they have become institutionalized by the idea of being sponsored by large commercial corporations, and

MALACHI FAVORS (Photograph by Rick Kendrick)

utilised for such dubious reasons as "drawing attention to the host cities." The original concept of a festival was of course based in the folk tradition of people gathering together to celebrate a specific occasion. In our case the celebration of music from the jazz traditions.

Lord Montague of Beaulieu owned a large estate in the south of England, and like many of the English landed gentry they have attractions to persuade the general public to visit their grand history. This particular ancestral home was financially supported by Lord Montague's magnificent collection of vintage cars that were permanently on display to the public. I mention this so as to arrange a setting for the first jazz festival that I ever attended, a festival that had been established as long ago as the middle fifties. It also meant that the site was compatible to crowds of people and quite used to the idea of servicing the public with amenities away from civilization.

For me, this was a great adventure in many ways. At that time I had a friend, one Rod Saint Rose, who was a West Indian guitarist, and also the owner of an American Ford convertible. This, it must be understood, was not a normal automobile in England in that period. It also was bright yellow in colour. We set off for Beaulieu in a grand manner, the top down and quite exhilarated by the sense of it all.

The estate, of course, had as always, a local village that had a wonderful old pub. Taken unawares by the numerical size of the visitors celebrating this event, it ran out of beer the second day. Close by was the sea and enormous stretches of beach that at night, enhanced by the bonfires glowing in the darkness, became our sleeping quarters. Groups of us huddled around the warmth of these bonfires, unable to let the festivities end. In the daytime the sun shone and shone. A festive occasion. The music I remember, from so long ago, was performed by Joe Harriot, Anita O'Day and Hans Koller.

In the early sixties I immigrated to Canada and the first summer found us driving the thousand and more miles to the Newport Jazz Festival in Newport, Rhode Island. This was the most legendary of all the world's festivals. We had already been introduced to all its possibilities by Bert Sterns' marvelous film, "Jazz On A Summer's Day." We knew all about the miles of beaches, the small quaint New England town, the America Cup yacht races and the general college boy excitement that seemed to make up its character. We were not to be disappointed. Upon arrival, one of my travelling companions, who had never before witnessed the awesome power of the Atlantic ocean, leapt from our car and ran headlong into its gigantic waves. Just from sheer excitement. The musical venue was a converted sports arena, modified just for the occasion. Rows upon rows of wooden folding chairs set out before a most impressive stage. And in the open areas were food and beer tents supplying such local delicacies as lobster and a beer that had the worst taste I ever remember. I had, at the time, the memory of the English ale that I had been nurtured on. The grounds were full of happy, festive people. In Newport itself, the local people had readied themselves for the onslaught, and several of the local bars sported jazz music far into the night. Often the musicians who had performed in the festival would come by and participate in the nightly jam sessions. The festival never seemed to end.

The Moers New Jazz Festival in Germany provided me with my third positive experience. In 1979, *Coda Magazine* arranged a tour for fifteen people to travel to Germany and Holland, and the Moers Festival was part of that itinerary. A long weekend of some of the world's most creative music, ironically thousands of miles aways from the land of its origin. The artists included the likes of Anthony Braxton, Roscoe Mitchell, Leo Smith, Andrew Cyrille, Rashid Ali, John Carter, David Murray, Albert Mangelsdorff, the ICP Orchestra and even an introduction to improvised music from behind the Iron Curtain. Once again, the environment is a small traditional town that had prepared itself for this celebration, even to the extent that much of its financing was provided by the town and a local brewery. Once again, even though this music was not supposed to be popular, the very large and very young audience was caught up in the festive spirit. Outdoors in a large park, row upon row of people seated on the grass surrounded by all this unbelievable music. And beer and food tents. One thought that remains with me is quite humourous. In the middle of one of the concerts it started to pour with rain, and instead of the young audience fleeing for cover, they simply took off all their clothes, put them in the plastic bags they were sitting on, and continued to listen to the music in the nude. Afterwards, when the stage performances were all completed, there was a small club where the music continued into the night. A festive occasion that never really seemed to end.

So now it becomes clear as to what I would consider to be a Jazz Festival. The joy of being collectively together, even if for only a few days, meeting new people from all parts of the planet, and sharing in the common joy of the music that we all love. This is not what the Toronto festival was all about. Instead it was spread out across the downtown core of the city in many different venues, as already described by my friend John Norris in the first part of this report. There was no sense of community, no sense of involvement, but rather a series of unrelated concerts. Because of this situation, and the fact that my mind is only able to consume a certain amount of music in one evening, I opted for the series that took place at the Diamond Club.

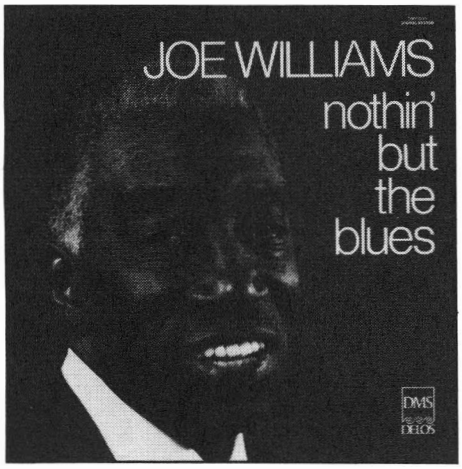
The music presented in this one venue was close to spectacular, and the three events I attended were the Max Roach Quartet, the Art Ensemble of Chicago and the Cecil Taylor Unit. Max himself was the legend that he is, and the opening part of the program was, for me, the highlight. Just Max alone. Listening to a master drummer is such a treat, none of the academic exercises that are so common among today's players, but a display of what the rhythm of American music is all about. Even a short section where Max played solo highhat. The truth in small detail. The Art Ensemble and Cecil Taylor have been given a great deal of space in recent Coda's, so I do not feel inclined to repeat the adoration for them again. Malachi Favors provided some of the highlights of the Art Ensemble, with his wonderful sense of humour, and Cecil had quite a different group from what I am used to hearing. The two horns in the front line were, as always, the great Jimmy Lyons, and the surprise addition of tenorist Frank Wright. Frank gave such a different sound to the music that it prompted me to comment to Cecil later that at last he had a jazz band. "We will talk about that later," he retorted. Even among all this wonderful music, that attracted capacity audiences (400 - 600), there was a situation that was not entirely correct. In the dressing room, Jimmy Lyons said, "This must be the first time we have finished a nighttime concert while it is still daylight outside." A strange comment, but the reason was that the events went from 7 pm until 9 pm, and then the club had to be emptied so it could return to its normal situation as a disco dance club. Quite stupid. The only small advantage that this early finish provided was the possibility for me to catch two other events; one, the cerebral Paul Bley performing solo piano at Bourbon Street, and the other being the joyous blues of Mr. Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson at the Brunswick House.

This was the first time out as a festival promoter for Dan Gugula, and hopefully he has learned something about the structure of producing such an event so that next year, the quality of the production will be on the same elevated plane as the music itself.

– Bill Smith

The Shape Of Discs To Come

When I first heard about compact discs, I was skeptical. My assumption was that this was another fad that was likely to be on the level of quadraphonic sound. However, after having an opportunity to try out a compact disc player I quickly changed my opinion and am now firmly convinced that this new technology is the most significant audio advancement since the development of the long playing record.



For those not familiar with the compact disc, let me mention some of its positive qualities. Since the music is played by readings from a laser beam there is no wear on the disc. This means that a disc will last forever and sound just as good whether you are playing it the first time or the one hundreth time. Clicks, pops, scratches and various other surface noises no longer exist. In fact, the pure silence between tracks is a shock when you first experience it. No more tape hiss is a delightful phenomenon to live with. The music is capable of a very wide dynamic range with virtually no distortion. The music sounds clearer as if a veil had been lifted. Stereo separation is also enhanced and each instrument is more definable. Finally, a disc plays on only one side but can hold up to 74 minutes of music. I could go on but the thing to do is experience it for yourself.

As a serious record collector for about thirty years, I have usually purchased records weekly throughout the year. The strength of my commitment to compact discs can be demonstrated by the fact that I have only bought about six lps over the past seven months. I won't tell you how many compact discs I have acquired but suffice it to say it is a high number.

Digital Music Products is a company dedicated to the compact disc format. They also make premium cassettes but ***no*** vinyl. The sound quality of their discs are excellent and each contains an hour or more of music. **Andy LaVerne (Liquid Silver - DMP CD-449)** and **Warren Bernhardt (Trio '83 - DMP CD-441)** share some common ground. Both pianists use Eddie Gomez on bass and Peter Erskine on drums but more significantly, they both are strongly influenced by the late Bill Evans. LaVerne's recording includes solo, duo, trio and quartet formats as well as a string quartet on two tracks. Guitarist John Abercrombie is the additional soloist on the quartet titles. The material on this disc is a studio recording of the same music LaVerne performed at a concert at Carnegie Recital Hall funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Bernhardt's offering sticks with the trio format throughout. Though neither disc could be classified as hard swinging music, "Trio '83" swings considerably more than "Liquid Silver." Both of these discs have some good music by talented musicians but neither is totally satisfying to this listener. Each disc has portions that I found to be somewhat lacking in jazz substance. A certain flabbiness creeps in which I didn't find very often in Bill Evans' own recordings. Nonetheless, I suspect that many listeners will find the music on these two discs quite enjoyable.

I'm sorry to have to report that I found **Gerry Niewood (Share My Dream - DMP CD-450)** to be a disaster. The musicians perform technically very well and the sound quality is top match. The problem is that almost all 61 minutes and 45 seconds of music is commercially oriented and without interest for readers of ***Coda***. Out of the thirteen tracks on this disc, I only consider one of them (***Tootin' For Toots***) to be of jazz interest. Pass on this one.

Joe Williams (Nothin' But The Blues - Delos D/CD 4001) is more like it. This session features Joe Williams in good form surrounded by a swinging group of musicians such as Red Holloway, tenor sax; Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson, vocal and alto sax; Phil Upchurch, guitar; Jack McDuff, organ; Ray Brown, bass; and Gerryck King, drums. The clarity of compact discs is well demonstrated by this recording. This has to rank with the best Joe Williams available.

I originally bought a vinyl copy of **The Modern Jazz Quartet (Echoes - Pablo 3112-41)** but the surface noise was so irritating I returned it. What a difference on compact disc. Pure music is the result, and with a group capable of delicacy such as the MJQ I truly appreciate this new medium. The music is wonderful on every track. Highlights include the moving title number composed by Milt Jackson with sensitive thoughtful solos by the composer and pianist John Lewis. ***The Hornpipe, Sacha's March*** and ***That Slavic Smile*** are three pieces written by John Lewis. Each of them is purely delightful from the standpoint of both the writing and playing.

There isn't a weak moment on this entire recording. Highly recommended.

Count Basie Meets Oscar Peterson (The Timekeepers - Pablo 3112-43) is another example where I found the lp version far less successful than the compact disc version. On lp the pressing was off center so that the last track was highly distorted. Here the sound is ideal on every track. Also with two pianos there is the danger of a muddy quality as far as sound is concerned. The compact disc produces clear undistorted music with separation that makes it easy to identify the two piano players.

On this recording Peterson and Basie receive solid support from John Heard on bass and Louis Bellson on drums. The entire foursome melds together beautifully. Oscar Peterson plays in a more relaxed manner than is usually the case with his own trio. I expect it was the influence of Count Basie that brought about that positive result. Both piano players were grooving at the February 1978 session. I suspect that there are very few serious jazz listeners who won't enjoy this fine compact disc.

— Peter S. Friedman

RECORD REVIEWS

COUNT BASIE
Count On The Coast
Phontastic 7546

Now that The Man has gone, it is not surprising that recordings of Count Basie and his band — most of them unauthorized and surreptitiously made — would be surfacing from vaults and private collections, much in the same way as the ongoing Ellington deluge. Happily, this Swedish-released recording, which captures the Basie band in concert in June, 1958, is of high quality, technically as well as musically. The engineer (Gert Palmcrantz) installed his equipment in a jazz club on the West Coast where the Basie band was playing, over a period of ten days (June 24-July 3), and captured the band more or less from the beginning to the end of their gig. And being somewhat farsighted, he recorded the whole thing in stereo (something rather rare in those days).

From miles of tape, Phontastic (a Swedish label that's putting out some high caliber jazz — original material as well as rare stuff by Ellington, Goodman, Basie, Shaw, Glen Miller, etc., on first rate pressings) is putting out a series of recordings by the Basie band from these sessions — this is the first.

And it's truly impressive, whether you are a Basie fan or not. True, this is not the "classic" Basie band of the '30s and '40s with the likes of Lester Young, Herschel Evans, Buck Clayton, Jo Jones and the rest. But the Basie band of 1958 had soloists who became stars in their own right — Joe Newman, Thad Jones, Frank Foster, Al Grey, Frank Wess, Snooky Young, as well as Basie evergreens Marshall Royal and Freddie Greene. And instead of Jimmy Rushing there was Joe Williams, Basie's "Number One Son", (although he's not on this lp).

What makes this lp vital is that it captures the Basie band live doing what they did best — swinging. Although a lot of old favorites were played — ***Moten Swing, Jumpin' At The Woodside*** on this lp — new charts by Neal Hefti, Ernie Wilkins, Frank Foster and Frank Wess were being constantly added that in time became Basie "classics" — ***L'il Darling*** (Hefti) for instance, here played to a warm and sensuous turn with Joe Newman's muted trumpet a highlight.

The Count himself is heard more than usual, from the humorous ***You're Driving Me Crazy*** introduction to ***Moten Swing***, to long and light airy pianistic stretches of ***Flight Of The Foo Bird*** (Hefti); from the Wallerish stride intro of ***Low Life*** (Johnny Mandel) to the fast and furious finale of ***Whirly Bird*** (Hefti), the final track.

