CODA MAGAZINE

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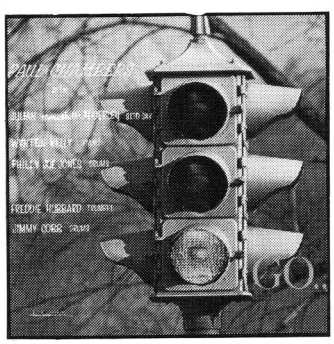

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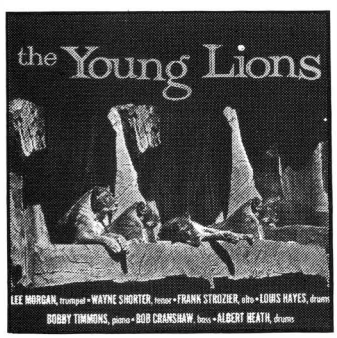

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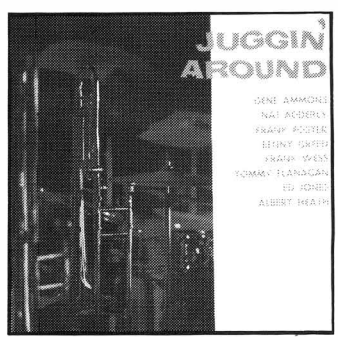

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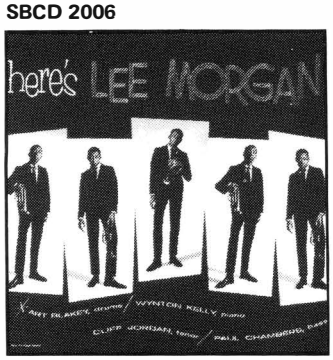

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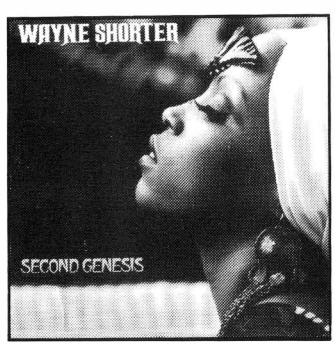

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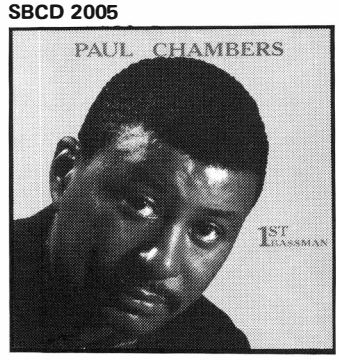

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LEE KONITZ - STILL IN MOTION

My first experiences with Lee Konitz's music go back to the early 1950s when I was just a budding teenager with big and hungry ears. Since then Lee, the improvisor and musical innovator, has been a constant inspiration. In 1971 I heard him live for the first time and during the 70s and 80s I've had the privilege of enjoying several of his live performances in Denmark and in New York City. His many achievements speak for themselves and so do, I think, his thoughts about the music to which he has dedicated his life. This interview was done on May 30, 1986 in Copenhagen and I wish to thank Lee for his cooperation in getting it together. I have done very little in terms of editing the piece and only hope I have managed to accurately preserve the opinions and viewpoints Lee shared with me. — Roland Baggenaes

R.B. — ***Lee, what does jazz mean to you?***

L.K. — It means an opportunity to do what I do best in this life and that includes traveling around and creating music each night. It means creation at many various levels, from just the slightest bit of creation to big areas of creation. That's just what the meaning of life is to me — creation in some form or other. We all have some special way of creating a little space or a big space of our own if we want to. It means a very big responsibility and I have spent my whole life trying to develop this ability that I have to create in this way and I intend to spend the rest of my life doing that. Now I have been able to do it long enough so that I understand that this process of creating is available to anybody who is interested. Jazz traditionally has been talked about and realized as a creation of the black people and white people are just kind of inheriting the music at best. I like the feeling that it's a much bigger process. It's for anybody to do, but I understand that black people have to emphasize sometimes the importance of their contribution, because most of the time they don't get enough credit for what they have done. The music and the process, however, are much bigger than all that and I'm very happy that I have been able to continue to live my life this way. That's part of what jazz means to me.

Looking at the whole history of jazz I see it as a very important and continuing valid music. The best part of that music will remain valid and real and part of the whole development of the improvising art. I was speaking with Butch Lacy [American pianist and composer-arranger now living in Copenhagen] earlier today about the young people and the responsibility that those of us have who are older and have experienced the process of this music. Butch was pointing out how some of the teachers and students here in Denmark are not fully ready to accept the tradition of the music, the American negro tradition... I think at this point more people are getting away from that obligation in some way and trying to offer a more individual contribution to the music. I understand that but it doesn't work that way. The students have to know what the tradition of the music is, in jazz or in classical music, in order to do their own thing eventually. The tradition of jazz is our Bach and our Beethoven.

Your first job playing jazz or jazz-influenced music was with the Claude Thornhill band. How was it working with that band?

It was my first real experience in that type of a situation, traveling around. I mean, I had been with so-called dance bands before, briefly, but this was the longest period of traveling. The band was a beautiful ballad band. The arrangers were literally teaching some of the older musicians how to phrase the bebop music. Being a member of the band was a special experience, the feeling of being in. I wish that I had been a little more able to play comfortably during that period but I was still learning and still a little bit... the word is impetuous. I remember Danny Polo, the beautiful lead clarinet player in the band who was an older man. He was able to see where I was at and he knew how to kind of cool me out when I got a little bit too impetuous — he was really a very lovely man. As I said it was a beautiful, a thrilling ballad band just playing straight dance music, and we would be playing these magnificent Gil Evans arrangements with two French horns and a tuba. I don't know who originally suggested the idea of the unusual instrumentation but I just read a piece someplace saying that the sound of that band was Claude Thornhill's and that he just tried to make it as interesting as possible. So that sounds like it was his idea but somehow I have a feeling that it would be Gil's idea.

Who were your own influences on alto?

Well, the first people I listened to were Willie Smith and Benny Carter, but Johnny Hodges was probably the strongest influence. I think I've always had a very special feeling for a ballad and Johnny was a very sweet ballad player as you know. But I liked very much Willie Smith and I was listening at those times to the Harry James band which Willie was playing in then... and Benny Carter of course, especially on some of the records with Roy Eldridge and Coleman Hawkins. It was later that Charlie Parker came on the scene and it took me a little bit to get to hear that music. It was a bit too much for me at the time. Lester Young came a little later too. Around 1945 I was working with one of those dance bands led by Jerry Wald and there was a beautiful Lester Young-type tenor player on the bandstand, Stan Kosow was his name, and I remember going to his room once to hear some Lester Young records and the music really made an impression on me. Those were basically the people that I was enjoying in jazz and I also heard a lot of the nice big bands that were being broadcast on the radio at the time. Then eventually I would meet Lennie Tristano.....

You talked about your own playing in the Claude Thornhill band and you said that you were still learning at that time. Listening to your solos on the recordings you did with Thornhill, it sounds like you already had your own personal style by then.

I was able to made a sound and have some understanding of the things I had been studying but there were still some very essential things missing in my musical education. The actual delivery of the music was still not in the right place to me. There was an indication, which thank goodness was picked up by some people and they encouraged me to go on and develop that. That's the way I've always looked at it. At that time I looked at it as an encouragement and when I listened to it I heard the imperfections in it. I felt there was something I needed to develop. My first teacher was Lou Honig and I didn't pick him out. He came with the clarinet lesson plan that I got and he turned out to be a very nice man and he helped me to learn how to blow the instrument for the first few years. I also studied with Eddie Harris when we were growing up in Chicago. Then I studied with another man named Santy Runyon who was a very fine saxophone player, a very clever mouthpiece maker and a very good teacher. And it's funny, over the years for some stupid reason whenever I would have an interview of some kind the attention was generally on Lennie Tristano. He was the man who was most influential in my music development so that I would never think it that important to mention Lou Honig and Santy Runyon and then I found out that they both were deeply resentful and hurt that I never mentioned them as my first teachers. And I said 'Oh, what have I done?' And I'm taking this opportunity to mention them because they were both really very influential. They taught me the process and the principles of blowing a horn. And Santy actually got into a little bit about some kinds of improvising materials but it didn't seem that any of that really came into any serious point. I was just interested in playing, I didn't have any real goal as a soloist until I was encouraged by Lennie to do that.

There was also one situation in Chicago at a time I was playing with a band led by a man who made clothing for many of the jazz bands. They'd come to Chicago and buy their uniforms from him. His name was Harold Fox and he had a band which was made up of some of the good musicians in Chicago, black and white, and used to play a lot of the black bar rooms in Chicago, like the Pershing. I even sang the blues and some ballads — like Al Hibbler — and I was just a little guy with funny glasses. I never mentioned Jimmy Dale [Harold Fox's artist name] in those interviews for some reason until one time a few years ago when I got a very angry letter from him — he is now living in Florida — saying 'How come you never mention me? I gave you your first chance.' And I thought to myself that I had been very selfish never to mention Jimmy Dale in connection with my development. I hardly ever sang again after that — it was my first time and he encouraged me to sing. Then one year I played at Carnegie Hall at one of George Wein's Newport Festivals in a program devoted to Chicago jazz and I told the rhythm section, at one point, to just play the blues behind me, as I wanted to

Photograph by Jorgen Bo

pay tribute to someone in Chicago. Joe Williams was the M.C. that day and before we went on I asked Joe what was the last line in ***Around The Clock Blues*** and he told me. So we played the concert thing with Ira Sullivan and we played a couple of numbers that didn't make it very well and then I started to make this speech to say that one of my early influences was Jimmy Dale and I would like to pay tribute to him. I finished the speech at the beginning of the blues and I started to sing one chorus of ***Around The Clock Blues*** and my voice slipped up one octave. My wife was in the audience and she told me I sounded about fifteen years old. Joe Williams came out at the conclusion and asked me if that was what I wanted the lyrics for and he said 1-2-3-4 and ***he*** sang and saved the show. But Joe Segal, the man who has been responsible for a lot of Chicago jazz, was in the audience and he was going to Florida to visit Harold Fox. So the word got out and I received a very nice letter and an apology from Harold. It took me about 30 years to get around to it but I tell you I sometimes forget things.

