CODA MAGAZINE

THE JOURNAL OF JAZZ AND IMPROVISED MUSIC * ISSUE 204 * OCT / NOV 1985 * THREE DOLLARS

THE TENOR SAXOPHONE * COLEMAN HAWKINS * SAHIB SHIHAB * SONNY ROLLINS * ARCHIE SHEPP
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SONNY ROLLINS
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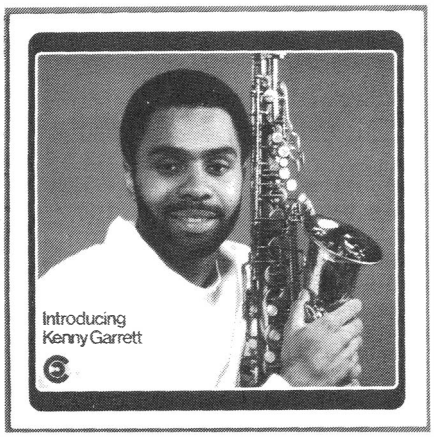

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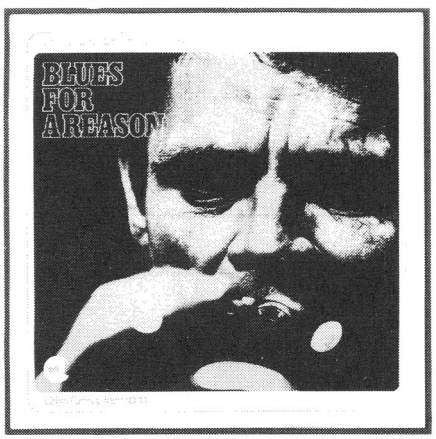

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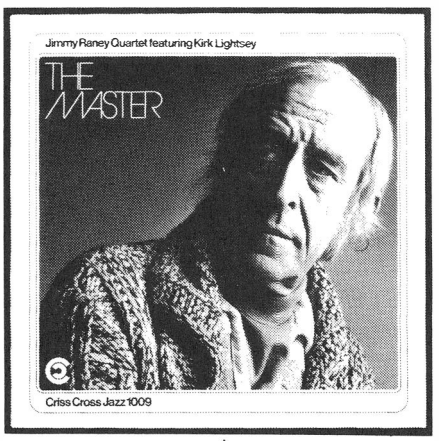

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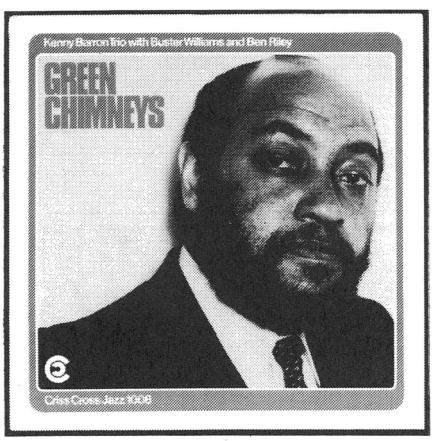

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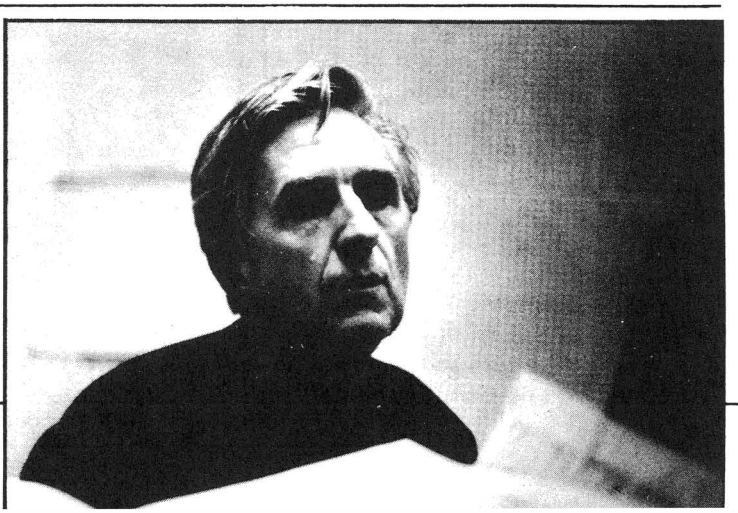
CODA MAGAZINE debates the recurring question — Are The Big Bands Back? Features will include — Gil Evans, Count Basie/Thad Jones, Duke Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie, Artie Shaw/Dick Johnson — and much much more in Issue 205.
The deadline for "Critics Choice," our contributors' selections of the 10 best records of 1985, is January 1, 1986.



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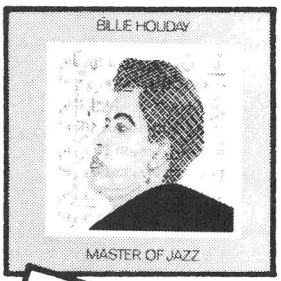

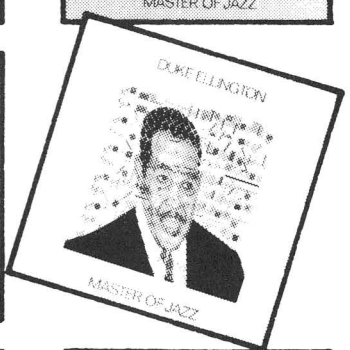

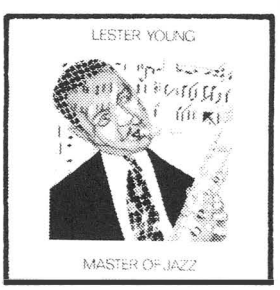

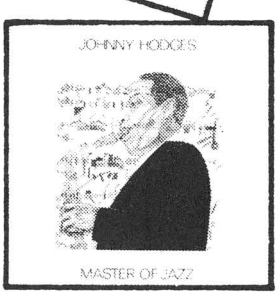

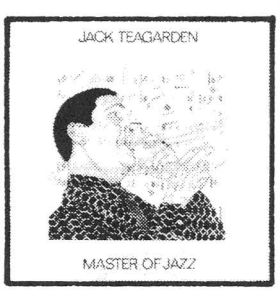

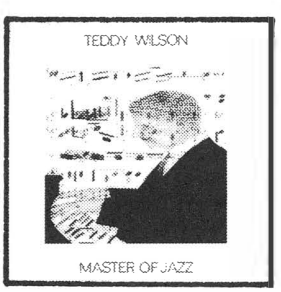

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COLEMAN HAWKINS

IN THE BEGINNING, THERE WAS THE HAWK.....

The history books tell us that the father of the saxophone was a nineteenth century French gentleman known as Adolphe Sax. That may be so, but the man who made it sing was born some years later, around the turn of the century, in St. Joseph, Missouri. His name is Coleman Hawkins.

A short and intense black man, the "Bean", as he came to be called, made an exciting entrance into the burgeoning New York scene while still a teenager in 1922 as part of Mamie Smith's Jazz Hounds. Soon he was spending all of his spare time gigging uptown in Harlem speakeasies, making music through many a frenetic night. Within a year, he was asked to join Fletcher Henderson's big band. "Smack's" group made up the first jazz orchestra. Beside Hawkins and the piano playing Henderson, there were many extraordinary players, notably Don Redman, reedsman and innovative arranger, and Howard Scott, trumpeter. This early Henderson ensemble played at the Club Alabam until the summer of 1924 when Hawkins refused to play specialty numbers for a headliner, Edith Wilson, unless he was paid extra. Hawkins was fired and Henderson handed in his own resignation. The band reformed at the Roseland Ballroom, a bigger and better venue where they reigned as the leading big band for the rest of the 1920s.

In the fall of 1924, the Henderson band was graced with the presence of the man who was in the process of changing the nature of jazz, Louis Armstrong. From a rough-and-ready folk ensemble, Armstrong's sure musical sense and pioneering talent led Henderson's band into the more difficult region of orchestrating exciting soloists into a collective group sound. Armstrong's solos for Henderson were clear musical statements, purposeful and emotive. They inspired the players around him to solo in a stronger, more coherent manner than had been heard heretofore in jazz. Hawkins was particularly impressed. He rapidly learned to play with stiff reeds and customized mouthpieces in order to create the big tone which became his personal signature. In an effort to catch up with Satchmo, the Hawk began to create expressive solos on the tenor saxophone.

An accomplished musician in his own right, Henderson was only too pleased to go along with the band's internal growth. His arrangements and those of his brother, Horace Henderson, and Don Redman became more complex. New and exciting soloists joined the band, among them the trumpet playing Smith brothers, Joe and Russell, the clarinetist Buster Bailey, trombonist Jimmy Harrison and the multi-talented Benny Carter. Armstrong left the band but Hawkins remained as the group's leading star.

Hawkins, in this period, was at that exciting stage when an artist has just begun to discover his voice. The tone and blazing rapidity of his approach to a solo were already apparent. A knowledge of the piano from his youth gave Hawkins a profound understanding of the use of chord changes that contributed to a maturation of his style. As any youthful virtuoso must do, Hawkins fell into patterns of expression that seem now to be brittle and mechanical. At his best, however, in pieces such as *One Hour* with the Mound City Blue Blowers in 1929 and *Hocus Pocus* with the 1934 Fletcher Henderson band, he is brilliantly effective as a balladeer and as an up-tempo performer.

Coleman Hawkins played with the Fletcher Henderson band for over a decade. Much of that time was spent in the joyful pursuit of music, camaraderie and merriment. This was the Jazz Age and Smack's band enjoyed it to the fullest. Drummer Kaiser Marshall recalled the late nights he spent played pinochle or poker with Bean and his great buddy, Jimmy Harrison. A jam session often broke out with, for example, Jack Teagarden on piano, Jimmy on trombone, Hawkins playing tenor and Marshall on a rubber-pad for rhythm. "Then Hawkins would play piano, Jack and Jimmy trombone. My, what fun we had! Of course we brought home, in my car, twelve bottles of beer, some wine, whiskey, ice cream, cake, barbecue ribs, and some chittlins, to make our morning complete." Hawk evidenced a great appetite for life's pleasures. Trumpeter Rex Stewart tried to match Hawk in the eating department, gaining almost forty pounds before giving it up. Hawkins' interest in the ladies was also well known as was his love for fast cars.

For all of his appreciation for the high life, Hawkins' primary pleasure remained playing the saxophone. During this period, Hawk was the King – and he was quite willing to take on all challengers to the throne. Trombone player Dicky Wells wrote vividly about the late night cutting sessions at the Hoofer's Club on 132nd and Seventh in Harlem where musicians would be invited to a "Saxophone Supper" by formal invitation. "Hawk would always come by the session whether it was Saxophone Supper or not.... You knew he'd come to carve somebody."

Like any gunslinger, Hawkins had to meet his match one day. Early in 1934, the Henderson band stopped over in Kansas City. The Hawk had heard about the great cutting sessions that took place at the Cherry Blossom, a club which was located at the famous corner of Twelfth Street and Vine. He arrived after midnight ready to do battle with Kaycee's best. As usual, his machine gun-like attack, huge tone and virile style were enough to silence most of the other tenor players. But this was Kansas City and three men found that they could keep up with the Hawk – Herschel Evans, Ben Webster and Lester Young. Pianist Mary Lou Williams would often recollect in later days being awakened by Ben Webster, at 4 a.m., saying " 'Get up, pussycat, we're jamming and all the pianists are tired out now. Hawkins has got his shirt off and is still blowing...' Sure enough, when I got there, Hawkins was in his singlet, taking turns with the Kaycee men... When at last he gave up, he got straight in his car and drove to St. Louis. I heard he'd just bought a new Cadillac and he burnt it out trying to make the [next Henderson] job on time." Although most observors of that famous night feel that Hawkins was merely equalled, not bettered, his rule as undisputed tenor saxophone king was over.

So was the high life with Smack's band. Fletcher Henderson's Orchestra had run into financial problems. Before the band officially broke up, Hawkins left for Europe. He spent more than five years there, playing with numerous aggregations in England, France, Holland, Switzerland, Belgium and Sweden. While he was away, Rex Stewart recalled, his legend grew. "Hawk, it was rumored, had a chalet in Switzerland and was retired; another story had a certain Spanish countess committing sucide over the loss of his affections. The most-repeated rumor was that Coleman had decided to live out

the rest of his life abroad, rather than return to Jim Crow." Although the forces of racism must have been quite repugnant to a dignified man like Hawkins, the armed minions of Fascism must have seemed the greater threat. In July 1939, Hawkins returned to the States.

While he was away, Hawkins had continued his musical maturation. As always, he played with many different musicians in a wide variety of musical showcases. For a time he was the featured performer in Jack Hylton's Orchestra, then a prestigious English band. In 1937, the Hawk took part in a great recording session organized by guitarist Django Reinhardt and featuring arrangements by another Henderson alumnus, Benny Carter. The set produced four recordings, two of which are classics – *Crazy Rhythm* and *Out Of Nowhere*. In the first, Hawk simply takes off and at the group's urging blows two outstanding choruses of swinging saxophone soloing. *Out Of Nowhere* is an evocative ballad redolent of that sweetly sad epoch when the world knew that it would soon be plunged back into war. Hawkins' solo again creates the climax to the piece, building a feeling of loss and regret that is as heartfelt as it is remarkable for its restraint.

Back in the Big Apple, the Hawk approached his comeback to his native land with a sense of drama. He went to Puss Johnson's, the hottest after-hours joint in Harlem, for weeks listening for what the musicians had learned in his absence. He would later recall that "I was surprised, you know, 'cos... I thought by the time I came back, the musicians here would be much more advanced. But they were just like when I left..." One night he arrived while Lester Young was playing with Billie Holiday. The Hawk joined in and when the set was over proceeded to astound the late night crowd – consisting mainly of working musicians – with his virtuosity. He blew everyone off the stage, amazing even "Prez", Don Byas and Chu Berry with his deeper, richer sound, rapid articulation and profound grasp of chord progressions.

By the fall of 1939, Hawkins was leading a band at Kelly's Stables on 52nd Street. With Billie Holiday as the other major act, Kelly's became *the* spot on the street that never slept. In November, Hawkins went into the studio and recorded – at the producer's insistence – a three minute version of the number that he was featuring as a long late-night favorite at Kelly's Stables, *Body And Soul*. To Hawkins' surprise, it became the biggest hit of his career. Hawkins himself asked, "Where is the melody? There ain't no real melody in the whole piece!" Hawkins' arrangement was frankly experimental, using flattened fifths and diminished

chords, devices rarely heard in jazz before the bebop era. What made *Body And Soul* so successful was that Hawkins' style had reached full fruition. The rhetorical flourishes that used to embellish his ballads now served as the basis of his approach to the piece. His extrapolation of the chord progressions inherent in the work are made powerfully moving by the full-bodied tonalities that he could now wrest from his instrument. The speed and sureness of Hawkins' musical notions here serve to express the meanings suggested by this torch ballad.

Seizing on his new-found success, Hawkins formed his own big band, which played New York ballrooms for the next year and a half. By 1943, he was back to leading small combos, mainly around 52nd Street. In 1944, Coleman Hawkins led the first bebop recording, featuring himself, Dizzy Gillespie, Clyde Hart and Max Roach. Due to his propensity for "running changes", Bean fit in with the boppers. He used Monk and Miles Davis in his band at various times. Unlike Satchmo, who put down the new sounds as "Chinese music", Hawk enjoyed the new style of jazz. "They say what Monk and Dizzy and Bird were doing was so different. Well, whatever they were doing they did great, and whatever they did I liked, and I had no trouble sitting in with them", commented Hawkins in later years. To use Dizzy's phrase, the Hawk was no "mouldy fig."

Throughout the 1950s, Coleman Hawkins participated in many of the Jazz at the Philharmonic tours. He played in Europe quite often and appeared at the "Seven Ages of Jazz" series in Toronto (and other Canadian spots). Quite often, he led a band with Roy Eldridge, although he was variously featured with Monk, Coltrane and Ellington.

To the end, Coleman Hawkins was a dedicated improvising musician. His credo might be summed in his statement, "Romanticism and sorrow and greed - they can all be put into music. I can definitely recognize greed. I know when a man is playing for money".

A cool, dedicated individual, proud in his music and his actions, Coleman Hawkins remains one of the intransigent individuals of jazz. An image of him remains from a late 50s short called "After Hours". Hawkins is in his favorite environment, playing jazz late at night with a quintet partnered by Eldridge. He reaches the end of his chorus, Eldridge picks up his horn to play – and Hawkins decides to keep on blowing. "Little Jazz" stares, amazed at the camera, looking for the director to halt the proceedings. But Hawk swings on, until he's finished his chorus and his musical thought. He just had to let Eldridge and everyone know that the Bean was still the Boss.

– Marc Glassman

COLEMAN HAWKINS & ROY ELDRIDGE (Photograph by Len Dobbin)

SAHIB SHIHAB

FROM AN INTERVIEW BY ROLAND BAGGENAES

This interview with Sahib Shihab was done on July 30, 1984. I don't find it necessary to add much to Sahib's own words about his previous and present achievements during more than 45 years in jazz. I would like, however, to thank Sahib and his wife, Maiken, for their patience and hospitality.

I always liked music and wanted to play an instrument. In the beginning I was very lazy and wanted to find an instrument I could play lying down. My mother bought me a saxophone but you couldn't play that lying down so that was the end of that dream. I had a teacher, Elmer Snowden, who used to play guitar with Duke Ellington, but who also played the saxophone; I had him as a tutor for about three years.

I was still in school in upstate New York when I had to go south to bury my mother, who died around that time and I stayed for about a year in Savannah, Georgia, working with Larry Noble and his band. When I came back to finish school I was around sixteen or seventeen years old and I joined Buddy Johnson's big band. Buddy had a singer who made a tune that because quite popular; I think it was called ***Baby, Don't You Cry***. This was during the war and the singer got drafted, and as I was the only one who could imitate his sound I got up there singing.

From Buddy Johnson I went to Fletcher Henderson. I think I joined him in Chicago. That was my first experience playing lead alto and it scared the pants off me, because it was the first time I ever saw so many sharps... all these sharps! But I made it and I wound up making advances very quickly. At that time there were so many places in Chicago to play, like Club DeLisa and the Rhumboogie. Chicago was also where I began getting some experience conducting a band. Then Roy Eldridge was working in a place called the El Grotto club, and as he was going back to New York I joined his band because I wanted to get back to New York.

In New York I played with a lot of bands at the Apollo Theater. You know Art Blakey, before the small bands he had the original Jazz Messengers, which was seventeen pieces and a heck of a band. But it was hard to keep a band of that size together because of the economic situation, and the guys began to leave because there wasn't enough work. Tadd Dameron had a band at the Royal Roost in New York with Shadow Wilson on drums, Curley Russell on bass, Tadd of course on piano, John Collins on guitar, Miles Davis on trumpet, J.J. Johnson on trombone, Cecil Payne on baritone, myself on alto and a tenor player from Brooklyn, Ray Abrams. When I worked with Tadd I first met Harry Belafonte. He was singing that type of balladeer thing, and we never thought he would make it because he sounded too quiet, and people like to hear something boisterous or something manly like Billy Eckstine.

During that time, the late 1940s, people began to recognize artists like Thelonious Monk. When I first played with Monk he fascinated me. Something about his music was hypnotic, and he created an atmosphere of his own where he would go. He was so advanced mentally that a lot of times he would get in trouble with the police because he would say things that were so completely out, according to their way of thinking, that they couldn't understand him and would say he was crazy. Monk's music was complex. It was out of the norm and everything out of the norm is always complex when you first see or hear it, but you have to give it a chance, and once you sit down and look at it you find out it fits. I understood the man and when we recorded I always considered him as just another cat. I mean, you play the music and if it isn't right you play it again to get it right. He was straight to the point and I enjoyed working with him. He was beautiful, because he would also rely on the other person's intelligence. I also found his way of playing the piano very amusing. He was an act and kept me laughing all the time. Most of his dancing he did over here in Europe. A lot of musicians learned from Monk because he was so unconventional. As for myself, I learned a lot harmonically; he opened my mind up to experimentation. I don't remember hearing Monk play the same thing twice. Monk was a genius. I think I was with him, on and off, for about a year. Idrees [Sulieman] was there too.

Then it was Art Blakey and his small group and other groups. Living in New York I made a lot of recordings with different people. I was musical director for Dakota Staton for a couple of years and I was with Illinois Jacquet — a strong cat who is still playing good — for another two years, I think. I travelled a lot with Illinois and it was while I was with him that I came to Europe for the first time. Coleman Hawkins and Sarah Vaughan were also on that tour. I have really been in good company all my life.

Working with Dizzy Gillespie was another beautiful experience. I don't know how he got his name but it fitted him. He was beautiful, a heck of a showman and he could play! Working with him you would be so fascinated by his playing that you would feel like a customer. And Dizzy had a sense of wit that carried him through, and he took care of business much better than a lot of other people. I also worked with Charlie Parker on a few occasions and he was the one who told me to go on and play my horn no matter what. I remember one time I was with Art Blakey. We had to make some extra money and we would give dances on Sunday afternoons up in the Bronx. We would select a star as an attraction, and this particular time Charlie Parker was supposed to play with us. Among the members of that band were Monk, Art Blakey, Ray Copeland, Cecil Payne or Leo Parker on baritone, and I played the alto. We were supposed to start at three o'clock and people were there wanting to hear Bird, who hadn't shown up. At three-thirty Bird still wasn't there. What happened to Bird? But we started playing and fifteen minutes later we looked up and there was Bird coming in and getting up on the stage. "I'm not gonna read no music," he said, and I told him that I would read the music and when it was time for him to solo I would give him a sign. Bird tore the house down, and naturally — New York being what it is — the audience wanted to hear an alto battle, and I didn't know what to play behind Bird. He looked at me and said, "Shihab, all you can play is what you know." And that's what I did and people accepted it and Bird too.

The late '40s and the early '50s was a fantastic period. Birdland was there, Bebop City, Basin Street... all those places. So much was happening in New York. A fantastic era... rich, rich, rich. Unfortunately so many of the musicians died as very young men. Somebody said that's the trouble with getting old — that all your friends die. But if that's the case then I think you have to make some new friends.

John Coltrane is another giant I played with. I recorded just one date with Coltrane for Prestige, but every time I go back to the States I run across someone who remembers that recording. It was a certain passage I played on the baritone that stays with people. That same year, 1957, I also worked with Coltrane in Art Blakey's big band, and I could hear what kind of musician he was.

I met Quincy Jones before I worked with him. I came in contact with Quincy around 1959 through Jerome Richardson about the show, "Free And Easy", that Quincy was putting together to take to Europe. Quincy was arranging Harold Arlen's music and it was kind of an experiment incorporating musicians on stage with the actors. We were going to act too, we had costumes and everything and it was fantastically done. The music was great. We rehearsed in Brussels and because we had to act also, we had to memorize all the music — and it was a two and a half hour show. It took a lot of rehearsing but we made it. I don't think I'll ever be able to do anything like that again. The show had a Sportin' Life type of theme and many of the scenes took place around race tracks and clubs incorporating that 1920s milieu: call girls, jockeys, play boys, pimps and racketeers. We performed in Holland and France. The last place we played was in Paris where the show folded — because of bad management, I think it was. We had a band meeting to find out what to do and we knew that if we went back to the States we would be out of work so we might as well stay over here which we did. In order to keep the band together I think Quincy went into 65,000 dollars of debt. He was asked some years later if he was going to put a big band together again and he answered, "If I do, shoot me!" In general, the show was well received because it was a new thing and if it had ever gotten to New York it would have played a long time there.

Another person I want to mention is Walter Gil Fuller, a fantastic man. I trusted him and he taught me a lot — not just about music. He was such a business-minded man and I started selling real estate with him, I got myself a real

SAHIB SHIHAB (Photograph by Jorgen Bo)

estate license because of him. I learned a lot from that guy but now I can never find him. People used to put him down because he had so much upstairs, so much knowledge....

The first saxophone player I listened to was Willie Smith who was with the Jimmy Lunceford band, a marvelous band. I like Willie Smith's playing and the way he would lead a section. Benny Carter was another influence but on baritone I had no influence because I started playing it by chance. Diz had this baritone player, Bill Graham, and he was going to leave and I told Diz I had no baritone so he said, "Buy Bill Graham's" which I did and that's how I started on baritone. At that time of course Bird and Diz were my strongest influences musically, that style. Right now, today, I play more alto than anything else with Ernie Wilkins. I like to play alto in a section, I like to lead, but as far as solo work is concerned I like the baritone. It takes a certain type of mentality to play alto, to play it right and I don't know if I have that. I like to play the baritone because I have been able to do with the baritone something I haven't heard anybody else do, even people like Harry Carney. I like to produce a sound that I can stand myself. When you listen to Duke's band you could always tell that Harry Carney was there. He had a particular sound but to me that sound wasn't soft enough. On the other hand, Gerry Mulligan's sound is too soft, too light. There was another baritone player, Leo Parker, who had a good sound. I like what he did and I like what Cecil Payne is doing. I think that a baritone shouldn't be harsh, it should be something that you can hear without putting your fingers in your ears.

I'm beginning to go more and more to the States and I'm hoping to get a grant from the government, from the National Endowment for the Arts, and if I get that I'll go over there and do whatever I have to do for the grant. Twenty years ago I wrote a ballet based on Hans Christian Andersen's "The Red Shoes", a jazz ballet. I submitted excerpts of that toward getting this grant, and if it comes through I would like to reproduce that in the States and I would like to use Max Roach's daughter's group. Maxine belongs to a group called The Uptown String Quartet and I would like to work with them and some of the other musicians over there. The ballet was performed here in Denmark.