Individual soloists glitter throughout, notably Frank Wess (flute) on ***Cute*** (Hefti), Thad Jones (***Indian Summer***), Frank Foster (***Low Life***), but collectively it's The Band that Counts — and you can take that any way. The highlights:

Victor Herbert's ***Indian Summer*** taken for a smooth ride on sultry saxes, then the trumpets (with Thad Jones to the fore) before the full band takes it out into a saxophone-laden climax.

The band jumps appropriately to ***Jumpin' At The Woodside***, with tart punctuation by Al Grey, leading the trombones, before Frank Foster leads it out with the saxes.

Plymouth Rock (Hefti) is a foot stomping medium swinger. ***Sweetie Cakes*** (B. Crawford) is a ballad riding on a cushion of saxes with inner springs of brass to give it the necessary bounce. The old favorites, ***Moten Swing*** and ***Jumpin' At The Woodside***, compare favorably with the classic Basie configurations of the 1938-40s, with the new soloists making their own valid statements while paying due homage to Lester Young and Co. And Basie kept marching along.....

It is fortunate that we have a valid and representative example of Basie and his band of 1958 — a time when recording companies weren't exactly rushing to record Basie or any other jazz band for that matter: The jazz blight of the 1960s was only a shadow away.

Al Van Starrex

BENNY CARTER
Skyline Drive
Phontastic 7540

One more page in the continuing saga of one of the authentic giants of jazz: Benny Carter, whose awesome talents as all round musician, arranger, composer, bandleader have spanned several decades and styles, in a musical summit with some of Sweden's top jazz artists. Judging from the results on this Swedish label release, the encounter (which took place in Hollywood in September, 1982) must have been a rewarding one for all concerned, as it certainly is for the listener.

Not only does The King play as beautifully as ever, but he leads his Swedish colleagues (of whom altoist **Arne Domnerus** is perhaps the best known in North America) to creative flights of their own. Apparently he also set the free and genial spirit — the "Carter cool" as it were — that pervades the session. With Americans **Plas Johnson** (tenor) and **Jerome Richardson** (soprano, tenor) helping out, we have another memorable Benny Carter album, comparable to some of his best efforts on wax.

Incidentally, Domnerus and the other Swedes on this session are rated in the top jazz echelon in their country: **Bengt Hallberg**, piano; **Plutte Wickman**, clarinet; guitarist **Rune Gustafsson** (whose earlier lp with Zoot Simms is one to consider); **Jan Allan**, trumpet; **Georg Riedel**, bass and **Magnus Persson** on drums. But the commanding authority of Benny Carter prevails throughout and we may well believe the liner notes' assertion that "There was a continuous dialogue between Carter and the other musicians, both in words and music....."

The Benny Carter sax section, a trademark of jazz grandeur (in this instance the Swedes plus Plas Johnson and Jerome Richardson), is heard on the Carter originals, ***Doozy*** and ***Easy Money***, as well as in the classic ***When Lights Are Low***, with plenty of sax to go around for horn lovers. Carter is heard as soloist (alto) on every track except ***Doozy***, where solo space is shared. As a measure of their quality, I would say that this ***Doozy*** is every note as lush and swinging as the version on Impulse with Coleman Hawkins in the sax section. But then it's a typical "Carter" piece.

Easy Money is a jaunty exercise in sax cohesion and interplay, with excellent solos by Wickman (clarinet), Allan (trumpet) and Gustafsson (guitar), with Carter putting the finishing touches with a well-rounded solo. ***Gorgeous! Georg!*** is gorgeous saxophone, by Carter, Domnerus and the sax section.

Few can touch Benny Carter on a ballad and he scores here in ***I'm The Caring Kind***, a Carter original, accompanied only by rhythm sparked by Bengt Hallberg's piano. In the Cole Porter perennial ***Love For Sale***, balladeer Benny swaps musical ideas with clarinetist Putte Wickman against a Latin rhythm backdrop. Very tasty.

The tone is appropriately joyous in ***I Want To Be Happy***, with The Smooth One leading all the way, while the whole band jams it up in a head arrangement of ***Stompin' At The Savoy*** and comes out smoking.

What better way to end a Benny Carter session than with the Carter anthem ***When Lights Are Low***! Though recorded umpteen times, this one ranks with the best; lit up by a string of solos and climaxed by a sax chorus written by Bengt Hallberg. Carter, all satin and silk, wraps the session in velvet in a shade of purple as befits The King.

"Skyline Drive", by the way, is where Benny Carter hangs out his shingle in Hollywood, and it also characterized the record session held in Los Angeles. It's surely a ride you'll want to take, whatever your tastes are in jazz, for the King rises above classification with an appeal that's truly universal.

— Al Van Starrex

DOC CHEATHAM
The Fabulous
Parkwood 104

Jazz has gone through an extraordinary range of changes in its short history. And one of the intriguing aspects is that the time span is still that brief that we have some of the pioneers playing for us still. Doc Cheatham is an outstanding example. For over sixty years he has been playing his trumpet and, if anything, is playing better than ever today. He's always played well, but in recent years has had greater opportunities to display his abilities.

This record puts him in the showcase setting of a quartet where his is the only horn. And, while the pianist on the date is the distinguished **Dick Wellstood**, it's really Doc's show. His trumpet playing sounds as refreshing as ever, complemented by his talk/sing vocals on several of the tracks. The vocals have a charm that may only appeal to some, but the trumpet work sparkles and reaches out to all. His accompaniment couldn't be better, starting with Wellstood, as mentioned, who gets some good solo room, all the while keeping the main focus on the date's leader. The late **Bill Pemberton**, on what must have been one of his last

BENNY CARTER (Photograph by Barry Philp)

recording dates, is the bass player and **Jackie Williams** does one of his invariably tasteful drumming jobs, particularly with the wire brushes.

The music chosen is a fairly predictable and familiar mix: ***Swing That Music*** and ***Big Butter And Egg Man*** from Satch, several show-movie-pop songs, such as ***The Man I Love, Jeepers Creepers, Deed I Do*** and ***I Double Dare You***, and the traditional ***St. James Infirmary***. However, while the titles are all familiar, to one degree or another, the treatment they get isn't, at least in some instances. Particularly notable is ***Let's Do It***, taken at a very leisurely tempo that proves to be most suitable to the subject matter. This is also the track where Doc's vocalizing works out best. Another notable track is ***'Round Midnight***, where Cheatham carries on a dialogue with himself by alternately playing open horn and muted.

This is a pleasing album, the product of two sessions held in November of 1983, with Doc sounding his best and the rest of the group worth a close listen, especially the always creative Wellstood. Had Cheatham limited his voice to one or two tracks, instead of five out of the nine, the results would have been more pungent, keeping the focus on his horn. On the other hand, this way it's a portrait of Doc Cheatham, complete. — ***Dick Needl***

ELLA FITZGERALD AND DUKE ELLINGTON
Ella At Duke's Place
Verve UMJ 3286 (Japaese)

Although Duke Ellington had aspirations of making it on Broadway at various periods of his life, we can surmise that his lack of success was due to a side of him that saw the Broadway musical as irretrievably vulgar. Not for him the trifling cynicism of a Lorenz Hart or a Cole Porter. Rather, and this is in spite of considerable cynicism exhibited by Ellington in his private life, the typical lyric to an Ellington tune, whether written by him or not, has a certain dignity and straightforwardness.

In Ella Fitzgerald, Ellington found the ideal interpreter of such lyrics. While her efforts to interpret Rodgers and Hart pale beside those of the world-weary Bobby Short, on such lps as "Ella At Duke's Place," recorded in October 1965, Fitzgerald's own dignity and straightforward nature do full justice to the material. There are 10 titles. Almost all were originally done in the 1940s. Two, ***Duke's Place (C-Jam Blues)*** and ***What Am I Here For?***, should have remained instrumentals, being saddled with particularly weak lyrics. Two more, ***Azure***, and especially the concluding ***Cottontail*** are vehicles for Fitzgerald's extraordinary powers of vocal improvisation. The rest are true songs. The four "art-songs" on the first, slow side, where the compositional influence of Billy Strayhorn is particularly felt (he is largely absent on the second, uptempo side), beginning with the gorgeous ***Something To Live For***, through two of Strayhorn's "Flower" pieces, ***A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing*** and ***Passionflower***, and concluding with ***I Like The Sunrise*** from the ***Liberation Suite***, are informed by the delicacy of Jimmy Jones (who also plays piano), like the slow unfolding of a great flower, and the sympathetic tenor and alto saxophone solos of Paul Gonsalves and Johnny Hodges. Fitzgerald has the knack of devising concluding tags which neatly resolve the tension in the preceding melody and elevate it to some higher plane — particularly on ***Passionflower*** and ***I Like The Sunrise***.

The uptempo side has its charms as well, especially the aforementioned ***Cottontail*** and the number from the 1941 all-black musical "Jump For Joy" (lyrics by Paul Francis Webster), ***The Brown-Skinned Gal With The Calico Gown***, on which Fitzgerald weaves her way through a set of particularly tricky lyrics. And throughout this side, even on the weaker numbers, is the full ensemble power of the Ellington band.

Recent months have seen a large number of the Fitzgerald/Ellington collaborations made available. "Ella At Duke's Place" is one of the best. — ***Chris Probert***

VERN ISAAC'S BIG BAND
Live: Downstairs San Antonio Rose
V.I.C. 235

Those who have visited "The Nation's Capital" after 10 p.m. must find it a matter for wonder that anyone can be found "live" in its mortuary stillness, let alone a jazz band. Yet Vern Isaac's Big Band has been playing there for many years, at open air concerts in the summer and at places like San Antonio Rose at night. What is so wonderful about this band is that, unlike some Canadian big bands, it doesn't leave you sitting back, exclaiming "lovely writing". It does what big bands ought to do: it lifts you out of your seat.

Vern Isaac has been well known for years to all those in the Ottawa region who love jazz. He was a member of Jazz Ottawa from its inception. More importantly, over the years he has played with Ellington, Hampton, Armstrong, Basie, Erskine Hawkins and the Savoy Sultans — though never, unhappily, at a time when they were recording. Quite apart from developing this fine band, he deserves to be known as a driving tenor saxophonist. He leads off authoritatively on the rousing ***Perdido*** that opens the album, and one senses that much of the band's great fire derives from his example. From listening to this record, it is hard to believe that he was born in 1913. He stands as a permanent advertisement for the health-giving properties of cigars, from which, over the years, he has seemed inseparable.

For me, the band is best on the up-tempo numbers — ***Perdido, Indiana*** and ***Undecided***, where its energy and sparkle are most in evidence. On these tracks we hear surprisingly good solos from trumpeters **Jack Coghill** and **Bill Rowat**, trombonist **Jay Harrison** and pianist

Jean-Pierre Allain. The rhythm section of **Michel Cloutier, Steve Watson** and **Bob Sabourin** gives the band a great deal of bounce and lift. The recording communicates very well the exciting feel of an in-person performance.

Some of the band's attack must come from its unusual instrumentation — brass section, plus rhythm section, plus Vern Isaac. It is a measure of the skill of the arrangements that, even with a tune like Benny Golson's ***Whisper Not***, so dependent on the subtle exploration of its sonorities, we have no sense of something missing from the texture. It is one criticism of the album that its notes, which give brief biographies of all the players, seem not to say who did the stirring arrangements — even though thanks are given to quite peripheral contributors and hangers-on, such as Ron Sweetman and Vernon's bank manager.

Equally unfortunate, the notes do not seem to give any indication of where one can get the record, if it isn't in the local stores. And Canadian lovers of big band jazz will want to get it.

Trevor Tolley

JUNIOR MANCE
Truckin' And Trakin'
Bee Hive 7015 (Recorded 1983)

Mean Old Amtrak / That Lucky Old Sun / Truckin' / Funky Carnival / Miss Otis Regrets / Birks' Works

JERRY COKER
A Re-emergence
Revelation 45 (Recorded 1983)

Un Poco Loco / Lush Life / Primal Prayer / The Summer Knows / Windows / I'm Sorry / Reach Out

ROBERT WATSON / CURTIS LUNDY
Beatitudes
New Note KM 11867 (Recorded 1983)

To See Her Face / Karita / Jewel / E.T.A. / Minority / Orange Blossom / Beatitudes

DON LANPHERE
Into Somewhere
Hep 2022 (Recorded 1983)

Noble Indian Song, Pt. 2 / Dear Old Stockholm Take The A Train / Last Night / When We Were Young / Brown Rock / For Kai / In The Garden