In an interview many years ago you talked about Lester Young and how his playing has changed many lives....

Yes, I certainly know that he did. I just loved the space Lester Young created. I don't know how else to really say it but it also included his sound, his rhythmic feeling, his melodies, his whole attitude about making music. It was just as free spiritually as it could be. The complete goal, I think, of this kind of creation is to get out of ourselves for a moment and into... we each have our own universe that we function in and then we try to relate to another universe and then we have the total universe that we're all moving around in. The more of these universes that we can contact and kind of link up to the total universe, that's the goal in communicating we're trying to reach, I think. And Lester was no longer just a nice, dark-skinned man who was wearing a funny hat — he was like a spirit. I didn't know exactly how to look at it then but I'm sure I felt similarly when I first heard him.

On this trip — this is my second month in Europe — I'm playing each night with different people and fortunately in this music you can do that. The spiritual part makes up for the imperfections from not having played together and for a moment here and a moment there it can happen. And whoever can hear and experience that is in for a special experience. For a minute they can stop thinking of Khaddafi and about nuclear weapons and all that and become involved in a spiritual thing. In a way I fell like some kind of traveling evangelist or something — the Billy Graham of the saxophone. I mean, I don't intend to do that, I just go out and play, but I'm certainly aware of that that's the nature of the communication when it's working. With Charlie Parker it was the same spiritual force as with Lester Young and even on a higher level in some ways — and then in some other ways I liked Lester even more sometimes. It was the same idea, the same area that they were able to occupy at their best. I didn't know Lester really but to say hello and I spent a little time with Bird and had a little trouble just relaxing with him at the time. But Bird was very nice and gentle to me, and I remember one little incident, among others, when we were together on a Stan Kenton tour. Bird borrowed ten dollars

from me and after a week I asked for it. The band was just coming up on the bus one by one and the first guy who came up Bird said 'Hey, give me ten dollars...' and when he got it he slipped it to me. I seem to have a recollection of sitting in with Bird two times at a club. It was very strange but I better not say anything about it because it was strange and I don't know if I can make the right picture now. All I can tell you is that I think Bird sincerely thought that I was missing out on something by not listening to him like everybody else was, but on the other hand I think he had a very deep respect for Tristano, I think that's very well substantiated by now. He was trying to know Lennie and learn where he was coming from. And every time we met he would continually say that he was glad that I was doing my own thing — and of course that was always an encouragement too.

How did you actually meet Tristano?

By accident. I was working with one of the dance bands in Chicago, I think I was 15 or 16, and I went across the street where a friend of mine was playing. Lennie was in the other band which was like a kind of rhumba band. We got into communication immediately and I knew that this was my opportunity to learn something seriously about the music. I think Lennie was always very concerned that he'd give me or whoever was studying with him the right point of view so we could develop in our own ways — he was very much aware of that. He dealt basically with very fundamental materials. Whenever anyone asks me what I learned from Lennie I have to stop and think for a minute. I think I learned about chords, basic chords, the scales.... always about the fundamental, theoretical things. And about listening carefully to the music, learn and experience solos by the great jazz musicians. The conversations we had are more difficult to relate but the intensity of his devotion was what mainly affected everybody, I think. He was almost fanatically intense in his devotion. Having been moved so much by the music he had heard throughout the years — a music basically invented by the great black musicians — I think somewhere along the line he wished to contribute to the music. So there was that kind of motivation too in his development. I think his strong devotion became a problem in many ways. He became very critical in a kind of a negative way. A lot of the black musicians respected him, I think, but didn't appreciate his criticizing some of them — basically for being commercial or selling out. He was insane about Monk and someone told me that in a radio interview he did shortly before he died he was still saying that Monk was a terrible piano player. Why would he have to do that? So that was an unfortunate part of it. I think Tristano really wanted to be a performer and get that nice contact with the audience, he was very concerned about that, and then something happened. He got afraid, I guess, to go out or it was too difficult for him as a blind man or whatever, but he decided not to go out anymore and I think that was his undoing. Teaching is not enough. As a supplement to playing it's great, but having to depend on that for a living and for your musical reality it's just not enough and I think that killed him.

You are a teacher yourself. Do you teach the same way as Lennie Tristano did?

Well, the things he told me and everybody else... and I just read the interview you did with Warne Marsh ten years ago in which he says that he is basically teaching what he learned from Lennie. Because what we learned are the truths of this music. I'm still saying the same things basically. You gotta do this and you gotta do that in order to learn this. The music has changed into many different areas and some of these areas I haven't dealt with. I'm still playing basically in the same forms so that's what I have to talk about because that's what I know best. Tristano was really one of the first to make some kind of methodology out of jazz education and there's hardly any tribute paid to him in that respect as far as I know....

It was a very dynamic experience every time I worked with, played with Tristano. He really encouraged everyone to play as freely as they could and to open up and blow. On some record I heard him say 'Blow' to Warne once. He loved Warne especially, and I can understand that because Warne is a very special musician, as you well know. My feeling was that it was a perfect situation, the student-apprenticeship kind of relationship, exactly the way it should be done. You study and do your lessons and then you get to play with the teacher. The only problem.... well, there were a few problems and maybe I should discuss them at this point in time. It might give an idea why something didn't work if I'm accurate. There was a perfect opportunity for a group to exist and to grow as students with their teacher and when we played we were equals. It wasn't like he was the teacher. He was the band leader and that's how we thought of him and when we would go out on the road occasionally we were just hanging out together like buddies. The music we were playing was happening during the very development of bebop and bebop was becoming accepted as the next music. I remember when Birdland opened, there was a program that listed the history of jazz. Lester Young was on it and Charlie Parker, there was a Dixieland band with some of the best players and I think Stan Getz was in there some place. And the last band on the program was the Lennie Tristano sextet and believe me, after listening to all that great music it was hard to feel like this was where the music was going, folks. We were the avant-garde, you know, and I don't remember being very comfortable that night. It wasn't quite the time for that band to

make a real impression because bebop was the thing. Well, it could have been like a Dave Brubeck thing off the main route but I think Lennie's idea, just having a band of students, was a large reason why it didn't continue. I think if he had at least had a strong and professional rhythm section, Kenny Clarke and some of the other great players, to help us things would have worked out differently. Lennie's music is famous for not having had good and imaginative rhythm sections and that's one of the reasons that we didn't stay together and really become a working group. Well, I think that's all I care to say about it for now...

Away from Lennie Tristano's band you have played on several occasions with Warne Marsh; the last time was about ten years ago. Many of us wish you would be able to work together more. Your styles seem to match so beautifully.

That was one of the miracles I was talking about. When two people who are so different in many ways can communicate for a minute about something. That was one of the best ways we could communicate together and when it was in a context with Lennie as students it was just that. We didn't really communicate too much away from that situation and that's really the way it's always been. When someone says what you just said I'm always pleased to know that it happened, that for a moment in life I was able to communicate with someone that I admire very much and make some music. Regrettably we weren't able to do it all through the years for whatever reason, personal or geographical. All I can tell you is that I think Warne is one of the great improvisors of all time and certainly in years to come the perspective concerning his importance will be more accurate.

Do you feel that your own music has been appreciated the way it should?

I'm overwhelmed at the appreciation I've gotten. I just feel bad about the fact that I can't work too much in my home town, New York City, which is the center of jazz. But neither can Elvin Jones or Clark Terry or anybody. There are hundreds of other guys waiting in line to work those jobs too. I took my own band to Japan last December and that was a very special feeling for me. To have a good band and play our music. I'm taking that same band [with Harold Danko, Rufus Reid and Al Harewood] to Nice in July and that will be special too. I hope to work with my own band more and more and the rest of the time I'm more than pleased to be accepted working with the many local musicians. Fortunately, there are jazz-interested people in countries like Italy, Germany and Denmark and I'm going back to Europe in October this year already.

You worked with Miles Davis in the late 40s and in the early 50s....

Playing with Miles in the late 40s was another special event. To me, it was in the category of playing chamber jazz. Interesting arrangements and I got an opportunity to play a few solos. My main interest at that time was the things I was doing with Lennie so it seemed like very familiar music. Last year I played at the Montreal Festival. My band was playing at 11:30 at night and Miles' band was scheduled at 12:30 in the big hall on the other side of the medium-sized hall we were playing in. Our last tune was a composition by George Russell, ***Ezz-thetic***, which Miles recorded with my sextet in 1951. I told Miles about it the next morning while we were having breakfast and it was very strange since he's such a different character now and we hadn't really talked for many years. He didn't seem to remember George Russell's composition and I sang it to him. He looked at me through his dark glasses and he said 'Oh, you mean...' and he sang something to me that I didn't understand at all. I don't know if he was putting me on or if he sang something he just made up at the table.

Lee, your repertoire hasn't changed much over the years. I mean, you still play, along with new compositions, the same standards you have been playing for quite a number of years...

I'm not interested that much in tunes per se. I'm more interested in approaching familiar materials and getting a new viewpoint on them. That is my particular strangeness but in my band, when we have time to rehearse, we play some of my new compositions. And I don't know if I offhand can call any tune that's as good as most of those standards. I mean, I love Wayne Shorter's tunes and they create a new challenge but I still haven't been able to learn these tunes with the intensity, I guess, as ***Star Eyes*** and all those nice tunes. I found this with Charlie Parker and Sonny Rollins and Lennie and Warne and many others – they tended to stay with the same body of things when they performed.

Once you were considered an avant-garde musician and I think a lot of people still regard you like that...