I came to Europe for the first time in 1954 and it made such an impression on me that I wanted to go back and stay because it was hard for me to believe that people could be so nice; I thought that maybe they were just nice because they knew that I was only here for a minute... It was five years later I came back with Quincy. After the show I told you about, Quincy got some more work over here and we made a tour of Sweden too. I was sitting with the others — I will never forget this, it was in Paris, in April — and the guys told me to get up and catch the plane, to get out to the airport.... and I just said bye and decided I was going to stay right there. I stayed in Paris for a little while and then went to Sweden and after two and a half years in Sweden I came down to Denmark and I've been here ever since — more than twenty years. When I came working conditions were good. Things were happening and I was new — I hadn't become a local. I started writing here in Denmark, composing, which I hadn't done much of in the States. When I first came here I worked with the Radio Jazz Group and with some other groups. Oscar Pettiford was here, Niels-Henning was a teenager then but playing great, and I played a lot down there at the old Montmartre and at Vingaarden. Around the time I came to Denmark I ran into Gigi Campi of Cologne and he wanted a baritone player for the small group they had — called The Golden Eight or something like that — with Kenny Clarke, Francy Boland and Benny Bailey. The band grew and became what was known as the Clarke-Boland Big Band. It was a fantastic band and I worked with it for about ten years, the longest I ever worked with a group of people. And Campi was the first impresario I met who treated musicians in the right way. I always stayed in contact with him and actually I just finished doing a project called Music Unlimited but in the meantime he was working on a project — I don't know how he came into it — with the Pope. As a young priest the Pope wrote poems and now recently the Vatican gave him the rights to have music put to these poems. He took about ten of them and gave them to the Italian composer Tito Fontana, who does a lot of music for theatres and stuff like that in Milan. To put music to the Pope's poems was a very difficult job because the Pope's poetry is more like prose. But Fontana wrote the music and he got Sarah Vaughan as one of the vocalists and a fellow named Bernard Ighner as another. Now, Bernard Ighner was the one who wrote ***Everything Must Change***; I think it is his most popular song. Francy Boland orchestrated the music, Tito Fontana and Sante Palumbo wrote the music, Gene Lees did the English adaptations of the poems and Sarah and Bernard did the singing, plus we had six voices from England and the strings and woodwinds of the Rundfunk Symphony Orchestra conducted by Lalo Shifrin ***and*** a big band consisting of 22 musicians. We recorded the work for TV in Dusseldorf, West Germany, a few weeks ago and I think it was a success. By the way, I did all the copy work which was a lot of work because the music was orchestrated for 72 pieces. At this point the tape is being mixed and the record should be out sometime this fall.

Now I'm more interested in writing than I am in playing. There's so much I would like to do and I'm in contact with some boss composers like Quincy and Thad Jones and Ernie Wilkins. I can get the same satisfaction out of trying to put something on paper and imagine what it will sound like. It's a feeling that's difficult to explain. My plans for the future.... well, the two projects I have told you about: the ballet music and the Pope project as I call it. We're supposed to go to Brazil and Argentina with a handful of the key men in the band and pick up symphony players wherever we go. And that has to be coordinated with Sarah and Lalo. I have an equal amount of interest in both projects because the Pope has a message. He is a good man and part of his message is incorporated in his poems. Working with this project and being a part of it was a beautiful feeling and a lot of labor was going into it. The work is titled "One World, One Peace." Apropos for the times we live in... Like we're ready to blow up the whole thing. I think it has a good message and I think it will help also because I saw the reaction of the people down in Dusseldorf.

I listen to the young musicians of today but a lot of it isn't jazz. They're playing — I don't know what you want to call it, Johnny Griffin calls it march music. I listen to it and if it's good and it moves me, I don't care what label you put on it. I think a lot of folk tunes are beautiful so I mean, there's only one type of music and that's good music — bad music, forget about it. I don't like to stay in just one vein. I've worked with so many different musicians and in so many musical contexts and I can play all of that stuff, you know. Free jazz is the only thing I don't particularly care for. I feel that in order to be free you have to know what freedom is — otherwise you don't know what you're doing. When I first picked up the saxophone I didn't know what I was doing — that was when it was free jazz! But after going to school and learning what it was all about... I think those guys are just playing protest music; to me it doesn't make much sense. I think that Bird was so advanced that they haven't caught up to him yet and after him came Coltrane; I think that type of music will outlast this century — if not more.

Aggressive, controversial, and unknowingly revolutionary, Sonny Rollins taught a whole school of jazz musicians how to play. Accompanied only by a drum set and bass, blatting out notes as if they were epithets, shouting out solos as if they were drawn out harangues, Rollins, at the age of twenty-five, introduced the world to what came to be called "Hard-Bop." Of his sound, the *New Yorker* in 1957 said "There's something almost repellent about his playing, for his bleak, ugly tone is... rarely qualified by the gracefulness of a vibrato or by the use of dynamics." But of his promise, the same magazine said: "Rollins is perhaps the most incisive and influential instrumentalist since Charlie Parker."

Sonny Rollins · Tenor Madness

Sonny Rollins' talent, his early contact with important jazzmen, and the immediate support he received from the jazz establishment all contributed to his quick rise to prominence in the late fifties. Rollins initially had a hard time adjusting to this prominence, however. He was unwilling, perhaps because of modesty but more likely because of extreme self-criticism, to accept the acclaim he justly received. His contribution to modern jazz remains significant, nonetheless. That he made as much of an impact as he did, and that he did it as a very young man, is a tribute to his unusual natural talent.

Rollins grew up in the Bronx, an area rich in jazz traditions and influence. Coleman Hawkins, Charlie Parker, and Bud Powell all lived and performed near the Rollins' family home. While still in his teens, Sonny made the rounds of New York's nightclubs watching these jazzmen carefully as they developed Bebop and made it the new voice of jazz. Not surprisingly, it was Hawkins' sound ("... his conception, the way he was able to play changes") that led Sonny Rollins to switch from alto to tenor saxophone.

Rollins was sufficiently talented even still in high school to start playing professionally in clubs and at parties in and around New York City. This early gigging brought him to the attention of several important jazzmen. One early influence was Charlie Parker.

"I heard Bird first on record and then I began to see him in the early 40's at a lot of sessions on 52nd street" said Rollins. "Bird made a deep impression on me on tenor. I heard him playing it very seldom, but his ideas, his drive, the way he could create moved me very much." Parker, later, would encourage Rollins who, by his own admission became "a young wild kid, running around not knowing what was happening," to commit himself to his music and trust his own instincts: "I remember asking Bird once about some changes, whether they were right for a certain song. Bird answered that whatever I heard was right. What he meant was that if you can hear at all, you should be able to hear what's right; and if you can't hear, you won't make it anyway."

At eighteen, Rollins came under the influence of Thelonious Monk. "Monk is a teacher with a different way of shaping and voicing chords" said Rollins, with some understatement, after rehearsing with Monk for several months in 1948. As Monk's influence began to show itself in his sense of form in long improvisation, Sonny began to earn recognition as a prominent new force in jazz.

It was in 1948, for example, that Sonny made his first recording, with Babs Gonzales, and began fronting his own small combos in several New York area nightclubs. In 1949 he recorded with Bud Powell and Fats Navarro, and in 1951 he began a working relationship with Miles Davis.

Between 1951 and 1954, Sonny recorded with many of the stars of the burgeoning Bebop movement: Parker (though the recording was never released), Monk, Miles Davis, Horace Silver, Kenny Clarke, Bud Powell, and the newly formed Modern Jazz Quartet. He also wrote three of his best known compositions: *Oleo, Doxy* and *Airegin*.

In 1954, however, Rollins went to Chicago for a club date and decided to stay on, avoid performing altogether, and study music while working as a day laborer. Thus began the first of Sonny's famous "sabbaticals": he withdrew from the music scene and worked at improving his technique, tone, and style. A year later, when Rollins returned to jazz as a member of the Max Roach - Clifford Brown Quartet, he began the most important period of his career.

Of Charlie Parker, Rollins once said: "After I understood what he was doing I realized it was a combination of everything up to that point, plus himself. He added something without taking away from anything that came before." Upon his return from self-exile in Chicago, Sonny effectively did the same. He retained in his music the standard Bebop framework and instrumentation that Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Lester Young and others developed, but he added to it a solo style unlike anything anyone had ever heard before. By the late fifties, this solo style made Rollins the leading tenor saxophonist in jazz.

By 1956, Rollins had recorded two of the most important lp's of his career: "Saxophone Colossus," and "Way Out West." On these lp's, Sonny's solo style was, excitingly, diametrically opposed to the cool style most tenor saxophonists were using in their improvisations at that time. The solos were hot, vehement, and aggressive; they exhibited Sonny's newly found, and extremely individualistic technical prowess; and they demonstrated a developing sardonic wit that involved contrasts, leaps without transition from smooth languid phrases to hot exasperated cries, to amazing effect.

Although his style did foreshadow the chaotic soloing of free jazz, Rollins' work in the late fifties was still that of an orderly, thoughtful improvisor. Gunther Schuller, the respected jazz critic, identified a wide variety of sophisticated compositional devices – "thematic variaton, diminution, repetition, and motivic elision" – in Rollins' solo in *Blue Seven*, from the "Saxophone Colossus" album. These devices, Schuller felt, lent Rollins' solo "great structural cohesion" and led Schuller to characterize Rollins as a thematic improvisor, one who constructs solos around central musical phrases or moods in order to make the solos become more than just strings of unrelated musical ideas.

With his concern for content as well as form in improvisation, Rollins joined an elite group of jazz musicians commited to musical development and change. Rollins, Miles Davis, Thelonious Monk, and Lenny Tristano were but a few of the musicians who constantly challenged themselves to produced a better sound. Their efforts gradually created the jazz avant-garde.

Not surprisingly, the members of this group became quite influential and Sonny Rollins was no exception. His bossy, imaginative style made him, according to

Down Beat in 1956, "the first major influence on a significant number of young tenors since the Stan Getz of the late 40's and early 50's." A number of notable saxophonists show Rollins' influence, among them Charlie Rouse, Yusef Lateef, Hank Mobley, Phil Urso, and, early in their careers, John Coltrane, and Dexter Gordon. Sonny's reputation as the leader of the new Hard-Bop movement was made when in 1957 *Down Beat*'s Critics Poll named him new star player of the year.

It is important to remember that Rollins experienced all of these honors while still in his mid-twenties. When he really hit national prominence in 1955, Rollins had only just turned twenty-five. At that time, adulation seemed to him an embarrassing, burdensome surprise.

In a 1956 interview with Nat Hentoff, Rollins expressed his reservations about being the leader of the new Hard-Bop school of jazz sax: "I don't dig this being an influence. I'm not trying to put myself down or anything. Being considered an influence admittedly is more of a challenge because people look to me to produce. But that bugs me, too, because I really don't feel I'm as great as they think I am... I've got a lot of work still to do, a lot of work... I know what I want. I can hear it. But it will take time and study to get it."

This interview may confirm what many jazz writers have already suspected, that Sonny's sabbaticals resulted from extreme self-criticism and a futile pursuit of unreproachable perfection. Actually, many things may have conspired to make Rollins' stay at the top a problematic one.

The solo style that brought Rollins into the limelight, for example, may well have contributed to the unease he felt in staying there. Thematic improvisation demands much more conscious decision-making on the part of the soloist than does improvisation guided purely by instinct; the pressure Sonny placed on himself to *compose* his solos and "produce," perfectly, every time probably became a frustrating burden. Nevertheless, undoubtedly it was this idealistic commitment to perfection that enabled Sonny to make as important a contribution to jazz as he did.

One can still hear the urgency and power of Sonny's early sound in the music he plays now, but today his sound is tempered by an awareness of the marketplace, and perhaps, of human limitation. He has not grown stodgy or complacent with maturity, nor has he lost any of his ambition or drive. As Sonny said recently: "There's still an idea of Sonny Rollins' playing which I haven't gotten to yet.... I'm still reaching."

– *Scott A. Jones*

THE TENOR SAXOPHONE

The saxophone was a latecomer to jazz. The early giants played trumpet (or cornet), clarinet and trombone. Those were the glamorous horns in New Orleans while the saxophone was only used in an anciliary way to fill out the ensemble in larger ensembles, parade bands and society orchestras.

By the mid-thirties, all this had changed. By then Coleman Hawkins, Johnny Hodges and Benny Carter had become masterful performers on their instruments and had resolved the technical difficulties which had faced them when they first explored the possibilities of the instruments. In time the tenor saxophone was to become *the* major instrument (or voice) in jazz music. It was ideally suited to the music. It had a wide range – touching both the alto and baritone – and this could be extended further through false fingering and tonguing. These devices, invented by jazz musicians, made the instrument into an extraordinarily versatile vehicle for the tonal individuality of so many musicians.

COLEMAN HAWKINS paved the way. Even in his earliest recordings with Fletcher Henderson there was this hugeness of sound. At that time he hadn't fully mastered the mechanics of the instrument or found artistic expressiveness (only Louis Armstrong had already reached that pinnacle). Artistic maturity came during his stay in Europe in the latter half of the 1930s where he was treated with respect and admiration. He responded by becoming much more than an outstanding musician – he became a major artist.

His career, after his return to the U.S., was subject to the whims of changing taste which continually erode the talent of America's greatest artists. They are used up by the industry as so much raw material to be squeezed dry and then discarded. By the 1950s Coleman Hawkins was in eclipse. His music was considered old fashioned at a time when he was at the height of his powers. The evidence of this can be heard in **Jazz Tones (Xanadu 195)**, a recently issued repackage of all the material he recorded for the Jazztone Society in 1954. Five of the selections (*If I Had You, Ain't Misbehavin', Cheek To Cheek, Undecided* and *Honeysuckle Rose*) are Hawkins with the rhythm section (Billy Taylor, Milt Hinton, Jo Jones) while the remaining selections have Hawkins' favorite instrumentation of trumpet (Emmett Berry) and trombone (Eddie Bert) added to the mercurial sound of his tenor sax. The repertoire is familiar but, at that time, not overdone standards from the swing lexicon. Only Shearing's *Lullaby Of Birdland* (which is written on standard changes) was a fresh melodic line. The stiffness of Eddie Bert's solos are the only weakness in an otherwise exceptional date. Emmett Berry's cleanly articulated and precisely swinging phrases are a marvelous foil for Hawkins. This date, along with a session for Riverside in 1957, used the same instrumentation and were the only real showcases before Norman Granz started to record Hawkins in a variety of settings (notably "Blue Saxophones" with Ben Webster). The classic date from this period of Hawkins' career remains **The High And The Mighty Hawk (Felsted/MJR)** where Hawkins' virtuosity was matched with Buck Clayton's equally imaginative ideas.

At Ease With Coleman Hawkins (OJC 181) is the first of five lps of ballad material recorded by Hawkins for Prestige's Moodsville label in the early 1960s. The music is restrained, but pretty, as befits the concept of the label. There are delightful solo moments from Tommy Flanagan while the richness of Hawkins' tenor is ideally suited to the material. I've always felt that **Make Someone Happy (Moodsville 31),** the last of these dates, was the one which stands out best. It's curious that Prestige would choose to reissue **At Ease** once again as it is still available as one half of **The Real Thing (Prestige 24083).**

Coleman Hawkins was a major influence on Chu Berry, Ben Webster and others who followed behind him. Only a few of these musicians are still performing. One of the best is **GEORGE KELLY** who finally gets a chance to properly display his talent in an album dedicated to **The Music Of Don Redman (Stash 240).** With his first solo on *Mickey Finn* you know that you are hearing a musician who makes powerful statements. His solo has all the swagger, brashness and aggressiveness which was part of the era when he grew up within the big bands. His tone has the fatness which marked Hawkins and his phrasing still owes something to his mentor but his playing has become more individual, more distinctive, since he first attracted attention when recording with Rex Stewart for Felsted in 1959. The extraordinary thing is that Kelly's career stretches back to the 1920s. He's a superb arranger and composer (listen to the charts played by Panama Francis' reactivated Savoy Sultans) and an excellent musician who never attracted the wide attention he deserved. Now in his late Sixties, he is enjoying an Indian Summer, if you will. This is his first worthwhile session to capture his abilities as performer and arranger – other recent sessions are marred with either inadequate production qualities or are in the company of inappropriate musicians. Even here there are shortcomings. Trumpeter Glenn Zattola (he doubles on alto saxophone) plays the ensemble parts with sensitivity but his lack of a definable style fills his solos with cliches. The rhythm section is smooth and to the point but seems unfamiliar with the nuances of Redman's compositions. Pianist Richard Wyands often works with George Kelly at New York's West End Cafe but his solos lack definition. Bucky Pizzarelli, George Duvivier and Butch Miles are consistently professional. But it is a major breakthrough for George Kelly. This lp and his cameo role in "Moscow On The Hudson" should make a difference.

BUDDY TATE, unlike George Kelly, got to play with one of the major jazz orchestras (Count Basie) and quickly established his reputation as a big toned tenor saxophonist of quality. Since leaving Basie in 1950 his career has blossomed and there are countless recordings now available by this amiable veteran. However, in the 1950s, he was in eclipse– just like Coleman Hawkins. He kept the faith, kept busy and developed musically by leading a band for more than a decade at Harlem's Celebrity Club. They were entertainers who kept the customers happy with the kind of dance music made famous by Basie and the other bands who worked the Savoy Ballroom. Artistic expression was coincidental to the job. All this changed when Buddy started to take work with Buck Clayton and began his schedule of worldwide travelling. In the early sixties he was a prominent performer for Prestige Records. There were three dates under his own name as well as sessions with Claude Hopkins and Buck Clayton. **Tate-A-Tate (OJC 184)** is a reissue of Swingville 2014. This long unavailable recording is an outstanding example of Tate's deeply drenched Texas blues style. The infinite variations possible on the blues are explored by the musicians (Clark Terry, Tommy Flanagan, Larry Gales, Art Taylor) and for good measure there's two Ellingtonian pieces as well (*All Too Soon, Take The A Train*). This is exciting and compatible music by performers who are assured and comfortable with what they do but can always be relied upon to find something fresh to say.

Both John Hardee and Ike Quebec

COLEMAN HAWKINS (Photograph by Paul Hoeffler)

were tenor saxophonists who made a mark for themselves in the 1940s. Both were heavily influenced by Coleman Hawkins and neither of them sustained their musical careers despite making solid recordings for Blue Note in those years. Now **The Complete Blue Note Forties Recordings of Ike Quebec and John Hardee (Mosaic MR4-107** - 197 Strawberry Hill Avenue, Stamford, CT 06902), have been made available in a deluxe boxed set. It includes unissued selections made avilable here for the first time and a booklet with extensive information on both players as well as being profusely illustrated with rare photographs. Sustaining a career in jazz is difficult at the best of times. Hardee eventually returned to Texas and a day job while Quebec continued working as a musician but was continually bedeviled by drug problems which kept him from the limelight as he chased any kind of job which provided money to support his habit.

Belatedly, therefore, we can now enjoy the music these men created. **JOHN HARDEE** has some of Illinois Jacquet's brusqueness to his tone but the key ingredient missing in his music is the forceful individuality which made others more successful. The three sessions documented here were made in 1946 and feature Hardee in front of a rhythm section. Tiny Grimes' guitar is the other solo voice of note at the first date while Trummy Young's trombone adds texture to the final date. Three unissued alternates complete the documentation of these sessions. The remainder appeared originally on 78s except for an alternate of *River Edge Rock* which was only issued a decade ago on Blue Note 6507.

IKE QUEBEC was leader at five Blue Note sessions spread between 1944 and 1946. Quebec, like Hardee, had some of Jacquet's aggressiveness in his way of phrasing – all of which comes back to Coleman Hawkins! Both these aspects of his playing can be heard in *Blue Turning Grey Over You*. At this time Quebec sounds more comfortable at slower tempos. The brighter numbers have a tendency to become little more than rhythmic exercises which do not remain etched in the listener's mind. The reality is that, for the most part, the musicians performing at these dates were not major creators. They played satisfyingly within the idiom but lacked the qualities to perform music which fully captures the imagination. Tiny Grimes, Jonah Jones, Tyree Glenn, Buck Clayton, Keg Johnson and Shad Collins all participate but only Clayton is a master jazz performer and the differences are noticeable immediately.

Collections such as this are invaluable in helping shape our perspective of different musicians. Blue Note, somehow, didn't have as much luck recording this generation of musicians as they did those who preceded them and those who followed. Ike Quebec, in fact, played a significant role in encouraging Lion and Wolff to record the pioneers of the next phase of the music (Monk, Navarro, Powell). Soon after that Blue Note concentrated all its efforts on that music and Ike Quebec didn't get to record again until 1959 even though he had remained in close contact with Blue Note's owners.

Three tenor saxophonists have really set the standards for all other players. First there was Coleman Hawkins and then Lester Young with his radically different conception. Tonally they were far apart and their rhythmic feeling was quite different. Hawkins bulldozed his way through the changes while Prez floated over them. Each was an unique master who gave an enormous vocabulary to the music – something which continues to be explored in many different ways. Musicians often utilise parts of each musician's heritage in developing their own conception. Others only succeed in parodying them. Only John Coltrane broke with this tradition in a really big way. Even then his harmonic explorations owe something to Hawkins in its intensity and weight. Certainly Coltrane added a completely fresh dialect to the vocabulary and it is one which is explored most frequently by saxophonists of the past two decades.

The leanness of **PAUL GONSALVES'** sound owes something to Lester Young even though he had worked hard at learning Ben Webster's repertoire. You can hear some of Webster's breathiness in *I Surrender Dear* on a recent reissue of **Gettin' Together (OJC 203** - originally Jazzland 936). Gonsalves, like Lucky Thompson, has an angularity to his phrasing which gives momentum to his music. It is most noticeable in medium or up tempos but his sensitivity is best displayed in ballads. He gets first rate support from Wynton Kelly, Paul Chambers and Jimmy Cobb and on five of the eight selections is joined in the solo spotlight by the articulate but unremarkable playing of cornetist Nat Adderley.

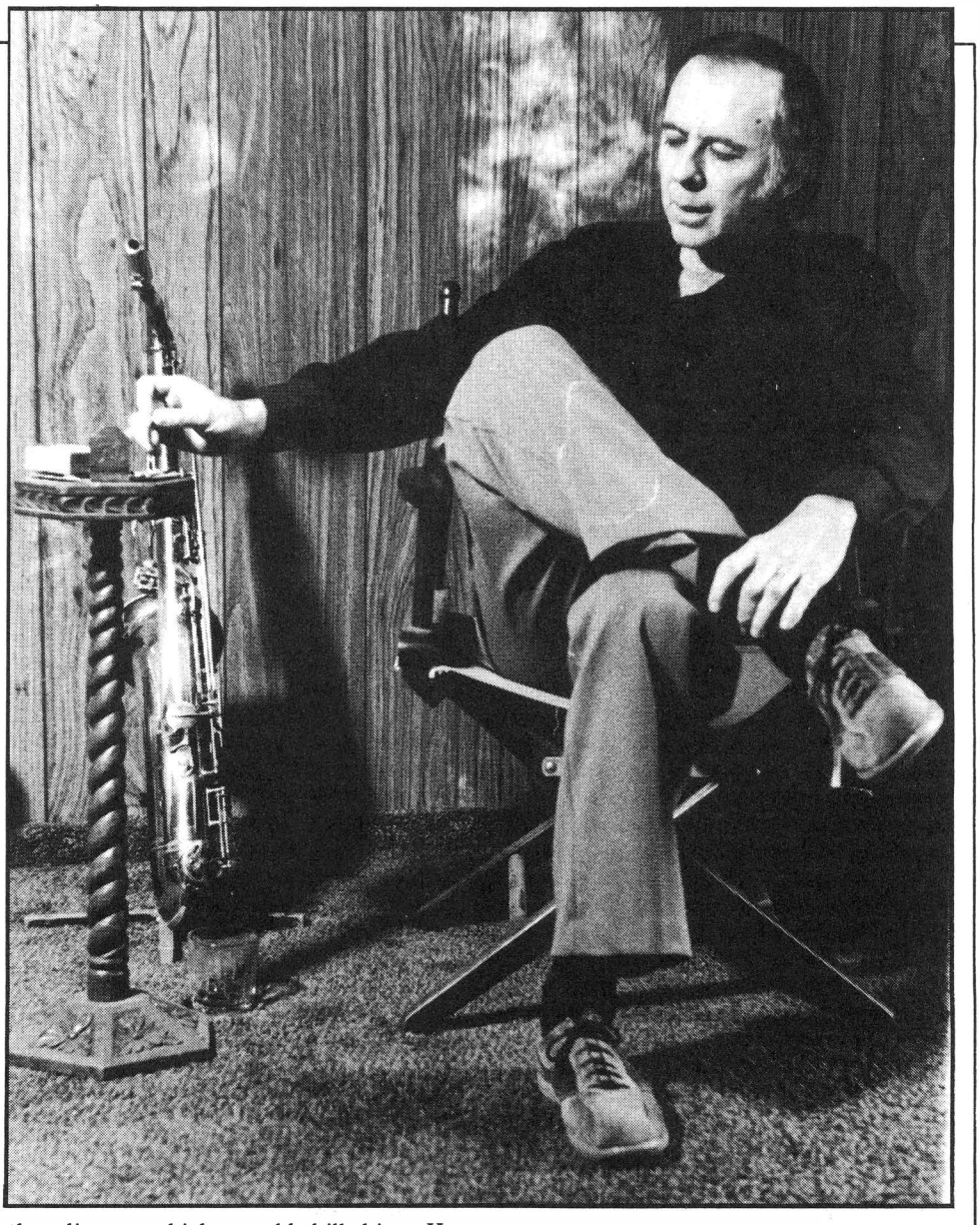
Perhaps because of his long association with Duke Ellington it was Paul Gonsalves' fate not to be adequately documented as a soloist. But it doesn't account for the suppression of a 1962 session with the

Ellington band where he soloed on all the band's familiar themes. As Duke said "This was going to be Paul Gonsalves' day." He crafts fresh and interesting solos on *C Jam Blues, Take The A Train, Happy Go Lucky Local, Jam With Sam, Caravan, Just A Sittin' And A Rockin', Paris Blues* and *Ready Go.*

Gonsalves rises to the occasion and is outstanding in *Happy Go Lucky Local* and *Just A Sittin'.* These two vehicles demonstrate particularly well his admirable qualities. Only missing is the kind of compositional originality with which Ellington characteristically showcased his soloists. Perhaps, ultimately, Paul Gonsalves' playing did not provoke Ellington's muse in this manner. Despite these observations this 1985 release of **Duke Ellington and his Orchestra featuring Paul Gonsalves (Fantasy 9636)** is an invaluable addition to the recorded works of both Gonsalves and Ellington.