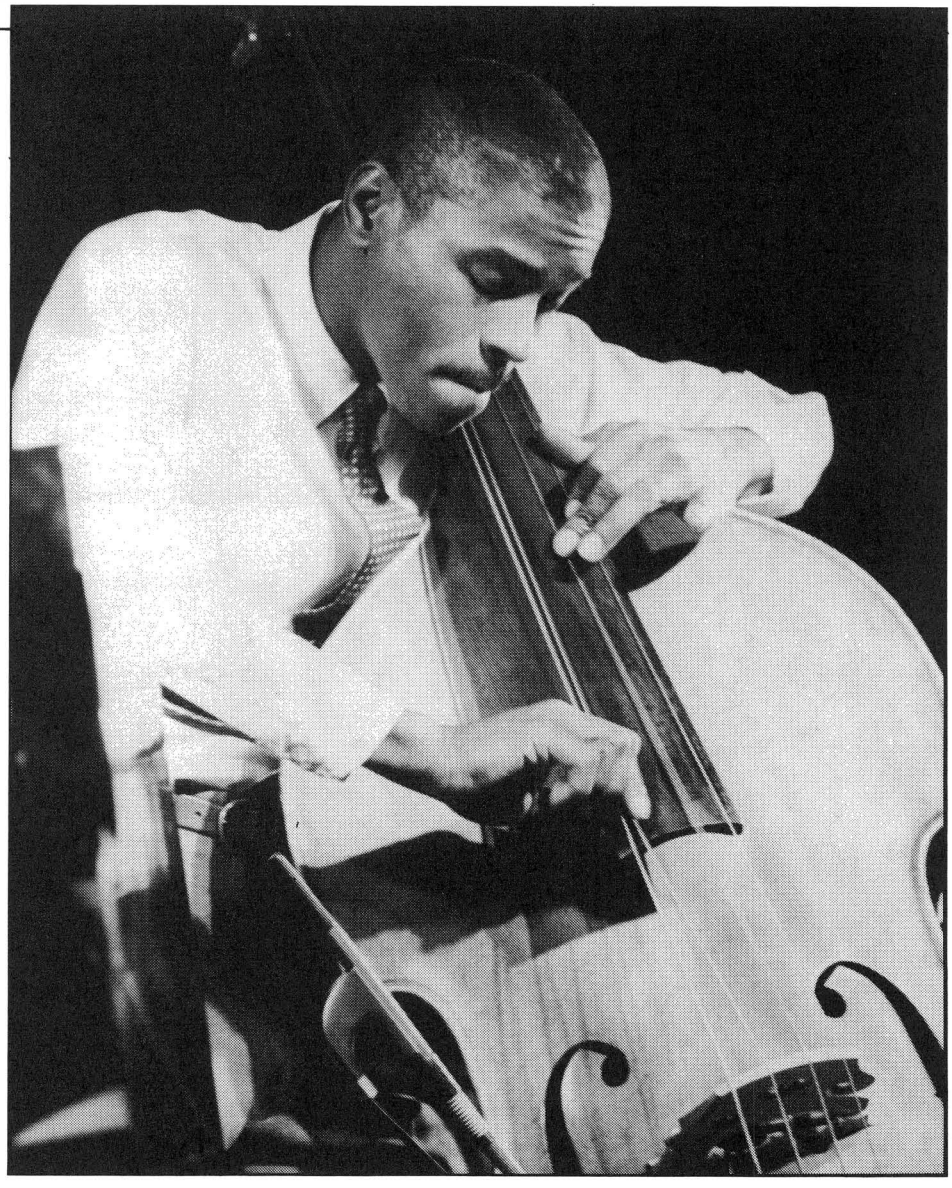
PETE MINGER
Straight From The Source
Spinnster 0004 (Recorded 1983)

Namely You / But Beautiful / It's You Or No One / Pete's Blues / Easy Living / When Lights Are Low

FREDDIE HUBBARD
Classics
Fantasy 9635
(Recorded 1981 — Keystone Korner)

Red Clay / First Light

In diversity there is strength. This is a key precept for many things, one of which is the development of the music called jazz; it is certainly a sounding board from which one may view these six albums, taking into account the wide range of musical experience of the performers, the compositional sources and the sense of personal commitment to the music.



The Junior Mance album is a trio performance (**Martin Rivera**, bass and **Walt Bolden,** drums), with guest artist **David "Fathead" Newman** on some tracks. Having played supportively with Ray Charles for so many years, Newman is a natural for Mance's strong entrenchment in the blues; the accord is never more evident than on the funky, R&B-like ***Amtrak*** opener, or with ***Funky Carnival***, where Newman on flute joins a romping Mance on a joyous Caribbean musical journey. ***Miss Otis Regrets***, my favourite on the album, is beautifully handled by this same pair who capture together the delicate sense of human frailty behind the facade imposed by the title. Even the trio numbers ***Birks'*** and ***Lucky Old Sun*** (not at all like Frankie Laine or Vaughan Monroe) are coloured "blue". Yet, this is not to imply that Mance is limited in approach; he has an amazing facility to accomodate himself to any challenge, as the variety of source material here attests to, though always retaining those strong roots which have become recognizably his trademark. He can swing magnificently (***Birks'***), provide breathtaking support to soloists (***Truckin'***), turn a keyboard into an instrument of explorative delight (***Amtrak***). I would be remiss if I did not draw attention to the strong empathy revealed between Mance and Martin Rivera; it must have been quite a challenge for drummer Bolden to find his niche in this line-up. He does! (Listen to ***Carnival***).

The Jerry Coker album is a vehicle for the ex-Herman, ex-Kenton sideman with trio accompaniment (**Frank Sullivan**, piano; **Scott Walton**, bass and **Billy Bowker**, drums). It is good to hear the craftsmanship and dedication of a player who had become a diminishing jazz figure from the late 50s on, a choice he made in order to devote more time to teaching responsibilities. This "re-emergence" after a hiatus of two decades, especially in a front-and-centre role, heralds a new taste of old wine, to coin a phrase. Indeed, the old bouquet is still there (Bud Powell's ***Un Poco Loco***, Strayhorn's ***Lush Life***), but it often comes in a new bottle (Corea's ***Windows***, Michael Brecker's ***Sorry***); the result is an exciting blend of stylistic approaches from the boppish modes of ***Loco*** to

CURTIS LUNDY (Photograph by Gerard Futrick)

Ayler-like bursts of energy, though "primal", not "primordial". Reflecting a wide expressive range and capable of adventurous sorties outside the melody, Coker remains an artist always masterfully in control so that one senses that even at his most raucous (***Reach Out***), the script has been carefully delineated. "I love to play ballads, especially great ones, " states Coker; some of the albums highlights lie in his renderings of ***Lush Life*** with its lightness of tone and abundance of feeling, Michel LeGrand's ***Summer***, striking in personal nuances and shadings, Brecker's ***Sorry***, sensitively yet provocatively fashioned. The trio affords admirable support throughout; Sullivan and Coker respond best to one another on ***Windows***. It is good to have a tenorman of the calibre and breadth of Jerry Coker back on the scene, particularly in an era when so many players seem willing to be locked into or pursue a style that is fashionable or trendy.

From tenor and trio to alto and trio is an easy transition, and an exciting one at that. Bobby Watson, an ex-Blakey sideman, is a very inventive, versatile musician, proven quickly on the two opening up-tempo numbers, both Watson originals, the former first recorded with Blakey in 1977 ("In My Prime" album). In fact, all compositions but one are originals, and this adds to the groups fluency and musical rapport. Whether Watson is showing strength and technical innovation (***E.T.A.***), or painting a delicately moving portrait (***Jewel***), one has to be impressed. With Lundy's ***Blossom***, he is exemplary in capturing moments of profound lyricism; I hear Dolphy, Criss, McLean, Adderley, Gryce, but, most of all, a young musician carving out his own kind of sound. The trio is skillfully adroit in its handling of time and mood changes, and the ubiquitous **Mulgrew Miller** (piano) in solo forays (***Jewel / Beautitudes***) shows a precision and warmth that is noteworthy. This album gets my "highly recommended" sticker.

Back to tenor and trio, with a trumpet added for good measure, and we are truly "Into Somewhere" with the Don Lanphere Quintet. Lanphere is not exactly a household name (a few late 40s recordings with Navarro and a brief stint with the 1959 Herman aggregation), but should be. This is a second album for the Hep label, the first being "From Out Of Nowhere", aptly titled from my own perspective. I can hardly wait to acquire it. There are no weak links in this group's performance, and the compositions are a fine amalgam of originals and standards, nicely balanced for listener appeal. ***Indian Song*** is a group rouser, a high-flying opener with Lanphere both on soprano and tenor; even a marimba gets caught up in the chase. Lanphere's rendition of ***Stockholm*** conjures up an early Getz (c1951) with a host of Swedish All Stars, while on ***A Train*** his playing is Coltrane-like, though he predates that giant considerably. Harold Arlen's ***When We Were Young*** is given a richly mellow voicing on tenor, and the traditional ***In The Garden*** is afforded a gorgeous soprano treatment, meditatively haunting. But it is the Pugh-Lanphere pairing that really captivates, especially on the tongue-in-cheek version of Sweet Georgia Brown (***Brown Rock***), and on Lanphere's own tribute to Kai Winding (***For Kai***). Pugh is a winner; clear and crisp on ***Avalon***; articulate, relaxed and imaginative on ***Kai***. Add the talents

SUPPORT LIVE MUSIC

of a **Don Friedman** (listen to his weaving of the piano fabric on ***Young***, tying together the dense and lush segments of melody explored by Lanphere!), and the sensitive accompaniment of **Jeff Fuller** and **Ignacio Berroa**, and you can understand why I must hunt still another sticker.

For the next recording, we remove the sax player and retain trumpeter (flugelhornist) and trio. The result, once again, is a pleasant surprise. Like Jon Pugh, ex-Basieite Minger (c1970-1981) exhibits a bright, clean sound, sharing the opening number with his musical compatriots (**Dolphe Castellano**, piano; **Keter Betts**, bass and **Bobby Durham**, drums), a good "display" piece for all (Johnny Mercer's ***Namely You***). Minger is an excellent balladeer (***But Beautiful***), injecting intricacies into the performance without giving way to that flamboyance that so often mars the lyricism of the number; his is not a predictable sound, revealing rather a wide melodic range — malleable, facile, creative — reminiscent, at different times, of Chet Baker, Jon Eardley, Shorty Rogers.... even Miles. On ***It's You Or No One***, he shows that he can stretch out with the best; with Carter's ***Lights Are Low***, he infuses a new energy into the number without altering the anticipated mood. As well, his supporting cast is top notch; Castellano, in particular, is outstanding in his brief solo on ***Namely You***, with Durham in an explosive duet on ***You Or No One***, cutting out great chordal chunks of sound on ***Pete's Blues***. The latter is the only original number on the record: one wishes there were more. Basie's liner note comment perhaps sums it all up; "Pete is one of the most exciting players I've had in my band and has the kind of talent that continues to grow. It gets better and better."

With the final recording, I have to keep reminding myself of the opening statement to this review article; In diversity there is strength. **Freddie Hubbard, Joe Henderson** and **Bobby Hutcherson** make up half the sextet on the album, and that alone should make this session something special. Both numbers are Hubbard originals, stemming from his alliance in the early 70s with the Creed Taylor affiliation. I suppose for many, judging certainly from the enthusiastic response generated by the patrons at Keystone Korner, these are justifiable "classics"; unfortunately, they are not for me. There is surely an abundance of glitter and gloss which undoubtedly serves its own purpose, but I experience much difficulty finding anything truly memorable here. Perhaps I am still too steeped in the treasures of a Hubbard of Blakey days, the Henderson who cut such exciting sides with Dorham, or the Hutcherson of an earlier Blue Note era with Eric Dolphy, to be objective. Reviewers are not judges of right or wrong; it would be self-righteous of me to question an artist's motives for pursuing what he believes in. However, opinions, for what they're worth, can be stated. I don't think that this album is likely to win the hearts of many jazz fans. I'll take the Mingers, the Pughs, the Bobby Watsons, and the "re-emerging" Jerry Cokers; theirs is an energy, a growth and a commitment that one can sense and appreciate.

— John Sutherland

THE MODERN JAZZ QUARTET
Fontessa
Atlantic SD 1231

OSCAR PETERSON TRIO WITH MILT JACKSON
Very Tall
Verve UMV 2062

At his best Milt Jackson is, as he has always been, the most compelling modern jazz vibraharpist. He has also recorded his share of mediocre albums. Happily, these two recent reissues contain some substantial Jackson.

After having recorded for Prestige from 1952 to 1955, the Modern Jazz Quartet began its long and rewarding association with Atlantic in early 1956 with "Fontessa". It is a wonderful album. There is no hint of preciousness or of the effete, qualities that later crept occasionally into the quartet's playing. A leader or group will often respond to an initial recording for a new company by creating music superior to its recent efforts. Think of Basie's Roulette debut, for example. It happens here with the MJQ. Even though Connie Kay had replaced Kenny Clarke less than a year earlier, the group exhibits great cohesion (when did it not?) and energy. Jackson is central to this success.

The title piece constitutes an early Lewis effort with commedia dell'arte. For all of its charm, ***Fontessa*** is relatively undistinguished. Lewis would progress from this, however, and create masterful music in that mold with "The Comedy" (1962). Lewis's other composition is more successful. ***Versailles***, which begins the album, is an attractive piece that the group's spirited playing enhances. Especially noteworthy are Lewis and Jackson's contrapuntal lines.

Following ***Versailles*** is ***Angel Eyes***, a sensitive ballad performance featuring Jackson's controlled double-time solo. He is more subdued on ***Over The Rainbow***, a tune seemingly of little promise even in 1956. Yet Jackson in particular avoids the maudlin and the cliche by playing with great sensitivity. He and the group offer a definitive interpretation of Harburg's classic. Equally successful is Jackson's wonderful ***Bluesology***, probably, after ***Bags Groove***, his most substantial composition. It is a blues; it is not spectacular. Yet, this performance, and especially solos by Jackson and Lewis, constitutes basic, unpretentious music of high order. ***Willow Weep For Me*** and ***Woody'n You*** complete the album. The quartet plays effectively on both.

Jackson also plays well on his 1961 outing with Oscar Peterson, Ray Brown, and Ed Thigpen. Even though this album features Jackson as guest with the Peterson trio that had been together for over two years, the group plays as though Jackson had been along from the beginning. The quartet displays both maturity and confidence.

Despite substantial Jackson, the album is Peterson's, if only because he plays occasionally in such an unexpected manner. He exhibits some of his virtuosity on this recording, but especially on ***Green Dolphin Street*** and to a

degree on ***Reunion Blues*** he plays idiosyncratically and wonderfully. The group interprets the former piece in a restrained manner. Peterson strums the strings; his all-right-hand solo incorporates some pithy Basie touches, with an oblique quote from ***Barnacle Bill, the Sailor*** (a reference to Bix?). Just as successful is ***Reunion Blues***, which Jackson and Peterson would record a decade later for MPS. Both principals are superb; the pianist, in an appropriate touch, bows obviously and gracefully in John Lewis's direction.