Well, within the form that I'm functioning in I try to stay new and renewed so in that sense I'm not using any new forms. The only thing that was avant-garde about Lennie's situation was the fact that there were a few free pieces. Otherwise, we were just playing standards with a new viewpoint. That term, avant-garde, is used very loosely for any kind of an experiment whether it's valid or not. I feel I'm contemporary within an established form and I'm satisfied with that. I might learn something new tomorrow that will bring me on another course. Some of our live performances, when we did some free form pieces with Lennie, I regret they weren't recorded.

How is your musical situation right now?

It's better than ever. As I mentioned, I'm on this European tour right now. I was in Italy for a month, in Paris for a week and before I came to Denmark I was in Germany for a few days. From here I'm going to England to play with John Taylor, Dave Green and Trevor Tompkins for a tour around Britain. Also this year I will make a few records, I don't know how many. So I would say that this is the best year for me in many respects in terms of being able to work at my music and I think next year will be even better. Back in New York I have my own band which is not a permanent band, but my nonet is a thing of the past. The next time I do a thing like that again will be when I'm thinking orchestrally and I'm not thinking that way now. For the time being I prefer a small improvising orchestra.

Gunther Schuller sent me a piece that he wrote for saxophone and orchestra but I wasn't really interested in playing it. The orchestration is very modern, very interesting, some of the most interesting saxophone orchestration I've heard. I do want to play with a large orchestra and I do want to create some music with a composer because I'm not really able to do that yet. In fact, it's in the process of being done right now. There's a French violin player named Pierre Blanchard who's in New York now and I kind of commissioned him to write a string quartet piece that will be recorded when it's finished. And David Baker – we talked about him writing a 20-minute piece. Tony Baker, my friend in New Zealand, is writing 20 minutes of music that I will record for the radio and hopefully Sonet will put a record out on it. In July I'll be recording with a 35-voice female choir that Italian pianist Guido Manusardi has written some music for. It's a group of women, none of whom can read music, and they're from his home town, Milan, and he plays their parts and they learn it by ear and that's the best way. He has written arrangements of ***All The Things You Are*** and ***Summertime***, a piece by Kodaly and some of his own compositions – a variety of things. He is going to record the group in June and then I'll come in with the rhythm section and overdub. Those kinds of things are beginning to open up for me finally. I have been very impressed and inspired by the achievements of Wynton Marsalis. He does what he is doing so well and he also has the power to name his projects. I mean, I've been playing all these years and I've wanted to play with a big orchestra but that's very expensive and no one was willing to really invest that money in me.

I also wish to say that I have been involved in Scientology since 1973 and that basically to me means the writings of L. Ron Hubbard. His writings have been very inspirational to me. Chick Corea actually was the one who introduced me to L. Ron Hubbard and his writings. I find Chick right now is one of the nicest, cleanest, creative people I know and he has just straightened up his act. He did everything before and now he is just an inspired man.

What do you listen to at home?

I've been enjoying listening to some tapes I have with Joe Henderson lately and I've been enjoying very much Wayne Shorter's new album "Atlantis." I have the record and I have a live performance of the band that I recorded from the radio where they stretch out the material. If that were the level of pop music we would have a much different ball game. I've always enjoyed listening to Bach and I frequently listen to Bartok. Some of the works of the Polish composer Lutoslawski have impressed me very much. I don't listen too much to pop music, that's still an area that's last on my list and I feel it's about time I became kind of knowledgeable about.... I mean, I don't even really know Stevie Wonder's music. Most of the musicians I talk to know that music very well and I feel like I'm missing something. I just can't fit it into my schedule somehow. We have priorities, you know. There are so many fine improvisors that I don't know them all, because if I have an hour or so to listen to music I usually put the best players on. I also listen to my own records and not only do I listen to them more and more but I finally decided that it's very important in my understanding of this whole process. We must get very familiar with the great solos of other players and we also must get familiar with our own solos. We must sing and copy and write down our own solos and I'm gradually doing that more and more because I never really did it before. In order to keep things in perspective we must pay that much respect to our own efforts.

TEDDY'S READY • TEDDY EDWARDS

Teddy Edwards has the kind of flypaper memory for jazz facts that makes him an asset to the music's historians. He's an eager talker, pleased to recall moments and musicians that might otherwise be forgotten. Of course, his experience is unusually wide-ranging, including as it does the long-gone world of territory big bands, the California bebop scene of the Forties and small group work in Florida and all over. Edwards is from Jackson, Mississippi, born into a musical family and after taking up alto saxophone, soon moved into full-time music, working in Detroit and Alexandria, Louisiana. Later, he headquartered in Tulsa with the Ernie Fields Orchestra before settling on the West Coast, picking up tenor when trumpeter Howard McGhee formed a new group. Since then, he has been based in Los Angeles, appearing as a soloist or combo-leader also functioning as a composer-arranger. He is recognised as one of the finest tenor saxophonists in jazz today and was recently a visitor to Great Britain.

A conversation with Edwards is peppered with references to his career and he was pleased to tell me that his reminiscences had been recorded for the Library of Congress oral history project. "They paid me 2000 dollars and I talked for five hours. And I only got as far as 1952! What they like is that I can talk about people in music who you haven't heard of, people who never made it but who were so talented. I talked about Central Avenue (the main thoroughfare of black Los Angeles) in the forties. When I arrived in L.A., things were really jumping there, all kinds of music going on along together. People just don't know what it was like. You know, no one even has a picture of Central Avenue from those days anymore."

What about some of those lost talents? "Did you ever hear about Harry Pettiford? That's Oscar's elder brother, and he was just one of the greatest saxophonists that ever lived. When I was with the Ernie Fields band, we'd go through Tulas a lot and that's when we'd run into Harry. There'd be guys from about four bands there and we'd jam the whole night. At the end, it would be just Harry that was playing. He was fantastic. Then there was Booker Green from Florida. I ran into him when I had my own group in Tampa. I was playing alto then and Booker was an inspiration. He never left Florida so nobody knows him.

"During my Florida days, the Adderley Brothers were always around listening to our sounds. Cannonball was kind enough later on to say that Cleanhead Vinson and I were his earliest influences. Another cat who said he always liked my sound and tried to play like me was Sonny Criss. Of course, I told him he had his own style but it was a nice compliment."

Edwards was involved with bebop's greatest practicioner, alto saxophonist Charlie Parker, during the latter's notorious Californian sojourn. "I know things about Charlie that nobody else knows. We were very close during Charlie's California days. Why, I was sitting right next to him when he started to have his breakdown. We were rehearsing, that's Howard McGhee's band, the one with the sax section of Charlie, Gene Montgomery, Sonny Criss and myself, when Bird took ill. There's a whole lot of stuff that hasn't been told about Charlie. Now it seems like they're going to make the film of his life with Richard Pryor playing Bird. That's for the box office, because Pryor is a big name now. I had a call just before I came over to go talk to the production people about my memories of Charlie. So something may come out of that."

Mention of the celebrated trumpeter Howard McGhee triggered some observations that emphasize how the jazz community supports and aids its casualties. "Howard takes time to get to know you but when he knows you're on the level he's a true friend and will do anything for you. Just before (ex-Basie trumpeter) Waymon Reed passed, Howard took him home and gave him something to eat and put some money in his pocket. Howard didn't have much money for himself but he could see Waymon needed help so he did that. That's how Howard is."

Our chat then moved on to the musical friendship between Edwards and another trumpeter Harry "Sweets" Edison, the tenorist's response also suggesting reasons for his exclusion from the international festival circuit. "Harry's another great friend and we have worked together. These days, George Wein and Norman Granz use him so we don't have a chance to make records or anything. I've never worked for Geroge or Norman. It's not that I've ever had problems with either of them. They just don't use me. I guess it could be because I don't come from either the Hawk or Prez tradition. I don't sound like either school so maybe this is difficult for them."

Aside from his exceptional gifts as an instrumentalist, Edwards has an enviable track record as an arranger. Like many, he started young. "I could arrange for a big band by the age of fourteen. I just did it by watching other people and reading a few books. I never had a lesson. These days I can write for a 100-piece orchestra without any problems. This trip I had arrangements to do for Belgian TV and in 1980 I did a TV special for the Dutch TV orchestra when the BBC in London was co-producing. It seems like I could spend all my time writing but I like to play as well."

That pleasure in performing is evident from the moment Edwards takes the stand. Indeed, there's an appetite to play that remains unabated and he'll seek out his peers whenever opportunity allows. "Red Callender has a regular Sunday gig at a club in North Hollywood, it's just a trio, with Gerry Wiggins on piano and the drummer Kenny Dennis. When I just want to stretch out and blow, I go up there and sit in. We have a really good time."

Ever the man to give credit where it is due, Edwards made sure to tell me about another talent deserving wider recognition, to coin a phrase. "I was just out at (trumpeter/organist) Red Mack's house before coming over here. He was giving a party for Cora Bryant, the trumpet player.

"You know, she's as good as any man. She has range and ideas and enough talent to go to the top. She can hit the high notes too. You ask Clark Terry and Diz. She scares them. She hasn't made many records but if she visited Europe, she'd be sensational." In fact, Ms. Bryant debuted on the European festival circuit this summer, appearing with the Johnny Otis R and B Revue at both Nice and North Sea.

While we talked, Edwards was organising himself for the evening ahead. Neatly labelled folders were laid out side by side, one each for tenor, piano, bass and drums, the manuscript sheets inside faultlessly prepared. Edwards travels with a complete book of quartet arrangements, trusting to the musicianship of his accompanists to do them justice. As he checked the charts over, the young English drummer with whom Edwards was to work that night started to look at the drum parts, explaining nervously to the American that his reading was not up to much, but he'd do his best. At this Edwards, a true professional but an understanding colleague too, closed the books, smiled and said: "That's OK, we'll just play standards and blues. Just so that you feel comfortable. That's what I want, and that way, we'll *all* have fun." And they did.