Both **FRANK FOSTER** and **FRANK WESS** come from the same mold. Their stylistic sameness has become a trait of tenor saxophonists who have gone through the Basie band since the 1950s. The same is true of those who worked with Woody Herman. Each group of players found their own way to define the inheritance of Hawkins and Young (and Berry, Byas, Gray, Thompson and Webster). **Two For The Blues (Pablo 2310.905)** is the first recording in a while to feature both players together. Foster became involved with his big band and changed his stylistic allegiance to John Coltrane while Wess seemed to prefer the effete musicality of the New York Jazz Quartet. Here they return to their original roots and tackle blues vehicles (notably the well known title selection) and delightful standards. The arrangements are designed to highlight the swinging capabilities of both players and Wess brings an added dimension to the proceedings with his richly gilded alto saxophone sound and the ubiquitous flute. (*Your Beauty Is A Song Of Love* is a richly rewarding ballad in the Benny Carter mold). The rhythm section is first rate and Kenny Barron gets plenty of solo space. Rufus Reid and Marvin Smith create a cohesive, smooth flowing carpet for the music.

ZOOT SIMS, of all the saxophonists to come out of the rocket ship known as the "Herman Herd," was the one who found best the secret of jazz expression. He became a timeless interpreter of the jazz muse and could take a tune (as could Louis Armstrong, Johnny Hodges, Ben Webster and a few others) and turn it into a thing of beauty. Zoot recorded often in his later years and these recordings are now part of his legacy. **Quietly There (Pablo 2310.903)** was made in March of 1984 when Zoot was already sick from the disease which would kill him. He sounds beautiful playing a collection of Johnny Mandel tunes – but especially in *A Time For Love* where his control, the easy warmth of his sound and the sheer musicality of everything he plays is overwhelming. The magical qualities which made Lester Young so gorgeous somehow got passed through to Zoot and in albums such as this everything is delightfully in balance. The other musicians are along for the ride – it's all Zoot Sims here.



WARNE MARSH's link with Lennie Tristano seems to have hindered rather than helped his career. Tristano's intellectual examination of jazz music's fundamentals often diminished his communication with an audience. While beauty is in the eye (and ear) of the beholder, there is no doubt that the richness of colour or melody has a way of reaching many people. **A Ballad Album (Criss Cross 1007)** is long overdue. Here the delicate balance between sophisticated harmonic progressions and melodic statement is intertwined in such a manner that both musician and ordinary listener can respond to Marsh's interpretations of these outstanding standards. The way he returns *How High The Moon* to its original focus is brilliant and the same can be said of all the other songs. Lou Levy's piano playing is completely in tune with Marsh's sensibilities and they have made, between them, one of the great ballad records of our time. This record deserves a place alongside similar projects by John Coltrane and Art Tatum/Ben Webster.

Blues For A Reason (Criss Cross 1010) is yet another recent Warne Marsh date and, like the ballad album, was recorded in Holland. This time all the musicians are Americans and there is an assertive character to the music. Chet Baker shares the spotlight with Marsh and his solos are among the most fluent he has recorded in recent years (and there have been many of them!). Eddie Gladden and Cecil

WARNE MARSH (Photograph by Mark Weber)

McBee play with the kind of intensity one expects of them and it is interesting to hear the way in which Marsh and Baker float over the top. Hod O'Brien is harmonically attuned to the music but his solo work reveals little individuality. This recording has rewarding moments but it doesn't hold together in the same kind of way that the **Ballad** date does and it doesn't match Marsh's collaboration with Pete Christlieb a few years back (**Apogee - Warner 3236**).

A glimpse backward in time is offered in **Music For Prancing (Mode 125)**, a 1957 recording which has been reissued in a replica version by the folks at VSOP Records. It sounds as though the music was dubbed off an existing lp but the sound is clean except for some muddiness in the bottom end. Warne Marsh's musical approach has broadened and deepened since the time of this music. The material is a mixture of standards (*You Are Too Beautiful, Autumn In New York, Everything Happens To Me, It's All Right With Me*) and originals by Marsh and pianist Ronnie Ball. Marsh's distinctively nasal tone is present, of course, but the music proceeds without any real alterations or shadings of dynamic levels. Red Mitchell's bass lines run the changes in unrelenting cycles while Ronnie Ball comps continually and Stan Levey lays down an unobtrusive pulse. It's good to have this early example of Marsh's playing back in circulation but its impact is less than when it was first released.

The international spread of jazz has seen a gradual shift in its sphere of influence. It's now just as easy to find a saxophonist in the tradition of Coleman Hawkins/Lester Young performing with authority in Paris as it is in New York. Assimilation has touched most countries and two recent recordings lend credibility to this. **Three Men On A Beat (Black and Blue 33.181)** features the work of veteran French saxophonist Guy Lafitte. His tenor sax is heard in collaboration with organist Wild Bill Davis and drummer Alvin Queen in a 1983 session which evokes images of the many sessions shared by Illinois Jacquet and Milt Buckner. Davis' organ style is of the same vintage as Buckner's and Lafitte plays with some of the characteristics which have made Jacquet such a formidable musician. Lafitte is an aggressive, full-toned soloist who fits comfortably into the intensely swinging frameworks devised by Davis.

The rhythmic aggressiveness of Lafitte contrasts sharply with the melodic flow of Norway's **Bjarne Nerem - This Is Always (Gemini Records** - Box 13, Bryn 0611, Oslo 6, Norway), is a delightful collection of well known standards which are interpreted within the framework established by Stan Getz and Zoot Sims. Nerem sounds more comfortable with ballads and he shares this characteristic with Canada's Fraser MacPherson - neither have quite found the secret of being rhythmically relaxed at brighter tempos. *What's New, Stardust* and *Foolin' Myself* are particularly attractive performances from a musician who deserves to be wider known.

Coltrane's influence can be felt on the playing of most tenor and soprano saxophonists who have emerged since the 60s. Coltrane (much more than Sonny Rollins) was a major force in the music. His personality projected itself into the minds and attitudes of so many people during the period when he was active that it still serves as a source of inspiration today. It is readily apparent in the music of **JOHN STUBBLEFIELD** whose most recent recording is **Confessin' (Soul Note 1095).** Like others of his generation he has had to persist against great odds to reach his present level. Only a handful of musicians from the 1960s and 1970s have been able to build careers as major stylists. Others, like Stubblefield, have continued to work at their craft in the hopes that eventually some recognition will come their way. For this date Stubblefield assembled some of the best New York musicians of his time. Cecil Bridgewater (trumpet), Mulgrew Miller (piano), Rufus Reid (bass) and Eddie Gladden (drums) perform a program made up almost entirely of original compositions by Stubblefield and Bridgewater. There's one contribution from Mulgrew Miller and a reading of Billy Strayhorn's *Blood Count*, which is the most impressive of the tunes where Stubblefield plays tenor. The numbers where he plays soprano bring out all the elements of his Coltrane-based style. This is especially true of the title selection and *Dusk To Dawn* where the unison lines in the theme statement are well executed.

Swedish tenor saxophonist **BERNT ROSENGREN** is a few years older than John Stubblefield and his musical influences appear to be slightly behind those of the American. Rosengren, in the context of the musical concept of guitarist **Doug Raney's Lazy Bird (SteepleChase 1200)** album, is playing within the framework of the musical ideas of the late 1950s. He interprets with forcefulness and conviction the two originals by guitarist Raney and offers fresh looks at the jazz standards: Bennie Golson's *Reggie Of Chester*, John Coltrane's *Lazy Bird*, Sam Rivers' *Beatrice* and *Theme For Ernie* by Freddy Lacey.

These recordings, in their diverse ways, are but a small part of all the contributions being made to the music – both in the past and today. They all have something worthwhile to offer the astute listener of jazz music. – *John Norris*

STEVE LACY · THE TAO SUITE

"The way to do is to be."

The TAO SUITE by LACY comprises the following individual titles –

EXISTENCE
THE WAY
BONE
NAME
THE BREATH
LIFE ON ITS WAY

Recorded performances of these titles have been released, sometimes with reference to their collective title and sometimes not. The following tabulates their appearance on record –

	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13
Existence		*	*						*	*	*	*	*
The Way		*	*						*		*		*
Bone		*		*			*	*	*		*		*
Name		*			*	*			*				*
The Breath	*	*			*				*				*
Life On Its Way		*	*						*				*

– with the following details on the enumerated releases –

LIST #	RECORDING DATE yy.mmdd	RELEASE LABEL	RELEASE #	RELEASE TITLE
01	69.0920?	BYG (F)	529 352	Moon
02	71.0104	FUTURA (F)	GER 22	Wordless
03	71.0909+	SARAVAH (F)	SH 10031	Lapis
04	71.1130	RCA VICTOR (J)	SMJX 10134	Journey. . .
05	71.0807+	EMANEM (UK)	301	Solo
06	74.0218+	SARAVAH (F)	SH 10049	Scraps
07	74.0411+	FMP (WG)	R 1	For Example
08	75.0607	DENON (J)	YQ 7507N	Stalks
09	75.0608	ALM (J)	AL 5	. . . At Mandara
10	76.0901	IMPROVISING ARTISTS	37.38.47	Sidelines
11	76;1205	ICTUS (IT)	005	Trio Live
12	77.0827	HAT HUT (Switz.)	K	Stamps
13	79.0123	HAT HUT (Switz.)	2R03	The Way

(F) = France; (IT) = Italy; (J) = Japan; (Switz.) = Switzerland; (WG) = West Germany; (UK) = United Kingdom; unindicated = U.S.

The period covered by the material in these releases is from September, 1969 to January, 1979 – some nine years. Using H.L. Lindenmaier's "25 Years of Fish Horn Recording – The Steve Lacy Discography" (HLL) as a reference source, the earliest potential reference to *Tao* material is an NDR (West German) television quintet recording made in Hamburg, West Germany in Feburary 1968, which details an "Examples Suite," the material of which includes the title *The Way* with voice by Irene Aebi (who is also heard on cello) using a text by Buckminster Fuller; other musicians are, in addition to Lacy, soprano saxophone; Enrico Rava, trumpet; Kent Carter, bass; Aldo Romano, drums. Whether this is, in fact, *The Way* of the Tao Suite cannot be precisely ascertained from HLL, but upon the face of it, having regard for the source of the textual material for the Tao Suite, it seems unlikely. In the event that it is not of the Tao Suite, then the next date given by HLL is December 1969 for an ORTF (French) radio broadcast in Paris featuring the Steve Lacy quintet with Ambrose Jackson, trumpet and balafon; Irene Aebi, cello, vocal; Kent Carter bass and Jerome Cooper, drums – although in a subsequently published footnote, Lacy states that this date is impossible; that it must be later (1970-'71).

About the most recent release listed above, "The Way" on Hat Hut, there is less room for equivocation, and it is with this release that one can establish the base of further examination. In his notes for "The Way," written in Paris in December 1979, Lacy says –

> "The Way" is a long story. Based on an old Chinese text, attributed to Lao-Tzu, it reached me 2000 years later, in New York, in Witter Bynner's Sing-Song version: "The Tao Teh Ching" (published by Capricorn Books). That was 1959. By '67 I had already set the melody of "The Way" for Irene [Aebi] and was mulling over the other verses. The rest of the pieces were written in the late '60s. By the early '70s began the elaboration and realization of the music, known as *Tao*, which is still going on.

By now, after hundreds of per-

formances of this cycle (in solo, duo, quintet, orchestra, with dancers, electronics etc.), the shape and sound is becoming clear and the whole work seems destined to become "standard," one day. New wings for old words – so be it.

Here is the order of the pieces:

TAO	DEDICATED TO:	
Existence	John Coltrane	Dawn
The Way	Alberto Giacometti	Morning
Bone	Lester Young	Noon
Name	Charlie Parker	Afternoon
The Breath	Gil Evans	Evening
Life on its Way	Duke Ellington	Night

Made in concert at Basel/Switzerland, January 1979.

This is the first complete recorded performance of *Tao*. Already, one year later, some parts have been modified, reworked, developed. This music is complete, but lucky for me, unfinished.

From this statement it is apparent that the Tao Suite was essentially composed in the period 1967-1970. This was the period when (contextually) some three-quarters of a million people marched down New York's Fifth Avenue in support of U.S. soldiers in Vietnam, and Hanoi was bombed by the Americans; the Israelis and Arabs had their Six-Day War, the former capturing the old city of Jerusalem; Che Guevara was killed in Bolivia; Dubcek became First Secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party and not long after Soviet and Warsaw Pact troops invaded his territory and arrested him; Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, as was Robert F. Kennedy; students rioted in Paris; the first men landed on the moon; Pompidou took over France from De Gaulle; Ho Chi Minh died and there were massive anti-Vietnam war demonstrations throughout America.

In his notes, Lacy refers to Witter Bynner's version of the Tao Teh Ching attributed to Lao-Tzu. A recent issue of Bynner's translation is "The Way Of Life According to LaoTzu, an American version by Witter Bynner," a Perigee Book, published in New York by G.P. Putnam at 200 Madison Avenue, first Perigee printing 1980 (ISBN 399-50241-6). The original material was copyrighted by the translator in 1944 and it is to this issue that reference is made here. The Tao Teh Ching is a short document (some forty pages) of eighty-one "sayings" (Bynner's term). In his introduction to them, also dated 1944, Bynner talks of the legends associated with Lao-Tzu – "Immaculately conceived to a shooting-star, carried in his mother's womb for sixty-two years and born, it is said, in 604 B.C...." Actually, who wrote these sayings and when, whether by more than one author and, indeed, what they say are all matters which will entertain certain minds for many years to come as they have for generations passed. Suffice it to say that Lacy was impressed enough with Bynner's versions to set selected sayings to his own compositions. The sayings selected by Lacy for setting are as follows: for *Existence* the fourth; for *The Way* the forty-seventh; for *Bone* the thirty-third; for *Name* the first; for *The Breath* the sixth; for *Life On Its Way* the fortieth.

The Bynner versions of these are as follows:

The fourth saying

Existence, by nothing bred,
Breeds everything.
Parent of the universe,
It smooths rough edges,
Unties hard knots,
Tempers the sharp sun,
Lays blowing dust,
Its image in the wellspring never fails.
But how was it conceived? – this image
Of no other sire.

The forty-seventh saying

There is no need to run outside
For better seeing,
Nor to peer from a window. Rather abide
At the center of your being;
For the more you leave it,
the less you learn.
Search your heart and see
If he is wise who takes each turn:
The Way to do is to be.

STEVE LACY (Photograph by Gerard Futrick)

The thirty-third saying
Knowledge studies other,
Wisdom is self-known;
Muscle masters brothers,
Self-mastery is *bone*;
Content need never borrow,
Ambition wanders blind:
Vitality cleaves to the marrow
Leaving death behind.

The first saying
Existence is beyond the power of words
To define:
Terms may be used
But are none of them absolute.
In the beginning of heaven and earth
there were no words,
Words came out of the womb of matter;
And whether a man dispassionately
Sees to the core of life
Or passionately
Sees the surface
Are essentially the same,
Words making them seem different
Only to express appearance.
If *name* be needed, wonder names
them both:
From wonder into wonder
Existence opens.

The sixth saying
The Breath of life moves through a
deathless valley
Of mysterious motherhood
Which conceives and bears
the universal seed,
The seeming of a world never to end,
Breath for men to draw from as they will:
And the more they take of it, the more
remains.

The fortieth saying
Life on its way returns into a mist,
Its quickness is its quietness again:
Existence of this world of things and men
Renews their never needing to exist.

A related reference to Witter Bynner appears in Lacy's notes (written in Paris and dated August 1981) to the release "Ballets" on Hat Art (Switz.) 1982/83 where he advises that his composition *Deadline* (the first piece written in his suite The 4 Edges, from 1975-76) is "in memory of the American poet and translator (of the Tao Teh Ching) Witter Bynner." His account of the inception and subsequent development of *Deadline* is also related:

> *Deadline*, on Earth, was... written for a record date in Tokyo[*]. I needed one more tune, it was late, the pressure was mounting, the deadline was approaching, I finished the piece just as the session began. We rehearsed it and recorded it immediately. Much later Brion Gysin supplied me with the formula for grass, tetra hydro (x3) tetra cannabinol, which when sung with the accelerating accompanying intervals, creates a kind of "high," on the way to the end of this journey to the "edges" of the elements."

[*] HLL refers to five recording dates in June 1975 which featured Lacy solo or with various groupings of Japanese musicians. The first recording of *Deadline* is reported for June 18th, 1975 at Nippon Columbia Studio 1, Tokyo by a sextet which was eventually released on Denon YX 7553 ND, under the title "The Wire." It is noteworthy that Lacy included a trio version of *Bone* in a Tokyo performance on June 7th and the entire Tao Suite the following day in a solo performance, also in Tokyo.

Further references of relevance to this topic appear in his own notes to the Emanem release of Lacy solos performed in Avignon, France in August, 1972. Versions of *The Breath* and *Name* are included of which Lacy writes:

> *The Breath* comes from a cycle of six songs (Tao) using words by Lao-Tsu, and is dedicated to Gil Evans. *Name* is another song from the "Tao" cycle, and takes its message by way of Charlie Parker. If *The Breath* is the valley, then *Name* is the mountain.

In this brief article there are references to several musicians besides those performing with Lacy. They are –

John Coltrane (1926-1967)
Lester Young (1909-1959)
Charlie Parker (1920-1955)
Gil Evans (1912 -)
Duke Ellington (1899-1974)

If we credit the Tao Suite with a significant position in the oeuvre of Steve Lacy then it may be assumed that these musicians enjoy a similar position with Lacy, as will the Swiss painter, sculptor and draughtsman Alberto Giacometti (1901-1962).

Passing mention is made in the foregoing material to Buckminster Fuller and Brion Gysin, two of the several sources from which Lacy has drawn over the years for texts to set to his own compositions. A closer look at these sources will be the subject of a subsequent article.

– Roger Parry
hongkong 850202

STEVE LACY
("Two, five & six")
Blinks
hat ART 2006 (HAT HUT Records Ltd., Box 461 4106, Therwil, Switzerland and Box 127, West Park, N.Y. U.S.A.), 1984.

Steve Lacy, soprano sax; Steve Potts, alto and soprano sax; Bobby Few, piano (on side 4 only); Irene Aebi, cello, violin and voice; Jean-Jaques Avenel, bass; Oliver Johnson, drums.

Side One – Blinks (16:00) / Wickets I (7:20). Side Two – Wickets II (11:25) / Three Points (13:50). Side Three – Cliches (22:40). Side Four – The Whammies (14:00).

All titles composed by Steve Lacy. Wickets I is the opening part and Wickets II the concluding part of a single performance of Wickets. Recorded 1983, February 12th at a concert at the Rote Fabrik, Zurich, Switzerland.

Think about this: Steve Lacy has been upon this Earth for half a century: some thirty-five years of that time he has devoted to "knowing" the soprano saxophone. The soprano saxophone is a corporeal and spiritual part of Steve Lacy; he knows its secrets, its nuances, its moods. His vocabulary for expression through this now natural extension is a highly developed resource and with it, whether in solo or group performances, he takes us sometimes through glades of memory, sometimes into fields of new pasture, planted with all manner of crops (licit and otherwise) for us to harvest.

Since the mid-50s, when he appeared on a Cecil Taylor quartet release, Steve Lacy has participated in the production of material made available to us on some 120 releases; on almost one half of these, he is the principal – and as such he has ten previous releases under the HAT HUT label. In fact, since his first (1978) HAT HUT release of solo material recorded in the previous year ("Clinkers", hat Hut 'F'), the majority of his released material has emanated from this source.

Turning to the five Lacy compositions on this most recent release, the "two" is a duet performance by Lacy and Potts of *Three Points*; the "fives" are *Blinks, Wickets* and *Cliches* by Lacy, Potts, Aebi, Avenel and Johnson and the "six" is the quintet joined by pianist Few for *The Whammies*.

Three Points is a suite of compositions individually titled as *Free Point, Still Point* and *Moot Point*. An earlier version can be heard on the 1978 release "Points" on the French Chant Du Monde label (LDX 74680) where Lacy has described it as a prospect of the current and future possibilities of the soprano saxophone. Having regard for the fact that, as he puts it, there existed then (1978) a number of accomplished instrumentalists such as Joseph Jarman, Oliver Lake and Evan Parker, it seemed logical (at the time of composition, 13th February, 1978) to systematically explore certain associa-

tions, such as here, two sopranos together. To date (1985), Lacy and Potts have experimented and played together as a duo for some fourteen years; in doing so they have become aware of certain "curious" additional voices produced by the differences and the similarities of their individual sounds and of the multiplication of an intimate relationship between certain accidental harmonics which are inherent characteristics of the soprano saxophone. Of the individual items of the suite, Lacy has said that *Free Point* is a free improvisation dedicated to the Japanese producer, critic and writer, Aquirax Aida. *Still Point* is a blues constituting an attempt to imitate the sound of the vibraphone and is dedicated to Milt Jackson while *Moot Point* is a conversational piece, a discussion of an ambiguous point, dedicated to John Lewis, MJQ pianist and composer.

The first of the quintet items is *Blinks*. The first recording of this title (from January, 1977) appeared on the Adelphi release, "Raps." It also appears on the Saravah release, "The Owl", Hat Hut's "Stamps" and Hat Music's "Snake Out." On this occasion it is used as a vehicle for two "extended" solos by Potts, alto and by Lacy. *Wickets* has appeared on disc on three previous occasions, on Horo's "Catch" (mis-titled as *Thickets*), on Hat Hut's "Stamps" and on Hat Art's "Prospectus", in the sleeve notes to which latter Lacy describes it as "a blue tale (tail?), on the trail, to Bobby Timmons, a blues blown in be natural." The present edition includes solos from Potts, Lacy and Avenel. *Cliches* made its first recorded appearance on the "Prospectus" release, where Lacy reports that "this piece began as an african postcard from Aline Dubois, who visited Senegal [and that he composed it] in memory of a dear friend and great musician, Joe Maka." This atmospheric edition maintains the expectations of "Prospectus." The sextet title, *The Whammies* (on occasions succeeded by an exclamation mark!) has appeared on Black Saint's "Troubles", and in the "Prospectus", there described by its author as "our fastest moving item. Built on selected licks from Fats Navarro." In this version we enjoy double doses of high-speed elan each bridged admirably by Bobby Few.

The preceding Lacy release, "Prospectus", gave more than sufficient evidence to convince investors to buy up shares in this exciting venture; this Blinks is a very fine double release which maintains the Lacy momentum. His is a tradition of invention and freedom, which he keeps in an advanced position within the broad tradition of this music we call JAZZ. Go for it!

ROGEr HeNrY PArry = NEOGRAPHY

Steve Lacy's latest two-album, digitally-recorded release on hatART captures a live performance by his quintet and sextet. Unlike his other recent efforts such as "The Way" and "Ballets," which featured unified suites, or his special collaboration with Brion Gysin, these discs feature a typical concert program. But the performances are anything but typical.

Steve Potts solos first on *Blinks*, joyfully bouncing off the beat laid down by Johnson and Avenel. There's a nose-thumbing, sarcastic quality in his playing, mixed with the blues and a muscular assurance. In fact, I was struck by the sense of mischievous, sometimes gleeful, sometimes black sense of humor frequently present throughout the album. They were obviously enjoying themselves this night.

The head to *Wickets*, a 21st century descendant of *Trinkle, Tinkle*, speeds by and you might expect another up-tempo performance. But the group cuts the time, and Potts delivers a well-constructed, blues-drenched solo accompanied primarily by bassist Avenel. The members of this long-established group have developed a special familiarity, and this duet is full of simultaneous agreement and mutual inspiration. Lacy's solo is a distillation of the blues, an abstraction which carries all the visceral power of its roots without recreating them. His solo climaxes with dirty growls and quacks, then soars into pure, clear tones. It is a beautiful essay on the essence of jazz – both earthy and transcendent.

Cliches, which seems to be a musical tribute to or portrait of Japan, takes up all of side C. Starting out quietly on thumb piano, empty bottles, and hand-clapping, the group builds to the pentatonic melody. A group free-for-all with Lacy playing Zen Monk to Potts' Samurai Warrior gives way to some fine soloing. The piece ends cryptically with Johnson (I think) urging everyone to "bring all the possums you can find. We'll have a feast."

Bobby Few fleshes out the more aesthetic sound of the quintet on an energized version of *The Whammies* on side D. With the piano's damper pedal down, notes trail behind his runs like a comet's tail, but for all their cosmic sweep, his playing also has a down-home feeling and a sense of fun.

Lacy and his group have kept the song form alive in jazz by using it to move us in ways we never expected it could. Paradox, terror, joy, dark humor, swing and craftsmanship are all found on this album. Lacy's group is one of the most important in jazz right now, and this release is a good indication of why.

– Ed Hazell

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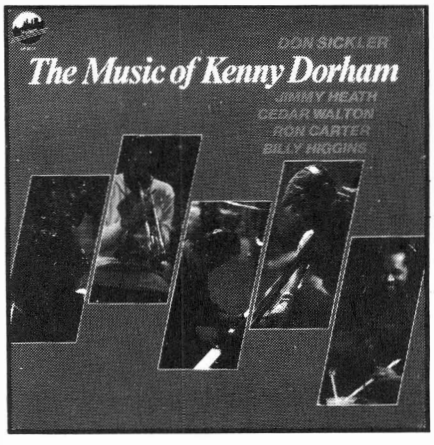
DON SICKLER w. Jimmy Heath
"The Music of KENNY DORHAM"
Uptown 27.17



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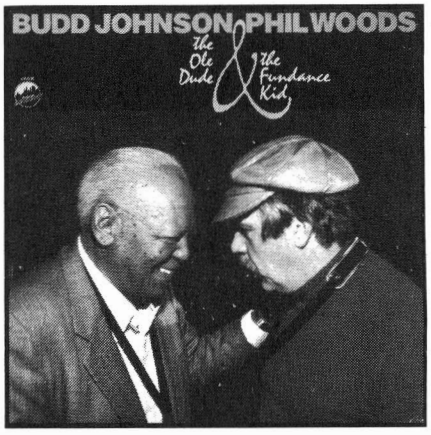

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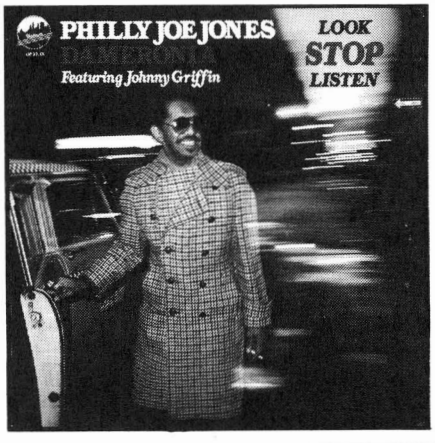


Ornette Coleman Festival

ORNETTE COLEMAN FESTIVAL
Hartford, Connecticut
June 30 - July 6, 1985

Real Art Ways celebrated **Ornette Coleman's** contributions to American music with a week-long festival, during which Governor William O'Neill proclaimed June 30 - July 6 Ornette Coleman week in Connecticut and Hartford Mayor Thirman Milner honored the innovative saxophonist-composer with the key to the city. Although the festival included film and video in its tribute to Coleman, the music presented during the event demonstrated most fully the scope of Coleman's influence on his peers and succeeding generations of musicians.