These two pieces frame the others. In between come an undistinguished Jackson composition (***Heartstrings***) with routine solos, some splendid vibes and funky piano on Nat Adderly's ***Work Song***, a soulful ***John Brown's Body***, and an unlikely but pleasing ***A Wonderful Guy*** (from "South Pacific"). In all, a fine album by an excellent quartet.

These reissues retain both the original album covers and notes by Ralph J. Gleason (MJQ) and Nat Hentoff (Peterson-Jackson). The Verve recording is a Japanese import with high-quality pressing. Both releases feature Jackson in a setting where his abilities may be — and are — presented fully. Along the way Lewis and Peterson offer some inspired playing, and no one can complain about backing by Percy Heath, Connie Kay, Ray Brown, and Ed Thigpen. These are indeed welcome reissues.

— Benjamin Franklin V

FRANK WESS
I Hear Ya Talkin'
Savoy SJL 1136

Wess, tenor, flute; Thad Jones, cornet; Curtis Fuller, tbn; Hank Jones, pno; Gus Johnson, drms; Eddie Jones, bs; Charlie Fowlkes, bar.

HANK JONES
Relaxin' At Camarillo
Savoy SJL 1138

Jones, pno; Bobby Jasper, flute; Paul Chambers, bs; Kenny Clarke, drms.

CURTIS FULLER
Blues-ette
Savoy SJL 1135

Fuller, tbn; Benny Golson, tenor; Tommy Flanagan, pno; Jimmy Garrison, bs; Al Harewood, dms.

BILL HARDMAN
Focus
Muse MR 5259

Hardman, trt; Junior Cook, tenor; Slide Hampton, tbn; Walter Bishop Jr., pno; Leroy Williams, drms; Stafford James, bs; Unidentified gtr on two cuts.

Much of the music on these albums could be linked by using words like "swing", "straight-ahead", "Basie" or "Detroit". They are all pleasant enough to listen to, bouncing along on a cushion of good solid rhythm with interesting solos, sometimes reaching out a little, though there's nothing very rivetting or compelling about any of them.

The Savoy reissues (the Wess, though, is being issued for the first time — it was somehow overlooked at the time) feature for the most part musicians from the Basie band of the late fifties or Detroit musicians who had moved onto the larger jazz scene.

Mostly the music moves with a gently swinging flow so the Basie keynote is more tuned to his work of the late thirties than the powerhouse mode of the late fifties, even though Frank Wess and Thad Jones as player and arranger are present on one album.

The Wess album has riffy tunes with slightly boppish accents played crisply with some nice simple voicings in Jones' arranging. The tunes by him reveal that he is here beginning to launch into odd and unexpected corners in the themes, as if he's trying to meld a little Monk quirkiness and leaping wit onto the straight-ahead swing he tended to use in his early writing for Basie.

Wess emerges as the most effective soloist as he's featured more heavily than the others. His flute was still relatively new, and he concentrates on tenor. His long solo on ***Struttin' Down Broadway*** is a good mix of hard blowing with a tone that's smooth and generally soft. He cleverly uses a brief phrase from the theme as an organizing motif for his solo, repeating it, altering it, reshaping it throughout the solo. Fuller's playing on this and his own album seems more individual and tightly ordered than his rather loose, even sloppy playing that I've heard him do in person during the last two years or so. Jones doesn't give himself much solo space, and Fowlkes doesn't solo at all.

The Hank Jones album is in the same quietly swinging vein with little sense of stretch or adventure. Yet it has its moments. I've always liked the playing of Jasper so I'm pleased to have this sample of his work. He can be a fluent flute player though at times here he doesn't always seem entirely in control of his ideas or his instrument.

Jones' piano as usual is reliable, with his elegant touch and fluidity out of Wilson, successfully interwoven with Powell and other bop touches.

Benny Golson seems to be the organizer of the music on the Fuller album. This is the best of these Savoy releases. The group is tight but relaxed, smoothing along on a very sizzling rhythmic push that never intrudes, never wavers, never overstates. The rhythm section achieves some variety by resting the piano on occasions — and Flanagan plays some good solos.

Like Fuller, Golson's tenor here is better than his sour tone nowadays. His arranging of the catchy tunes is direct with little interference and punctuation in the soloing.

The Hardman album is more modern though the trumpeter still plays his usual hard bop lines. It's become almost a cliche of jazz criticism to say that Hardman is a unique musician who's never got the recognition he deserves. There's some truth in that though for me Hardman has never convinced that he measures up to the other Blakey Messengers like Brown, Bird, Morgan, or even someone like Kenny Dorham. In fact, on this album he seems to be in the shade of the trumpeters I've just mentioned, not simply as influences but more

FRANK WESS (Photograph by Gerard Futrick)

directly in phrasing and sound, a little too cloose to being imitative. He is a fluent player who stays in the mid-range mainly with a full brassy sound though he's a little stiff in his ballad playing.

The title cut breezes along on that full sound with first-rate comping from Bishop. Throughout, Cook plays good tough tenor. The ballad-y things are disappointing — the up-tempo drivers are more suited to Hardman's style: ***Cubicle***, for instance, is a good leap-frogging theme.

All in all, "Focus" is no better but no worse than other albums by this kind of group playing hard bop, uneven but containing some hard driving music at times. — ***Peter Stevens***

BILLIE HOLIDAY

Embraceable You
Verve 817 359-1

Admittedly Billie Holiday's fifties Verve recordings weren't her best — the great Lady was well into her slide, a result of her unfortunate excesses — but they are still valuable demonstrations of the unique talents and skills of the greatest jazz singer of all time. As such they are cherished by many collectors (even a few who don't see beyond Billie's Columbia classics) as her triumph over undeserved adversity. The voice is sometimes pitifully inadequate, at other times almost reaching the ebullience of her earlier recordings. This is particularly evident in at least two of the four sessions in this new two-disc set (which completes the chronological reissue of all the studio sessions Billie recorded for Verve between 1952 and 1957).

Just One Of Those Things, ***One For My Baby*** and ***Comes Love***, from the session recorded January 8, 1957, are alone worth getting this album — if you haven't got these sides already. Billie's voice is firmer, surer, full of confidence and, at times, even some joy. The group sharing with her (rather than accompanying, for Billie's voice was in itself another jazz instrument) — Ben Webster, Harry "Sweets" Edison, Jimmy Rowles, Barney Kessel with (on this session) Joe Mondragon, bass and Larry Bunker, drums, surge to her assistance, reaching individual heights. Webster in particular is consistently good in every cut, his breathless caressing tones offering a warm cushion of beauty for Billie's tortured soul.

An unexpected bonus is a previously unreleased instrumental ***Just Friends*** (6:12) from the same date that allows the musicians to warm up in a tasteful jam. It also sets the stage for the Holiday numbers on that date, the other tune being ***Stars Fell On Alabama***, in which Billie's voice is pretty shaky (though Webster's warm support compensates). If any tenor saxophonist could take the place of Lester Young, it was Ben Webster, though his style was somewhat different. Ben, like Lester, and Billie were old friends, and the camaraderie is spelled out musically.

One of the best trumpeters today, Harry Edison had a tendency to sound cliched at this period (even on the Ellington-Hodges "Back To Back" sessions) but he shines with occasional brilliance, particularly on ***Comes Love***. One misses Buck Clayton even more!

In the first of four sessions, recorded January 4, 1957, ***A Foggy Day*** is the weakest, with Billie just going through the motions. By contrast, ***If It Isn't So*** is one of Billie's (and this album's) most moving efforts. ***I Wished On The Moon*** is only a shadow of Billie's original classic of twenty years earlier, but Webster's warm solo gives it new life. Webster also rescues ***Moonlight In Vermont*** and ***I Didn't Know What Time It Was*** (a weak tune). Alvin Stoller (drums) and Red Mitchell (bass) along with Kessel and Rowles (particularly on ***A Foggy Day***) give sympathetic support.

On the last number cut on January 7, Billie sounds like her old self on ***Body And Soul***, which is probably better even than her original version. She was pretty weak in the beginning ***Day In Day Out*** but got stronger through ***Darn That Dream*** (great Webster) and ***But Not For Me***, leading to ***Body And Soul***.

Holiday's voice sounded strongest in the last session, on January 9, with ***Embraceable You*** (first-rate Webster, Rowles, Kessel); ***Gee Baby Ain't I Good To You***; ***Let's Call The Whole Thing Off*** (wishful thinking?) and ***They Can't Take That Away From Me*** (never a truer statement from Billie). With Billie Holiday at such a premium, you can't afford to be without this set. — ***Al Van Starrex***

BEA BENJAMIN

Memories And Dreams
Ekapa 003

Sathima Bea Benjamin's third release on Ekapa broadens the scope of her art while still maintaining her connections with the musical heritage of Ellington and American popular composers.

On the side-long ***Liberation Suite***, a personal and political statement on South Africa, Sathima uses all her gifts as a singer and songwriter. The lyrics grow directly from her life as a woman and South African of mixed racial descent. Sathima unflinchingly looks at the present and laments the condition of her people, but on ***New Nation A'coming*** and ***Children of Soweto***, shows her faith in the power of the higher virtues — love, justice, and peace — to free her country some day. The powerful message is enhanced by Sathima's clear articulation and the emotional weight she gives key words in the songs. Her delivery of the word "humiliation" lets you hear each syllable and feel the enormous pain of the experience. But when she sings "freedom" her voice lifts you above the clouds and into dazzling sunlight.

Sathima's choice of material for side two is as creative as ever. I think she sings these songs so well because she honestly cares about them and each one has a special personal meaning for her. "Rose petals seem to fall" on ***In A Sentimental Mood*** as her voice floats gently on the melody over the rhythm section. She sings way behind the beat and at the extreme of her range on ***I'm Getting Sentimental Over You***, creating the sense of happy/sad yearning which is special to Sathima's art. The album's high point is ***Day Dream***, which she takes at a medium bounce.

The rhythm section (Onaje Allan Gumbs, piano; Buster Williams, bass; Billy Higgins, drums, replaced on side two by Ben Riley) is given more room to play than on Sathima's previous albums and shines throughout. Only master musicians can be so self-effacing and make perfection seem so effortless. While it's hard to single anyone out since this is not an album with "stars" but a group effort, Onaje Allan Gumbs's arrangements and supportive comping are especially sympathetic to Sathima's conception and style. Carlos Ward contributes some lovely soloing and fills on side one, also.

— ***Gerard Futrick***

ALBERTA HUNTER

Young Alberta Hunter — The Twenties
Stash ST 123

You can tell a jazz singer by the company he or she keeps. A few are out-and-out jazz musicians, but most belong to the cabaret and stage, crossing back and forth over the wavery line that separates the two genres. This album, set in the 1920s, gives us the young Alberta Hunter in fourteen examples of how a singer covers the whole territory.

At the start of the twenties there was nothing much in the way of jazz bands and jazz singers — not as we recognise the music today. But the inclinations were there and so we begin this LP with Miss Hunter's debut recording for the Black Swan label in 1921, accompanied by Fletcher Henderson and others unknown. It's not very jazzy, nor is the 1922 session made with a Eubie Blake orchestra that produced her famous ***Down Hearted Blues***. These numbers are sung well, but with little in their execution to distinguish them from others of the period.

By the time we reach 1923, the transformation begins to occur. Recording with Fletcher Henderson again, with solo piano accompaniment on ***You Can Have My Man*** and a five-piece group on ***Bring It With You When You Come***, it's evident that both Hunter and Henderson have matured a lot in two years. Her style and voice have at this point reached the qualities that have remained with her for over sixty years. Also included in this collection are two of the alias Josephine Beatty sides made in 1924 with the Red Onion Jazz Babies, the famous session that brought Louis Armstrong and Sidney Bechet together in New York. ***Nobody Knows The Way I Feel This Morning*** and ***Early Every Morn*** are both gems.

Curiously, it's the later titles, from 1925 to 1929, where the accompaniment is largely unknown, with one notable exception. This is ***I'm Gonna See My Man***, with Fats Waller rolling out a couple of joyous choruses on the organ. Also effective is the unknown guitarist on ***Gimme All The Love You Got***. Other than that, the accompaniment is little better than adequate. This leaves the job up to the singer, and Alberta is up to the task. There's no question, listening to these recordings, that she has the talent to deliver a song well. One of the more outstanding singers of the twenties, she's worth listening to in that respect alone. Beyond that, anyone interested in the latter-day Alberta Hunter needs to have these seminal early recordings as well. There are the usual difficulties in having to accept acoustical recording quality on some tracks and some surface noise, but the sound is quite acceptable for recordings out of this period. — ***Dick Neeld***

AROUND THE WORLD

CANADA — Jazz City is western Canada's major festival. The sixth edition takes place in Edmonton (August 11 to 17) and features Betty Carter, Phil Woods, the Dirty Dozen Brass Band, Ran Blake, Richie Cole, Freddie Hubbard, Bobby Hutcherson, Cecil Taylor, McCoy Tyner, Quest, the String Trio of New York and Anita O'Day. Oliver Gannon, Bill Eames, The Vancouver Ensemble for Jazz Improvisation, Tim Brady and the Alberta Jazz Repertory Orchestra are the Canadian representatives. Jesper Thilo and Aladar Pege are the Europeans who will be performing at the event.

Tenor saxophonist **Ralph Bowen**, now a resident of New York, has a Blue Note recording contract in his pocket. He will make a guest appearance at Jazz City with the VEJI. He returned to Toronto June 25 for a week at East 85th where he worked with the Keith Blackley Quartet.... George's Spaghetti House celebrated 30 years of jazz activity with an early evening party on June 13. Moe Koffman, artistic director and resident performer, made an eloquent speech for greater media support of the club scene — which he felt was the key to the development of musician's abilities and reputations. The music room, now located upstairs, is a big improvement and Moe's announcement that the club was acquiring a new piano brought cheers from and musicians and puzzlement from the many outsiders who graced this media event.