– Peter Vacher

JAZZ IN AUSTRIA

There are few cities in the world that can rightfully claim to have shaped our western cultural thought. With Paris, Vienna is recognized as one of the cultural "meccas," whose past was indeed a thriving one and whose reputation has survived two wars and a good deal of destruction.

Yet, the cultural and intellectual forces which were so strong at the turn of our century seem to be flourishing again, as a renewed interest in the past has nurtured new ideas in all art forms. Be it in the visual or performing arts, Vienna is a city full of historical treasures and contemporary developments.

Of course, music has been an essential part of the city's cultural tradition, one dominated by the composer – one can hear the schmaltzy waltzes of Strauss and the abstract textures of atonalism first introduced by Schonberg and his followers. Normally, one would not associate jazz with this city, but as I discovered, there is an active scene that regroups a couple of expatriates (Art Farmer being the most famous of them), some Austrian veterans and a thriving younger generation, most of whom are members of the Vienna Art Orchestra: Woody Schabata, Karl Fian, composer and arranger Matthias Ruegg and Harry Sokal, just to name a few.

As for the veterans, the first name that comes to mind is that of **Hans Koller.** Now at 65, he is the dean and father to many a younger musician in both his native Austria and in Germany where he lived for many years. As a follow-up to a birthday party, which the city held in his honour last February, Koller himself led a European all-star band last April 26 with such prominent players as Albert Mangelsdorff, Kenny Wheeler, Wolfgang Puschnigg and Bernd Konrad. Apart from one solo saxophone tribute to Billy Strayhorn (***Lush Life***) by Koller, all compositions were his, ranging from a long suite dedicated to sculptor Constantin Brancusi to a series of compositions for saxophone quartet, which demonstrated his synthesis of a jazz time feeling and atonal harmonies. A fitting tribute then to one of Europe's seasoned performers, and a concert warmly applauded by a large audience of all ages.

Two weeks earlier, **Elvin Jones** and his quartet played in the same auditorium at the Technical University (a.k.a. Audi-Max-Tu), a regular setting for jazz concerts in Vienna. Originally billed as a quintet date, with regular sax-man Pat LaBarbera scheduled to be the front-line partner with Sonny Fortune, it so turned out that the latter was the only horn player on the date. Interestingly enough, he played tenor rather than alto (which, as he told me, is the only occasion on which he unpacks the bigger horn). Too bad, because he sounds damn good on it. In any event, the crowd was treated to a standard post-Coltranian repertoire, which has been the drummer's trademark ever since his golden days of the sixties. Few surprises in the music, but Mr. Jones can still drum up a pretty good storm.

Another artist on tour during my stay was **Lou Donaldson.** Now back in circulation after a lengthy hiatus, I caught him at Jazzland, one of the premier jazz clubs of the city, still under the direction of Axel Nelhardt. As a representative of another era, the saxophonist still relies on Bird for his bread and butter and his repertoire is still a mix of bop standards, which we all know by now, and some blues with (humourous) vocals supplied by the leader. Pianist Herman Foster was not really known to me, though I discovered very rapidly that his is of the Milt Buckner locked-hands persuasion. Even if such a style is an effective way of creating tension, it becomes rather predictable after a while, and tiresome at that.

FRANZ KOGLMANN (Photograph by Heide Heide)

Still in the bebop tradition, I met up with **Leo Wright**, who, after having suffered a crippling stroke which left him partially paralysed in 1979, is playing again although it has been an uphill battle to regain the fluid technique he once had. Yet, his wonderful dark sound and his swing have remained intact. Now living in Vienna for the last three or four years with his Viennese born wife, singer Elly Wright, he performs periodically with her group.

This group was heard last May 30 as part of a mini jazz festival held on the grounds of the Oberlaa spa. Futhermore, this was a good opportunity to hear a good cross section of the local jazz scene, as 36 groups were presented on ten stages. Unfortunately, the crowds were kept away by unusually cool weather that weekend. For the brave who shivered through the evening they had the opportunity of hearing the **Karlheinz Miklin** trio, the leader being a multi-reedist with a strong sound, the piano/sax duet of **Koller/Schwarz** whose intimate rapport was not too well suited for an outdoor context, and the quartet of **Boschidar Sotirov**, an excellent reedman technically, but whose sound and ideas are mainly derivative from the American mainstream. **Albert Maier**, as the pianist for Elly and Leo Wright, certainly must be one of Austria's best kept secrets from the jazz world, particularly a memorable performance he gave a week after at an after hours club in the city.

Though there is a lot of straight ahead jazz to be heard, there are a number of musicians less intent on emulating and more concerned with other creative venues, closer to the European tradition. One such musician is **Franz Koglmann**, a flugelhornist, whose prime interest is a music which he calls "post avant-garde". Working towards a synthesis of European and

American influences, one can hear in certain instances a combination of Alban Berg and middle 50s Gerry Mulligan. This was the impression I had upon listening to a trio he calls KoKoKo (with East German bassist **Klaus Koch** and West German **Eckard Koltermann** on baritone sax and bass clarinet as sidemen). This group performed last June 4 in one of the numerous smaller galleries in the city's center, an ideal setting for their music. Measured in its emotional content, the music is varied in terms of compositional and textural nuances, truly a good example of how Europeans can be as creative in improvised music without being imitative.

As has been the case of other countries, Austria has also been organizing jazz festivals of its own, one of them in the spring in a small town near the West German border, Sigharting, the other one in Hollabrunn, north of Vienna, in early July. In closing, just a word of thanks to one of Austria's most fervent jazz fans and resident discographers, Dietrich Kraner, for accomodating me in Graz, a beautiful city with an interest in the music we all love. Without a doubt, the Austrian scene is alive and well in all fields of artistic endeavour; as for jazz or, more loosely speaking, creative improvised music, there is also much activity and, most interestingly, a good following for it too.

FRANZ KOGLMANN

Franz Koglmann Pipetett: Schlaf Schlemmer, schlaf Magritte
Pipe Records 153 000
Recorded live at Ensembletheater Trefpunkt Petersplatz, Vienna, Dec. 22, 1984.

Trio KoKoKo: Good Night
Creative Work Records (CW 1002)

Franz Koglmann, flugelhorn; Klaus Koch, bass; Eckard Koltermann, baritone sax, bass clarinet. Luzern, Switzerland - November 26 & 27, 1985.

Since the late sixties, at a time when Free Jazz was "invading" the European scene, it was an opportunity for many young musicians to seize upon a new aesthetic and establish their own musical identity which would be different than the models they had been emulating up to that point. Now some 20 years later – and a whole generation of free playing later – there seems to be a movement afoot pointing to a return to more pre-conceived structures, a music in which total spontaneity is integrated into a detailed (i.e. notated) framework. On the one hand, there are a few large orchestras, like Willem Breuker's Kollektief or the Vienna Art Orchestra, who have eschewed experimentation to establish a specific style while, on the other hand, there are a good number of musicians whose prime interest is experimentation. One such man is the Viennese flugelhornist Franz Koglmann.

Both of the records here under review are representative of his move away from open-ended free improvisation to active experimentation in the field of composition. As a musician who came up in the sixties, he was actively engaged in the "European New Thing", playing with Steve Lacy and Bill Dixon in the early to mid-seventies. Nowadays, his prime concern is composition and these two albums document this new phase of his career.

Both records present a common interest, expressed in two different contexts. As the first album presents his writing for a ten piece ensemble, the second focuses on a trio setting. The Pipetett album offers an interesting combination of sounds and textures, mainly due to the choice of instrumentation: flugelhorn, trombone, french horn, tuba, soprano sax, oboe, clarinet and rhythm section. Furthermore, this album brings together classical and jazz musicians in a rare instance where people of different persuasions can work effectively together.

The music itself is a blend of solo excursions and tight group playing. In terms of compositions, one can qualify it as an extension of the writing found in a number of prominent arrangers of the fifties, the likes of Bob Graettinger, Gil Evans and Johnny Richards. Yet, there is a concurrent use of numerous contemporary classical composing techniques, such as unresolved dissonant harmonies and wide intervals. By North American standards, one might find the music closer to chamber music than to a jazz feel. But he himself calls his group a chamber jazz orchestra and one should not use the American approach as a baseline for this music, which is precisely the point the Europeans have been trying to make.

Yet, we cannot disqualify the jazz influence off hand. For instance, he still uses the traditional rhythm section, but never in a continuous time-keeping role: sometimes it swings, sometimes it is subdued like in a ballad and, quite regularly, it just drops out leaving the horns on their own. The jazz influence may be periodic in this album, but it is much more pervasive in the trio record. Two of the pieces (***Dedication*** and ***Löwenlinie*** – or ***Line For Lyons*** roughly translated) are reminiscent of the pianoless quartet years of Gerry Mulligan, with quotes and paraphrases from some of that material. Beyond that, the music has individual free improvisations and a variety of moods created by certain juxtapositions of sounds. But like the first album, the compositional ingredient is still the unifying concept of the music.

Apart from the leader, bassist Klaus Koch and reedman Eckard Koltermann are well in tune with Koglmann's approach: the former does not simply limit his role to that of an accompanist, but he solos proficiently and plays, at times, like a third horn; the latter has a definite Mulligan influence on baritone, playing in a more linear swing-like fashion, while his bass clarinet seems more personal in conception, though his solo space is more limited on it.

As a "post avant-garde" music, to use Koglmann's own description, one can conclude that he is rerouting his own pursuits, by relying more on past traditions to create something different, but not necessarily new. Some people prefer to think that something new is basically a break from the past, so one might see a paradox in Koglmann's music. But when one really thinks about it, what then is really new in music?

– Marc-A. Chenard

Pipe Records, c/o F. Koglmann, Wilhelm Exnergasse 23/5, 1090 Vienna, Austria.
Creative Work Records, c/o Mike Wider, St. Karlistrasse 14, CH-6004, Luzern, Switzerland.