Coleman and his Prime Time band opened the festival June 30 with an afternoon concert in Bushnell Park. Other writers have described Prime Time's material as fusion, but I find it conveys much the same flavors as Coleman's earlier work: bouyantly boppish themes and hints of latin rhythms veering away from the regimentation of their traditional formats. The group itself impresses me primarily as an extension of the double quartet concept Coleman employed in his landmark "Free Jazz" recording; the clashing, slashing countermelodies of the guitars and electric basses called to mind the joyful noise of the original double quartet. In performance, Prime Time's funky pulse either loosened to or throbbed against the sprung rhythms that Ed Blackwell and Billy Higgins used to lay down. The electric instruments and earthy pulse simply add new textures to Coleman's all-encompassing improvisational concept.

Coleman himself seems intent on refining the basic instrumental style that jarred the jazz world twenty-six years ago. His tone on alto saxophone remains throaty, his phrases short but piercing. His work on violin and trumpet follows the pattern of his earliest performances as a multi-instrumentalist. The iconoclastic fury of his bowing still sends blips blurring off his violin's strings. His trumpet solos blend his approach to the saxophone with the squealing, darting pitches that characterized Don Cherry's early work.

While Coleman continues to follow his original path, **Don Cherry** is moving in a direction entirely his own. Instead of etching sound collages with an acid tone, he now plays trumpet with a full-toned, sequential approach. The facility Cherry has developed on a number of instruments allows him to explore the colors and textures of the World Music that evolved partly through his pioneering efforts with Coleman. In his July 6 afternoon concert with **Ed Blackwell** at Hartford's Center Church, Cherry shifted from trumpet to piano during a stirring Monk medley, chanted over his own keyboard vamps, wailed a brief harmonica passage in another piece, turned in a fine wood flute meditation, and showed some dexterity on a gourd-like string instrument that sounded somewhere between a bass and a sitar. During Cherry's versatile improvisations, Blackwell drummed with effervescent drive and an empathy that brought the music's challenging textures into focus.

If Cherry's current work reflects the influence Coleman and his collaborators have had on succeeding generations of free jazzmen, then **James "Blood" Ulmer's** work reflects the influence of Coleman's work on a new wave of musicians who apply harmelodic concepts to a music that blends funk with freedom. Unfortunately, Ulmer's high-volume approach proved incompatible with the acoustics of Center Church, where he played several hours after the Cherry-Blackwell concert. His violin-guitar front line promised to step beyond the Mahavishnu Orchestra but remained barricaded behind a wall of undifferentiated sound. Only the backbeats and get-down shuffles of the drums broke through. I could hear the potential in the music, but not its realization. In an environment better suited to high-volume music, Ulmer could show the ground he's broken with his funky beat. Center Church just wasn't the right place. Nevertheless, Ulmer's appearance in the festival attests to Coleman's far-reaching influence on improvisers working in a variety of idioms.

The festival also featured an evening of Coleman's chamber music July 3 at the Real Art Ways Performance Space. Real Art Ways director Jospeh Celli conducted *Dedication to Poets And Writers, The Sacred Mind Of Johnny Dolphin* and *Time Design - In Memory Of Buckminster Fuller*. Wallace Roney and Chandra Asken were the featured trumpeters with the string ensemble.

Shirley Clarke's film, "Ornette: Made In America", received its New England premiere July 1 at the Trinity College Cinestudio. The far-reaching documentary juxtaposed Coleman's childhood reminiscences with concert performances and the comments of peers ranging from George Russell to Buckminster Fuller to William Burroughs, and confronted the irony of Coleman's continued financial hardship despite his belated critical acclaim. The film, along with Coleman's Home Video Tapes, provided insight into the man as well as the music he creates.

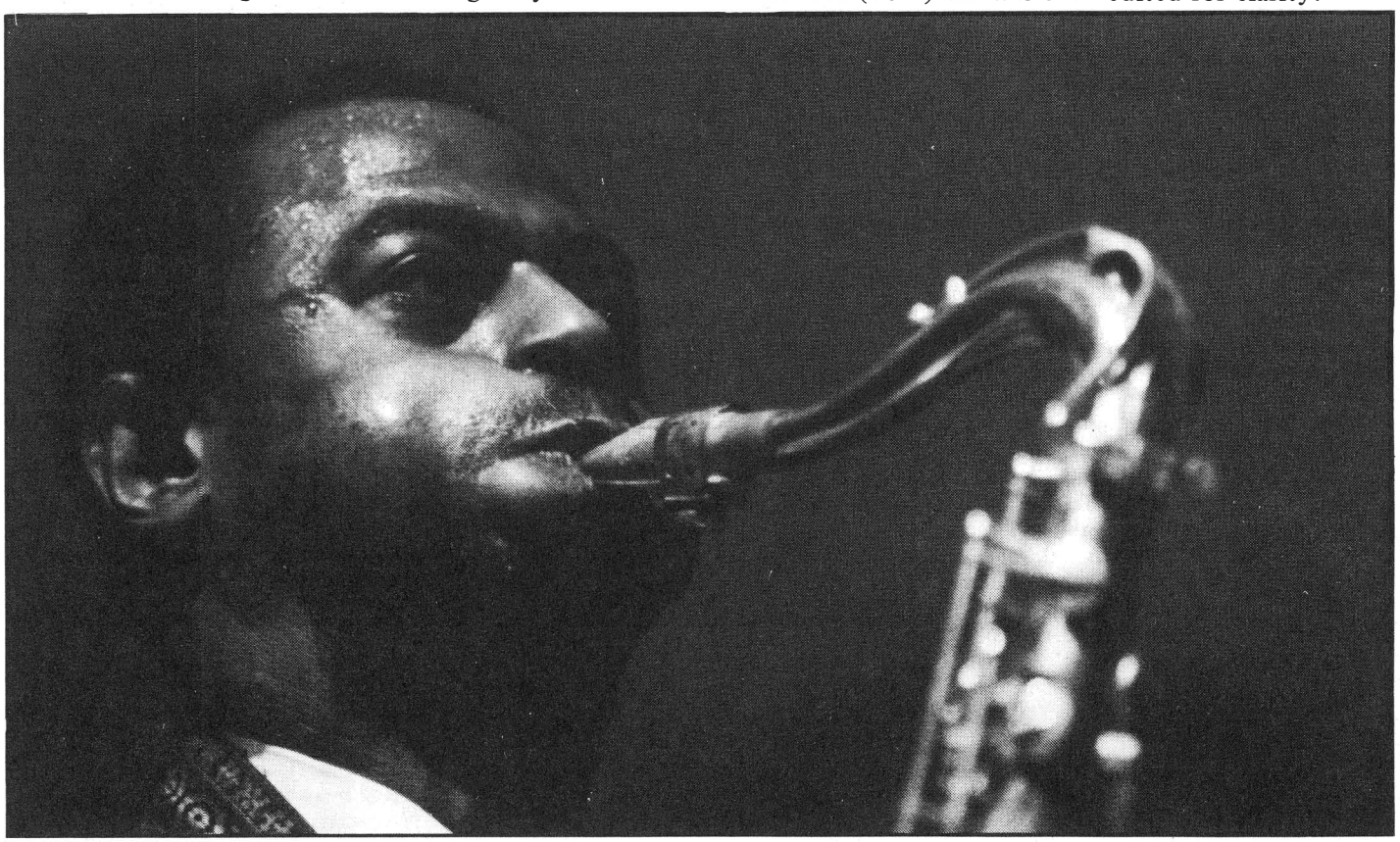
Once again, Real Art Ways offered the public the opportunity to view the accomplishments of seminal improvisers in their proper historical perspective. The week-long festival was a fitting tribute to Ornette Coleman, one of the foremost trailblazers in the New Music.

– Vernon Frazer

ORNETTE COLEMAN (Photograph by Jorgen Bo)

ARCHIE SHEPP · FOUR FOR TRANE

The following interview was originally broadcast on CKLN-FM (88.1) and has been edited for clarity.



BILL SMITH: *Are people beginning to treat you as a more traditional artist these days?*

ARCHIE SHEPP: Well yes, it's hard to accept me that way, but I suppose they are. I think music, especially this kind of music, is very much involved with the time or the period in which it's played, so people grow up with it, unlike Western classical music. They develop almost an allegiance to a certain style of music. For example you have people who listen to Louis Armstrong in the nineteen-twenties and say he didn't play anything after that. It's unfortunate because it doesn't allow us the same flexibility in this area to change, even to re-create music from past eras. People feel you've defected somehow from your generation. I think it's all about generations, this music. I notice my audience, at least the hard core, the old guys, are all getting grey and bald like me. The kids who are coming out have not heard a lot of this music, so in order to form a kind of connection I do try to play some of the more melodic things, and the kinds of things they have some reference to.

BS: *Yesterday I was reading a quote by the composer Edgar Varese and he said the musicians are always in the time that they are in, and the audience is always in the past. They don't become part of it exactly when it's happening.*

AS: Especially contemporary audiences. People expect re-created music; you go through all the styles or periods of the artist, but in a music like this that is being created on the spot, you might say, there are other social factors involved.

BS: *In the early times when you first became a player, in 1960 with Cecil Taylor, that was considered in its day to be a revolutionary music, by the audiences.*

AS: Yes I think so, and by my own standards I still consider it so given the organisation of those pieces and the fact that they were being done for the first time. Also Cecil [Taylor] writes quite differently to Ornette [Coleman] or John Coltrane. Both John and Ornette were primarily dealing with short forms of music – haiku, 32-bar, but Cecil I think broke that by bringing to the small group a concept of larger structures.

BS: *Have you listened in recent times to those Candid records?*

AS: Not recently, but I still remember them very vividly.

BS: *Because in retrospect, which is an easy way to judge something, they sound very melodic.*

AS: They probably sound "inside" now, whereas at the time they were breaking new ground. Since groups like Anthony Braxton and the Art Ensemble of Chicago and David Murray, who evolved out of that period, it's sort of standard fare – in a way. People have become more sophisticated, those who listen to that sort of music. Unfortunately not a lot of people listen to that kind of music.

BS: *There was a great deal of difficulty in that time even to be recorded at all. Because Nat Hentoff had the possibility to record you for labels like Candid – that was the only reason you got recorded.*

AS: That's right. Archie Blier, who I think was working with Jackie Gleason, was making a lot of money and he decided to invest in this jazz label. So I got the chance to record, because I had just joined Cecil Taylor's group.

BS: *In that same period you were seriously beginning to be a writer of plays and poetry.*

AS: I had a piece that was produced off-Broadway, originally entitled "The Com-

ARCHIE SHEPP (Photograph by Gerard Futrick)

munist." It was produced under the title "June Bug Graduates Tonight." It's now published in the Black Drama Anthology, a good anthology published by Signet Books. As a written work.

BS: *One of the other people in that period who had access to record companies was Bill Dixon – Savoy Records.*

AS: Right. Actually I might have turned Bill onto Savoy. He became a good friend of the assistant producer there. Bill did some artwork for them and stayed on there for quite a while.

We had a good quartet, a good idea during that time [1962]; I think we produced a lot of good music.

BS: *It gave you the chance to play original music. Didn't Bill write quite a lot of the music in that period?*

AS: Yes, in fact Bill was very helpful to me in learning how to write. I didn't write at all during that time, and he did quite a bit of writing, as well as copying for George Russell. He and Roswell Rudd were very helpful to me in learning how to notate music. I used to have a lot of problems with it. Still do – I still notate in a personal way as far as academically-trained musicians are concerned. It seems as though I can never satisfy them. But I think it's improved a bit since those days.

BS: *You were one of the first musicians to take the music into Europe and introduce the new music of that period to European audiences with the New York Contemporary Five [1963].*

AS: That's right. John Tchicai was very instrumental in that. He did a lot to help put the group together, in fact we impacted very strongly on the European audiences. Much stronger than I thought we would. We had a lot of confidence and we had good musicians. J.C. Moses (drums) – Don Moore (bass) – John Tchicai (alto saxophone) – and of course Don Cherry. It took place mostly in Copenhagen, Denmark, and we were also in Sweden; although we did not get up as far as Norway and Finland.

BS: *How would you come upon a Danish player like John Tchicai?*

AS: Quite fortuitously. John had come to the United States seeking to make it as a musician. At the time the lady who was his wife worked for the Danish Embassy. John was a chef in a Swedish restaurant. Word got around downtown that there was this cat who sounded like Ornette, but he sounded like two Ornettes. So I really wanted to hear this guy and when I heard him he really knocked me out. He was playing with Don Cherry and that's how the idea began. We were all very young and all very excited. The criticism they all had of me – the one that's lingered through the years – was that I was playing too long. The drummer and I used to get into big arguments; God bless him, J.C., I really love the guy, he used to shout on the bandstand: "Next man – next man!" You know. To tell me to stop playing. We had really terrible arguments about that.

BS: *It wasn't so common for improvisation to be so long. In this same period, which I think is the development period of the so-called American "new music," of course we come upon the Jazz Composers Orchestra [1964], and the Jazz Composers Guild. You were actively involved in that.*

AS: Yes I was. That was a very crucial time for new music. Albert Ayler, Paul Bley, Carla Bley, Sun Ra, there were a lot of people. The idea was essentially Bill Dixon's. Bill you know, has a very creative mind that way, especially organisationally. When I met him he was working for the United Nations. He's a person who is well accustomed to putting together group situations, and he managed to organise this setting, which I thought was very positive. That's the one drawback: we were all struggling at the time, and I had just, through the good graces of John Coltrane, been offered a contract with ABC Records (Impulse), and the group charter had decided that we were not going to record, we were going to withold our services. Well this turned out to be perhaps one of the biggest debates in the organisation because people thought that guys like me were scabbing out. But I explained that as the father of four children, and most of these people were single, and when they were married they didn't have any children, so they didn't understand my position at all. I was on welfare, and I had struggled for years, for just this chance, and as I advised them, by our holding out on the record companies we were by no means going to stop the jazz record industry from recording. We were not going to break them. So as it turned out I did hold on to my record contract, and I think it was a good decision, because the Guild eventually broke up. It was a good idea, but to make those kinds of demands of musicians was somewhat unrealistic. This was a record contract with Impulse and John Coltrane had helped me to get that, and Bob Thiele [producer] had been very impressed by my first record "Four For Trane."

BS: *People often refer to you being very influenced by John Coltrane, both as a player and a spiritual person. Would that be true?*

AS: Well certainly as a musician, and certainly I feel influenced by his perception and the perspective that he brought to music, from a social political standpoint. He seemed to understand a lot about generations: the fact that in order for this music to evolve, and I think it's been proven correct, by the things we see today – older players, players who had some stake in this, today guys like Miles Davis who made money, have to begin to invest their time, energy and so on into the bringing up of younger players of newer experiences in the music. He [John Coltrane] was perhaps the only one who saw and anticipated that this music would change, and was flexible enough, at least in his outlook, to have a philosophy that would have accomodated that change.

BS: *And so the first record that you did for Impulse, "Four For Trane," is a thank-you to him.*

AS: It's a strange thing. Bob Thiele had been very averse to my recording for Impulse. In fact he didn't like the so-called "new music" at all. He accepted John's innovations because they sold, and they had a lot of money, but the young guys who were coming out of him, who often played a lot less melodically, he couldn't understand that. It turns out that John had offered the prospect to record to a then-young saxophone player, Byron Allen, and Byron had known Trane through his brother, or something like that, and Trane had offered him the possibility to record for Impulse. Then he met with Bob Thiele, who had this gimmick he would use. He would tell all the new players – "Well if you are going to take this option to record that Trane has offered you, you've got to play all his music." Which would usually turn most of these avant gardists away. But I had been a student of Coltrane's music for years, and I really liked his music, so when I heard that Byron had turned down the record date – which he did, because he wanted to do all original music – I remember very well I had a conversation with Bill Dixon, it was perhaps just after I'd had a big blowout with Miles [Davis] in the Village Vanguard (he wouldn't let me sit in; of course we became friends later, but I was young then and I reacted very sensitively to the way he treated me). The next day I was talking to Bill Dixon. Bill's about ten years older than I am, and he was a confidant as well as a colleague, and I was telling him how on welfare it was hard for me and my family and I was trying so hard to get a record date but Bob Thiele, whom I used to call up with my welfare money – I lived on a fifth floor walkup, I would take a dollar a day in dimes and I would call Bob ten times a day, this went on for months – and he was never in according to his secretary. This evening after this blowout with Miles, I was talking with Bill and

he said, "Well why don't you ask John Coltrane to get you a record date?" he said sort of gruffly – "He's supposed to be a friend of yours isn't he?" As a young man I had never really thought of it, but then I remembered this story of Byron Allen having been offered the record date and having turned it down – so why the hell not, I'll ask John. Because I wouldn't mind recording his tunes at all.

So I went to the Half Note where he was playing and on his intermission, I wanted to ask him, but I was really very shy, so I hemmed and hawed, and he sort of looked me down – he said "Shepp what are you trying to ask me" so I said, John, I want to get a record date, can you help me. And for the first time he looked at me in a way that was rather stern and he sort of looked through me and he said, "You know a lot of people take advantage of me because they think I'm easy." That's what he said – he looked me straight in the eye like that. So I trembled because I didn't want him to think I was thinking he was easy. But it was an insight into John that I had never seen, he had never talked to me that way before. Then he said, "Okay – I'll see what I can do." The next day I called Bob Thiele and I got him on the phone for the first time ever. That was the start of a ten-year association with the company. In fact, when he made the gimmick, the deal, you are going to have to do John's tunes, I said I've got them all arranged, we've been rehearsing, we're ready. That was the "Four For Trane" date.

BS: *In that period [1965] you did something that also was not happening, apart from Langston Hughes, Leroi Jones and Charles Mingus, you presented poetry with music on record.*

AS: Of course Duke [Ellington] had done some things earlier – "Peter And The Wolf" and those kinds of things, and he had done some monologues that I had found very impressive, but also my theatre training in college was very helpful. I had heard Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot, which showed me records had dimensions other than musical works.

BS: *One of the great ones is the poem for Malcolm X, "Malcolm, Semper Malcolm." He was a very strong political force for young black musicians and artists in America at that time.*

AS: No question about it. I was very moved by the assassination of Malcolm X. However I would say my earlier training since I was born in the south, I am a southern negro as Cecil Taylor always points out, it made me first aware of Martin Luther King and I was always very close to the things that Dr. King was trying to do. Because I felt that if you put King and Malcolm together you had a real political solution for black people in the United States.

BS: *Considering what we were just talking about, about how difficult it was originally for you to record on Impulse, eventually when John Coltrane made the record "Ascension" [1965], which was a very startling record, it seems almost impossible to think now, based on what you've told me, that such a record would ever take place.*

AS: John was a nexus, a connection between his generation, of so-called "beboppers" and what he himself was about to create. What they call the avant garde today. I say he created it because in a sense he was able to synthesize in his work, perhaps the most important innovations of Ornette Coleman and Cecil Taylor, and to maintain the basic elements that we consider vital to the organisation of black music. Namely – swing. Because Trane was never an intellectual or academic musician, he was always a real hard swinger. I think what upset a lot of people is that he could combine all the theoretical, the most innovative qualities of his time and his peers into the context of "hot music."

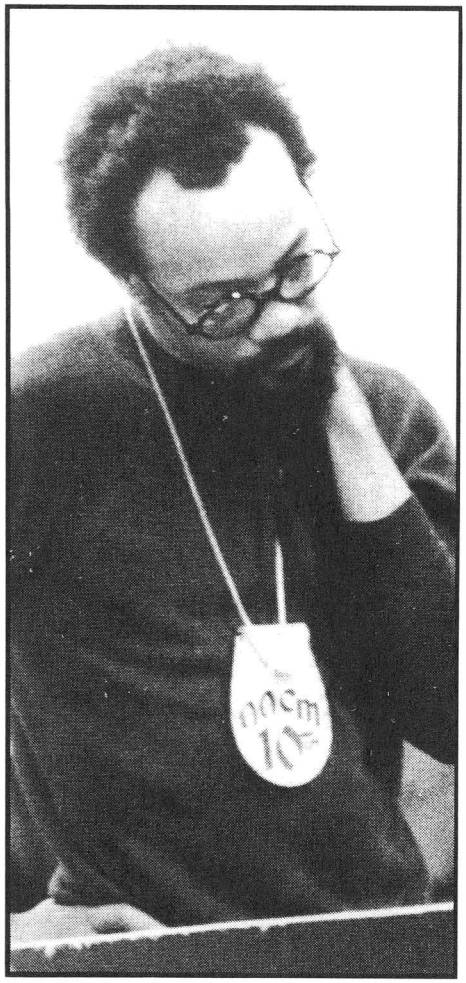
All the guys he chose for "Ascension" felt very sympathetique with his efforts because, like Coleman Hawkins before him, I think he was very much in touch with the tenor of the time, so a record like "Ascension," if I think of an analogy: there was a baseball game, the American League Championship, and they asked one of the players, a black player who was an outfielder – was he scared when the ball was hit out there to him, and it was the last ball of the game, and it was the winning catch? And he said, "no man I was just waiting on it to get there." That was the feeling of the "Ascension" date, that many of the people there, we were right on time.

Joseph Jarman • In Concert

Koncepts Cultural Gallery,
Oakland, California
June 30, 1985

Joseph Jarman poses on the cover of an early Art Ensemble of Chicago album "Message To Our Folks" in an antique military coat, his nose stuck proudly in the air, his hands clasping a book. That photo was taken almost 20 years ago, but Jarman is still clasping the book, a born preacher and teacher, as well as being one of the most exciting and underrated saxophone and flute players of our era. Not that his talents are exactly buried within the Art Ensemble of Chicago. He is an integral part of the dynamic which has carried the group along its trailblazing path for the last two decades, contributing an unforgettably searing tone and concept that musical performance is total performance, i.e. theatre. Jarman, of "the little instruments", who introduced tiny bells, whistles, miscellaneous percussion into the modern music repertory. Voted the 'most influential group of the 1970s' by international critics polls, the Art Ensemble's influence is indeed so pervasive that no one actually thinks about it much anymore. In fact, their performance last October at Wolfgang's seemed somehow automatic, cliched almost, to ears familiar with the excruciatingly slow percussive buildup which eventually flares into rapid-fire exchange of trumpet, saxophone and flute lines, then simmers back down into a cacophony of random gongs and clackers. Newcomers to the music enjoyed this primitive sound forest fraught with oases of sophistication, immensely. There are many, many, too many who haven't yet had the opportunity to witness that most unique group in action. The Art Ensemble of Chicago's stage setup is truly something to behold - nearly 200 instruments; Joseph Jarman, Malachi Favors and Don Moye dressed as bizarre African warriors, Lester Bowie in a white doctor's coat, and Roscoe Mitchell as straight man in baggy corduroys and faded turtleneck sweater.

Having achieved fame, notoriety and a modicum of financial success, the individuals who comprise the Art Ensemble each have branched out to pursue their own areas of interest. Joseph Jarman can be heard on scores of albums as featured sideman. Poetry has always been one of Jarman's preoccupations – part of the overall total theatre concept – the interrelatedness of all the arts. As a poet, a "jazz poet", Jarman blends the language of the streets with smatterings of Buddhist philosophy and African mythology. All this adds up to message – subtle as the message may be at times. While the revolution that was conceived on the South Side of Chicago and in all the ghettos of the United States during the 1960s never quite came off – Jarman realized that the "revolution" can also be and, of necessity, must be from within. His book of poetry, "Black Case, Volumes 1 & 2 / Return From Exile," which appeared self-published in 1974, is a statement from one who has gone into the death wilderness of drugs and ego and who has returned as "the grateful alive".



At his Sunday, June 30th solo concert at Koncepts Cultural Gallery in Oakland, Joseph Jarman, head shaved and wearing a summertime print shirt with floppy bow tie, demonstrated some of the magic in his art. Choosing only soprano and alto saxophones, flute and alto flute from his vast instrument arsenal, joking about his inablility to follow a carefully prepared table of contents, Jarman went with the feelings of the day. He explained that his compositions were always based, not on abstractions, but on some concrete emotion or historical vision, some personal experience which had touched him. In turn, he touched the audience deeply with outstanding renditions of his two most enduring songs *As If It Were The Seasons* on alto saxophone and *Lonely Child* on flute, interspersing instrumental melody with half-spoken, half-sung recitations of the songs' lyrics. This in itself was a feat – twin muses standing on his shoulders.