Expatriate Canadian arranger and baritone saxophonist **John Warren** has resurfaced again in England with a newly organized 13 piece band which includes Malcolm Griffiths and Alan Skidmore. A recent Bulls Head appearance heralded by writer Richard Williams who singled out alto saxophonist Martin Speake for special praise.

If you travel British Air this summer you may be surprised to find **Jim Galloway** introducing the music on the jazz channel while **Humphrey Lyttelton**, long time host of that service, is now handling a comedy segment. Swissair is another European airline with a jazz channel but there must be others. Both Canadian and U.S. airlines are especially negligent in their presentation of jazz. We would like to publish of listing of those airlines programming jazz. *— John Norris*

ROSCOE MITCHELL
With The Bill Smith Ensemble
The Rivoli, Toronto, Ontario
Sunday, June 23, 1985

Roscoe Mitchell, reeds; Bill Smith, reeds; David Prentice, violin; David Lee, bass; Arthur Bull, guitar; Richard Bannard, drums.

Any appearance by saxophonist and composer Roscoe Mitchell in Toronto is bound to be regarded as an event by those who admire his approach to modern music. Several factors contributed to make this particular club date a memorable one. It was the night after the conclusion of the DuMaurier International Jazz Festival, an occasion that had been robbed of its scheduled finale by the unfortunate cancellation of "Blood" Ulmer. To many afficionados this marked the true ending of the festivities and served to bridge a gap between the Toronto and Montreal jazz jamborees. For lovers of the avant-garde, the Mitchell concert was made notable by his choice of collective improvisors for the evening, the Bill Smith Ensemble. Readers of ***Coda*** are aware that Smith and Lee are long-time supporters of Roscoe Mitchell and the Art Ensemble of Chicago. Smith introduced Mitchell to the audience that evening as "one of the premiere saxophonists on the planet," an indication of his high regard for the Chicagoan's musicianship. Many members of the enthusiastic and knowledgeable crowd at the Rivoli were aware of Mitchell's profound influence on Smith's inclinations as a player and composer. If anyone can claim to be the mentor of the mercurial personality that is Bill Smith that man is Roscoe Mitchell. Both men have functioned most effectively as ensemble members, leading collectives through the force of their presences rather than by fiat. The discernable tension in the air amongst the musicians can be attributed to the diverse personas of Mitchell and Smith working with Lee, Bull, Bannard and Prentice. The final element in the evening — the garlic in the broth — was the non-musical but very real presence of Cecil Taylor as a member of the Rivoli audience.

The concert was organized in two sets, geared towards presenting Roscoe Mitchell as a virtuostic musician. Bill Smith's Ensemble opened the first set with a collective improvised piece that served to establish the musical territory that was to be explored during the evening. The high pitched harmonies between reeds and violin, the surging tensions of the rhythm section, and the unique lyrical passages were all there in attenuated form. Roscoe Mitchell made his entrance at the conclusion of the quintet's piece. He proceeded to perform an extended saxophone improvisation that broke no new ground but did hint at the turf that Mitchell intended to tread with the Ensemble for the rest of the evening. The group gathered forces for the first time to perform a new composition by Smith entitled ***Boot Lane***. This meditative work is a nostalgic exploration of the composer's Bristol roots. It concluded the first set on a high note.

Apart from a brief concluding solo by Mitchell, the entire second set was taken up by the group's rendering of a new composition specifically written for them by the Chicagoan. This extraordinary work is fully in keeping with Mitchell's canon of pieces that have been performed by the Art Ensemble of Chicago. A tone poem remarkable for its mood and coloration, it is one of the strongest pieces that the Bill Smith Ensemble has ever performed. What is most interesting about this presently untitled composition is Mitchell's understanding of the voicings present within the Smith/Lee/Prentice/Bull/Bannard group. Mitchell harnessed the gamut of harmonics inherent within the Ensemble, while deploying their diverse musical abilities in extraordinary ways. He utilised the power of Bannard's percussion which allowed Lee to improvise much more freely. Bull's guitar was made to complement Lee's bass instead of merely providing incidental coloration. Prentice's violin was made into another lead voice, adding depth to Smith's and Mitchell's reed work. Roscoe Mitchell's talents as an arranger allowed the symphonic nature of the Smith Ensemble to assert itself as it rarely has before. A friend who listened to a tape of the performance commented favorably that "It sounds like a film score." As the leader, Mitchell clearly pushed this group to new heights of expression. One can only hope that this fruitful evening will be just the beginning of future collaborations between Roscoe Mitchell and The Bill Smith Ensemble. *— Marc Glassman*

THE T.O. JAZZ JAM

Harbourfront, Toronto
Monday, June 3, 1985

A cross-section of Toronto's established jazz musicians turned out in full force at Harbourfront's Water's Edge Cafe to celebrate Ted O'Reilly's 20 years as host of CJRT-FM's "The Jazz Scene."

The program format over the years has established itself as a kaleidoscopic potpourri of the music's various directions and the Harbourfront bash took very much the same course. The overflow crowd of more than a thousand jammed every nook and cranny of the place as they listened to bands performing on an impromptu basis for five hours. Masterminding the proceedings was saxophonist Jim Galloway who managed to not only put together compatible couplings of musicians but avoided the inevitable delays which seem to plague events of this kind.

The rhythm sections had to work hardest to keep things moving along and a special mention should be made of their contributions. Ian Bargh was frequently on stage and his flexibility was evident as he worked with Phil Nimmons, Frank Wright and John McGarvie, Eugene Amaro and Jodie Drake. He also gave a solo interpretation of ***I Should Care***. Bassist Steve Wallace worked longer than anyone and drummers on stage included Archie Alleyne, Don Vickery, Keith Blackley, Michael Beck and Norm Villeneuve.

Musical highlights included Ed Bickert and Don Thompson's duet of ***One Morning In May***, Ray Bryant's solo outing of ***St. Louis Blues*** (he is, after all, Ted O'Reilly's favourite piano player), Pat LaBarbera's treatment of Coltrane's ***Naima*** (the most contemporary moment of the night) and, especially, the soul wrenching clarinet exposition by Phil Nimmons of ***In A Sentimental Mood***. His creative energy and artistic control was an early highpoint and remained the most moving musical moment of the five hour event.

Jim Galloway performed with a variety of musicians, hosted the evening and organized the

musicians. His skill in all these matters kept things moving and his opening set, where he shared the bandstand with Phil Nimmons, Ian Bargh, Neil Swainson and Terry Clarke, set the standard for all that followed.

Others who participated were Paul Grosney, Ken Dean, Alistair Lawrie, Peter Sagermann, Ron Sorley, Rosemary Galloway, Bill Bridges, Herbie Spanier, Bob Fenton, Fred Duligal, Salome Bey, Dave McMurdo, Joe Sealy, Kieran Overs, Bernie Senensky, Jane Fair, Frank Falco, Brian Harris and Claude Jones.

Other musicians showed up for the event but didn't play. It was especially pleasing to see Rob McConnell on hand for a while and Moe Koffman brought his best wishes but not his horn. Jim McHarg made a presentation on behalf of Harbourfront to Ted but didn't play either. The best gesture of appreciation came when the Musicians Association made Ted an honorary member for his work with members of the association in the CJRT Science Centre series "Sounds of Toronto Jazz" and the many interviews he has done in support of local events.

Best of all was the realisation that this was a celebration rather than a benefit concert for an ailing or deceased member of the music community. The enthusiasm could be felt both on stage and in the audience. It was a fitting occasion to pay tribute to the achievements and commitment of Ted O'Reilly to the music.

— John Norris

VINNY GOLIA TRIO
Le Bruit Court, Montreal
June 1, 1985

Vinny Golia, reeds, flutes, other wind instruments; Wayne Peet, electric grand piano; Ken Filiano, bass.

Having first been an assiduous reader of this magazine, I am now fortunate enough to write about some of the performers on a first hand basis rather than just reading their names without ever having the opportunity to know how and what they play. One such musician that fits into this category is the Los Angeles based multi-instrumentalist and composer, Vinny Golia. Incidentally, regular readers of ***Coda*** might recall Mark Weber's profile in issue 164/5 (1979), so you could look up that piece to fill in the usual details, biographical and musical.

With these indications at hand, I was eager to check out the multi-faceted talents of Vinny Golia, though I was not quite sure what to expect. In retrospect, I can best describe the music by quoting Vinny Golia from the aforementioned article, where he states that "the improviser should be flexible to adapt to feelings and emotions thrown at him."

First of all, one cannot deny his flexibility as an instrumentalist, given the fact that he brought no less than ten instruments with him — which, by the way, is only part of his complete woodwind hardware — and he plays them all quite deftly, as if he has worked on all of them for a long time. But the truth of the matter is that he is one of those musicians who has a natural ability to pick up an instrument and get around it rather quickly. Apart from that, I can say that just the time he takes to put all those instruments together is part of the show itself (and I was always curious to see how a contrabass clarinet is put together).

Secondly, and more importantly, is the music itself, i.e., the means of expression he possesses to adapt the feelings and textures within the ensemble playing. This group relies heavily on pre-conceived material that serves the roles of starting points or moments of rest between improvised sections. As a composer, Golia seems to favour unison statements between all three players, preferring jagged rhythms in tight ensemble statements to a contrapuntal approach with contrasting textures from each instrumental voice. However, this latter strategy was brought thoroughly in the improvisations. Still, I would have liked to hear a little more harmonic and melodic diversity in the written parts, but the music generated a lot of excitement when the players were left to blow on their own.

Though Vinny Golia dominated the proceedings with his many instruments, both his accompanists cannot be overlooked in their respective duties. Ken Filiano played a strange new instrument with an equally strange name,

PHIL NIMMONS (Photograph by Ron Adlington)

the blitz bass, a sort of compromise between the standup and electric basses for those unaware of this unusual hybrid. His technique is impressive, both when he plucks and bows the strings (though he sounds a little scratchy at times when he plays arco, while humming along in an audible murmur). His playing ranges from set tempo bass lines to more complex ones that intermesh with the overall sound of the group. The same can be said for pianist Wayne Peet as he was effective in setting up moods which he could sustain under Golia's many shadings. Nonetheless, I would like to have heard him on an acoustic piano rather than on the ersatz electronic grand that gave a more brittle sound to his playing.

Moreover, a drummer was billed for the show but was not included — according to Golia — because he was not familiar enough with the material. This might explain the feeling I had that the rhythm section seemed to play with some restraint, leaving it up to the leader to stretch out and generate the excitement.

Despite all of his instruments, Golia left plenty of room to his sidemen, often stepping aside after exposing a theme so his partners could fashion their own statements. As for the leader's solos, I found his tenor and baritone playing to be the most assertive and energetic, gruff and bold on the latter horn while being soulful and bluesy on the former. The full bodied tone of his bigger horns were in sharp contrast to the smaller saxes which had a much edgier and biting sound, both on soprano and sopranino. As for the other horns, he used them less audaciously than his saxes, playing them with more subtlety and nuance in sections that established particular moods rather than emphasizing energy and abandon. This is understandable when one takes into consideration the unwieldy contrabass clarinet, an instrument that surely does not have the capacity to project that a saxophone does. Generally speaking then, Golia sizzles on saxes while being somewhat more laid back on his other instruments, offering us that range of textures and feelings of which he talks about. Upon looking at Golia's collection of horns, I am reminded of John Coltrane's statement when he said that playing soprano was like having another hand; if that is the case, Golia must now be a centipede!

Another positive aspect to be heard in this group's music is the way in which spontaneous playing smoothly segues into the written material and all three musicians were well in tune to each other. The music played over the two fairly lengthy sets was like an ebb and flow, sometimes moving ahead at a brisk pace, then turning into an extended rubato exploration, searching and probing for different feelings and textures. From my own point of view, I preferred the up-tempo sections as they were more compact and engaging in their effect than the airy tonal explorations which tended to drift off a little too much in search of a new direction.

For all the diversity and ranges of intensity, the music played that night should not be assimilated to an avant garde or experimental tangent in improvised music. Golia's music has roots in the mainstream and he reminds us constantly of it throughout his playing, be it bop inspired licks on tenor or even an interlude on clarinet which reminded me of an old-fashioned funky blues, played with a relaxed feeling and a burnished tone of a veteran swing player. In short, this music offers us a lot of glimpses to the past and to the present, and this is most uplifting because it never gets caught up in any one bag.

In essence then, it is nice to hear such musicians who have a broad scope on music (improvised or otherwise) and who have the talent and resources to expand their own musical universes by inquiring into an array of styles and concepts. Apart from his standard woodwinds, Vinny Golia plays a number of ethnic instruments, including the panpipes which he used briefly, and has studied Indian music with L. Subramanium, the Indian violin virtuoso, as well as participating in contemporary classical chamber groups. All of these activities demonstrate clearly Vinny Golia's resourcefulness as a composer, performer and "businessman", lest we forget his own recording label, Ninewind records. If he's coming around your way, catch him if you can: this man has quite a few things to say.

— Marc Chenard

VINNY GOLIA (Photograph by Mark Weber)

BOSTON — Jimmy Lyons returned to Tufts University to play alto saxophone duets with **Lewis Porter** on May 1st. The program consisted of two originals from each, a blues, and a fun house mirror distortion of ***Lover Man***. Porter was the more overtly bluesy player and his first, untitled original composition established an especially sympathetic environment for the two of them to musically converse. Lyons, despite his professed reluctance to play in drummerless settings, played soulfully with his hard-as-nails tone. There was call and response, simultaneous agreement, and meeting and parting of musical lines. The only flaw being a tendency for the pieces to wind down in the same way. On the whole, it was a satisfactory first meeting between the two.