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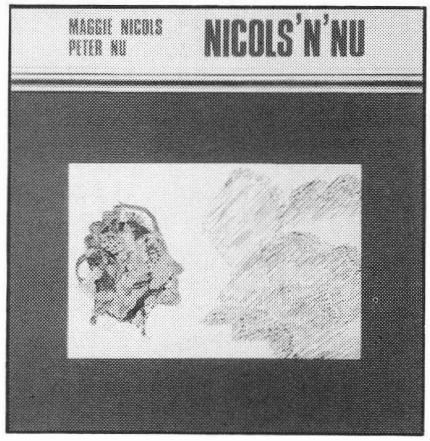

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BOBBY WATSON

Bobby Watson is one of the most talented of today's young jazz musicians. Composer and alto saxophonist, he has played and recorded with such well-known leaders as Art Blakey, George Coleman, Sam Rivers and Woody Shaw. He spent a couple of years as musical director for Blakey, and recently he has recorded under his own name for Roulette, Amigo, Enja and New Notes. The following interview was done in Paris on March 9, 1986, during Watson's engagement with Panama Francis at "Hotel Meridien."

BOBBY WATSON: Three years ago, we started New Notes Records with Curtis Lundy [bassist] and Dennis Sullivan [business partner]. The first record we put out was called "Beatitudes." It was co-led by myself and Curtis Lundy, with Kenny Washington on drums and Mulgrew Miller on piano. We recorded it at Rudy van Gelder's studio in New Jersey. Now, we have contacts with distributors around the world, we have a few investors and we have three more records coming out.

When you were playing with Blakey, when he had his big band in 1980, did you feel he was doing that out of nostalgia for the big band he tried to lead in the fifties? ["The Seventeen Messengers" and "The Art Blakey Big Band" with Donald Byrd, John Coltrane, Sahib Shihab, etc.].

At first, I thought that this was what he was trying to recreate. But since that time, he had an album called "The Golden Boy," where he played selections from the movie of the same name, which starred Sammy Davis Junior and some other big stars. The instrumentation on that albums was exactly the same as the big band we did in 1980. There was James Spaulding, Wayne Shorter, Lee Morgan, Freddie Hubbard, Curtis Fuller; three brass and three reeds, and Bill Barber on tuba I think. So in 1980, we tried to recreate the instrumentation of "Golden Boy."

You have released the "E.T.A." album on Roulette, played with Blakey, George Coleman's octet in 1981, the Louis Hayes quartet in 1982, and now you play in the "29th Street Sax Quartet." What decided you to form this quartet – was it to put forward another image of yourself as a musician?

The saxophone quartet was already formed, and Ed Jackson [alto saxophone] was the founder along with Jim Hartog [baritone]; then they had Rich Rothenberg [tenor]; I was the last to join. When they asked me to join them, I looked at it as an opportunity to expand my image, as you say, because everybody looked at me as an Art Blakey-style musician [soul and hard bop] and perhaps thought that maybe I would not be capable of experimenting with so-called "new music"; although I know as a musician that the hardest music in the world today, to play with feeling and technique is bebop. This is the hardest music to play without a doubt. I play sax and I want to tell this to the world!

When you were in George Coleman's octet, along with trumpet you were also playing with two tenors and a baritone; perhaps that made the saxophone quartet easier.

To be honest with you, I was not thinking of a saxophone quartet until Jim Hartog approached me with the idea. For me it was a challenge, because I don't want to be categorized, you know! I want to show that the more knowledge and the more training you have, you can play anything, and "avant garde" is really easy. Because you have freedom... like a language.

When I was in school, I studied composition. My degree is in composition, so to me, the most important thing is the melody. If the composition is strong enough, it can be present in many ways. In the Twenty-Ninth Street Saxophone Quartet we do several things that I used to do with Blakey but that know I've arranged for saxes. Some of the songs I've done with my own quartet with a rhythm section; I do them now for

BOBBY WATSON (Photograph by J. Giscard)

saxes, just to show the strength of the composition. Jazz, to me, is the classical music of American in terms of form, improvisation, and basically, we deal with the three elements: melody, harmony and rhythm. Basically, exploiting these three elements with the saxophone quartet gives us the opportunity to bring to jazz the chamber music approach of a string quartet or a piano trio. To play Thelonious Monk with four saxophones gives it more of a classical approach, because the composition is strong enough, and the melody is strong, so you can present it without drums.

My next album on New Notes will be a big band album with compositions by me and my wife, Pamela. I'll arrange the compositions for seventeen musicians. Probably with Kenny Washington or Victor Lewis on drums, Ronnie Mathews or John Hicks on piano.

Art Blakey said, in an interview with Francis Paudras (Jazz Hot, 1980), that Clifford Brown "played his heart out." Do you feel you play that way?

Art Blakey is a philosopher, you know. Every time you play you should play as if there's no tomorrow.

You were born in Charlie Parker's birthplace, Kansas City. In that same interview, Blakey said that there was in Kansas City a fantastic alto saxophonist called John Jackson; both of them had the same professor, Buster Smith.

Right. I don't think I ever met Buster Smith. I think the main connections in Kansas City was the gospel music, because the Middle West portion of the U.S.A. is what they call the Bible Belt, because in many counties in the area, there are many churches, and religion is very heavy there, and my first experience playing in public was in a church. I come from a family of ministers.

On the album "Live at Montreux and Northsea" [Timeless], Blakey's big band plays your composition Wheel Within A Wheel *[cf.: Ezekiel's vision] and now you've entitled your album on New Notes "Beatitudes."*

Right! The term "Messengers" is Islamic. As a matter of fact, Blakey helped buying my first Koran and told me many things about Islam. For Blakey, religion is something very personal. For him it's more *action*, in terms of how he relates to each personality he meets. He shows you how to be positive. Art Blakey is the most positive bandleader, and perhaps, to me, the greatest bandleader living today in terms of giving young people a chance. Although there came a time that I had to leave.

In 1954, Blakey said, "I am going to stay with the youngsters; it keeps the mind active."

It's true. I was with him for four and a half years. We had a talk one day and he said, "I think it's time for you to leave. You have been around the world with me twenty times, you have made twelve records, it's time to give someone else a chance." He is very committed to encouraging young people and I remember when we were touring all around the world, if anybody had enough courage to ask to sit in with Art Blakey, he would let him sit in.

James Williams told me in 1981 that Blakey had his best group since the sixties [the days of Wayne Shorter, Curtis Fuller, Freddie Hubbard, etc.]. Perhaps that was the reason that he's kept the brass and two reeds lineup?

For me it was a thing. When I joined Blakey, he had a quintet with Larry Schneider and Bill Hardman. Bill Hardman left the band and, at first, Johnny Coles played for three weeks, and then Valeri Ponomarev. All the arrangements were for a quintet, so I had to make my own part. Blakey gave me the record, I went home and made all the third parts for alto myself. By the time he came back to New York, I met him in a club and sat in, playing these parts... so I had the job.

You know, he is the most positive man.

INTERVIEW BY JO GISCARD AND DIONIZY PŁATKOWSKI

BOBBY WATSON / Selected Discography

E.T.A.
Roulette SR 5009 (1978)

Live At Montreux and Northsea
Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers Big Band
Timeless SJP 150 (1980)

Live at Bubba's
Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers
Who's Who in Jazz/Philips 1981

Beatitudes (co-leader with Curtis Lundy)
New Notes 1001

Curtis Lundy
Just Be Yourself
New Notes 1003

Advance
Enja 4082

29th Street Saxophone Quartet
New Notes 1002

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RECORD REVIEWS

BUDD JOHNSON /PHIL WOODS
The Old Dude & The Fundance Kid
Uptown UP 27.19

Budd Johnson's recent passing, at the age of 74, robbed jazz of one of its most productive talents. A multi-reedman who played all four saxophones and clarinet in a league with Coleman Hawkins-Ben Webster-Lester Young-Charlie Parker, performers with whom he was closely associated, he was also a gifted composer, arranger and/or musical director for a variety of bands ranging from Earl Hines to Billy Eckstine's orchestra (the first big band to play bop), to Woody Herman, Gene Krupa (***What's This*** was Budd's) ... He toured Asia and Europe with Quincy Jones, played with Count Basie and Gil Evans, led his own groups ...

We could go on and on about Budd Johnson's accomplishments and most jazz fans by now should be familiar with his intensely personal stylistic playing. But the fact remains that despite all his talents, formidable by any standards, this giant of jazz was not given a recording date under his own name in at least twenty years!

There were some minor masterpieces in the '60s – the marvelous "Let's Swing" (with brother Keg) for the low budget Swingville label, and the epicurean "French Cooking" on Argo (which bears searching out in bargain bins) are two "sleepers" that should be classified among the classics. Even on the magnificent JPJ Quartet sides, Budd shared equal honors with Bill Pemberton and Oliver Jackson (along with another jazz genius-neglect Dill Jones).

So it's no surprise that Budd's last recording date is one shared with Phil Woods, a musician younger in years but with an empathy going back some 25 years when the two were top studio jazz players in New York, then later toured Europe together in the Quincy Jones band. This is not to downgrade Phil Woods, a compelling reedman and idol of the New Age beboppers, but Budd deserved at least one album under his own name, even if it was to have been (as in this case) his epitaph.

As it is, Dan Morgenstern provides some fitting farewell notes that make up in part for the album's seemingly all too short 40 minutes of music. But it's 40 minutes that's worth every second if only for Budd Johnson, playing his heart out as usual, with Phil Woods providing an adept sounding board with rakish alto.

Listen to Bud, the consummate balladeer, stoke the fires under ***Street of Dreams*** and ***More Than You Know*** with creamy rich tenor work in the cooking school of Hawkins and Webster (with whom he shared another classic album in the '60s – "Webster Meets Hawkins"). With Phil Woods' vinegary alto adding the right pungency, it makes some truly gourmet jazz fare that should satisfy any jazz palette. The old Edgar Sampson warhorse ***Blue Lou*** is taken at a sprightly clip by the two master hornmen, who duet freely at one stage after the rhythm section drops out.