With catlike movements Jarman, mercurial, wiry and taut, pivoted and read from his book:

"What's to say
is nothing
is where
we
are now
in
a maze

together

its warm
its peace
its quiet

love
and
is-ness
is a runner
in
the
rain
on a public
holiday"

The poetry selections Jarman chose spoke of love, of OM, of George Jackson getting blasted by the "hunkie gun". Of a spiritual quest through murky, junkie-riddled streets, of the sharp pangs of realization. Even more profoundly his music says this too – a long flute solo on a simple North African (Berber) theme; the passionate ascending and descending runs and rocking on a chord with soprano sax; the playful teasing of a march motif; the turns and twists of a burgeoning, see-sawing alto piece above the funk rhythms emanating from a dance performance taking place simultaneously in the building. Jarman, filling the afternoon gallery with resonance, light and the unusual sensation of peace. Perfect, the setting, as the streets below were scattered with pool players and hustlers of Oakland-Chicago-Houston-Harlem. A few people, no more than 50 or 60, getting the message etched into their brains. Through Joseph Jarman's sound, a universal moment was shared. – *Elaine Cohen*

JOSEPH JARMAN (Photograph by Bill Smith)

Canadian Jazz On Record

ROB McCONNELL AND THE BOSS BRASS
All In Good Time
Innovation JC-0006

I Got Rhythm / Close Enough For Love / Phil Not Bill / Ecaroh / Can't Stop My Leg / Darn That Dream / Schlep It Up To Joe / Songbird
c. 1983-84

ED BICKERT & ROB McCONNELL
Mutual Street
Innovation JC-0009

Royal Garden Blues / Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams / Medley: Imagination, What Is There To Say / I'll Be Around / April In Paris / Strange Music / Everywhere / Open Country / Sweet And Lovely / Maybe You'll Be There
March 1982 - May 1984

ARCHIE ALLEYNE / FRANK WRIGHT QUARTET
Up There
From Bebop To Now BBN 1001

Up There / One Hundred Ways / Deja Vu / Clouds / Monk's Blues / I Didn't Know About You / Wright Or Ron / A.A.E.H. / Everything Must Change
April 11 & 13, 1983

DAVE LIEBMAN QUARTET
Sweet Fury
From Bebop To Now BBN 1002

Full Nelson / A Distant Song / Nadir / Spring '82 / Missing Person / Tender Mercies / Feu Vert / A Picture Of Dorian Grey
March 23 - 24, 1984

TIM BRADY
Dreams
Apparition A-0485

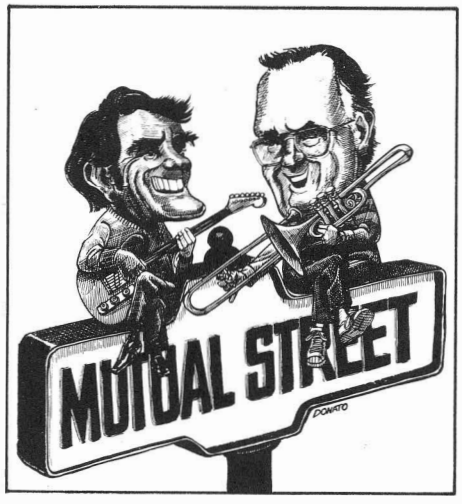
Talk At Random / Go / That Shade Of Grey That's Red / R.E.M. / Used (with only minor changes) / Yellow, Add Green / A Dozen Letters / Broomstick Trick / Roughshod / Gnomen
November 7 - 8, 1984

SARA HAMILTON AND DAVID
Live!
Innovation JC-0007

Take The "A" Train / Baltimore Oriole / Fine And Mellow / Guess Who I Saw Today / Over The Rainbow / Night And Day / Fever / When Your Tears Hit The Ground / Don't Wanna Play No More / Shiver Me Timbers
1983

JOE COUGHLIN
Second Debut
Innovation JC-0008

My Romance / Word Games / Hello N.Y.C. / Angel Eyes / Baltimore Oriole / Lyric Waltz For A Libra Lady / All The Things You Are / Starshine / Deep In A Dream
1984



This review groups together seven albums from Canadian record companies that mostly feature Canadian artists. Next to Oscar Peterson and Maynard Ferguson, Rob McConnell is currently the best-known Canadian jazz musician, at least outside his native country. McConnell, a fluid and personable valve trombonist, owes much of his fame to his leadership of the Boss Brass. His colorful arrangements tend to ignore jazz development after the early 1960s (no free jazz or fusion licks here), but manage to be quite creative within the boundaries of straight-ahead jazz. "All In Good Time" has many bright moments, particulary a fascinating re-evaluation of ***I Got Rhythm***, the multi-tempoed ***Schlep It Up To Joe*** and the blues ***Can't Stop My Leg***. Although there are short solos from several of the sidemen, the sound of the 22-piece orchestra is emphasized. All in all, this album is an excellent introduction to the Boss Brass.

McConnell so enjoyed playing a duet chorus with Ed Bickert on ***Darn That Dream*** that he commented about it on the above album's liner notes, and shortly after released a record of valve trombone-guitar duets cut over a 2-year period. I have rather mixed feelings about this record. The duet sounds great when Rob McConnell is soloing; his ideas are endlessly creative and the frameworks (such as utilized on ***April In Paris***) work well. But when the virtuoso valve trombonist inevitably drops out to allow Bickert a chance to solo, the music seems in danger of falling apart; ***Royal Garden Blues*** is a good example. The absence of a bass becomes obvious during the guitarist's single-note lines although McConnell tries to help out with backing chords that only end up emphasizing the sparseness. Ed Bickert, though quite talented, does not have Joe Pass' ability to cover up the empty spaces. Why not add bassist Don Thompson and try again? But despite the reservations, this is one of the best examples of McConnell's playing talents to date; I'd like to hear him in small-group settings more often.

"Up There" teams together four high-quality musicians sometimes referred to as the Gentlemen Of Jazz. Although there is some passion in their playing, that title fits this tasteful music perfectly. Frank Wright's vibes bring to mind the playfulness of Lionel Hampton and especially the basic sound and style of Milt Jackson. Wray Downes, a strong player, shows individuality in his octave runs on piano but is quite influenced by Oscar Peterson; in fact ***Monk's Blues*** sounds like it could be a Bags/Peterson meeting from perhaps the early 1960s. **Steve Wallace**'s bass is strong in support while Archie Alleyne's drums are quite subtle. The slightly unusual material (including the soul classic ***Everything Must Change*** and Isaac Hayes' ***Deja Vu***) receives quietly swinging treatment from the quartet on this enjoyable date.

The second album from the Hal Hill/Don Thompson label From Bebop To Now is quite a bit different. Dave Liebman (on soprano and flute) plays fairly free originals with his quartet. Actually, it is surprising how generous Liebman is with the solo space; only his unaccompanied soprano feature, the 3 minute ***Spring '82,*** casts him as the main soloist. ***Full Nelson*** has longer improvisations from **Don Thompson** on piano and drummer **Claude Ranger** than from the leader. The explorative but mostly peaceful ballad ***Tender Mercies*** (at nearly 11 minutes, easily the longest piece on this date) is most notable for Thompson's usage of whole-tone scales in his somber solo. On ***Missing Person*** Thompson switches to second bass where his pizzicato statements are echoed and a bit satirized by the bowing of the talented **Steve LaSpina**. Even Thompson's one appearance on vibes, on ***Nadir***, has impressive interplay with Liebman's flute. The most memorable composition, Ranger's ***Feu Vert***, features driving almost-talking soprano but even here Thompson's piano accompaniment grabs one's attention. Overall "Sweet Fury" is worth acquiring for its musical content but those wanting to hear Dave Liebman heavily featured should look at one of his many other fine albums.

Tim Brady's solo guitar session "Dreams" is quite ambitious and partly successful. On ten original sketches, Brady covers a diverse variety of styles, switching from acoustic to electric guitars, sometimes using overdubbing and electronic distortions. The opening ***Talk At Random*** is his best integration of rhythmic patterns with solo outbursts. On several of the acoustic pieces, notably ***Roughshod***, the squeaking of the strings is a bit distracting. Other songs range from the bizarre ***Broomstick Trick*** (what is he doing here?) to the emphasis on an echoey sound on ***R.E.M.*** and a brief ***Gnomen*** on which Brady displays a hard rock style. The lack of liner notes is rather inexcusable; they would have helped one's understanding of what Brady is attempting. One gives Tim Brady extra points for his efforts but I'd mostly recommend this album to guitarists looking for new ideas.

It is easy to see why Sara Hamilton and David live at a nightclub might be enjoyable; they perform upbeat supperclub music. But listening to their album "Live!" is another story. Sara Hamilton is not an improviser or a jazz singer. Her two choruses on ***Take The "A" Train*** (patterned after Betty Roche's recording with Ellington) are virtually identical and she is so overly dramatic on ***Guess Who I Say Today***

that it gives away the punchline. For some reason ***Over The Rainbow*** and her original ***Don't Wanna Play No More*** are given uptempo renditions, rendering the potentially meaningful words useless. Her pianist "David" (does he have a last name?) is fine in support although his backing vocals show more personality than tonal quality and he has the audacity to sing ***Night And Day*** by himself. Much better and the only real reason to buy this album are the two or three solos apiece taken by guests **Rob McConnell** on valve trombone, trumpeter **Guido Basso** and **Eugene Amaro** on tenor; these far outshine the singing. A much better album would have mostly featured the three horns with the good rhythm section and perhaps had a few vocals from "guest" Sara Hamilton, who in a different setting is quite capable of recording a worthy album.

Vocalist Joe Coughlin is also a fairly straight singer but he knows the meaning of the words he sings. On "Second Debut" he sounds best on the standards where he gives the proper emotional intensity to the lyrics. The swinging guitarist **Ed Bickert** and Trane-influenced tenor of **Kirk MacDonald** solo on alternate songs, giving a strong jazz feeling to this set of popular music. Of the originals, ***Hello N.Y.C.*** is a tribute to the quantity of jazz in the Big Apple and has a mysterious theme that could have come from the pen of Wayne Shorter. ***Spring*** and ***Starshine*** are of lesser interest but the rare vocal version of ***All The Things You Are*** and the tasty duet with Bickert on ***Deep In A Dream*** makes this a recommended album for those who enjoy hearing talented singers. — ***Scott Yanow***

YVES BOULIANE / JOHN HEWARD
Masse Au Tiers Controle
Clac 3301

PIERRE ST-JAK
Oeuvralgique
St-J 8888

PIERRE ST-JAK / CLAUDE VENDETTE
Existango
STVE 111

The three Canadian albums covered in this article are by players from the province of Quebec. "Masse Au Tiers Controle" (Clac 3301) features two painter-musicians, bassist Yves Bouliane and drummer John Heward. On their six untitled improvisations the performances of this acoustic bass - drums duo are a bit like black and white film; a limited amount of colors is available but there is a strong potential to tell a story. While Bouliane's bass moves slowly with an emphasis on emotion, Heward reacts immediately to his moods. Bouliane doodles a bit on clarinet (overdubbed) near the close of this lp but it's quite irrelevant. There are no real melodies or obvious rhythms (although a steady pulse does emerge) and both players use quite a bit of restraint. At times this music grabs one's attention while at other moments it works best as background music for one's thoughts.

"Oeuvralgique" (St-J 8888) is a solo piano album by Pierre St-Jacques (known as St-Jak) that is quite fascinating. On most of his nine originals St-Jak explores more than one distinct melody (often several) and although hinting at Tristano, McCoy Tyner and Jarrett among others, he creates an original style. Since I regrettably do not read French, the lengthy liner notes do not help much in trying to interpret the pianist's goals. Suffice it to say that his music is colorful (particularly ***Chere Sonia*** which has a childlike melody and utter dissonance co-existing), occasionally humorous (the distorted piano on ***Brique A Braque*** sounds both like a banjo and a drum set) and quite explorative if sometimes wandering. Overall this album offers a very interesting listening experience.

Even better is "Existango" (STVE 111) which finds St-Jak co-leading a quartet with saxophonist Claude Vendette. Tempo and mood changes are common yet many of the melodies are quite strong. ***Impossible Important*** and ***Intimate Zero*** are both a bit Monkish; the latter is a baritone-piano duet that reminds one of both ***Goodbye Pork Pie Hat*** and ***Crepuscule With Nellie***. The title cut has Vendette's tenor mixing together Wayne Shorter and Gato Barbieri. Other selections include the intense ***Samba St-Atha***, a brief but pretty ballad ***Petite Piece***, and some sparkling unison lines on ***Danse A Colorier*** that could have been written for the Keith Jarrett quartet (the one that featured Dewey Redman's tenor). Bassist Wayne Smith and drummer Raffaele Artiglieri have no trouble being versatile enough to fit into the many different settings. Pierre St-Jak and Claude Vendette are talents to watch for in the future. — ***Scott Yanow***

Saxophone Variations

JULIUS HEMPHILL / THE JAH BAND
Georgia Blue
Minor Music 003

Some musicians have always had the ability to assert themselves and to shape very strong statements no matter what context they are playing in. The tone, the sound, the urgency of their music immediately elicits a response from the listener and they seem to give an added depth to any group performing with them. As was the case in the past, there are such individuals in our midst today, and to that special breed we can add the name of Julius Hemphill.

In this latest release (recorded live at Willisau last summer), Hemphill once again dominates the proceedings, thus proving that he is a leader to be reckoned with. Throughout, his voice cuts into that of a very heavily amplified band and there is no doubt here that he makes all the difference. On this outing, he has chosen a quintet format, where an electric bass and guitar give off some very loud vibes, further compounded by the drummer and an added percussion player.

Side one starts interestingly enough with a ballad, ***Georgia Blue***, that brings Hemphill's lyrical side to the fore. The tune has an almost pop-like sound to it, but Hemphill takes it to different places, pacing himself nicely in his solo and shaping the harmonies very nimbly. Moreover, he uses his broad and expressive tone on alto to great advantage. This track shows us a side of Hemphill we do not hear too often, so it is a treat to hear him in a mellow and relaxed mood. However, the next track has something quite different in store for us. ***The Hard Blues*** (the same tune he recorded earlier on Arista) receives quite a hard treatment. As a matter of fact, if the title of a tune ever depicted accurately its content, this surely has to be it: a low down funk groove with acrid guitar twangs sets up Hemphill's growls and screams. The tune falters slightly as it brakes twice into a double time feeling that sounds somewhat unsettled in the backfield.

Side two carries over the energy of the blues, especially in the last cut ***Dogon II***, a free and intense excursion with quite a bit of raucous guitar decibels. Maybe I missed something there, but the piece exuded more volume than cogent musical discourse. ***Testament #5*** (the opener of the side) is a much more subdued rubato exploration that remains dynamically restrained from start to finish. Jumma Santos is the only one on the piece who seems to be setting down a groove but, for some strange reason, none of the other players pick up on it, except for the very end when a thematic statement emerges and the band finally meets.

As for the sidemen, Hemphill has chosen people with whom I have not seen him associated before. Alex Cline might stand out as the best sideman as his drumming provides a good foil for the leader. As for Nels Cline on guitar, I cannot really dig what he is doing, because Hendrix-like clones were never my cup of tea, so I will pass up on any diatribes. The enigmatic one-named bassist, Steubig, does not overbear like a legion of thumpy electric bass players all too common in the pop and fusion neighbourhood's. Percussionist Santos, finally, is there somewhere on each track, and his conga playing on ***Testament*** is the most noticeable contribution of the set.

In any event, Julius Hemphill seems to be another one of those "avant gardists" making forays into a more electronically rock-oriented context. However, the music here appears more daring than the commercial slant of the fusion wave that almost overran us ten years ago. When I listen to these grooves, I can think a bit of Ornette's brand of harmolodic funk, which is starting to spread around very quickly. However, Hemphill's band is not emulating this trend, but some influence is detectable. For Hemphill's gutsy playing, this album is good, but the band around him doesn't succeed in making the music exceptional or original.

— Marc Chenard

THE DAVID BOND TRIO
Odessey
Vineyard Records VRC 001

FOURTH STREAM
Crystal Reflections CRP 01

Ever since the early 50s, various artists have sought to defend their won creative interests by producing and recording their own music according to their own standards. Many independent labels have come and gone over the last 30 years, but all of them have tried to keep artistic and aesthetic concerns above the profit margins and other economic priorities. Basically, such initiatives have been (and still are) testing grounds for new talent (and, at times, new ideas) which will either develop or fall by the wayside. This last assumption serves as a baseline for reviewing albums produced by hitherto unknown talent, as is the case of the two releases under consideration.

David Bond is one of the musicians whose name is known on the "local circuits" of the Big Apple, which may also be true for cellist **Peter Sowerwine** and percussionist **Charles Miller**. Before listening to this album, I was struck by the instrumental combination which led me to believe that I was in for something experimental or esoteric. Yet, there is nothing radical or difficult; one feels a great deal of control exhibited by each player, an excellent rapport between them and a relaxed, uncluttered feeling from beginning to end. In a sense, one could call their style of music, "swinging chamber jazz". In fact, David Bond himself gives the best description of their musical concept: "... contemporary jazz with subtle influences from European and Indian classical influences. One might think a bit of the group Oregon, minus the cerebral or contemplative aspects".

This trio swings nicely because the cello supplies a lighter pulse than the one usually given the bass and the conga adds a nice rhythmic flow, a bit like the recurring sounds of waves rolling onto the beach. Their music is readily accessible to average ears, while the more adventurous ones might find it a little too cautious. For instance, David Bond's saxophone stays within the usual high F range, while the cellist and percussionist seem to adhere to the usual bass/drum format, supporting the alto instead of challenging it. Only one piece on the album (***Illusion***) is a totally spontaneous improvisation, but it does not come across as convincingly as the tunes with a written head. Some groups do sound more at ease with written material and this one is far better in that vein.

Apart from Bond's fluent but not overtly technical playing (in fact, they refuse to overplay their instruments) cellist Sowerwine plays with clear and precise articulation (no doubt he is classically trained) and percussionist Miller keeps everything ebbing and flowing with his rhythmic sureness. But one thing puzzles me with the latter's own playing: how does he play congas while striking a cymbal simultaneously?

In essence, their music is well thought out, well crafted and very tight, maybe a little too much for some tastes. With this album you could even get some of your non-jazz-loving friends hooked on some of today's sounds in improvised music. Chances are you will also dig it yourself.

Though I do not want to compare the previous disc with the debut album of a new trio based here in Montreal, Fourth Stream, I still think that it is worth noting that records in general betray very quickly the professionalism of any musical effort. As the David Bond Trio passes the test hands down, this young group doesn't make it yet. First of all, I have never heard an album whose two sides differ so much in the quality of the playing. Side one gives the impression that they are all looking for the light switch, but they are afraid of falling in their search for some light. The tentative feeling made me wonder if this was all for real. Side two (fortunately) lays those doubts and questions aside (but not completely to rest). The group feels less inhibited and they even begin to cook, which leads me to believe that they have found the light switch. All of the music is their own, except for Don Cherry's ***Mopti***, a melodically simple African-tinged theme, which gives them a chance to conjure some nice rhythmic interplay.

As for the musicians, they are all young. **Ken Vandermark**, on tenor, plays somewhat in the recent Rollins mode, preferring motivic development to the linear sequences common to harmonically oriented improvisation. **Scott White** (bass) and **Ken Burke** (drums) seem to form a good team and they keep things moving on side two.

In spite of my criticisms, I recently had the opportunity of meeting Ken Vandermark who informed me that the music on side one was destined for a play that fell through and they did not have much leeway when it came to playing the material. In all fairness to them, I'll give them a break on that account.

In setting aside the inherent liabilities of this record, I was also made aware of the fact that the band is still together, a year after this session took place. Furthermore, they have

some new material on tape which they want to release. It is nice then that this group is not yet ready to fall by the wayside, so I can only wish them well and hope to hear more (and better) things coming from them. *Marc Chenard*

TONY DAGRADI / RAMSEY McLEAN
The Long View
Prescription Records No. 4

Cellist and bassist Ramsey McLean and reed player Tony Dagradi, two members of the diverse New Orleans music scene which is emerging into international prominence, deliver a contemplative but gutsy series of duets on this release from Prescription Records. Titles like ***Swan Song, Resurrection (For The Living)*** and ***Without*** indicate the mood sustained throughout most of this album. And while it is an extremely difficult task to sustain a program entirely of ballad material, McLean and Dagradi do it successfully through their seamless execution of McLean's imaginative material.

They perform these pieces flawlessly, letting the music unfold at its own pace, letting go gradually to an emotional climax, then reining themselves back to the melody. They blend the sounds of their instruments in the unified way that Dolphy and Davis did — the timbre of one instrument reflects in the timbre of the other until it is sometimes hard to distinguish string from reed. The tunes sound simpler than they are because of the assured performance they get.

Music like this risks becoming audio anesthetic in the manner of Windahm Hill troupe, or of sounding naive or pretty in a shallow way. But Dagradi and McLean avoid these pitfalls. There are no comforting platitudes on this record. The compositions provide the quietude for unsentimental contemplation of the world as it is, rather than audio wash to blunt the senses. You emerge with the philosophical strength which comes from taking "The Long View." *Ed Hazell*

TIM BERNE
Mutant Variations
Soul Note SN 1091

Icicles / Homage / Clear / The Tin Ear / An Evening On Marvin St.

Clarence Herb Robertson, pocket trumpet, trumpet, cornet, flugelhorn; Tim Berne, alto saxophone; Ed Schuller, bass; Paul Motian, percussion.

Beginning with the initial releases on his own Empire label, and including "The Ancestors" (Soul Note SN 1061), saxophonist Tim Berne has maintained a consistently impressive track record. "Mutant Variations" is yet another fine example of this continuing pattern of excellence. Recorded during an 18 concert European tour, it catches this venturesome quartet in peak form. Berne's confident, aggressive playing and loosely structured but finely crafted compositions most certainly bear a significant importance; however, the real spark is ignited by trumpeter Clarence Herb Robertson. Using his mutes effectively, Robertson introduces a vast array of tonal variations that range from the comic to the dramatic. His explosive attack rustles up a whirlwind of excitement that spreads through the ensemble like wildfire. On ***Icicles*** for instance, his humorously rambunctious solo breaks the foreboding spell of the theme before giving way to an emotionally frantic outburst from Berne. ***Homage*** opens with Berne's pensive alto and soon develops into a moody ballad with Mingusian overtones. There is a nice spot from Robertson and an appropriately thoughtful solo by Schuller. ***Clear*** has a somber air about it as the horns trade phrases over an urgently bouyant pulse supplied by Schuller and Motian. Working together frequently with Berne and in Motian's own group, these two men have developed into a strong, dependable team.

Side two gets off to a swinging start as ***The Tin Ear*** finds Berne looking in the direction of Ornette Coleman, soaring to ever spiraling heights with the aid of Motian's relentless drumming. Robertson, not surprisingly, falls under the influence of Don Cherry during his wide open, full bodied statement. Motian has the final say, conveying his message in forceful, but controlled, fashion. The closing cut, ***An Evening On Marvin St.***, moves through various stages of assorted dialogue slowly gaining momentum and finally surging forward under a full head of steam. Hopefully, this immensely satisfying record will help Berne achieve some of the recognition he so justly deserves.

— Gerard Futrick

TIM BERNE (Photograph by Rod Heinz)

DANNY TURNER
First Time Out
Hemisphere 0001

Coming through the 1970s into the 1980s, the sidemen in the Basie orchestra have tended to become members of musicians anonymous. Some have sustained individual exposure with musical lives outside the big machine, and now comes another one emerging from that fine organization to show what makes it so good. Here we have the debut album by alto saxophonist Danny Turner, joined by a small clutch of very helpful musicians.

He has the benefit of Gerry Wiggins at the piano, playing with taste and perception as always, veteran Red Callender on bass and, joining him from the Basie band, drummer Dennis Mackrel. With that kind of help, you'd better be good because you can't lay the blame for a poor session on the company you keep. And Turner passes the test, making good use of the musicians, the engineering and the material to come up with an initial album that makes a fair statement of his abilities.

Those abilities include good technical facility, a nice tone when it's called for and a gritty one when that's what's appropriate and, at times, a supply of ideas to carry off the challenge of the moment. There are two original blues that prove his ability to produce a blues line and embellish it through a succession of choruses. Likewise, when he takes a ballad at slow tempo, as he does in ***Lover Man***, Wild Bill Davis' ***Stolen Sweets*** and ***The End Of A Love Affair***, his interpretation is very satisfying. Less effective are the last two tracks, Irving Berlin's ***All Alone*** and Cole Porter's ***I Love You***, which Turner takes at fast tempo and ends up with superficial flurries of notes that fail to be either attractive or grippping. The liner notes, by Stanley Dance, refer to the last track ending with a pretty and effective coda, but actually we're given one of those engineer's fades.

There's much to enjoy in this record and much for Danny Turner to be pleased with. Next time it might be worth adding another horn to the session to give the altoist something to play off of. Not only is this a debut album for Turner, it's a debut album for the label, and

all parties should be satisfied with the effort. Facing the challenges of record distribution, this is a mail-order-only operation: Hemisphere Record Corp., P.O. Box 3578, New York, NY, 10185. *— Dick Neeld*

BUDDY TATE AND AL GREY
Just Jazz
Uptown UP 27.21

CHARLIE ROUSE
Social Call
Uptown UP 27.18

SAHEB SARBIB
It Couldn't Happen Without You
Soul Note SN 1098

These two Uptown recordings clearly reflect this company's musical preference: older musicians playing in the tradition, in ***their*** tradition. And they do so well. The listener expects no surprises; there are none, unless hearing vital music from the elders is unexpected.

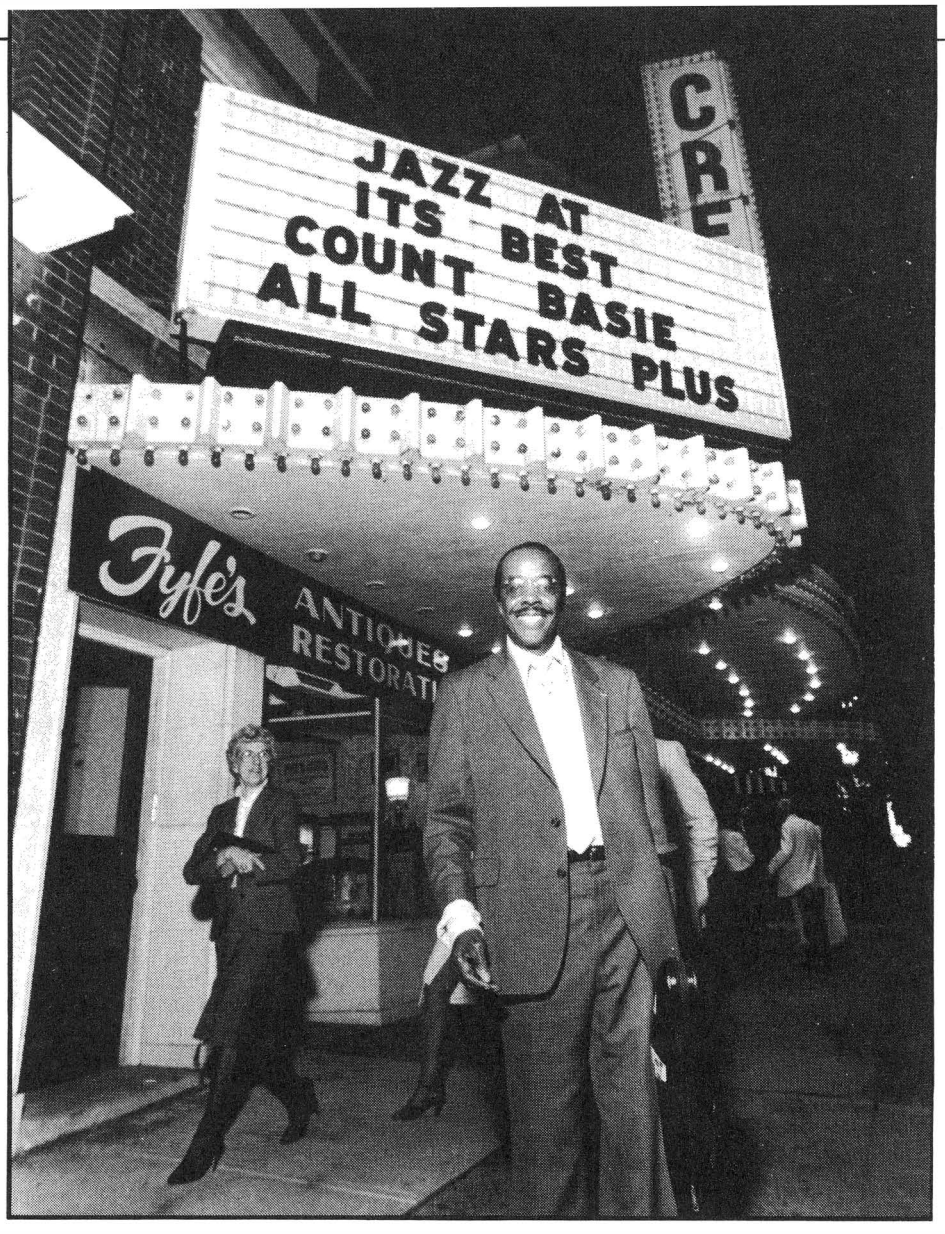
Long-time Basie-ites Tate and Grey create consistently rewarding music throughout their album. While Tate is Tate, on both tenor and clarinet, Grey plays splendidly, in part because he does not mug and because he does not overindulge his plunger. He plays in a straightahead manner. Tate and Grey are obviously compatible; the sparkling rhythm section of Richard Wyands, Major Holley and Al Harewood provides ideal support. The six tunes range from Benny Carter's beautiful and neglected ***Blues In My Heart*** to ***Tangerine***. Other than the Carter blues, the highlight is the venerable ***Topsy.*** Wyands recreates Basie's original 1937 introduction and conclusion; Tate solos superbly on this chestnut that was originally a feature for Herschel Evans, his predecessor in Basie's band. And, ironically, this album so infused with Basie's spirit was recorded the day following his death.