Arthur Blythe sounded lackluster on the first night of his weekend at Charlie's Tap on May 10th and 11th. Blythe has always put together imaginative settings for himself, and this group with Bob Stewart on tuba, lending a brassy texture to the bass lines, and Kevin Bell, on guitar, feeding sometimes surprising rhythms into the ensemble, helped compensate for the lack of imaginative alto playing. Bobby Battle was a serviceable time keeper, and took a long, but engaging solo on the final number. A funky tune from his embarrassing new Columbia release inspired Blythe to his best playing of the night.

Dave Holland brought two promising younger players, Steve Coleman on alto saxophone and flute, and Marvin "Smitty" Smith on drums and percussion, with him to the 1369 Jazz Club on May 17th and 18th. Coleman is hard at work finding his own voice. His sound that night displayed a flat, even attack which spoke of intense concentration, but he seemed unfocused at times during the nearly two-and-a-half-hour, continuous first set. As the group caught fire in the last 45 minutes, Coleman's sound brightened and his phrasing became more complex and unique. Smith played mainly basic, loose limbed time, interjecting bursts from a large assortment of little instruments into the pulse for contrast. But he lost the pleasant surprise element gained from these sudden explosions of sound and color by repeating them too often. He positively ate up the faster tempos, but didn't display an equal mastery of the slower ones, command of which I think is the mark of a fully developed drummer. Holland's musicianship and leadership were evident in his usual flawless technique and his direction of the flow of tunes.

The **Lowell Davidson** trio with Dan O'Brien on bass and Laurence Cook on drums played two nights at Charlie's Tap on May 22nd and 23rd. Davidson is a deep and disturbing musician, unlike anyone else. Seated at a small, battered electric keyboard with a variety of devices attached, he produced a restlessly moving mass of sounds which evolved according to its own inner logic. At times he would shoot out a long arm to play a beautiful, coherent melody, seemingly beginning and ending at random, on the acoustic piano before which the electric keyboard was set. O'Brien and Cook often seemed at a loss as to how to enter into Davidson's very private meditations. Not an entirely successful night for this band, but I found myself strangely moved.

Dan O'Brien was back at Charlie's on May 31st and June 1st with a quartet consisting of Gary Valente on trombone, D. Sharpe on drums and Lewis Porter on alto saxophone. Some O'Brien originals, Haden's ***Ballad Of The Fallen***, and compositions from Ornette and Coltrane made up the program on the first night. Valente's big sound filled the room with his short, bluesy phrases. Porter, who was more exploratory, put a lot of the blues into his playing, but also probed into other areas. O'Brien was more at home in this extroverted setting than he was with the more inner-directed Davidson, holding down the beat with his light, warm sound. Sharpe was responsive to the others and a witty soloist.

On May 30th, **Your Neighborhood Saxophone Quartet**, Steve Adams, Allan Chase, Tom Hall and Ben Schachter, displayed ability and aspirations well beyond their (ironically) modest name. This versatile foursome did two sets which ranged from Ayler's ***Ghosts*** to Parker's ***My Little Suede Shoes*** with originals

from group members and a Boston composer, which were more akin to the compositional approaches of the ROVA quartet.

The audience was unfortunately small for **Vinny Golia**'s visit to the Willow Cafe on June 3rd and 4th, but those who came heard some exceptionally good, personal music. Golia, on a variety of saxophones, arrived with Tim Berne on alto, Herb Robertson on trumpet, Wayne Peet on piano, Ken Filiano on bass, and Nick Prout on drums. Golia took full advantage of the group in his arrangements, which were varied in instrumentation and tempo settings. A medley of his tunes started with an alto/sopranino/trumpet trio into which the rhythm section entered one at a time, building into the head, then into a collective improvisation and individual and paired solos. A quiet interlude for the piano, bass and drums led into a modal piece with the leader on bass clarinet. Golia matched the proper instrument to the character of the written material. Robertson, who was new to me, is an enormous talent, with a commanding tone and active imagination. Peet is a thoughtful pianist who favors tart, Monkian harmonies.

Other events on the unusually busy Boston area music calendar were performances by the **Jaki Byard Trio** on May 3rd and 4th, the **John Hicks Trio** on May 24th and 25th, both at Charlie's Tap, **Dave Holland** solo, at Brandeis on June 27th, and a Boston Jazz Coalition presentation of the **George Russell Living Time Orchestra** at the DeCordova Museum on June 23rd. — ***Ed Hazell***

NEW YORK — The death of master tenor saxophonist Zoot Sims in late March represents not only the loss of a vital creative individual in our community, but also an absence of one more direct link of gifted musicians who had been inspired by Lester Young. In this instance, we are fortunate that Zoot Sims has left a substantial legacy of wonderful, readily available albums and rare collector's items — now, increasingly more significant as musical statements of his life accomplishments, and of a total era.

Zoot Sims had first achieved international recognition during the 1940s within Woody Herman's Second Herd, as an intrinsic member of The Four Brothers. Together with Stan Getz, Herbie Stewart and Serge Chaloff, he created music which served as warm, experimental journeys into modernism of that time. **Al Cohn** subsequently replaced Herbie Stewart as part of The Four Brothers, and became a lifelong friend and frequent playing partner of Sims.

Through the years, **Zoot Sims** seemed to epitomize the wandering minstrel, repeatedly bringing the beauty of his musical language to audiences around the globe, playing with an incredible variety of individuals and bands including: Clifford Brown, Chet Baker, Benny Goodman, Stan Kenton, Gerry Mulligan, George Wallington and Joe Venuti. As time passed, he came to develop a fuller quality in his personal sound, reminiscent of Ben Webster.

When Zoot Sims suddenly discovered that he suffered from incurable cancer, he was determined to continue playing until he became so depleted, that he would have to stop. And so, during his last months, Zoot performed in such settings as DeFemios in Yonkers, New York; Struggles in Edgewater, New Jersey and at a Heavenly Jazz Concert in New York City, where over 1,000 people gathered to hear the music. After one last trip to Toledo, Ohio, he was too ill to play at The Blue Note; his friend Al Cohn performed in his stead.

As his life ebbed away, his wife Louise and his friends began planning the imminent services to be held at Saint Peter's Church in New York City. Paul Weinstein, producer of all Heavenly Jazz Concerts, made the arrangements. Bucky Pizzarelli and Major Holley were responsible for inviting musicians to participate.

Zoot Sims passed away on March 23 at the age of 59. On the evening of March 25, more than 1,500 members of the jazz community congregated to express their regrets. The number of celebrities assembled to pay respect could have formed another chapter in "Who's Who." Pastor John Garcia Gensel officiated.

The sequence of events at the Tribute included a Prelude by Bucky Pizzarelli, Ron Turso, Johnny Carisi, Richard Wyands and Major Holley. Dick Hyman, alone at the piano, played a soft tender blues, followed by Woody Herman, sensitively and thoughtfully recalling memories in his relationship as one of Zoot's former leaders. A trio composed of Benny Aronov, Milt Hinton and Bobby Rosengarden offered ***Memories Of You***. Dick Sudhalter and Jack Kleinsinger each presented eloquent eulogies before Tommy Flanagan's ***All Too Soon***, and Roger Kellaway's ***Trees***; Paul Weinstein shared personal thoughts of Zoot, then — George Shearing's exquisitely rendered ***Early Autumn***.

Ronnie Scott had flown from London solely to be there, and spoke of his feelings concerning Zoot. Phil Bodner, Michael Moore, John Bunch, Ray Mosca, Turk Mauro and Manny Duran played ***These Foolish Things***; telegrams and floral arrangements from such friends as Gerry Mulligan, June Christy and Ella Fitzgerald were announced; and jazz scholar Ira Gitler read from an article he had written. Ruby Braff, Scott Hamilton, Phil Flanigan, Chuck Riggs and Chris Flory played ***I Can't Give You Anything But Love***; Dave McKenna provided a solo ***Thanks A Million***; Roland Hanna, Bill Crow and Mel Lewis offered ***Yesterdays***; and the culmination was ***Morning Fun***, the theme of Zoot and Al Cohn, interpreted by Major Holley, Manny Duran, Ron Turso, John Carisi, Turk Mauro and Benny Aronov.

Special mention must be made of the beautiful spontaneous eulogy delivered by Albert Goldman, in which he lamented the passing of Zoot Sims. He focused upon the fact that Zoot had embodied so perfectly "... the ideals and principles of a jazz life — that is, to play exactly what he feels, thinks and believes in.... discovering anew what it is... Within this process, comes a maturation... development of the spirit.... heroic expression.... the ability to turn disaster into triumph and grow from adversity.... There are constant pressures on musicians.... To artistically grow within this climate, one has to be motivated by idealism..."

Illinois Jacquet has returned to the States after leading an all-star group, Jacquet's Jazz Train '85 in an extensive tour through Germany and Italy. Since the inception of his sixteen piece band one and a half years ago, a Tribute To Benny Carter and Illinois Jacquet at Carnegie Hall; performances at Lincoln Center, Alice Tully Hall, Lush Life, and Rick's Cafe Americain in Chicago have brought superb reviews. He is continuously enlarging his book to reflect standards with refreshing new insights. He will be bringing his big band out-of-doors at Lincoln Center on August 21, and to the Chicago Jazz Festival on August 30.

The annual "Jazzathon" to benefit WBGO-FM was broadcast "live" from the Ritz in New York City for over twelve hours. Among the musicians featured were: the Joe Thomas Sextet; Vince Giordano's Nighthawks (this eighteen piece band devoted to reviving standards performs regularly at the Cafe Carlyle); Little Jimmy Scott; Michel Petrucciani; Phil Woods with Bill Goodwin, Tom Harrell and Steve Galper; Amina Claudine Myers; Mel Lewis; Steve Turre with Greg Bandy, Lonnie Smith, Rene McLean and Marvin Smith; Manny Oquendo's Libre; Lester Bowie's Brass Fantasy; and the Harlem Blues and Jazz Band. The untold efforts by so many members of the jazz community to create a tremendous spectrum of expression, served to bring increased musical intensity to the total production. Dorthaan Kirk, widow of **Rahsaan Roland Kirk**, and Music Coordinator of WBGO-FM is to be credited, as is Wylie Rollins, Al Pryor, and On-Air Hosts, Michael Anderson, James Browne, Rhonda Hamilton, Lois Gilbert, Leslie Harrison, Chico Mendoza, Bob Porter, Gary Walker and Anthony Wilson, who provided insightful interviews with the performing artists and alternated MC responsibilities.

Don Sebesky's sensitive arrangements for his big band at Fat Tuesday's provided almost total juxtaposition of mechanized rhythms and seeming cacophonous passages to fragile flights before tropical storms — waves of soft sounds. Roger Rosenberg's baritone brought unreal power and passion.

Norman Simmons has been accompanying **Joe Williams**, offering another dimension to music of intense and immediate impact. They have most recently appeared at the Smithsonian Institute and Blues Alley in Washington, D.C.; Ethel's in Baltimore, Maryland; The Fairmont Hotel in Denver, a WYRS-FM concert at the Stamford Center for the Arts; and Struggles in Edgewater, New Jersey. Although Norman is scheduled to travel extensively, he continues to teach at William Patterson College in New Jersey, and will also be teaching at Queen's Community College in New York this autumn.

Among the diverse attractions at The Bottom Line have been performances by Sonny Rollins; Roy Eldridge, Sol Yaged, and the Herb Strizik Trio; Bo Diddley; George Russell and The Living Time Orchestra... Vocalist **Meredith D'Ambrosia** came from Seattle, Washington to record with Harold Danko on Sunnyside, and also to combine her voicings with Major Holley Upstairs at Greene Street.... 5 & 10 at 77 Greene Street has featured Judy Niemack's vocals. On another evening there, Steve Elmer created his own imagery on solo piano....

Daniella, a North African vocalist blending her original lyrics with classical jazz, performed at the West End Cafe with Richard Wyands, Monty Waters, Dennis Irwin and Akira Tana. Phil Schaap hosted a live broadcast of one performance on WKCR-FM. This station continues its policy of extended "Birthday Festivals", including those for **Billie Holiday, Duke Ellington,**

Charles Mingus, and **King Oliver**, as well as a one week Lost Masters III Festival, exploring the music of **Scott LaFaro, Joe Smith, Booker Little** and **Lucky Thompson**. Ongoing research concerning living artists focused on a comprehensive air-play "Special" of **Dizzy Gillespie**'s musical evolution.

At Gregory's, an intimate jazz room on the upper east side, **Chuck Wayne**'s trio with Warren Chiasson and Michael Fleming offered music seeming to be forever bonded together. ***Speak Low*** reflected warmth and positive energy; each player developing space for individual solos. Other musicians appearing with some regularity are Sorrow Astrasa, Brooks Kerr and Judy Niemack.

Steve Kuhn with **Ron Carter** and **Al Foster** have played three extended engagements at the Village Vanguard within this year, as well as a California tour. Negotiations are presently underway for an album to capture the illusive beauty of this pure trio construction — continuous musical conversations — total melodic empathy, sensitively communicated.

Among the many enterprises of **Paul Weinstein** are the Heavenly Jazz Concerts and an evening concert series at the New School, Jazz At Six, bringing the music to college audiences as well as to jazz devotees. Recent New School performances have included: Bucky and John Pizzarelli, Warren Bechet, Roger Kellaway, Big Joe Turner, Michael Moore, Gene Bertoncini, Charlie Byrd, Zoot Sims, Howard Johnson, Dick Hyman, Ruby Braff, Doc Cheatham, Jon Faddis, Kenny Burrell, Ron Carter, Roland Hanna, Pepper Adams and Cecil Payne.