Woods displays his formidable composing skills with two originals: on ***After Five*** he spars deftly with the old heavyweight Budd, then does an unison turn in the manner of Zoot Sims-Al Cohn on a catchy ***Old Dude And The Fundance Kid*** (Old Dude was what Phil fondly called his friend Budd); Phil takes a standout solo answered in character by Budd, but the tricky bridge is taken by the group's bass player – another giant who has since passed away – George Duvivier.

Characteristically, Duvivier shines on all these tracks, along with the rest of the rhythm section: Bill Goodwin (drums), Richard Wyands (piano). But then Budd Johnson shows that, even at 75, how advanced he was in his ideas with a new composition called ***Confusion*** that might leave many younger players dizzy (but not Woods). As Morgenstern says, "Old Dude went out with his boots on..." Too bad he didn't use them effectively on those record producers who chose to ignore him in favor of more saleable talents. ***– Al Van Starrex***

THE METROPOLITAN BOPERA HOUSE
Still Comin' On Up
V.S.O.P. #32

This record is a real sleeper. I suspect most readers will be unfamiliar with the five musicians that make up this fine quintet. However, make no mistake, this is a highly swinging hard bop album that deserves to be noticed.

Leader Danny D'Imperio is perhaps best known for his two years with Woody Herman. Danny, who hails from Cortland, New York, (not far from Syracuse) demonstrates that his roots are deeply planted in the joyful music of the first and second generation beboppers.

Gary Pribek, who plays alto on this record, has paid his dues with the Mel Lewis and Buddy Rich bands. He is a wailer who reminds me at times of Sonny Stitt. I expect we will be hearing a lot more from him.

The trumpet player is John Marshall who impresses with his creative melodic solos. He doesn't just run the changes, but rather tells a story with his improvisations.

Steve Ash on piano and bassist Dave Shapiro round out the group and both make positive contributions to the success of this record.

Mention should be made of the excellent choice of tunes on this lp. ***Look, Stop And Listen*** by Tadd Dameron, ***One Bass Hit*** by Gil Fuller, ***Tour DeForce*** by Dizzy Gillespie and ***Autumn In New York*** are all well known to those who frequent the Metropolitan Bopera House. On top of that is Joe Zawinul's ***One For Newk*** plus selections by two upstate New Yorkers; ***Steppin'*** by Don Menza and ***Comin' On Up*** by Sal Nistico.

The sum total of all the above is a record with a vitality that is too often missing from the majority of so-called jazz albums being issued these days. Strongly recommended.

– Peter Friedman

KENNY DAVERN / DICK WELLSTOOD / CHUCK RIGGS
Live Hot Jazz
Statiras SLP 8077

Kenny Davern and Dick Wellstood, especially when they play together, are among the few musicians who effectively span a broad range of jazz expression. They have encountered each other on the bandstand or in the studio countless times over the last couple of decades and never fail to play provocative, intriguing, original music. They have their foundations firmly resting on the work of the old masters; on top of that they build their fanciful castles out of all kinds of materials. Melody, harmony and rhythm are all kneaded to fit the shape of their ideas, with each musician fueling and inspiring the other.

Davern plays it straight for a time, caressing a ballad, musing on a blues line or swinging out with a conventional clarinet attack. But then he can't resist pulling on his circus tights and giving us some acrobatics – the trills, runs, twists, moans and explosions that are alternately exciting and mystifying. Wellstood also ruminates while the world eavesdrops, playing passages of exquisite beauty, using his fluid stride style that sounds more like the touch of the masters than any of his contemporaries, and delving into dark corners with his left hand. Separately and together, they give us glimpses of their extraordinary inner worlds.

All of that is much in evidence in this recording, taken from a 1984 live performance at the Maryland Inn in Annapolis. It's not an occasion for rarely played songs, as might have been the case if it had been a studio date. One welcome rarity is ***Then You've Never Been Blue***, and ***Travelin' All Alone*** doesn't crop up all that often. After that, though, it's the familiar ***Rose Room, Who's Sorry Now, Wrap Your Troubles***

BUDD JOHNSON (Photograph by Jorgen Bo)

In Dreams, Beale Street Blues and *Oh! Lady Be Good*. And — the song that competes with *Indiana* as being the most-played, or, more accurately, the most-overplayed, jazz piece — *Rosetta*. The pain of over-exposure is redeemed, not surprisingly, by the pleasure of some extended striding by Wellstood. All the pieces are given worthy interpretations, to be sure, so it's a matter of whether you favor old friends or new faces in your music material. The duo are joined by drummer Chuck Riggs, who does his job well with groups like the Scott Hamilton gang he's sprung from, but too much of the time is over-bearing here. He earns his pay on *Beale Street Blues*, though, where the witty four-bar exchanges between Riggs and Davern and Wellstood show him successfully entering the special world of Kenny and Dick. However, the pair are at their best going it alone, and a lot of sticks and cymbals flying across the landscape doesn't enhance their art. Even so, with a supernumerary aboard, we still get all the benefits of a rich musical experience.

— Dick Neeld

BOB WILBER / DICK WELLSTOOD
The Duet
Parkwood 103

Bob Wilber and Dick Wellstood began their days in jazz frequently playing together, and then went on in pursuit of separate and varied careers. Both have proved to be superior musicians, absorbing numerous musical influences and reflecting them back in their own personal combination of talents. Those beginning days are now four decades in the past and here we have them reunited and applying what they've learned and experienced in all those years. It's strictly a duet session, which means that you give up some of the full-bodied sound of a larger group for the intense exposure of two musicians' expressiveness at close range.

Naturally, knowing these two probing players as we do, it's no surprise that they come up with a selection of material that includes many obscure but worthy songs, along with a few familiar ones. James P. Johnson is here twice (*Ain'tcha Got Music* and *You, You, You*), Fats Waller is included without resorting to his over-exposed compositions (*Wild Cat Blues*), Louis Armstrong's *Cornet Chop Suey* comes out as *Soprano Chop Suey*, Wilber is featured on his own *Soulful Soliloquy* and Dill Jones gets included with his appealing ballad *No Flowers For My Lady*. These are complemented with the more familiar fare by Cole Porter (*I've Got You Under My Skin*), Rudolph Friml (*Song Of The Vagabonds*), Scott Joplin (*The Entertainer*), and the team of Schwartz and Jerome, responsible for *Chinatown, My Chinatown*.

Wilber splits his playing between the soprano sax and clarinet equally, while Wellstood plays in his broadly varied manner, getting the best values from each piece. Wilber plays well, as he always does, but doesn't always sound completely involved in the music, even if he is. At times it sounds more like he's approaching the music from the outside in rather than from the inside out. It may be due to the unfamiliarity of the material — or that the reed-piano duet format isn't entirely compatible with some of the music they play. This seems especially likely with the Fats Waller and James P. Johnson numbers, where either a solo piano or an expanded group would be able to express the music better. One piece that does work well is *The Entertainer*, taken at a very slow tempo that allows for better sound and expression from Wilber's clarinet and gives Wellstood the opportunity to play majestically. By the time we come to the last track, *The Song Of The Vagabonds*, everything is clicking and we again get the chemistry of involvement and interplay. It gets the true stride pianist's treatment, whomping the hell out of an old operetta song as the attack builds from chorus to chorus. Overall, material and musicianship make this record worthwhile listening. *— Dick Neeld*

ARNETT COBB
Keep On Pushin'
Bee Hive BH 7017

Arnett Cobb's story is one of courage and tenacity in the face of near-insurmountable odds — and it's reflected in his music. As Stanley Dance recalls vividly, in his liner notes to Cobb's newest album "Keep On Pushin' ", Cobb was dogged by "bad luck and trouble" from his earliest years: he was hit by a car when he was ten; a resulting bone condition brought about two spinal operations nineteen years later, and he was bed-ridden, in all, for fifteen and a half months — right when he was beginning to make his mark as a leader of a jazz septet, after five years with Lionel Hampton. Undaunted, he put a new group together and stayed busy until April 1956, when both his legs were broken in a Connecticut car accident. Forced to use crutches since then, Cobb's activities were restricted for more than a decade — and a bout of pleurisy caused him to lose fifty pounds. Then Cobb began to travel extensively again, playing festivals in the U.S. and abroad (often as a star attraction with Hampton) and recording extensively.

On his newest outing, Cobb — at sixty-six and still going strong — plays with all the fire and relentless energy of a younger man but, at the same time, with the reflective twinges and occasional wry humor of a man whose had a tough long road to travel. He is accompanied, on this journey, by a formidable rhythm team of Junior Mance — piano, Panama Francis — drums, and George Duvivier in one of this bassist's last recording dates.

Versatile trumpeter Joe Newman and veteran trombonist Al Grey join the group for the title track *Keep On Pushin'*, a catchy Basie-style blues that allows all to solo and collectively to achieve a big band sound with the big-sounding Cobb. This group also travels *Indiana*, with the rhythm section opening up under Duvivier's distinctive loping rhythm, and Cobb leading them out in a rousing blow-out.

Duvivier introduces Cobb's own slow-tempo *Blues For Lisette* (for Arnett's daughter), for an evocative display of the leader's resonant tenor work, with Mance sharing the spotlight with two scintillating choruses that makes one wonder where he's been hiding all these years.