Rouse and his partner, Red Rodney, are more obviously modern than Tate and Grey. The boppers play compositions by, among others, Gigi Gryce, Miles Davis, Tadd Dameron, and Rouse. Most impressive is a definitive and lengthy (almost ten minutes) interpretation of ***Darn That Dream***, Rouse's showpiece. His playing is subdued yet lyrical; lean yet strong. The up-tempo ***Greenhouse***, the shortest selection, is almost as successful. Elsewhere on this album Albert Dailey's minimalist piano occasionally seems out of place as the third solo voice, but his forcefulness on ***Greenhouse*** fits perfectly with Rouse and Rodney's muscularity.

Other strengths include the surrealistic beginning of Dailey's solo on Rouse's ***Little Chico*** (and do not miss his allusion to ***Buttons And Bows*** on Dameron's ***Casbah***), Rodney's consistency (his tone is magnificent), and Rudy Van Gelder's wonderful sound. Cecil McBee and Kenny Washington play ably, but except for a few bars from the bassist, they stay in the background. Strangely, the group's only lackluster performance is on the title tune. This reservation aside, "Social Call", a splendid release, is probably Rouse's best date as a leader.

Saheb Sarbib's session does not seem initially to be similar to the Uptown dates, but it is. Here is a forty-year-old leader comfortable with the avant garde whose group plays, in this instance, in an immediately accessible manner, with strong historical roots. This may be Sarbib's natural bent, but part of the reason for this accessibility is possibly that three of his five originals are dedications, two of which are to Thelonious Monk and Charlie Parker. (The third is to Dennis Charles). The dedicatees' music likely influenced the composer's. ***Conjunctions*** is a short, perky number with a decidedly Monkish feeling to it; ***Watchmacallit*** might not be pure bop, but Bird would doubtless have admired the performance. Part of the latter composition's melodic line is indebted to Quincy Jones' ***Hard Sock Dance*** (1961). A subdued and lovely ***You Don't Know What Love Is*** also helps establish this album's mood. The musicians are first rate: Joe Ford, alto and soprano; Kirk Lightsey, piano; Rashied Ali, drums. The bassist/leader provides solid support. Joe Lovano plays tenor on five tracks; Pete Chavez, on two.

These three 1984 quintet albums demonstrate — if proof be needed — the tradition's fecundity: directly, on the Uptown releases; obliquely, on Sarbib's date. These are substantial recordings. *— Benjamin Franklin V*



BUDDY TATE (Photograph by Paul Hoeffler)

ABE MOST
The Most — Abe, That Is
Annunciata AR-1051

Swing Low Sweet Clarinet
Camard KM 12582

LICORICE FACTORY
Jazzmania 41206

The popularity of the clarinet in jazz has paralleled the popularity of jazz itself. There's probably no cause and effect relationship involved, but consider their joint history. The clarinet was a basic instrument in groups large and small in the founding days, and it grew to its greatest prominence in the swing era, when the big band phenomenon gave jazz its greatest exposure and popularity. Bandleaders Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, Woody Herman, Jimmy Dorsey and others signify the prominence of the clarinet in those times. As jazz receded in popularity in the 1940s and thereafter, for numerous reasons, so did the clarinet within the jazz sphere. Only a handful of musicians, like Buddy DeFranco, Tony Scott and Jimmy

Guiffre, joined the ranks of the older generation players in keeping the clarinet in jazz. The many notable early clarinetists, like Ed Hall, Barney Bigard and Buster Bailey gradually succumbed to jazz's eclipse, obscurity, old age and death. Now, in current times, with jazz receiving new interest as it recovers from the nearly mortal blows of rock music in the 1960s and 1970s, there is a renewed interest in the instrument. While a few determined players, like Bob Wilber and Kenny Davern have stayed active through these latter years, we now see veterans returning to the scene and a new generation making its appearance. At hand we have worthy examples of both developments.

One of the veterans is Abe Most, a sideman in the big bands of the swing era who also worked in small combo's. He has recently made two lp's that show he has kept his talent at work in the years that have followed.

On the Annunciata lp he is supported by a piano-bass-drums combination of **Ray Sherman, Ray Leatherwood** and **Nick Fatool** who, like Most, have a long record of West Coast studio work and local appearances. Fatool, of course, shares a distinguished swing band past with Most. The music here draws on that swing idiom for a program of originals, standards and ballads that are tasteful and tasty examples of the genre. ***Avalon, All Of Me*** and ***Estrellita*** are the kinds of tunes that remind you of Goodman and his dominating presence in this kind of music, with an update in the form of ***Send In The Clowns***. However, Most's three originals and one by Fatool allow them more room to assert their own selves, albeit in the same tradition.

The same can be said for the Camard lp. Basically, we get more of the same. It's a different trio of musicians in support, with **Hank Jones** at the piano, **Monty Budwig** on bass and **Jake Hanna** on drums. Good as the other group is, this gang of pro's is able to add some extra strength to the proceedings, especially the beat that Hanna sets up, using wire brushes throughout.

Most comes back on this record with a couple more good originals to add seasoning to the mix of staples like ***After You've Gone*** and ***These Foolish Things***, a rare good choice in Bob Haggart and Nappy Lamare's ***My Inspiration***, and other songs well-suited to Most's handling — ***Angel Eyes, Here's That Rainy Day*** and ***The Sweetest Sounds***. On one track he switches to flute and is joined by younger brother Sam to play some of Luis Bonfa's princely music from "Black Orpheus". Both these albums are very enjoyable: well-chosen material, tastefully played by accomplished musicians in a style of music that has proved its worth over the decades as a live and lively expression of the improvisor's art.

The urge to do something different pervades all the arts, and none more so than jazz. Oftentimes it's an empty act, achieving the difference by sacrificing any musical sense or value. In the case of Licorice Factory, however, they find their way into musical expression that is largely new, or at least different, while showing respect for, and deriving inspiration from, the jazz tradition.

Licorice Factory is a group of three clarinets supported by three rhythms. **Marty Whitecage** plays alto clarinet, **Mike Morgenstern** the bass clarinet and **Perry Robinson** soprano clarinet. They are given suitable assistance by **Dave Lalama** playing piano and synthesizer, **Michael Fleming** the bass and **Walter Perkins** on drums. It's clear that a lot of thought has gone into creating their music and that they have a generous amount of ability to execute those ideas. It makes you wish that there were descriptive liner notes to explain the development of their music and their activity as a group. Apparently their arrangements, like their material, originate from both inside and outside the band.

The instrumentation of the group is certainly like no other. We've heard numerous duets through the years and big band reed sections with multiple clarinet voicings, but none of that corresponds to this group's output, except as prelude. They pay their respects to tradition with a jaunty rendition of ***Do You Know What It Means To Miss New Orleans*** and a rich voicing of Duke Ellington's ***Azure***, a composition ideally suited to the sound textures the three instruments are capable of producing. They also dig into Oliver Nelson's ***Stolen Moments*** to give their gutsiest performance of the lp. After that it's mostly a matter of special material: one number composed by Morgenstern, two by Robinson and a Whitecage arrangement of a Willie Nelson tune. There's also an oddity entitled ***Laurel And Hardy Meet The Three Stooges***, which is entertaining but, from the sound of things, might better be called Felix The Cat Meets Mickey Mouse. This is a collection of carefully prepared music that is enjoyable throughout — capable musicians creating new music in a conscientious way. It may be too precious a sound to be durable on the world market, but it should be absorbing in concert or on record, as here. — ***Dick Neeld***

EKKEHARD JOST QUINTET
Crambolage
View VS 0028

Mobibobi / Lonely Langgons / Kleine Serenade Fur He He / Tangenten / Stieselkick & Dat Walzerle / Palestrinas Reise Nach Cadiz / Onaega Jive / Saint Malo / Haste Gesagt

Herbert Hellhund, trumpet, flugelhorn, zither; Dirk Huelst, tenor saxophone and roll shutter; Ekkehard Jost, baritone and bass saxophones, zither and percussion; Georg Wolff, bass; Joe Bonica, drums and percussion.

Considering the glut of records flooding the international market each year under the guise of jazz or creative music, there surely are many worthwhile releases that slip by virtually unnoticed.

"Crambolage" certainly qualifies as a prime example. Under the leadership of Ekkehard Jost, (probably best known as the author of "Free Jazz"), this loosely structured free bop excursion is an attractive and refreshing revelation. A saxophonist and composer of considerable abilities (all of the compositions with the exception of ***Saint Malo*** by trumpeter Hellhund are his), Jost handles the larger members of the saxophone family with relative ease. He also emerges as the most imaginative and adventurous soloist on these sides. Throwing caution to the wind, he more often than not relies on his gut feelings, unleasing several brash and probing improvisations. Trumpeter Hellhund, while possessing good chops, a respectable range and bright, clean attack, is a bit stiff and has a tendency to ramble. He is, however, quite an effective team player. Rooted more deeply in the mainstream, tenor saxophonist Dirk Huelst's work is marked by a fluent continuity enabling him to develop intelligent, full bodied solos. Most of the charts are basically sparse sketches that allow the players enough elbow room to maneuver easily and without restrictions. There are also one or two selections which emphasize the ability of this band to function as a close knit unit. Working in tandem, Wolff and Bonica generate and sustain the kind of free-flowing propulsive rhythmic base needed in this type of situation. By and large, there is more integrity to be found here than in the work of many of today's highly touted, so-called super stars. ***Gerard Futrick***
(View Records, Schluterstrasse 53, 1000, Berlin 12, West Germany).

VINNY GOLIA TRIO
Slice Of Life
Nine Winds 0108

NEW AIR
Live At Montreal International Jazz Festival
Black Saint 0084

KESHAVAN MASLAK With Charles Moffett
Blaster Master
Black Saint 0079

These three records, all strong in different ways, are interesting in how they illustrate the artists in different phases of their development.

The Vinny Golia record, for example, is like all of Vinny's records in that it is extremely good in every way. Many improvising artists seem unable to present their best music on disc; this has never been the case with Vinny Golia, whose recordings are always very carefully programmed and produced. He has issued, I believe, about eight records of his own music on Nine Winds — beginning with the first record of this trio (with Roberto Miranda on bass and Alex Cline on drums) plus John Carter on clarinet, and proceeding through to his current projects with pianist Wayne Peet and others. A talented instrumentalist and composer, Golia would doubtless be better known if he moved back home to the New York area; but he would also not be the important regional influence he has become in Los Angeles and that area would doubtless suffer more from losing his music than the East would benefit from gaining his music. In any event, hopefully the seriousness and consistent high quality of his work will eventually gain him in the long run as many listeners as greater media exposure could bring him now.

Throughout most of his Nine Winds records Golia is in the company of Miranda on bass and Cline on percussion. Although his collaborations with them are not so consistent now, this recording is very representative of the fine music this trio has made through a long and important phase of Golia's career.

The Air record, or rather the New Air record, is the first issued by this long-standing trio since Steve McCall has been replaced by the equally-superb Pheeroan Ak Laff on drums. Ak Laff is, as always, delightful; he is one of

those players who has transformed and abstracted the drums into an instrument of pure imagination and joy.

I have always thought of Air as a group better heard in person than on record and this recording confirms this. Recorded live in Montreal in 1983, the concert must have been great; however I feel that there is an element of hypnotism in the appeal of this kind of extended improvisation in "time" — an element that one is less receptive to when listening to a record than when one is witnessing the performance in person. This despite the great flexible, melodic bass playing of Fred Hopkins and the shifting layers of Ak Laff's percussion. In many ways this trio personifies, as do all these three records, a certain style of post-Ornette Coleman "jazz" — but a music that tends to be conventionally melodic rather than harmolodic, and less flexible rhythmically than Ornette's pre-Prime Time groups. However unless you insist on jazz being based on the chord changes of popular songs, music such as Air — or New Air — must surely be considered the epitome of modern, even "straightahead" jazz.

It is good to have Keshavan Maslak recording on a prominent independent label such as Black Saint. He is one of the better contemporary saxophonists, yet to date his recorded work has been for very small, mainly European labels. He impressed a lot of listeners here in Canada while touring with Loek Dikker's Waterland Quartet, a relationship formed during Keshavan's stay in Holland. Here he is in good form, playing his own hoarse, bluesy alto and tenor, matched by the funky drumming of Charles Moffett. This is a good introduction to two under-recorded artists, and I urge you to let this record inspire you to find Keshavan Maslak's trio and quartet recordings on Leo, Waterland, Circle and others, to get a more complete picture of how enjoyable his music can be. — ***David Lee***

EVAN PARKER / GEORGE LEWIS / BARRY GUY / PAUL LYTTON
Hook, Drift & Shuffle
Incus Records 45

Drift / Shuffle / Hook

Evan Parker, saxophones; George Lewis, trombone and "a number of accessory and modifying devices, most of which were amplified"; Barry Guy, bass, using "amplification and electronics to process the sound"; Paul Lytton, percussion ("cymbals, gongs, woodblocks and amplified percussion").

This forty-fifth release on the Inus label is "a set of improvisations". (The "incus", or anvil, is the middle bone of the three bones of the middle ear which transfer the vibrations of the eardrum to the cochlea; an illustration of this three bone system is used as a logo by Incus and can be seen on their covers and record labels). Incus Records was founded in 1970 by Derek Bailey, Evan Parker and Tony Oxley, the first independent musician-owned record label in Britain.

As may be expected, Evan Parker is featured in a significant number of Incus releases, to date 22. Over the years he has developed a quickly identifiable modus of playing his saxophones, predominantly soprano and tenor. He relies to an extent upon the use of circular breathing techniques to enable a sustained flow of sound to be maintained; to an extent he uses the comprehensive resource of sounds which he is able to manipulate (by means which extend far beyond the realm of the hands) from the instruments. The former technique, when used, can excite you, the listener, by causing you to suspend your own physical and mental breathing — you hold your breath and have no time to think; long lines of improvisation on blown instruments were, not so long ago, the stuff of dreams.

There is a hint from the layout of the cover words and the wording of the disc labels that Evan Parker should be perceived as "the principal" of this release; so far as his previous work with partners in this session has been documented by Incus, he can be heard in duo sets with George Lewis on Incus 35 and with Paul Lytton on Incus 05 and 14. Lewis is a relative newcomer to the Incus label, this being his fourth release. His first three releases derive from material performed in May and June 1980, (Incus 35, 36 and 37). Barry Guy has been associated with Incus from its beginnings (1970) and this is his ninth release. Lytton goes back to 1972 and now has seven Incus releases representing his work/play.

The use of modifying devices, electronics and amplification adds considerably to the sound resources available to these four free-improvising co-performers. ***Hook*** is the shortest track, ruminations whose rhythmic ground (not stated, but felt) shifts from dawn to noon; ***Shuffle*** shuffles from preliminary meanderings into a more deliberated development against a more or less repeated "bass" figure. Auditioning the "long" ***Drift*** track triggers in me words such as "animal", the "kammer" of chamber music, "humour, ethereal, gamelan, voices, primeval, ritual, disjointed, continuity"... for the ying, the yang — a "tao teh ching", a watercourse way of music, of music performance, of co-operation; ultimately a proof of a political suggestion, a history of the world and a pointer towards a future other than that towards which this little sphere of ours seems currently to be inexorably drifting.

Altogether, a fine release.... the rest is up to you. — ***Roger Parry***

JOE McPHEE
With The Bill Smith Ensemble
"Visitation"
Sackville 3036

Excerpts from an interview with Joe McPhee taken 11.4.80 in San Francisco, CA:

"I wasn't interested in making my name a household word — I am interested in playing some music, no matter where I am, I intend to do that.... In terms of tradition.... my family background doesn't involve a traditional jazz background.... both my parents are from the Bahamas... the music that I was brought up around had nothing to do with gospel (we come from a different church), so much, although I was aware of that tradition... the blues wasn't a large part of that. As a teenager I had friends who had record collections, jazz, what have you, and that's the sort of thing that led me to investigate other kinds of musics... also folk musics, European forms.... and all of that together has influenced the music I'm playing today.

"I acknowledge that the music I play comes from a jazz tradition. I'm not about to say that I don't play jazz 'cause I don't want that connotation... I know where it comes from. It comes from a very rich heritage, a heritage I'm proud to be associated with. I don't know whether the music I play is jazz or not; but that's not for me to say... that's for writers and people who attach various labels to things. I would hope that if any description was used about the music I'm doing it might possibly be that it was good music; that it was honest, from the standpoint that the person who was making that music was sincere and honest in what he was doing....

"Music in total is a very fluid thing. I see a tune (like ***Django*** from "Old Eyes," Hat Hut 001) as a vessel into which this very fluid material is poured — the shape that it takes is determined by the vessel but what is inside that vessel is free to go wherever it wants.

"I have perceptions of being an American, period. I know that it is very difficult for anyone in America regardless of whether it is the visual arts, music, whatever, to get anything done. I don't think there is enough, in terms of education, to expose people to these arts... I'm sick of hearing all this disco walking down the street... giant boxes up against these ears, blowing their brains out with all this nonsense... I know they've been bought out — I know that whole societies have been bought out and I know who bought them out and they're not jiving me — I know that these young people should be listening to music — not just the music I play... not necessarily to what I play — but to music, the music of the USA, the music of the world... and then they should be able to choose. They have no choice now. But there is a danger you see. Because once you do that, people begin to question other aspects of their lives in this society...."

The progression of African-American creative music is symbolized by the attribute of growth. The power of this standard has enabled the music to survive both in a linear and organic sense. The active ingredient of the music, improvisation, has inspired the music, through musicians, to reach forth in a spiraling form. The tradition of the music has always taken a stance of forward-reaching change.

Viewed in its totality, African-American creative music presents an intricate mosaic of interlinked design, similar to eastern mandalas, or perhaps the blooming of a flower. This holistic nature allows each successive generation to draw from a rich past, invigorate the present while providing supporting material for the future. The concepts are based on the fact that in order to create something truly expressive of the soul one must take risks. The act of risk-taking for the reflective artist opens up new and expanding channels of creativity. Horizons expanding through depth of vision.

Joe McPhee is one such artist. He has worked steadily, regardless of circumstances (including being a factory worker for a long period) to refine his art to a very sophisticated degree. He is a multi-instrumentalist who began on the trumpet and later added reeds. He continues an active process of growth.

McPhee has had an opportunity rare for

many African-American creative musicians to have his work regularly documented for over a decade by Hat Hut Records. There are twelve in all varying in format from solo to large group. One album called "Old Eyes", recorded in 1979 marks, for me, Joe McPhee's solidification of concepts in a group setting and propelled him toward a series of recordings culminating with his most recent: "Visitation."

"Visitation" represents a unique addition to McPhee's discography. He is heard here in the company of a unit (The Bill Smith Ensemble: Bill Smith, soprano, sopranino & alto saxophones; David Prentice, violin; David Lee, bass; Richard Bannard, drums) that is involved in its own process and has reached its own high standards. The program contains besides two of his own compositions, three from the supporting ensemble as well as a modern classic (Ayler's ***Ghosts***). Least important but notable is that it is on another record label (Sackville).

The music contained on "Visitation" meets the very high standards that McPhee has set for himself. Each composition has a distinct flavor that resists category. ***Exuma*** is a soulful trip for trio of trumpet, bass and drums. McPhee guides us through the Caribbean of his dreams. There is a ritual dance taking place, almost mystical as the trumpet darts out a vibrant color scheme. The rhythm section is heard pumping out a constant, ecstatic pulse. ***Exuma*** is, after all, the "Obeah" man. ***Eleuthera*** starts off in a quiet mood, with a dense duo line for the two saxophones. Framed lyrically, the saxes become a chorus for David Prentice's piercing, soaring violin line. For his solo, McPhee keeps the dirge pace, referencing Albert Ayler's open throated cries. ***Home At Last*** reflects that event. This composition by Bill Smith incorporates the joy of the occasion in an almost graphic way. The rhythm controls the propellors as the horns fly to the destination. Once there the saxophones carry on a conversation in tandem that comes off very clearly.

Albert Ayler's ***Ghosts*** is one of the monumental compositions in African-American music. It is a tune that is infinite in its memory of the past and predictions for the future. Ayler was a seer through his music. He had an indefatigable vision of the possibilities for humanity. McPhee and ensemble are true to this vision, enunciating perfectly the rarified aspects of the composition. ***If I Don't Fall*** composed by violinist Prentice, has an angular structure. The musicians jut in and out of the theme, driven very deliberately by the bassist David Lee. The final composition, ***A-Configuration***, was contributed by saxophonist Smith. It is sonic exploration at its finest with the wavering vibrato of the violin stitching together the long-toned intensities of the reeds. The bass provides the gravitational pull for the kite-like movement. There is a restlessness present as the drummer Bannard chips away underneath the soloists, who seem to be probing a deep secret, left unanswered.

Joe McPhee's metaphor of a vessel to describe his music is an exact representation. The six performances on "Visitation" defy category without defying description. In terms of human progress McPhee is an artist in his time. He has absorbed the diversity of creativity around him and through a distinctive process added to that diversity as the river rushes past to empty into a larger ocean. — ***Brian Auerbach***

WILLEM BREUKER
Kollektief
About Time AT-1006

Amsterdam Rhapsody Overture / Sylvia's Proposal / Women's Voting Rights / Preparations And Farewell / Benares / Kontrafunkt / Song Of Mandalay
October 31, 1983

Breuker's "Kollektief" manages to be both innovative and highly entertaining, cutting edge music with a strong sense of hilarity. Perhaps the best way to sum up this date is with a bit of play-by-play. ***Amsterdam Rhapsody Overture*** brings to mind both Charles Mingus (the riffs, constant tempo changes and several very dramatic moments) and Carla Bley (the general humor and utilization of march rhythms). The nine-piece unit romps through the hodge-podge of folk melodies with solo space for the sarcastic trombone of Bernard Hunnekink and the Dolphyesque alto of Andre Goudbeek. Leader Breuker shows off his virtuosity on the E-flat clarinet throughout the ballad ***Sylvia's Proposal***. The interplay with pianist Henk de Jonge and Willem's literal singing through the clarinet are the highpoints. ***Women's Voting Rights*** is a bit more routine, especially compared to the often-crazy ***Preparations And Farewell***. This medley of mixed-up and vaguely familiar march/patriotic melodies suddenly segues into an Ellingtonian version of ***Farewell Blues***; quite straight except for Breuker's colorfully atonal tenor. He conforms to the spirit of the song if not the chords. This piece concludes by switching wildly between the marches and ***Farewell***. After a harmonically distorted version of Kurt Weill's ***Benares***, ***Kontrafunkt*** features two contrasting sections: a runaway samba with soloing from Andy Altenfelder's passionate trumpet and a funky groove for the soulful tenor of Maarten van Norden. Breuker's nonet concludes this remarkable album by ripping apart ***Song Of Mandalay*** with a rapid polka beat. The often-broad humor of this fun session makes it recommended even for those listeners who never developed an ear for the avant garde; if they can't get into this, bury them. — ***Scott Yanow***

ANTHONY BRAXTON / DEREK BAILEY
Royal, Volume I
Incus 43

Opening (opening) / Opening (closing)

Derek Bailey, electric guitar; Anthony Braxton, soprano saxophone, alto saxophone, B-flat clarinet, contrabass clarinet.

This release has already been reviewed in ***Coda*** (Issue 202, June/July, 1985) by Roger Riggins; however, the nature of his review seems to me so unsatisfactory, even ill-considered, that I feel further commentary is justified.

First, attention is drawn to the "historical" nature of the material released on this Incus disc last year, some ten years after it was recorded. Riggins "believes" that there were "two other duets by these two musicians released on the Emanem label some years back..." and indeed this is so — they were "Duo", Volumes 1 and 2 (Emanem USA 3313 and 3314) recorded live at London's Wigmore Hall on June 30, 1974, just two days before the Incus material here under consideration. Notwithstanding the fact he is uncertain of their very existence, Riggins is miraculously able to state that the material on the two Emanem discs is "considerably better" than that which is now made available by this recent Incus release.