Kiesha St. Joan's summer plans include a Brazilian tour, and the initiation of a jazz series sponsored by the Arts Council of Norman, Oklahoma and the Cimmaron Opera Company. She continues to sing at the Green House of the Vista International Hotel in the World Trade Center; and at Pumpkins and the Flamingo Lounge with **Ed Stout, Peck Morrison, Calio Hadi** and **Harold Vick**.

In addition to other appearances, **Steve Fishman**'s quintet has been performing at a group of colleges including Princeton, Clark and Hartwick. A video production of his group by Gene Perla is being shown on Cable TV in the New York area.... **David Lahm** and **Judy Kreston** have recorded their second album, Live At Wallman's. .... The Museum of Modern Art's Summer Festival in the sculpture garden, produced by Andy Caploe scheduled an incredible opportunity to hear the solo tenor saxophone of **Sonny Rollins** on July 19. This performance will be recorded by Fantasy.

Jack Kleinsinger's Highlights In Jazz has recently featured **Lionel Hampton** with the Tri-State McDonald's High School Jazz Ensemble; the 12th Anniversary celebration with Joe Bushkin, Doc Cheatham, Phil Bodner, Ray Mosca, Britt Woodman, Major Holley, Glenn Zottola, and Loren Schoenberg; and a Salute to Mel Lewis with Pepper Adams, Frank Foster, Roger Kellaway , Jon Faddis, Lew Soloff, Benny Powell, George Duvivier and Mel Lewis.

Abbey Lincoln (Aminata Moseka) premiered her production, "I Got Thunder," involving instrumental backing of her voice together with spectacular jazz dance sequences, at The Silver Lining on West 46th Street, before taking it on the road.... Among the many artists travelling to perform in Europe this summer will be Astrud Gilberto, Stan Getz, McCoy Tyner, Phil Woods, John Clayton and Carmen McRae.... **Bob Cunningham** will be releasing a new album of original and standard material on Alvin Queen's Nilva label from Switzerland with **Melvin Sparks, Bernard Purdy** and **Bross Townsend**. Bob's recent New York appearances have been at Bradley's, Angry Squire, Greene Street, Discovery and Cafe Burgundy....

Hanratty's, an elegant upper east side restaurant, is recognized for featuring the finest solo keyboard artists (with accompaniment on special occasions). **Dick Hyman** performs every Monday night; **Jane Jarvis** on Sundays. Others appearing with some regularity are **Dick Wellstood, Dave McKenna** and **Roland Hanna**.....

The Mirage Restaurant and Supper Club is part of a massive business and community effort to renew the status of Newark, New Jersey as a major jazz center. Club Mirage initially introduced "Little" Jimmy Scott after a fifteen year hiatus.... At Bradley's, **Harold Danko** and **Michael Moore** developed impassioned music together.... **Monty Alexander, Ed Thigpen, John Clayton** and **Milt Jackson** weaved intricate music at the Blue Note....

Cobi Narita's Universal Jazz Coalition continues to bring music to diverse audiences. Among Cobi's thoughtful activities was a concert and 74th birthday party for **Maxine Sullivan**, who performed with and for her friends that evening (Maxine's album, "The Great Songs from The Cotton Club" on Stash provides naturalness and warmth — nostalgia that is part of the present).

Cobi recently provided an opportunity for her students in the "Business of Music" class at Long Island University to hear guest lecturers Dr. George Butler, Vice President of CBS Records, with Mike Bernicam, producer; Dave Novick, Director of A&R International; and Sandra DaCosta, National Director of Artist Development and Publicity.

As executive director of UJC, Cobi has produced thousands of concerts or concert and party combinations including those at the Dairy in Central Park, in Bryant Park, and at the suggestion of this writer, a new series of Sunday afternoon parties for teenagers, to be called "Teen Machine — Electric & Non-Electric." Invitations are being extended to high schools, offering students the fun of live and taped music, dancing, refreshments and free soft drinks, all for a modest admission charge. Young groups who are interested in performing at the parties are requested to send cassettes to the UJC, 380 Lafayette Street, 3rd floor, New York, N.Y. 10003.

It seems evident that youngsters who begin to enjoy music as a part of their experiences, will continue to respond to and support this music throughout their lives. We understand that many of today's jazz devotees were once youngsters who may have listened to late night jazz radio programs by DJs such as Symphony Sid, or perhaps were fortunate enough to have been in that portion of Birdland reserved for those not yet of legal age, where only soft drinks and refreshments were served. It may be time for present day jazz rooms to begin a similar policy. ***— Flora Wilhelm Bush***

NORTH CAROLINA — Trumpeter **Bobby Shew** was featured at a day-long clinic, workshop and concert at Western Carolina University in Culowhee, N.C. The concert presentation included segments by the 10 piece **Western Carolina University Jazz Ensemble,** directed by vibist **Mario Gaetano**; a Gaetano quartet and finally the ensemble with Shew as principal soloist. Although, as Gaetano pointed out, Shew is on the road more than 200 nights a year, his involvement in the artistic/educational task at hand was obvious and his playing excellent. A highlight was his dueting on the "Shewhorn," a double belled, double valved trumpet which enabled him to play call-and-response segments on open and muted horn with himself. There was plenty of room left for ensemble soloists, too, who obviously enjoyed

STEVE TURRE (Photograph by Gerard Futrick)

playing with Shew.... Charlotte's major venue for jazz continues to be Jonathan's Jazz Cellar, with its resident **Cellar Dwellers** band. Owner Burt Gellman continues to book occasional out-of-town groups, the most recent being **Alexander Zajcek's**..... Next door at NCNB Performance Place, the outstanding concert of the spring featured violinist **Stephane Grapelli,** accompanied by acoustic guitarist Marc Fosset and bassist Jack Sewing..... A small town audience got a little jazz exposure on May 31, when the Macon County Cultural Arts Council presented the **Howard Hanger Jazz Fantasy**, regulars on the Asheville scene, at the Fine Arts Center in Franklin, N.C. (population 3,500). While to these ears, the leader's enthusiastic pounding on piano bore little resemblance to jazz, the other members (Elliott Wadopian, bass; Bert Clemens, drums and Leah Picaza, acoustic guitar and vocals) made up for it. Ms. Picaza surprised the crowd with some numbers in what could best be called a "Latin-scat" style, but Wadopian provided the real excitement with some solos and accompaniments which should place him in the front ranks of those who have solved the problems of using the electric bass in an acoustic jazz context.

— Bill McLarney

Steve Turre / African Liberation Day / Julius Hemphill

During the month of May I attended three events of extraordinary contemporary expression at Koncepts Kultural Gallery in Oakland, California. Koncepts is located at the corner of Telegraph and Grand Streets near downtown. It is housed in an arts complex called Jenny Lind Hall, occupied also by Everybody's Dance Studio, another center of creativity in Oakland. Up on the third floor the performance space is long and narrow, seating up to seventy-five people. The room is warm, draped with beautiful fabric and showing fine paintings and drawings. The food is great and the non-alcohol policy contributes to an already relaxing atmosphere. The programming is diverse. In May the spread included Harold Land's Quartet, Teatro Pantomina de Cuba, blues great Charles Brown, Houston Person, Berkeley High's Jazz Ensemble and Bes Childrens' Theater of the Bay area. The three events I attended were Steve Turre's Quartet, African Liberation Day/ A Tribute To Malcolm X and Julius Hemphill with an octet.

There's been a lot of talk lately about "World Beat." The critics have discovered a new fusion incorporating aspects of different "world" cultures' musics and adapting them to suit a basically contemporary electric structure. Some of this music is listenable and danceable. But the World Beat is nothing new. It has been a part of African-American creativity from the beginning. Now that instantaneous electronic communication has brought the world even closer, we know that it's happening in Africa, the Caribbean, Brazil, et al.

Steve Turre plays the world beat. In one set he'll take you from Bahia to the visionary blues stratosphere to the streets of New York City to a visit with Duke Ellington (probably the first "world beat" conceptualizer and activist). All lean, smokin' original American classical music. All played acoustically.

Turre was joined on this occasion by three of the Bay Area's finest musicians. Rudy Mwongozi on piano is a constant spark and sensation. His sensitivity to the music and the players enables him to state his case without cluttering the court. Drummer Eddie Marshall is an old favorite. He defines musicianship with his ability to contribute fully, whatever the music calls for. The surprise on this set was bassist Peter Washington. This man in his early twenties has already developed such facility that it makes one excited about the continual contributions of a next generation of players. Steve Turre is a master of breath. On stage, along with his trombone, are five sizes of conch shell and two lengths of dijeridoo (Australian aboriginal instruments). His trombone playing is full and powerfully executed. The conch shells were something else. What was most striking was not only did he play changes on them but by playing two at once he created full chordal harmony. We were quite moved by his creativity on these instruments and his overall approach to music.

By setting aside a day to pay tribute to one of the world's greatest leaders, Koncepts reaffirmed its commitment to truth through culture. A stance that reflects Malcolm's beliefs. The wonderfully balanced afternoon, mc'd by Judith Holten, director of Bes Children's Theater, presented four duets by Bay Area musicians and a solo by pianist Joe Bonner. The program opened with the chanting and drumming of Tacuma King and Sunga Francis. The two are members of SDOUAE (Sun Drums of Urban Africa Ensemble). The fiery drumming was followed by Ibrahim Shakoor on flute and Daniel Kane on Chapman stick. The Chapman stick is a stringed instrument with five treble and five bass strings. It is both fretted and struck percussively. It has a beautiful and strange sound. Kane played it masterfully, creating the effect of two or more instruments happening simultaneously; rhythmic bass, chordal and melody lines on the high end. Theirs was a sweet, flowing set. Avotja and James Lewis were next. She, a bay area musician-poet and radio broadcaster. He, a local freelance bassist known for his work with the Now Artet and Julius Hemphill. Musically, James had a lot of room to improvise around Avotja's guitar work and her poems. The poems, sometimes humourous, always direct, covered subjects from a cowboy in the white house (you know who) to the history of the music and finally a hopeful love affair shattered by a cockroach. The duet series ended with Rudy Mwongozi and Ray Collins (reeds). They played a dedication to Malcolm X called ***El Haj Malik Shabbaz*** as well as an interesting tour through the classics called ***Reflections In Five Flats***. Included within were extrapolations on ***Lush Life, Body And Soul***, music from Monk, Pres, Mingus... the classics. After the air settled from this series, Joe Bonner came out and contributed a superbly organized solo including (dig this) a version of ***We Are The World*** that truly made sense and said something. True to the tradition, all material is worthy of the improvisor's soul.

The Julius Hemphill program was an historical event. I have heard Julius at least four times in the past year. First, with a trio of James Lewis and Billy Higgins; his electric group with the Cline Brothers and twice with the World Saxophone Quartet. For this occasion, Julius surrounded himself with the finest contemporary players from the bay area. What he did was bring on Rasul Sadik's Now Artet (Ghasem Batamuntu, tenor sax; Rasul, trumpet and flugelhorn; James Lewis, bass; Butch Price, hand drums) augmented by Leon Williams on tenor sax and clarinet, Floyd LeFlore (from St. Louis) on trumpet, Larry Hancock on traps and Tacuma King on hand drums. Julius, besides playing alto and soprano saxes, conducted and contributed the music.

The power of an artform is expressed through its vitality. On this evening the orchestra reflected the highest qualities of African-American creative music by being both true to the music's traditions and thoroughly original in presentation. The open ended arrangements allowed for individual expression and created a collective unity that is so much a part of Hemphill's music. There is a special feeling that happens when the musician has the collective statements of the ensemble as well as written material to work from. It was not about straight comping of rhythm and changes but intricate lines taking on shapes, becoming intimate, creating distances. At times the group would be soloing together with such dynamic control that every part was clearly heard. On ***Kansas City Line*** the drummers and bassist laid out a popping rhythm while the melodic and harmonic activity moved up and down the front line. The collective wrapping around, releasing and wrapping around the next soloist in line. ***For Billie*** featured Julius Hemphill on soprano sax. This song is a penetrating vision of Billie Holiday's soul. A cross-section with all levels viewed equally. There were five pieces over a two hour period. Those of us crowded

into Koncepts Kultural Gallery came away with a portion of the vitality. Continuing a cycle advanced by the greatness of the music.

Koncepts continues its fine programming in June. The month opens with Bes Children's Educational Theater Company presenting "Song Of An Indigo Hue" (1-2-8). Also on the first, after the theater presentation, is the Rudi Mwongozi Trio with Cash Killion on bass and Larry Hancock on drums. The following week is a Mal Walron-David Friesen Duo. Programming continues throughout the month culminating the last weekend in June with Big Joe Turner on Friday the 28th and a rare solo performance by Joseph Jarman on Saturday and Sunday the 29th and 30th. July opens with another rare event for the Bay Area: A quartet featuring reed master Buddy Collette with Ed Kelly, piano; Herbie Lewis, bass and Eddie Marshall, drums. This set takes place July 5th and 6th. *— Brian Auerbach*

MELBA LISTON

The shocking news that Melba Liston has suffered a stroke, leaving her partially paralyzed, came as a poignant reminder of the frail threads binding our lives together; the unfathomable transience of being — and the need to focus upon those periods when the search for excellence is joy.

Thoughts of Melba bring the vitality, warmth and humor of this wonderful composer, conductor, arranger, and teacher; the love she brought to every deed. All her energy is now being directed to restoring.

Over the years, Melba's accomplishments have included performances with Billie Holiday, Count Basie, Dizzy Gillespie, Quincy Jones, Gerald Wilson, and an almost unending list of others. Between 1974 and 1979 she lived in Kingston, Jamaica, developing and heading the Afro-American division of the Jamaica School of Music. Working with young people there has been one of the primary loves of her life — Melba continues to remain their friend. A group of fine young musicians who she had encouraged to come to New York are a source of tremendous emotional support and pleasure since her illness.