Cobb pays tribute to a close friend and early inspiration Joe Thomas in *Cheatin' On Me* (with an opening chorus patterned on Joe's ballad for the Lunceford orchestra). But the superb ballad quality of Cobb's playing can be savored in *Stardust*, which is as evocative as the classic 1940 version by Ben Webster with Duke Ellington at Fargo, North Dakota. Here's another classic! Cobb preaches on *Deep River*, recalling his Baptist roots, with only George Duvivier's bass to back him — as great an exit line as you can wish. *— Al Van Starrex*

KHAN JAMAL / PIERRE DORGE / JOHNNY DYANI
Three
SteepleChase SCS 1201

Khan Jamal, vibes and marimba; Pierre Dorge, guitar; Johnny Dyani, bass

Lilli Goes To Town / Bhala / Blues Life / Tjader / MK Speak Of The Nation / A Bomb / Children Of The Third World / Three

"Three" unites a trio of musicians with differing geographical, cultural and sociological backgrounds whose sensitive collaboration yields its share of satisfying moments. Khan Jamal, Pierre Dorge and Johnny Dyani have all led their own dates for and appeared as sidemen on various other SteepleChase sessions. Here there is no designated leader as each player is given equal billing. Generally a loose, easy going feel is the order of the day; resembling at times an amiable conversation among close friends. Dorge's *Lilli Goes To Town* opens in a bright mood as Jamal and the guitarist wrap their short solo statements around Dyani's throbbing bass lines. Combining a cool, metallic sound with an expanding concept, Jamal's playing has taken on a greater depth and maturity. His composing skills also lend a boost, especially the jaunty *Blues Life* and the R&B tinged *Children Of The Third World*. Dorge is one of the more original of today's crop of young guitarists. Employing an angular attack and attractive tonal colorations, his work is fresh, personal and free of the usual cliches. A strong authoritative presence, bassist Johnny Dyani provides a firm rhythmic backdrop; his fat, round juicy notes filtering through with zest and clarity. Of the three Dyani compositions, *MK Speak Of The Nation* is the most attractive. Here Jamal switches to marimba and helps to stir up a warm, spicy, African flavor. While this date may not be a milestone in anyone's career, it does contain enough subtle surprises to warrant more than just a casual listen.

— Gerard J. Futrick

PANAMA FRANCIS & THE SAVOY SULTANS
Everything Swings
Stash ST 233

For decades the traditional sounds of New Orleans, real or fancied, have been preserved by active musicians and bands. The devoted have been keeping the music alive, with bands from Poland to Japan and everywhere in-between playing for an enthusiastic following. Swing music has fared less well, probably due to its being of more recent origin and more of a basic element to a great body of jazz styles. However, a swing band, of any size, is hard to come by in its pure form.

Panama Francis, with his forty-years-later Savoy Sultans, has taken dead aim at this object-

ive, and has ended up with holes scattered all over the target. At times the band swings as hard and as well as its namesake, and at other times it sounds more like a first rehearsal. In this LP they have gone right to the heart of the swing book, as created by Charlie Christian, Benny Goodman, Chick Webb, Edgar Sampson, Duke Ellington, Glenn Miller, Joe Garland and Charlie Shavers, to bring forth an array of classic numbers — ***Air Mail Special***, ***Stomping At The Savoy***, ***It Don't Mean A Thing***, ***In The Mood***, ***Undecided*** and several more, plus an original, ***Funkie Willie***, and Wild Bill Davis's ***Stolen Sweets***.

In picking all those standards for the album, Francis and the producers have created something of a problem for themselves. Except for the two last-named titles and ***Sentimental Journey***, which is uplifted by their gently surging interpretation, the band is bested at every turn by the original versions. Having a band play music of this kind live at a concert — or even better, at a dance — provides not only justification but also pleasure and excitement. On record, however, the game is played with a different set of rules.

This album shows the band's abilities, individually and collectively, but the music doesn't soar the way it should. It's a good band, with George Kelly, Robert Watson, Sayyd Abdul Al-Khabbyr, and Phil Bodner handling the reeds, Irv Stokes and Spanky Davis playing trumpets, and Sammy Benskin, Bill Pemberton, John Smith and Francis providing the rhythm, and they know what they're doing. But the missing ingredient is the zest and fire that are vital to music of this kind. Perhaps for their next recording they can be taped live playing for a thousand dancers. On the right night, they can make good claim to the Savoy Sultans title.

— Dick Neeld

VIC DICKENSON
Just Friends
Sackville 2015

Vic Dickenson possessed one of the most idiosyncratic sounds in jazz. If the first requirement for playing jazz is the ability to improvise, the first requirement for distinguishing yourself while doing it is to have your own expressive, identifiable, individual way of playing. With that definition in mind, Vic Dickenson's trombone playing places him in the first rank. This record, made at two sessions in 1981, catches him there, at his best, before his final illness had advanced on him.

The appeal of the album is enhanced by the comfortable ambience of three old friends exploring all sorts of tunes out of the past. It's a trio date with pianist Red Richards and bassist John Williams, both of whom have worked with countless swing and mainstream musicians for countless years. And the songs come from every direction. Dickenson was famous for his storehouse of songs, and here we get a spread that ranges from show tunes to jazz staples to pop songs of varying repute. Along with ***On A Clear Day You Can See Forever*** and ***Taking A Chance On Love*** there's James P. Johnson's ***If I Could Be With You One Hour Tonight*** and Eubie Blake's ***Memories Of You.*** Those, along with ***Sweet Sue*** and ***Runnin' Wild***, are good songs that merit the repeated attention they get. But interspersed are such songs as ***Bye Bye Pretty Baby***, ***Here Lies Love***, ***Once And Only Once***, and ***What A Wonderful World***. In addition, there's Irving Berlin's ***How Many Times***, which enjoyed a minor big band popularity in the 1940s and ***Me And My Shadow***, a piece that lived and died with bandleader-showman Ted Lewis.

There's no question that Richards and Dickenson make good company for each other, and John Williams is equally compatible. ***Runnin' Wild*** and ***Sweet Sue*** are solo piano features that Richards makes the most of. ***Sweet Sue*** is an especially inventive interpretation. Vic sings a pair and Red does likewise. Their vocals have a pleasant amiability about them, but there are limitations, especially on ***One Hour***, where a very slow tempo challenges Vic's ability to carry the tune. The track is redeemed, however, with superior playing, and Dickenson's spirit, inventiveness, humor, and sentimentality are on display throughout the record.

Neither Dickenson nor Richards has ever sounded better. They've played in different contexts, of course, but in this kind of setting they achieve an intimacy and reflect an understanding that leaves you feeling that this is a four-person session — Vic, Red, John and you.

— Dick Neeld

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JAKI BYARD AND THE APOLLO STOMPERS
Phantasies
Soul Note SN 1075

I May Be Wrong / Medley: Black & Tan Fantasy, Prelude No. 29, Prelude To A Kiss, Do Nothing Till You Hear From Me / One Note To My Wife / 5/4 Medley: Take Five, Cinco Quatro Boogie Woogie / Medley: Lonely Woman, So What, Impressions, Olean Visit, Some Other Spring, It's Too Late / Tricotism / Lover Man
September 25-26, 1984

Jaki Byard, best known for his mid 60s stint with Charles Mingus, has long been one of the most versatile of jazz pianists, being comfortable in every idiom from stride to free. In the late 1970s he began to lead his own big band, the Apollo Stompers, mostly around the New York and Boston areas. On the orchestra's initial album, Byard's charts cover quite a bit of territory and, despite some weak moments, the results are usually quite interesting. After the band plays an excellent arrangement of their theme ***I May Be Wrong***, they perform an Ellington medley that sandwiches Byard's ***Prelude No. 29*** (incorporating some of the modern chords that classical composer utilized in the 1920s) between two of Duke's best-known themes. Unfortunately this medley concludes with Jaki's singing daughter Diane reaching for high notes she cannot hit on ***Do Nothing.*** The complicated but swinging ***One Note To My Wife*** and a 5/4 medley dedicated to Paul Desmond precede an odd medley of modern jazz themes. Ralph Hamperion's bass is quite impressive on Ornette's ***Lonely Woman*** but Byard's other daughter-vocalist Denyce is remarkably dull on ***It's Too Late*** as the band tries in vain to rock the Carole King classic. Much better are the Hamperion-Byard duets (shades of Blanton and Ellington) on Oscar Pettiford's ***Tricotism*** and Dan Licht's guitar feature on ***Lover Man***.

Surprisingly there are very few horn solos from the young players; hopefully Byard's next big band date will showcase his soloists a bit more and will continue in his eclectic fashion.

WALT DICKERSON / RICHARD DAVIS
Tenderness
SteepleChase SCS-1213

Tenderness / Divine Gemini / So Thoughtful / The Road Must Bend / Play Son Play
February 9, 1977

The music of "Tenderness" cannot be described in terms of a conventional vibes-bass duet with one instrument backing the other and the two players trading off solos. Dickerson's five compositions set moods rather than state melodies. The development is left up to the two improvisors who must create sounds and ideas together as a team. Both Dickerson and Davis have such command of their instruments that they are able to reveal their own thoughts and inner souls through their chosen axes; certainly, their musical conversations fit the definition of self-expression. Richard Davis in particular is a marvel, getting beyond the tonal limitations of the bass to fully express himself, but Dickerson is not far behind. Their quiet but occasionally intense interplay will not satisfy those who prefer groove music and melodic hooks but listeners seeking thoughtful improvisations that make expert use of space and dynamics will find much to enjoy on this previously unreleased duet album from 1977.

BILLY HIGGINS
Mr. Billy Higgins
Riza RRL85-104

Dance Of The Clones / John Coltrane / Morning Awakening / Humility / East Side Stomp

The brief liner notes of "Mr. Billy Higgins" (what a dumb name for a record!) proudly states that Riza Records has the honor of presenting Higgins' first American date as a leader. Actually it is difficult to tell from the music that the drummer is responsible for the date, for Higgins contributed none of the five band originals and he is mostly confined to backing the other soloists. Gary Bias, who did write the three compositions on side two, is the dominant soloist, playing soprano, tenor and alto skillfully although without a distinctive voice at this point (Wayne Shorter is his biggest influence). Pianist William Henderson, particularly on ***Dance Of The Clones*** and the overlong ***Morning Awakening***, sounds like he has been listening much too closely to McCoy Tyner. Despite the different style of Bias, the influence

of John Coltrane is strong on this date although oddly enough much less on ***John Coltrane*** than on ***Morning Awakening*** and the somber ***Humility.*** Bassist Tony Dumas is fine in support, contributing a little Jimmy Garrison solo to ***Coltrane***. A decent but nonessential album.