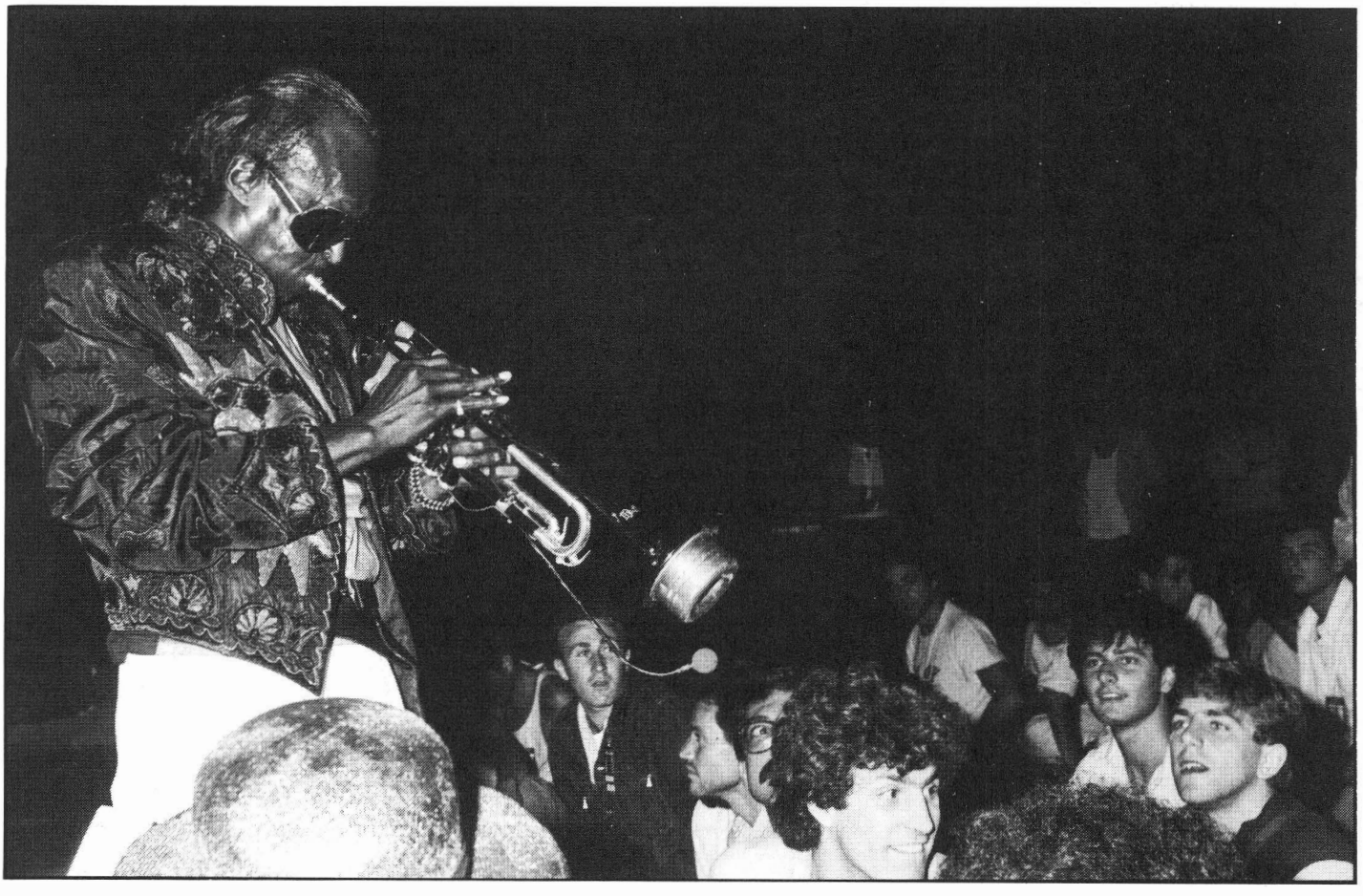
(To complete the details of this period of recordings, I would mention that there is a further Emanem release (3315) with material by these musicians recorded at a London studio on the day preceding the Wigmore hall performance).

It is my conclusion that both Anthony Braxton and Derek Bailey have been honest, consistent and distinctive performers in the genre of free improvisation over a period of some twenty years. The performance record available on Anthony Braxton is well documented by a substantial number of releases, (some eighty), covering the period 1967 to date and this release is representative of his work in the period concerned. Derek Bailey was one of the founders of the Incus label in 1970, a self-managed company owned and operated by musicians. In the intervening years his performance work has been significantly documented by the twenty-six releases in which he is a participant (the Incus output being, to date, 45 releases). And, of course, as one might expect with such an established performer, Bailey is also to be heard on a substantial number of releases under labels from around the world. Heard in this context, the performance by Bailey on "Royal" is difficult to perceive in the terms proposed by Riggins in his "piece". Derek Bailey is the author of the book "Improvisation; It's Nature And Practice In Music" which was published in 1980. The attention of Riggins is drawn to this volume; in its light, he may avoid the temptation to promulgate the sort of drivel which characterises his unfortunate outburst on page 22 of Coda 202.

— ***Roger Parry***

ANATOMY OF A FESTIVAL TWO

The conclusion of this two-part feature, dealing with the phenomenon of the jazz festival, looks at events from Canada (Montreal and Ottawa), Italy (Umbria), and the United States (New York and Hartford).



MILES DAVIS (Photograph by Mimmo Rossi)

KOOL JAZZ FESTIVAL
June 21 — June 30, 1985
New York City

The 1985 New York Kool Jazz Festival — in its 32nd year as a continuation of the Newport Jazz Festival — was a mixed bag, as festivals are meant to be.

Since 1972 it has been transplanted from Newport, Rhode Island, to New York, and its fourteen years in the world's most aware and sophisticated city have given it a peculiar character of its own. There is so much happening in New York at any given time, that the KJF intensifies jazz life in town but certainly does not have a significant impact on it.

Festivals — "festive occasions" — assemble performers and audiences in some sort of unified whole. The KJF producers take great care to unify its many events. They dedicated the festival in 1985 to **Max Gordon**, proprietor of the legendary Village Vanguard club in Greenwich Village. They create logos, programs, T-shirts etc. and advertise the events jointly. Nevertheless through the years the KJF has become more and more a string of unrelated concerts. In 1985 we had forty of them in ten days. I managed to attend seventeen festival events, and visited a lot of clubs on the side.

New York mayor Ed Koch gave a garden party at his official residence, Gracie Mansion, at noon on Friday, June 21st. In his speech the mayor praised the KJF producer George Wein, and made an appeal for new sponsors to finance the festival. Wein graciously acknowledged the mayor's interest and proceeded to hand a plaque to Max Gordon, the 80-year-old innkeeper, for running the oldest jazz club in town.

At first the music was provided by Dave Brubeck's group which for the occasion included bassist Gene Wright and mayor Koch playing four handed piano with the leader. Later on a very swinging pickup band assembled on stage with Frank Wess (tenor saxophone), John Lewis (piano), Bucky Pizzarelli (guitar), Major Holley (bass) and Roy Haynes (drums). The rest of the day did not measure up to this auspicious beginning. **Marian McPartland** was charming but rather uninspired in her solo performance at Carnegie Recital Hall. Later that night **Miles Davis** looked gorgeous on the huge stage of Avery Fisher Hall, wearing the same stunning black leather outfit he sports on the cover of his latest album. Nevertheless — and in spite of the fact that his trumpet playing was in great form — his music sounded confined and directionless. His rendition of Cindy Lauper songs did not even reach the level of their mediocre originals. His sidemen did not get much chance to stretch out either.

Next day at the Carnegie Recital Hall exbopper **George Wallington** showed the sombre side of the revolutionary music of the forties. Alternating with dark chord clusters, his left hand violently punctuated sudden bursts of single line melodies. He played an uninterrupted suite, unfortunately not letting any idea be pursued long enough to develop interest. That same evening the **David Murray Big Band** conducted by **Butch Morris** played at Town Hall. The horns were David Murray (tenor saxophone and bass clarinet), Baikida Carroll (trumpet), Vincent Chancey (french horn), Steve Coleman (alto saxophone), Olu Dara (cornet, Craig Harris (trombone) and Bob Stewart (tuba). They were supported by the superb rhythm section of John Hicks (piano), Fred Hopkins (bass) and Marvin "Smitty" Smith (drums). the writing — by Murray and Morris — was innovative but clearly steeped in the jazz tradition. This was the only so-called "avant garde" concert of the festival, and it did indeed showcase some of the best new music on the scene.

The Jazz Picnic at Waterloo Village on

Sunday was very pleasant and the music was smooth and swinging in an informal and unpretentious way. Urbie Green (trombone), Derek Smith (piano) and Spanky Davis (cornet) struck me as specially outstanding before it was time to return to Manhattan for the **Tribute to Wes Montgomery** at Carnegie Hall. A super rhythm section of Hank Jones (piano), Ron Carter (bass) and Jimmy Cobb (drums) backed two selections each by guitarists Larry Coryell, Kevin Eubanks and Jim Hall. There was also a final number with all three on stage. Coryell was the most inspired, but even an average performance by musicians of this calibre is worth hearing. They were followed by Kenny Burrell with Jimmy Smith (organ) and Grady Tate (drums) who – as you would expect – played a scorching set. After a short appearance by Monk Montgomery (piano) with Larry Ridley (bass) and Jimmy Cobb, a larger band assembled onstage with Nat Adderley (cornet), Virgil Jones (trumpet), Curtis Fuller (trombone), John Clark (french horn), Harold Vick, Jimmy Heath, Sahib Shihab and Pepper Adams on reeds, Hank Jones, Larry Ridley and Keith Copeland (drums). Conducted by Jimmy Heath, the band was later joined by Buddy Montgomery on vibes. It accompanied guitarist George Benson, the star of the evening, impeccable in both black tie and musical style. In spite of Benson's proficiency, neither he nor the band really took fire until their very last number, ***Caravan***, when Pepper Adams stood up and tossed off a breathtaking solo, lifting the concert to the level that it had so far failed to attain.

On Monday pianist **Valerie Capers**, accompanied by John Robinson on bass, played at Carnegie Recital Hall. Despite the great enthusiasm with which she attacked the keyboard, her music failed to move me. My full reward came later that evening at Town Hall where a **Tribute To Bud Powell** took place. The proceedings started immediately with great fire, when Jimmy Heath (tenor saxophone), Walter Davis (piano), Ron Carter and Art Taylor (drums) played Monk's ***Well, You Needn't***. Everybody took such creative solos that the piece seemed much shorter than it actually was. In these musicians' gifted hands, bop became a valid proposition not a nostalgic recreation of an era. Piano, bass and drums played ***Un Poco Loco***. After ***Blue 'n' Boogie*** and ***Strictly Confidential***, Davis and Jackie McLean (alto saxophone) duetted on ***I'll Keep Loving You***. They were replaced on stage by Tommy Flanagan (piano), George Mraz (bass) and Art Taylor for a sublime performance. Mr. Flanagan was at the top of his form and he had done his homework, attacking the pieces with assurance, sometimes with Powell's own phrases. While playing superb Flanagan, he maintained constant references to Bud Powell's vocabulary. Should Tommy Flanagan ever appear within a hundred miles from where you live, don't miss him. As the travel guides say: worth a detour!

After the intermission a film made in France was shown, featuring Bud Powell playing with Kenny Clarke and Pierre Michelot, appearing with Charles Mingus, greeting Thelonious Monk, etc. It was a moving image of the artist and the man although perhaps – at about forty minutes – a little too long for this kind of event. George Wallington appeared next and his performance was stronger than at his solo concert two days before. Another peak topped the evening when a very inspired Barry Harris sat down at the piano with Marc Johnson (bass) and Leroy Williams (drums), to play trio and solo interpretations of Powell's and Powell-associated tunes, such as ***Celia*** (Powell's daughter was in the audience), ***Dusk In Sand, Parisian Thoroughfare, Hallucinations, Sure Thing, Oblivion*** and ***Tea For Two***. The evening ended with Jon Faddis (trumpet), Jimmy Heath, Cecil Payne, Jackie McLean (saxophones), Walter Bishop Jr. (piano), Marc Johnson and Roy Haynes playing ***Webb City***, with Faddis quoting Fats Navarro's original solo. A memorable concert wisely put together and conducted by Ira Gitler.

Pianist **Patti Bown** performed on Tuesday at Carnegie Recital Hall. Her powerful left hand was at its most effective in a couple of gospel and blues influenced numbers. Later that evening I attended a **Tribute to John Hammond** at Avery Fisher Hall. Unfortunately Mr. Hammond, the greatest talent scout in jazz history, could not be present at the event. He is recovering from a stroke. The tribute started with a reminiscence of Bessie Smith's last recording session (produced by Hammond) performed by Carrie Smith with Doc Cheatham (t) and Dick Hyman (p). Ray Bryant played ***St. Louis Blues*** and was joined by Buck Clayton (t), Harry Edison (t), Frank Wess (ts), Freddie Green (g), Cecil McBee (b) and Gus Johnson (d) for a Basie reminiscence playing ***Lester Leaps In, Blue And Sentimental*** and ***Broadway***. The rhythm section backed Hammond's latest discovery, an excellent gutsy young trombonist called Frank Lacy, on ***Things Ain't What They Used To Be.*** George Benson came on stage, again clad in superb evening clothes, to play ***Billy's Bounce***. Benson played brilliantly, the star of the evening until master of ceremonies George Win brought a surprise guest who stole the show for him: in excellent musical form and great spirits, Benny Goodman proceeded to play a rousing ***Lady Be Good*** and a beautiful ***Body And Soul***. With Scott Hamilton (ts) and Harry Edison (t), they played ***Indiana*** and ***Don't Be That Way***, the latter as an encore to a standing ovation. After the intermission I was blown out of the hall by the outrageously loud rock and roll playing of Stevie Ray Vaughan and Double Trouble.

On Wednesday at Carnegie Recital Hall the festival reached its lowest point with the performance of singer Sasha Daltonn and her trio, whose music was totally unfit for the event. The evening concert, titled **Young New Orleans**, started with Terence Blanchard (t), Donald Harrison (ts & fl), Mulgrew Miller (p), Phil Bowler (b) and the excellent drumming of Ralph Peterson Jr. The rhythm section did impressive team work while the two virtuoso horns played with great assurance and creativity. Flutist Kent Jordan got to play only one number which showed potential but was not enough to get a clear impression of his style. The Dirty Dozen Brass Band made its entrance from the back of Carnegie Hall and proceeded to play their exhilarating mixture of traditional tunes and avant garde-sounding riffs. This very satisfactory concert ended with the exciting contemporary music of Wynton Marsalis (t), Marcus Roberts (p), Jeffrey Watts (b) and Charles Moffett (d). Jazz from New Orleans is alive and doing very well in 1985!

At his Carnegie Recital Hall solo concert on Friday, **Roland Hanna** played his own compositions plus works of Coltrane and Strayhorn. Hanna's beautiful touch and his deep involvement with the problems of solo piano playing were very much in the foreground. Echoes of classical composers resounded in his playing. His careful planning made him gain in form what he may have lost in warmth. The evening concert at Carnegie Hall presented **Toure Kunda** from Senegal, **Flora Purim** and **Airto Moreira** from Brazil via New York, and **Alceu Valenca** directly from Pernambuco, Brazil. Except for Flora and Airto, the music never even pretended to be related to jazz and somehow did not make it on its own terms either.

On Saturday at noon I took a very enjoyable boat ride on the Staten Island Ferry with the **Dukes Of Dixieland** and marvellous playing by **Dr. John** (Mac Rebennack) and his group. Dr. John's art is probably the last valid link between jazz and dance music. It is so powerful that the whole boat rocked and danced to it. **John Lewis** played a superb concert at Carnegie Recital Hall that same evening. He performed mostly what has become his standard repertoire; pieces like ***Afternoon In Paris, Round Midnight, Milano, I'll Remember April***, etc., plus two J.S. Bach preludes. He managed to infuse new life and form into everything he played. The recital was a brilliant summation of his life as a creative artist, swinging yet restrained. After a standing ovation, Mr. Lewis played as an encore his own ***Django***, where he sketched the melody with a few masterful strokes and proceeded to the business of jazz improvisation.

In Manhattan the festival closed on Sunday, June 30th, with a **Tribute To Louis Armstrong** at Saint Peter's Church. It was a nostalgic occasion with an exhibition of Armstrong memorabilia in the lobby and music by Ruby Braff (t) and Dick Hyman (p) in the church itself. Although there were problems with the sound, both artists played well. Mr. Hyman was specially good at the church's organ and playing stride piano.

While the KJF was in progress, New York clubs were featuring some excellent jazz too. Phil Woods with brilliant Tom Harrell, trumpet; Stephane Grappelli; Frank Foster and Frank Wess with Kenny Barron, Ray Drummond and Smitty Smith; Charlie Haden and the Liberation Music Orchestra; Michel Petrucciani; Abdullah Ibrahim (Dollar Brand) and Ekaya; Milt Hinton; John Abercrombie; Dave McKenna; Billy Butterfield; Tommy Flanagan with George Mraz, just to mention a few. What a week!

– J. Hosiasson

Festival International de Jazz de Montreal
June 28 - July 7, 1985

More than ever, summertime is festival time in all of the arts, and music in particular. In the world of jazz (or creative improvised music if you prefer), there is a proliferation of such events. Moreover, the crowds seem to be larger every year: such is the case of the Montreal International Jazz Festival (or FIJM as it is known here). From its first modest weekend in 1980, it has grown into a full-fledged success story, at least in financial and commercial terms: 300,000 people who gathered in and

around the quaint but confined rue St-Denis for the 10 day event. However, this made it uncomfortable at times to elbow one's way amid the throngs on a very hot summer night (agoraphobiacs beware!). In any event, there is talk about expanding the site for next year.

Yet, the question of size is a double-edged sword. Just because an event is big, is it necessarily great? Or should we believe in E.F. Schumacher's theory that "small is beautiful"? Essentially, a festival need not be bigger to be better. Given the fact that a "festival circuit" now prevails, whereby the same names keep reappearing, it is tempting for organizers to engage in a streamlining process that often overlooks the more innovative and daring aspects of today's music. Therefore, the desire to innovate is the key to an autonomous identity, which is needed in an age where economics dictate conformity and conservatism.

Herein lies the difficulty of all jazz festivals: balancing out the commercial viability of the event with the artistic integrity of a substantial program. Given the fact that North American festivals do not enjoy the level of subsidies that those in Europe do, the pressures of commercialism are stronger which, at times, makes for unusual (if not questionable) choices. The FIJM is no exception to this rule, but the organizers have sensibly tucked away most of these more peripheral genres in the "Contrastes" series.

On the other end of the scale, though, there was plenty of music for those more attuned to the strains of improvised music. The free outdoor concerts were as numerous as ever, and they are most welcome for the casual ear. Standing up for three quarters of an hour in a dense crowd is not the most appealing incentive I can think of, but it's better than nothing when you are strapped.

There was some good music to be heard, like the energetic trio of **Charles Papasoff** (reeds), powered by Claude Ranger's percussive flares and Normand Guilbault (bass), the Bob Mover Quintet (though hampered by an uneven sound balance), a young group I caught called Sitelle whose crisp bop lines caught my ear and, finally, a taste of the old time jam session atmosphere with the **St-Michel All-Stars**, featuring veteran sax and vibes man, Vernon Isaacs.

Nevertheless, the real substance of this festival is to be found in the indoor concerts, particularly the "Jazz dans la nuit" and the "Piano Plus" series. Held in the intimate surroundings of the auditorium in the Bibliotheque nationale du Quebec, the acoustics of the room enhanced the overall sound of each performance. Yet, the lack of air conditioning added some unexpected "warmth" to the music heard there.

One such instance was the **George Adams/ Don Pullen** duet. Between the tenorist's incendiary playing and the pianist's intense runs, the music was the most expressive of this series, although the length of each piece tended to be over-bearing. I would have liked to see the duet as the quartet instead (with Cameron Brown and Dannie Richmond): the performance would have benefited from a little more timbral and textural variety.

Despite similar instrumentation, the **Rickie Ford/Ran Blake** duet was another kettle of fish. Pullen and Adams are kindred spirits: Ford and Blake are not. Let's face it: playing with Ran

Blake is no easy task, for he is a musician who is interested in everything aural but who settles down in no single area for too long. Blake's unpredictability seems to go against Ford's linear swing-like phrasing, giving the impression that the performers are working side by side but never crossing one another's paths. However, it's still nice to hear people who believe in the virtue of concise performance, eschewing some of the pitfalls of over-expansiveness.

Perhaps the most original duet in terms of instrumentation was the **Sheila Jordan/Harvey Swartz** combination with added guest Harold Danko. After three numbers, pianist Danko left to prepare his appearance with Lee Konitz later that night, and for some reason the concert really took off from there. Jordan's airy and supple voice endeared the capacity audience while Harvey Swartz proved his mastery of the bass fiddle. It was music to please the senses, soothe the heart and content the mind. An even better example of conciseness and purity of performance.

In contrast, **Muhal Richard Abram**'s one hour solo was a much more intense and demanding experience. The angularity of the many shapes and forms his music took was like a panorama of techniques with none of the expected notes played. The layering of dissonances gave the music an austere but highly disciplined quality, leaving the listener to search for a resolution rather than having the performer do it for us.

Basically, this series was varied in style and generally consistent in quality, as was the "Jazz dans la nuit" series. On the other hand, there were more mainstream bands, such as **Lee Konitz**'s quartet, **Ahmad Jamal, Chick Corea's Trio Music** and **Sphere**, while on the other, more experimental or adventurous styles like **Cecil Taylor**'s new unit, **Charlie Haden's New Liberation Orchestra** and the **Max Roach** Quartet were featured.

Entering the stage chanting (or moaning) to the percussionist's arhythmical wash, **Cecil Taylor**'s tornado came sweeping in not too long after, aided and abetted by Jimmy Lyons, Frank Wright and bassist William Parker. The alto player was the most consistent in his solos, building up the intensity of each of his interventions to an appropriate climax. As for the rest of the group, it was a letdown for me: given the perpetually identical solo order, the energy always stayed on the same level and there was a lack of diversity, such as fragmenting of the group in different interactive units, as was the case of his group with violinist Ramsey Ameen. Tenor saxophonist Frank Wright was honking and dancing his way out of every solo while William Parker was lost in the whirlwind of sound. A pity.

From one world of the piano to another, **Ahmad Jamal**'s trio (plus an added conga player) was rhythmically pungent, although marred by those thumpy electric bass cliches (one of my pet peeves by the way). As usual, Jamal is the boss and everyone else toes the line, soloing briefly under the pianist's showy presence. It's a "feel good" music that makes you want to snap you fingers. Incidentally, Jamal acknowledged Jack deJohnette's tribute to him (***Ahmad The Terrible***) by playing the drummer's tune ***Ebony***, perhaps his best performance of the night.

After an interlude with the Flora and Airto band on Monday night and a day off from the shows on Tuesday, it was back to "work" on Wednesday with **Charlie Haden**'s newest version of his Liberation Orchestra. Carla Bley's compositions and arrangements of the music from the Spanish Civil War took a back seat to extended soloing by all members of the group. Dewey Redman, Craig Harris and Haden himself were the standouts that evening, as was Paul Motian's deft and varied percussion shadings.

And then there was **Max Roach**.... To my ears, this was the high note of the series. Under Cecil Bridgewater's fluid trumpet and intelligent paraphrasing (Monk's ***Bemsha Swing*** for instance), Odeon Pope's Coltrane-inspired vitality and Tyrone Brown's strong sense of time and virtuosic bass solos, Master Max laid down the beat straightforwardly, flavouring it (bittersweet) with multiple shifting accents and cross-rhythms. This is an extension of hard-bop at its best and it further exemplifies Roach's own contention that "design is the key to all artistic endeavour."

To finish off this series with some good vibes, one could not dispute the choice of **Sphere**, easily the "mainstream mainstay" of the series. What can one really say about the empathy and cohesiveness of these four veteran musicians who are so well attuned to each other? Charlie Rouse never gives us a dull or insipid moment while Kenny Barron and Ben Riley are engaged in a continuous conversation, mediated by Buster Williams' vibrant strings. The only drawback was that their repertoire was almost the same as their last appearance here two years ago, also to be heard on their recording Flight Path. But that's what you have to do to sell records.

Pianist **Jean Beaudet** was included in the "Piano Plus" series and his solo outing was quite strong, but not as "outside" as one would expect from him. Moreover, the "Jazz sur le vif" series was entirely devoted to some of our own, and featured last year's competition winner Lorraine Desmarais, veteran Pierre Leduc, the very facetious Lepage/Lussier duo and a very disappointing Sonny Greenwich.

But there was more to the festival than these shows. The early shows at 7 p.m. were a generally good way to kick off the evening as the music was mostly of a lighter fare. I never have been a fan of Louie Bellson's, but I must

JEAN BEAUDET (Photograph by Peter Danson)

admit his taste is impeccable and he copiously avoids hogging the spotlight like so many drummers cum band leaders. Noteworthy was Hank Jones playing a beautiful solo rendition of ***The Very Thought Of You***. Michael Moore's bass was rock solid and melodic, while Pete Christlieb's tenor was just right for the context.

The **Basie Band** under the aegis of **Thad Jones** played the same mid-fifties stock arrangements of Sam Nestico and Ernie Wilkins (for the most part) with all the usual trimmings and solos by Basie stalwarts Danny Turner, Freddie Green and Eric Dixon as well as some nice contributions by Little John C. (Coles) on trumpet and flugelhorn.

We went back in time to get a piece of nostalgia with **Panama Francis's Savoy Sultans.** With lead alto player Howard Johnson (at age 77) and other veterans, this group is a healthy reminder of the roots and it's refreshing to see these people bring to life this happy and danceable music.

Let's now take another leap in time to **Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers**. Forever the publicist, Blakey proclaims his newest edition to be the best group ever. With sterling players like Wallace Rooney on trumpet and Mulgrew Miller on piano, the lineup looks good with a muscular Jean Toussaint on tenor, but it still does not live up to the Marsalis/Pierce/Watson sextet. The main problem here is altoist Donald Harrison, a strange mix of an awkward sound, a good technique, but a conception lacking overall direction and unity.

Such criticisms cannot be levelled at **Wynton Marsalis**, that's for sure. All is under control for him, but that might be his problem. Now he's facing a predicament: without the energetic drive of an Art Blakey, or another horn player on the front line, he is playing it safer than ever, forsaking those intricate harmonic and melodic lines he revealed on his first recording sessions as a leader. His latest concert at the Theatre St-Denis was proof of this, as he relied on standards and ballads, mellow in mood but cerebral as ever in conception. Marcus Roberts, Jeffrey Waits and Charnett Moffett backed him up efficiently.