Since Melba's return to the States, her apperances have included being part of the Kansas City Women's Jazz Festival in an all-star trombone group; leading her company in Universal Jazz Coalition's annual New York Women's Jazz Festivals, participation with her company (Melba Liston & Company) at festivals in Nice and Nimes, France; Pori, Finland; The Hague, Holland; and Munich, Germany. In October, 1983, Melba brought her company on a tour of Taiwan, the Fiji Islands and Malaysia, at the request of the International Communications Agency. Melba has performed with her company at Carnegie Hall, Town Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, Citicorp's Atrium, South Street Seaport Summerpier Concerts, Lincoln Center's Out-Of-Door series, and Harlem's Jazzmobile. Among other appearances have been nine performances at Sweet Basil's, taped by National Public Radio; the Bottom Line; Blues Alley, Washington, D.C.; Left Bank Jazz Society, Baltimore, Maryland; Emmanuel Church, Boston, Massachusetts; and trombonist with Dizzy Gillespie's Dream Band at Avery Fisher Hall (the televised production is regularly available to viewers of public television).

MELBA LISTON (Photograph by Raymond Ross)

Melba has written arrangements for the Boston Pops Orchestra and the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra which feature Randy Weston. She continues working on his new arrangements, even at this time. Melba's individual contributions to the music and to others within the music have been considerable.....

As an expression of caring, Cobi Narita of the Universal Jazz Coalition provided a benefit concert for Melba, "because we love her." From early evening until after three a.m. musicians and friends continued arriving — to help Melba in a time of need. Among those present were: Lodi Carr, Al Grey, George Coleman, Jon Hendricks, Harold Vick, Teri Thornton, Maxine Sullivan, Marian McPartland, Tom Briggs, Bill Spilka, Patti Bown, Michael Moss, Richard Wyands, Harold Mabern, Carlene Ray, Major Holley, Janice Robinson, Benny Powell, Jamil Nasser, Kim Clarke, James Spaulding, Bobby Sanabria, Sherry Mericle, Walter Bolden, Ernie Ross, Bucky Thorpe, Alva Nelson, Frank Gant, Leon Thomas, Tina Pratt, Roy Burrowes, and James Williams. Raymond Ross and many others photographed events of the evening for Melba.

Those readers who would wish to reach Melba can write or call: Ms. Melba Liston, Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center, Neurological Unit, Room 543, 710 West 168th Street, New York, N.Y., U.S.A. 10032 (212) 305-2500 (main number for hospital).

— Flora Wilhelm Bush

ODDS & SODS

NEW YORK — Fourteen Greenwich Village clubs will participate in the fourth **Dewar's Village Jazz Festival** to be held this year between August 23 and September 2. It's an unique concept for New York, created and produced by Horst Liepolt and Mel Litoff. Arthur's Tavern, Blue Note, Bradley's, Discovery of Soho, Fat Tuesday's, Greenwich House, Jazz Center of New York, Seventh Avenue South, Sweet Basil, Village Corner, Village Gate, Village Vanguard, Zinno and 55 Bar have all arranged special programs for the duration of the festival. There will also be a festival long presentation of jazz films at the Bleecker Street Cinema which is being coordinated by Bruce Ricker of Rhapsody Films. Opening everything up will be a free concert at Washington Square Park on August 23 between 5 - 7 p.m. featuring the Stan Getz Quartet and the Kenny Burrell Trio. Brochures giving details of performers can be obtained at the participating clubs or by mail from Horst Liepolt, c/o Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Avenue South, New York 10014. A $10.00 festival pass gives you reduced admission at all of the clubs.

The Django Reinhardt Society (P.O. Box 6610, FDR Station, New York, N.Y. 10150) was formed recently to promote the "life and musical legacy" of the famed gypsy guitarist. Their inaugural event took place May 17 at the Overseas Jazz Club with performances by society founder Mike Peters and his group. Veteran guitarist Les Paul was honoured at this event.

Summer in New York includes several special series. The Museum of Modern Art has returned to activity with concerts in the Sculpture Garden. Of particular interest were a solo concert by **Sonny Rollins** (July 19 and taped for release by Fantasy), a world premiere of new works by **Lawrence "Butch" Morris** (July 26) and an August 30 concert by **The Art Ensemble of Chicago**.... "Jazz in July" was a series of six concerts held at the Kaufman Concert Hall of the 92nd Street Y under the artistic direction of **Dick Hyman**. New Yorkers got a rare chance to hear Ralph Sutton and Jay McShann perform together along with Dick Wellstood, Mike Lipskin and Judy Carmichael. Each concert in the series had a special theme — ranging from Ragtime and stride piano to the blues, the American popular song and the diverse early styles of small combos (Cake-Walking Babies) and Paul Whiteman.... **The International Art of Jazz** presented more than fifteen summer concerts in the New York's surrounding "bedroom" communities. It included a festival at Heckscher State Park spread over the month of August. A mammoth Jam Session was held August 3 and upcoming on August 17 is Max Roach while The Duke's Men, Toots Thielemans and Tania Maria will perform August 31.... Vocalist **Sheila Jordan** was showcased July 15 at a special presentation at the Public Theatre. Roswell Rudd, Harold Danko, Harvie Swartz and Victor Lewis appeared with the singer.

Jacob's Pillow, in Lee, Ma., presented Chick Corea's trio (June 30), Herbie Mann (July 7), the New Black Eagle Jazz Band (August 4) with Susannah McCorkle (August 11) and Stan Getz (August 25) scheduled to follow... **Bud Freeman** and **Art Hodes** performed at St. Paul Minnesota's College of St. Catherine June 29.... September 14-16 are the dates for **Minneapolis' Jazz Party**. Twenty-five top flight musicians have been signed for this weekend event to be run along the same lines as Dick Gibson's bash in Colorado. Full details of the event are available from Helen Larson, 9725 Cimarron Circle, Minnetonka, Mn., 55343.... **Jay McShann's Trio** will be playing October dates in such midwest spots as Ottawa, Bartlesville, Wellington, Iola, Coffeyville, Emporia and Pine Bluff. All are in Kansas except for Pine Bluff (Arkansas) and Bartlesville (Oklahoma). The tour is under the sponsorship of Mid-America Arts Alliance. They have further dates set for next February or March.

The Blues Foundation has set November 17 as the date for its 6th annual **National Blues**

Awards Show. The venue is Memphis' Orpheum Theatre.... The **Long Beach Blues Festival** will be held September 14 and 15 and is the sixth such event. Albert Collins, Roomful of Blues, Cleanhead Vinson, Linda Hopkins, Bo Diddley, Otis Rush, Papa John Creach, Charlie Musselwhite and Joe Lippins are set to perform in this presentation of KLON Radio.

If you visit Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic you might wish to contact Club de Jazz, Av. John F. Kennedy No 10, 4to Piso for information on jazz activity in that city.

The **New Music Review for Radio** makes its debut this October across the US on public radio. July 1 was the date when program submissions were supposed to have been sent to coproducer Frank Hoffman, R # 1, Box 1110, Windsor, Vt. 05089, but as that information only arrived recently it might still be possible to send examples of music or program ideas which might fit into the audio magazine concept of the program.

EUROPEAN NOTES — Jazztime is a Swiss publication listing, on a monthly basis, upcoming events. The May issue carried an advertisement for the New Orleans in Lugano festival to be held June 14-16. This year's event was taken over by the city's Cultural Events department and they announced the "second coming" of Eddie Condon after a 20 year absence from Europe!.... Bern's **Bebop Records** has relocated at Spitalgasse 36. It's one of several valuable specialty stores in Switzerland which serve the international jazz community.. **Jim Galloway**'s spring tour of Switzerland included several nights at Zurich's Widder Bar where he worked with a first rate rhythm section of Brian Lemon, Dave Green and Terry Clarke. Harry Edison, Buddy Tate, Benny Powell and Eddie Jones stopped by one night for a listen and a little friendly jamming. Galloway also returned to the church in Villigen for a concert with Henri Chaix's trio and that combination also played in Lucerne.... **The Flat Foot Stompers** has been in existence for twenty years in Stuttgart. Under the enthusiastic leadership of reedman Peter Buhr it has not only worked hard at developing an extensive repertoire of traditional jazz tunes but it has also been a catalyst for appearances in that area of many visiting musicians. These visits have been documented in an above average collection of well-recorded performances by Wild Bill Davison, Dick Wellstood, Peanuts Hucko, Trummy Young and Carrie Smith in collaboration with members of the hometown band which includes the fine trombone work of Roland Muller. Copies of the record are available directly from Peter Buhr, Sonnenrain 9, D-7050 Waiblingen, West Germany.... Jim Galloway played three nights with the band in the Stuttgart area before moving on to Frankfurt and an appearance with Agi and Lindi Huppertsberg (piano and bass). From there the trio went to Wiesbaden and a session amidst the congenial surroundings of Sherry & Port (Adolfsalle 11).... **The Vienna Art Orchestra** were in Willisau for a concert May 12. This year's festival takes place the last weekend of August.

Francis Paudras is at work on his book about **Bud Powell** and is endeavouring to find the whereabouts of photographer Howard Morehead. Any information can be sent direct to Francis at 6 Rue Rouai in Paris or to Jerry Atkins, P.O. Box 491, Texarkana, Tx. 75504.

A new magazine devoted to big bands is being produced in Holland. Called **Swing**, its initial issue focuses on Glenn Miller and Benny Goodman. It is available from The Swing Society, Groeseindstraat 39, 5014 LT Tilburg, Holland and a four issue subscription is $4.00... A jazz map of **New Orleans** and a 30 page descriptive booklet have been compiled by Dr. Karl Koenig. They are available from him at 3121 Cleary, Apt. 13, Metairier, La. 70002. Cost is $8.50 postpaid.... **The AFRS "Jubilee" Transcription Programs: An Exploratory Discography** is a two volume, hardcover book compiled by Rainer Lotz and Ulrich Neuert devoted to transcriptions primarily aimed at a listening audience of blacks in the armed forces between 1942 and 1947. The book is available from specialty jazz stores or direct from the publisher (Norbert Ruecker, P.O. Box 4106, D-6000, Frankfurt, West Germany) and has a retail price of DM148.00 (in Europe) or US$55.00 elsewhere in the world.

Just released by Landmark Records is a piano trio lp by **Jack DeJohnette** and an intriguing collection by the **Kronos String Quartet** of Thelonious Monk compositions. Label producer **Orrin Keepnews** was in New York to record Jimmy Heath and Mulgrew Miller for lps to be released later in the year. Keepnews is also making available again some of Cannonball Adderley's Riverside sessions. First up will be "Them Dirty Blues" and "Cannonball's Bossa Nova"..... **Art Pepper**'s New York Album, an unreleased 1979 date with Hank Jones, Ron Carter and Al Foster is now out on Galaxy..... **George Cables** recorded a trio date for Contemporary with John Heard and Tony Williams which will be known as "Phantom of the City." Cables is also the pianist on a Shorty Rogers/Bud Shank concert date for Contemporary with Monty Budwig and Sherman Ferguson.... Canadian guitarist **Peter Leitch** is the headliner of a new Uptown lp. Pepper Adams, John Hicks, Ray Drummond and Billy Hart are ideal compatriots for his US debut as a leader in "Exhilaration".... **Inner City** are back in action and two widely disparate duet sessions came out recently. Nancy Harrow and Jack Wilkins join forces on "Two's Company" while Ruby Braff and Dick Hyman collaborate on "Fireworks" — a November 1983 concert recording from the New School in New York.

Pianist **Lloyd Glenn** died May 23 of a heart attack in Los Angeles. He was one of the least appreciated of the original voices which have so profoundly shaped the sound and direction of the music. His piano conception was a key factor in the so-called California blues sound of the 1940s as exemplified by T-Bone Walker's recordings from that period. Lloyd was a masterful player of the blues and his imagination never flagged through the years. A 1980 session with Gene Ramey and Al Levitt was issued recently on Black and Blue under the title "Blues and Boogie" (33.563) and is more than a fitting tribute to his qualities.

Other recent deaths include **Larry Clinton** (75) on May 2 in Tucson; **Willie Mabon** on April 19 in Paris at the age of 59; guitarist **Skeeter Best** died May 29 in the Bronx at the age of 70; alto saxophonist **John Jackson**, veteran of the Jay McShann band, died recently and trumpeter **Lonnie Hillyer** died in early July.

— compiled by John Norris

ALL CORRESPONDENTS PLEASE NOTE

There will be **no** news column or reviews in the next issue of Coda. Next deadline for all material is NOVEMBER 1ST.

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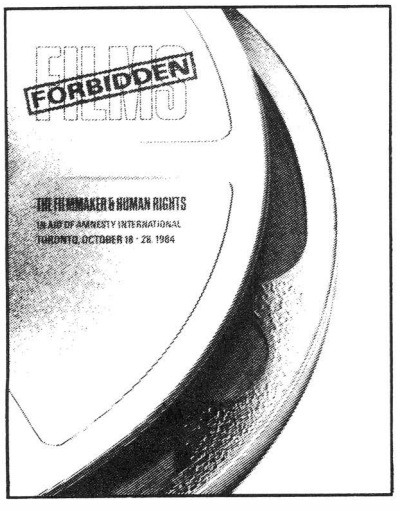

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003 MAURY COLES' SOLO SAXOPHONE RECORD
004 BILL SMITH * "PICK A NUMBER" * with David Prentice (violin), David Lee (bass, cello)
005 RANDY HUTTON/PETER MOLLER * "RINGSIDE MAISIE" * Randy Hutton (guitar), Peter Moller (percussion)
006 PAUL CRAM * "BLUE TALES IN TIME" * Paul Cram (alto and tenor saxophones), Paul Plimley (piano), Gregg Simpson (drums) and others

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