In terms of popularity, Wynton Marsalis is now being upstaged by another amazing newcomer, **Stanley Jordan**. There is no doubt in my mind that he has the ***potential*** to make a profound musical contribution by applying a pianistic conception to his instrument. In plucking the strings along the neck with both hands, he can create melody and harmony simultaneously, feeding himself chords or creating an independent bass line. By what I heard in concert, his debut record shows but a fraction of what he can do. Hopefully, if he integrates this technique along with more standard ones, he will enhance his art, instead of just becoming another guitarist whose musicality is subordinate to his technical ability.

Apart from the live shows, there was the film series, an effective and relaxing alternative, reminding us of the documentary and historical dimensions of the art. Be it the early masters (Kid Ory, Django Reinhardt, Ben Webster or Lady Day), or the musicians of today (Jackie McLean, Archie Shepp, Toshiko Akiyoshi), it is always vital to acknowledge the past in order to grasp the present. As a special guest of the festival, Leonard Feather presented some classic footage of Miles and Trane, Bird and Diz, as well as Cannonball Adderley in the late fifties t.v. show "The Subject Is Jazz." Another credit goes to our resident film collector, Walter Mohrenschildt, for his presentation of "Jivin' In Bebop," a rare film of the forties featuring the Dizzy Gillespie big band.

By all accounts, this year's festival was an economic success (be it in tickets sold, overall attendance figures or revenues generated) while being generally positive artistically. As a matter of fact, many of the "specialized shows" (like the Haden band and the Pullen-Adams duet) were sold out and this in itself is an incentive to bring in even ***more*** of these audacious groups. I do not know if audiences are getting more sophisticated, but this just might be indicative that daring need not be a deterrent to financial success.

But as the FIJM's reputation is now made, will it too assume the proportions of a Montreux, Monterey or Kool and become a commercial proposition more than an artistic celebration? For my part, I hope that it will be capable of pursuing an even more challenging course, not only in searching for new local talent, but by also including more eclectic, if not experimental, ensembles which bring some attention to those seeking other venues and wider horizons to the music. Time will answer such speculations, but one (hopefully) positive aspect is that the organizers have turned a profit which will help them bring in more groups throughout the year. Now that they have booked Tito Puente's salsa band as the first post-festival act, I wonder if my previous assumptions are nothing more than wishful thinking.

— Marc Chenard
(with added input by Peter Danson)

This article has been edited due to space limitations.

THE WORKSHOP STRATEGY; A CRITICAL APPRECIATION.

Peter Kowald Workshop
L'Attaca Alternative Gallery
Montreal, Quebec
June 24, 1985

For the critic, the workshop performance is a flexible setting that yields variable results, sometimes unsettled and lacking a sense of purpose. But the standards critics use for judging the work performed are not always valid, because we don't hear the whole developmental process which led up to the actual result, the concert itself. In other words, the critic goes to the performance and passes judgement without any real knowledge of the growth and shaping of the music during the rehearsals.

It is this particular shortcoming which I sought to remedy as I spent one whole afternoon quietly observing the evolution of the music and the tuning-in process of all the participants. In the first place, all the thematic material is given aurally by Peter Kowald to all musicians, whose responsibility it is to create ensembles out of melodically simple material by well-known people like Don Cherry, Pharoah Sanders, Barre Phillips, Keith Tippett and Kowald himself, not forgetting the reading of a poem by Ornette Coleman (***Body Meta***).

All of these heads acted as rallying points, which would lead to a solo spot. However, no pre-determined sequence is imposed by the leader, but it is discussed and integrated within the democratic structure of the "performance-in-the-making" context. To exemplify that, each player is assigned one solo spot along the way and anyone can direct the course of the music by adding his own verbal suggestions to the overall structure of the work. For instance, one tenor player suggested adding a sequence where three Charlie Parker themes were reiterated simultaneously over the heavy percussive background of the drummers. An off-beat acknowledgement of the tradition to say the least.

By witnessing this process, I could better appreciate the music played that night, since I could see how the music was falling into place as they performed before a numerous and manifestly enthusiastic audience. Even though the success of such workshops are contingent upon the talent and technical abilities of the instrumentalists, as was the case that evening, I still had a feeling of having grown with them, which obviously helped me overcome some of the critical barriers that hinder a better understanding of that approach, and which made me appreciate that much more the commitment of the musicians. Hence, to judge them only on the final result instead of the process has been the critics' main strategy: these open workshops are valid means for people to grasp the

music as a process of becoming, and not just as a single event. *— Marc Chenard*

Umbria Jazz Festival 85
Ternie, Italy. July 5th - 7th 1985

At a time of the year when many Italians traditionally head for the seashore, Umbria Jazz is now attracting 150,000 enthusiasts from all over the world to the rolling hills of Italy's heartland — and with good reason.

This year, Umbria Jazz tastefully combined the sounds of established American artists — Miles Davis, Art Blakey, Joe Williams and The Count Basie Orchestra (now under the capable direction of Thad Jones), Shorty Rogers and Bud Shank, to name a few — with the progressive compelling sounds of several emerging Italian nationals, including the phenomenal pianist Franco D'Andrea and veteran saxophonist Gianni Basso.

This broad-based booking of major jazz artists is made possible by grants from various state governments and corporate support. Such underwriting made for very reasonable ticket prices. The Miles Davis concert, for example (which drew 15,000), was priced at $7.50. Many other major concerts, held outdoors at the beautiful Frontone Gardens, were significantly less expensive.

Umbria Jazz '85 opened on Friday, July 5 in Ternie, Umbria's second largest city. More than 7,000 people filled Piazza Europa for the free concert that traditionally begins the festival.

In Terni, **Charlie Haden's Liberation Music Orchestra** never quite got off the ground. Haden's lengthy compositions reflect his concern and sensitivity toward the struggle of people in Central America, while at times also reflecting the compositional prowess of Charles Mingus, an early influence. Trumpeter Baikida Carroll was a standout, as were pianist Amina Claudine Myers, trombonist Craig Harris, and Haden's long-time colleague, saxophonist Dewey Redman. Harris, in fact, took an inspired solo that he's yet to equal on record. Craig definitely deserves wider recognition. The band's energy wasn't quite what it could be — perhaps a collective case of jet lag.

Jaco Pastorius and Friends were set to close the opening night's concert, but Pastorius was a late scratch, apparently having passport problems. Fortunately, **McCoy Tyner**'s trio filled in, eliciting immediate approval from the attentive audience. Tyner is a giant of the piano and his stand-in performance was a stand-up tour de force, in my mind the high point of the ten day festival. Bassist Avery Sharpe is extremely mature for his young age and veteran drummer Louis Hayes provided formidable support. The fact that McCoy has had this working unit together for a while was very much evident in their sensitive reworking of beautiful standards and breakneck-speed originals.

On Saturday, July 6, the festival moved on to Perugia, Umbria's capital, for the duration of its 10 day run. An ancient city rich with medieval art, Perugia is home to the renowned Italian University for Foreigners.

Many of the festival's concerts and films were staged in the elegant Morlacchi Theatre, a five tier opera house built in 1788. This acoustically superb theatre served as the perfect setting for an evening of elegance the Italians called "Concerto Straodrinario", featuring the classic sounds of the **Modern Jazz Quartet**. Pianist John Lewis exercised his typical economy of elegant style while Milt Jackson smoked the vibes on a beautiful unaccompanied performance of ***Nature Boy***.

Jackson proved he's still a volcanic improvisor, the perfect balance for Lewis. John's composition ***Milano***, was a dedication to a city dear to his heart, and elicited an enthusiastic response from a respectful audience.

The festival's late night jam sessions were held in the Rocca Paolina, a medieval fortress and catacomb built by Sangallo in 1540, under the direction of Pope Paul III. It was here that I heard the emerging talent of saxophonist **Steve Grossman**, who is richly deserving of wider recognition. Steve's top-notch improvisational talents are being cultivated these days by the Italian jazz impressario Alberto Alberti, who has produced Steve's first album for the Red Record label, "Way Out East" (VPA 176; available domestically through Polygram Special Imports).

Sounding as inspired and impassioned as Sonny Rollins did during his less commercial formative years, Grossman's command of the tenor saxophone's historic vernacular seemed, on this occasion at least, encyclopedic in scope. Young drummer Ronnie Burrage, who is now working with Jackie McLean, also surprised and delighted the Paolina patrons into the wee hours of the morning, providing polyrhythmic support with untiring energy.

Reviewing performances at Umbria '85 kept many Italian journalists working overtime, given the scope of producer Alberto Alberti's bookings. For example, one evening's concert ran almost five hours, combining the vintage West Coast jazz of **Shorty Roger's Allstars** with the hard bop of **Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers**. Also featured were the thoroughly modern stylings of trumpeter Jon Faddis, the heir apparent to Dizzy Gillespie. Just this one evening's performance could have passed as an entire festival back in the States.

The Blakey Band is like a family. You can see a lot of love and understanding among band members (all of whom are less than half Art's age) on the stand. Papa Blakey sets the pace, and nods in approval when a soloist peaks in performance, such as bassist Lonnie Plaxico did on a sensitive arco bass reading of ***For All We Know***.

Trumpeter Blanchard kept the audience and critics transfixed, and pianist Mulgrew Miller's work was noteworthy throughout the night. Despite Miller's lack of public recognition, this young giant from Mississippi is slowly carving out a name for himself as a creative composer and improvisor to be reckoned with. There's a definite sense of telepathy between Art and his sidemen, and the band is a study in perfection.

The Italian audiences are among the most attentive, courteous and respectful in the world. All three of these adjectives described the 5,000 patrons who paid just $5 each, packing an outdoor garden to witness two masters of the idiom, **Horace Silver** and **Jackie McLean** working opposite each other.

Silver's style remains a permanent fixture in the soul jazz vernacular, his warm melodies riding over soulful rhythms, just as they did decades ago. While some critics have denigrated Horace for "dragging out the same old tunes",

JACKIE McLEAN (Photograph by Gerard Futrick)

the same myopic critics usually praise blues artists for the exact same reason. Even if Horace, in performance, isn't breaking much new ground compositionally, he's swinging harder than ever with the grace and distinction that have always characterized his sterling performances.

Horace Silver is an American institution, as is modal master Jackie McLean, whose set, by contrast, was played at breakneck speed. Jackie's son, Rene, is giving his dad a run for his money on alto, and drummer Burrage is mature beyond his years.

Tickets to the **Miles Davis** performance sold so swiftly that the concert had to be moved from the Frontone Gardens to Perugia's soccer stadium. Miles' arrival could have been a scene from a Fellini movie: Exiting from the back seat of a Mercedes which swiftly carried him up to the stadium's stage, surrounded by a security man who resembled Luca Brazzi in "The Godfather", Miles immediately plugged in and proceeded to showcase songs from his recent Columbia release, "You're Under Arrest"; the difference here being that most of the music was presented in a more expansive context, allowing for greater improvisational experimentation on the part of Miles, guitarist John Scofield, and saxophonist Bob Berg.

I don't know how many ***lire*** Miles and company were paid for this night's work, but however inflated (by jazz standards) his concert fee may be these days, Miles played non-stop for two hours. His relationship with bassist Darryl Jones and drummer Vincent Wilburn was intimate, but I couldn't help wondering how much more clever and intimate Miles' solos would have sounded isolated from the repetitive din of his rhythm section.

I've never seen Miles reach out to an audience like he did in Italy; his gestures were a photographer's dream come true. While my personal high moment at Umbria '85 was triggered by McCoy Tyner's percussive attack at the keyboard in Terni's Piazza Europa, the Italian press and public loved Miles. This was clearly the media event of Umbria '85.

Among the most important Italian jazz musicians at Umbria '85 were a "Supertrio" combining the talents of pianist **Franco D'Andrea** with his countrymen **Giovanni Tommaso** on bass and **Roberto Gato** on drums. D'Andrea's music is cerebrally stimulating yet emotionally grounded, reflecting his thorough understanding of all genres of jazz. This Italian wunderkind can take you through the history of jazz piano in one sitting, his approach suggesting influences as diverse as Fats Waller and Cecil Taylor.

Another refreshing set of music was delivered by **Summit**, an international quintet featuring Yugoslavia's great trumpeter Dusko Goykovich, American drummer Alvin Queen (who now divides his time between New York and Geneva), and the much respected Italian saxophonist Gianni Basso.

This thoroughly modern band opened their set at Teatro Morlachi with a Basso original, built on the chord changes of John Coltrane's ***Impressions***. If you enjoyed Miles circa '59, you would have found Dusko Goykovich's muted trumpet on ***Madison Walk*** equally pleasing.

Alvin Queen's ballet on drums was a spectacle to behold — clean, precise, subtle, yet always remaining the cohesive glue of this interesting quintet. Basso, a veteran of the Italian jazz scene for 40 years, proved to be a master of the ballad.

This band also featured Joe Kienemann on piano and Branko Pejakovic on bass. I'd love to see Summit touch down in the States sometime.

The jazz films of archivist/historian David Chertok have become a favorite event at Umbria Jazz. Every afternoon during the festival's run, Chertok would screen footage of a number of classic jazz shorts. His commentary was both knowledgeable and entertaining.

The festival's only disappointment was a deafening performance by bluesman **Stevie Ray Vaughan**, during the free concert that traditionally closes Umbria Jazz in Perugia's Piazza IV Novembre. Vaughan's roughish, overbearing sound cheapened an otherwise first class event.

I'm already saving my ***lire*** for Umbria Jazz '86 when, once again, the "green Heart of Italy" will pulsate with jazz. — ***Gary G. Vercelli***

Currently jazz music director at Sacramento's KXPR-FM, Gary G. Vercelli flies courtesy of Pan American Airlines.

The 5th Ottawa International Jazz Festival
July 12 - 20, 1985

Note: I feel obliged to state that as I was a member of the programming committee for the festival my perspectives are not impartial. My participation was voluntary and unpaid and simply a small service to the music we all love. Many people gave far more of their skills and time than I, particularly this year's jazz festival director, Don J. Lahey, who made considerable sacrifices. Acknowledgements are due to the N.A.C. for the spirit of co-operation with which their management, technicians and staff helped to make this festival such a success, especially on the three days when rain forced the music to retire into the foyer. Thanks are also due to Alison Churniak and the staff at the National Gallery for being so receptive, enthusiastic and ready to help at every stage of this year's solo piano series.

1985 marks a significant turning point for Ottawa's International Jazz Festival — this year's nine-day programme was a small triumph. While the super-star circuses of Montreal and Toronto catered to an affluent elite, the Ottawa Festival managed to stamp its unique identity upon the National Arts Centre, a fundamental and refreshing change in these conservative times.

For the first time the picnic atmosphere of outdoor jazz enlivened the heart of the city, for the N.A.C. has a central location between Confederation Square, the Chateau Laurier and the Conference Centre across the Rideau Canal. Combined with careful programming, the new location made it possible to attend virtually every scheduled performance.

This is what a National Arts Centre should be for — a showcase for the best of Canadian creativity. Vic Vogel summed up the situation at the conclusion of his big band's concert: "There's a lot of Canadian talent... and they should be heard."

A similar concern is shared by the Ottawa Jazz Festival organisers: to showcase the best of local and national Canadian musicians, groups and big bands has become the virtual philosophy behind the festival. What began as a trad-band weekend in a park five years ago has now grown into an established annual event with a distinct national identity. Ottawa, the N.A.C., the public, the musicians and the music have all been well served by what Jazz Festival President and trumpeter Bob Misener has described with pride as "the largest free festival in North America."

While the four prestige concerts at the N.A.C. were not free, it was possible to buy tickets for all four shows (six performances) for under $30. The package appears quite attractive in comparison to the figures for Toronto's du Maurier International Jazz Festival. Just to see Oscar Peterson at Roy Thomson Hall would have cost more than $30. each for the best seats, while the price for all three of the du Maurier prestige concerts (five performances) would have approached $80. per person. That's the sort of corporate, elitist philosophy that the

Ottawa Jazz Festival has done well to avoid.

Yet, if the N.A.C. offered such an attractive deal (1/3 discount was offered as an incentive to purchase tickets for all four shows), then why were the central concerts by **Mongo Santamaria** and **Paquito D'Rivera** (15th) and the Canadian showcase of **Salome Bey** and **Vic Vogel's Big Band** (17th) so poorly attended? I think this was due to a lack of appropriate promotion, both by the N.A.C. and the local press and media, as well as an ultimate lack of nerve by the N.A.C., the festival programmers and a public weaned on a "freebie" mentality for the past five years. As it turns out, the N.A.C made money from the week's events as both **Chuck Mangione** (12th) and **Wynton Marsalis** (19th) played for near-capacity houses, while the entire festival brought solid business into the N.A.C. complex.

I hope that in 1986 the N.A.C. will learn from the Montreal Festival's shrewd example of transforming an anticipated loss into an advantage. By providing an opportunity for serious listeners to purchase a series pass (20 shows could be selected this year for under $90.00) several months before their festival begins, the Montreal organisers have learned how to generate a lot of free publicity. The several hundred people who buy the package will talk about it and spread their excitement. That's how the Montreal Festival grew, by making an Oscar Peterson concert affordable for Old Age Pensioners and students, unlike the du Maurier fiasco that charged between $23.50 and $32.50, the equivalent of some folk's weekly grocery budget. If the N.A.C. made money despite their expectations this year, then in 1986 they should concentrate on filling the house for every show. They should realize that they're on to a good thing and Montreal's sound example suggests how to make it grow. For while the N.A.C. cannot rival the scale of Montreal's operation (nor should it aspire to that), it's certainly possible to offer fewer shows at a far more attractive price.

Montreal and Toronto are truly international in scope and no doubt the Ottawa Jazz Festival aspires to be seen as an equal. I think the description of the Ottawa Festival as International is a misnomer, and could be perceived as a weakness by some. To my mind that "International" tag has a nice ring but just isn't true. Worse yet, it distracts from the Ottawa Jazz Festival's fundamental (yes, the stress is on that first syllable) merits and strengths. For this is really the Great Canadian Jazz Feast in the East. Out of 73 scheduled performances, only 4 of the acts originated outside of North America, compared with over 60 listed Canadian performers, groups and big bands. Maybe this is small news in the bigger cities but it's an antidote to the prevalent notion that talented Canadians can only really make it south of the border. Finally the N.A.C. has seen the light, encouraged by the dollar sign, and has begun to provide the sort of focus which would have been overdue twenty years ago.

Perhaps such a misnomer is simply a political necessity to impress various bureaucrats in the endless rounds of grant negotiations. This is closer to reality probably, but it's unfortunate that the festival's real character should go unperceived by so many who profess to know better. Until the situation changes, such fine musicians as Rene Lavoie and Lorraine Desmarais will continue to amaze their audiences without receiving any of the coverage and acclaim from the media which the quality of their music deserves.

For instance, Lorraine Desmarais performed twice on July 19th, once in the solo context of the piano series and later in the afternoon with her trio that included Michel Donato (bass) and Ottawa's Camil Belisle (drums). This young musician from Montreal enthralled her audiences and each concert ended with several encores and standing ovations. All this went unreported by ***The Citizen***, which means that the small sensation which her appearance created was never acknowledged in the English press. Put this down to the fact that the nation's capital is a one-newspaper town with no full-time jazz writer on staff to cover the entire festival. Their regular reviewer was unable to get to the daytime concerts, except on the weekend, and therefore missed virtually 50% of the festival. As a result, the piano series went unreported except for two sentences about Ran Blake's recital on the final day. ***Le Droit*** proved to be more thorough and professional in their coverage, while most of ***The Citizen***'s reviews were devoted to the headliners, who no longer need such exposure, although there were welcome features on Paul Bley and Sonny Greenwich.

— David Lewis

CRT Festival of Jazz
Bushnell Park
Hartford, Connecticut
July 8 - August 12, 1985

Despite its eighteen-year history, the Community Renewal Team's Festival of Jazz always seemed to encounter some funding problem that threatens to end what has become an institution in Hartford. When the National Endowment for the Arts chose not to fund the summer concert series, the Festival founder and co-ordinator **Paul Brown** kept the event alive by securing funds from such local sources as the Evelyn W. Preston Fund, the Long Foundation and the Ensworth Foundation.

The series of Monday night concerts began July 8, when the **Williamsburg Composers Orchestra** and the **George Coleman Octet** performed before several thousand people in Bushnell Park. The Williamsburg Composers Orchestra presented an interesting array of original material in a format which adds a string section to the customary woodwinds and brass. Former McCoy Tyner sideman Joe Ford turned in several fine alto solos in the orchestral context. George Coleman's octet featured one of the most formidable front lines you'll ever want to hear: the master of circular breathing himself, Bobby Watson, Junior Cook, Charles Davis and Danny Moore. Individually and collectively, the musicians lived up to their reputations.

The **Bucky Thorpe Quintet** and the **Mickey Tucker Sextet** maintained the level of excitement the following Monday, when rain forced the festival to its indoor site, the West Indian Social Club. Thorpe's group romped through a set of standards, with James Spaulding and Jack Wilson soloing superbly throughout the set. Tucker's sextet followed with some inspired frontline blowing, especially from Junior Cook.

The level of excitement lowered July 22, when **Arnie Lawrence** and **Little Jimmy Scott** shared the bill in Bushnell Park. Lawrence's quartet outing was desultory at best, with the saxophonist occasionally rasping an exciting solo or Mike Richmond testing the limits of the string bass. As a group, however, the quartet lacked the cohesion needed for a consistently

SALOME BEY (Photograph by Bill Smith)

exciting performance. Little Jimmy Scott didn't fare much better. After a fine rendering of ***All Of Me***, Scott gave his varied material a similarity of treatment that bordered on the monotonous. His sidemen, however, compensated for his performance. Dave "Fathead" Newman ripped through the modal structure of ***Milestones*** and dug into a gritty slow blues. Joe Dukes turned in a mighty drum solo on the same tune. Throughout the set, bassist Bob Cunningham anchored and inspired the group with his virtuosic performance. His accompaniment was strong, his arco solos sure and adventurous.

July 29, **Kent Hewitt**'s quintet of fine local musicians opened for **Warren Chiasson**'s sterling quartet. The vibist performed at the peak of his skill and passion on ***Ultramarine***, a lively tune he wrote in honour of "Under The Volcano" author, Malcolm Lowry. His funky rendition of ***September Song***, featuring his smooth yet vigorous soloing and Cecil McBee's updated slap bass, was one of the high points of the summer festival.

The following Monday, August 5, the **Jim Argiro Quartet** opened for the **Clifford Jordan Big Band**. Argiro and saxophonist George Slovak offered strong, no-nonsense solos over Larry DiNatale's bold drumming and Dave Santoro's solid bass. The local musicians almost stole the show from Jordan, whose big band performed competently but only occasionally with inspiration. James Spaulding's searing alto solo on ***Epistrophy*** was the high point of a set diminished by arrangements that sounded more like backing for a small group than a true integration of ensemble work and improvisation.

The Festival concluded August 12 with the skillful tenor saxophonist **Laurie Dreier** leading her quintet through a program of standards and originals, and trumpeter **Jimmy Owens** fronting a high-powered quartet of Ted Dunbar, Anthony Jackson and Freddie Waits. During his steaming set, Owens paid tribute to Charlie Parker and Duke Ellington, the latter with a medley whose thoughtful ***Sophisticated Lady*** segued to a funky safari through ***Caravan***. On the slow blues that followed, Owens invited local vocalist Tiny Joe onstage to sing some aching lyrics and playful scatting. When the audience demanded an encore, Owens returned to play an unaccompanied statement of ***Nobody Knows The Trouble I've Seen***, then led his band into a viciously funky beat that provided the backdrop for a bright, burning solo that closed the series on a high note, so to speak.

If the Festival's performances were uneven, the high points more than compensated for the lows. The CRT Festival of Jazz is an event that benefits everybody. Area jazz fans receive a night of free entertainment. Listeners unfamiliar with the jazz idiom gain exposure to the music. The musicians, local and out-of-town, get a payday. The Hartford nightclubs benefit from the event, which draws thousands of people downtown on nights when even the sidewalks normally sleep. After each performance, the fans visited Dagny's to hear Ralph Duncan's quartet, 36 Lewis Street to hear Earl Womack's trio, and the 880 Club to hear Chick Cicchetti's big band. Given the boon the businesses receive, one hopes they will support the Festival if the foundation funding comes up short some year. — ***Vernon Frazer***

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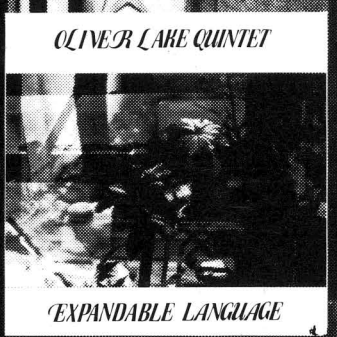

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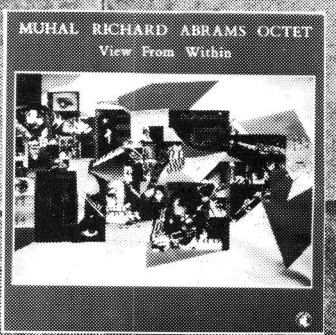

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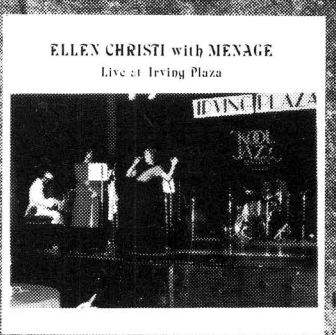

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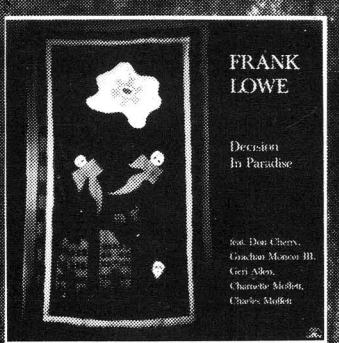

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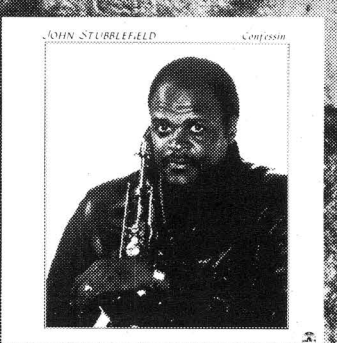

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