DOUG RANEY TRIO
Guitar Guitar Guitar
SteepleChase SCS 1212

I Thought About You / Laura / Minor Majority / Solar / My Old Flame / Perhaps
July 28, 1985

Guitarist Doug Raney has, in the eight years since his debut album, developed into an impressive player. Still possessing a quiet tone reminiscent of his father Jimmy Raney, Doug at 29 has his own bop-based style and the ability to swing hard with a soft sound. On his latest SteepleChase album (virtually his entire career has been documented on that label), Raney is matched with his regular duomate bassist Mads Vinding and his good friend Billy Hart for a set of lightly swinging improvisations. The interplay between Raney and Vinding on ***Solar*** (where the bassist plays lead), the intense ***Minor Majority*** (based on the standard ***Minority***), a tender rendition of ***My Old Flame*** and Raney's wealth of ideas on the Charlie Parker blues ***Perhaps*** are among the highpoints of this easily enjoyable session.

SCOTT ROBINSON
Multiple Instruments
Multi Jazz 101

Sure As You're Born / Ben / I'm Coming Virginia / If I Were A Bell / Muskrat Ramble / Way Down Yonder In New Orleans / New / Blue And Sentimental / Survival On Venus (a Science Fiction Adventure)
April, 1984

Scott Robinson is (along with Benny Carter, Ira Sullivan and Glenn Zottola) one of the few musicians around who is equally adept on both reeds and brass. Robinson greatly emphasizes his versatility on "Multiple Instruments" during which he makes at least cameo appearances on no less than 33 instruments. Helped out by a fine rhythm trio (led by the talented bop pianist Niels Lan Doky), Robinson mostly explores 50s style jazz on this date, with a few exceptions. Here's a brief play-by-play synopsis of the busy activities: An uptempo rendition of Johnny Mandel's ***Sure As You're Born*** features the leader on both trumpet and his passionate soprano sax. ***Ben*** is a ballad tribute to Ben Webster that has Robinson capturing Webster's warmth while utilizing his own lighter sound. ***I'm Coming Virginia*** showcases Robinson on C-melody sax, sounding closer to Eddie Harris (circa 1960) than to Frankie Trumbauer. ***If I Were A Bell*** has Scott soloing on three rather odd instruments: the ophicleide, normaphon and double-belled euphonium. The funny part is that each of these strange horns sounds close to a bass trombone.

One the flip side, Robinson's brief ***Muskrat Ramble*** has him imitating an ancient '78 (complete with scratches), overdubbing on eight instruments. This segues into ***Way Down Yonder*** with Robinson (backed by the trio) soloing on clarinet and piccolo before playing three horns (overdubbed) on a closing dixieland ensemble straight from the Louis Armstrong All-Stars. ***New*** is a modern hard-bop original for the leader's heated tenor while on ***Blue And Sentimental*** he plays ballad solos on trombone, cornet and tenor. The most adventurous work, ***Survival On Venus***, is saved for last. An episodic piece that alternates a straightahead theme with spacey sections, Robinson appears on twenty-three instruments including organ pipes, the bombarde, solaristic sound sculptures, a helicon, slide trumpet, the Highland bagpipes (roaring on a blues ensemble) and the ever-popular rotary valved posthorn!

Certainly a unique album, Scott Robinson's "Multiple Instruments" is worth searching for. His future projects promise to be fascinating.

DAVID WIDELOCK TRIO
Too Many Vitamins
Beegum 001

Squeak's Suite / Summer Fog / Too Many Vitamins / Good Morgan, Julia / No Substitute / Expansion / Expletive Deleted
August, 1984

Although there are no liner notes on this debut album from Beegum (an unfortunate omission) one can assume that the three talented players on this date are based where the record company is, in Northern California. There is an early 50s West Coast chamber jazz feel to some of the selections, particularly with the liberal usage of Jim Kerwin's bowed bass and the light touch of the guitar-bass-drums trio. The music is sometimes bop-based yet never derivative. Each of the originals possess its own personality although the melodies (excepting the catchy ***Squeak's Suite***) are not by themselves memorable. David Widelock's guitar has a bright appealing sound, Kerwin's tone and creativity is of consistent high quality and drummer Bob B. Hobbs is colorful and subtle; his brief solos are all quite inventive. A fine beginning from these players, all of whom we'll hopefully be hearing from in the future.

FRED ANDERSON
The Missing Link
Nessa N-23

Twilight / A Ballad For Rita / The Bull
September 17, 1979

Fred Anderson, although one of the earliest members of the A.A.C.M., has long been an obscure figure in creative music. Choosing to make his homebase in Chicago and refusing to compromise his music has done little to make him a commercial success, but Anderson is a survivor. He runs his own bar (the Velvet Lounge), plays regularly and today at 57 is in his artistic prime. Neil Tesser in his lengthy and very informative liner notes does an excellent job of summing up the Fred Anderson story.

The tenor-saxophonist is indeed a "missing link" for his lyrical but explorative style is a bridge between the melodicism of Ornette Coleman and the intensity of the mid-60s high energy players, and he possesses a sound all his own. The three originals have brief melodies (quite mournful in the case of the first two) that set up Anderson's powerful solos. Drummer Hamid Hank Drake works very well with Anderson, giving him colorful rhythms to improvise over, and percussionist Adam Rudolph is a strong asset. Bassist Larry Hayrod plays in a sparse often repetitive (but quite fitting) style that is slightly under-recorded. Overall this is easily Fred Anderson's definitive recording; he's been on few other albums. One really has to wonder how this pioneer must have sounded in 1960.

PHILLY JOE JONES
Drum Song
Galaxy GXY-5153

Our Delight / I Waited For You / Bird / Two Bass Hit / High Fly / Drum Song
October 10-12, 1978

During his last period, the late Philly Joe Jones led Dameronia, a group dedicated to reviving the music and arrangement of Tadd Dameron. On "Drum Song," an album that precedes that unit by a few years, one can hear the beginnings of the concept. Slide Hampton's harmonically advanced charts are somewhat reminiscent of Dameron and Philly Joe's drum breaks recall his 1962 recording with Tadd. Jones put together a top-notch septet for this previously unreleased date, including trumpeter Blue Mitchell, the contrasting tenors of Harold Land and Charles Bowen (who is well featured on ***High Fly***), pianist Cedar Walton and Hampton's trombone, which is fully showcased on ***I Waited For You***. All of the players have fine solos on this bop date which was originally dedicated to the late Blue Mitchell, but now is sadly a tribute to the sorely missed Philly Joe Jones.

RICK STONE
Blues For Nobody
Jazzane J2001

Blues For Nobody / My One And Only Love / Ennazus / Lady Bird / Autumn Leaves / Softly As In A Morning Sunrise
December 10 - 11, 1984

Rick Stone's debut album as both a bandleader and head of his own record company is an impressive bop session. The guitarist (29 at the time) plays with authority and taste, improvising with ease over the common chord changes. He enlisted the aid of veterans Hal Galper and Billy Hart along with young bassist Brian Hurley for what turned out to be a swinging date. Marc Bernstein, who guests on alto and saxello during three of the selections, stretches the boundaries of the straight-ahead music. His exciting percussive style is more outside than the other players' and he comes up with many interesting ideas (along with an occasional squeak), showing much potential for the future. Stone's two originals have complicated melodies but resolve into a fast ***Sweet Georgia Brown,*** (***Ennazus***) and a medium-tempo blues; the other cuts are well-known standards.

In summation, this well-played session will delight fans of bop music.

Straight Ahead With Mr. T

Among the welter of contemporary tenor saxophone styles, Stanley Turrentine's is, without a doubt, one of the most unmistakable. Turrentine's virile, bluesy tone and his hard-driving emotional intensity have been a long and deeply influential presence in that special B-flat world of Jazz instrumentalists. Long before the meteoric rise to fame in the mid-70s of Grover Washington, Jr. and a host of less imaginative imitators (foreign and domestic), Stanley Turrentine's soulful and emotionally evocative sound was at the center of the so-called "funky school" of tenor saxophonists which bridged the gap between earlier traditional notions of "swing," bebop and the blues. Turrentine's tenor style (he has, on occasion, made use of the soprano sax) uniquely exhibits a wide range of tonal approaches. From the lyrically subtle and symmetrical phrasing on ballads to the "screeching," "honking" and "shouting" stylistics of Kansas City fame, Turrentine's musical voice is one in which the tradition of blues form and the techniques of blues feeling coalesce.

Mr. T. (as he is affectionately called) made his recording debut twenty-six years ago on the now classic Blue Note album, "Midnight Special," with organist Jimmy Smith and guitarist Kenny Burrell. Since that release (in 1960) and the production of more than fifty albums, Turrentine's career has moved in a variety of directions. However, as we talked, following his recent appearance at Howard Rumsey's Concerts by the Sea, it was apparent that in spite of changes, some things, for Mr. T. at least, simply moved in a circular fashion.

Stanley's latest ablum, aptly titled "Straight Ahead" (which he produced himself and which was released on the newly revived Blue Note label), represents that circular movement, returning him to his professional musical beginnings. And in keeping with Blue Note tradition, Turrentine's primary consideration for "Straight Ahead" was with the personnel. For that he turned to musicans with whom he had worked in earlier years. The selection of tunes, he recalls, came later: *"Let me tell you one thing. On this last album, I didn't prepare any songs. I was thinking about the musicians first. Jimmy Smith flew in and stayed at my house for the duration of the recording. And we started making up songs right there. I planned the musicians before I got to the music. It makes a great deal of difference when you're playing with such quality musicians as I had on that date because things just come. Jimmy Smith, Les McCann, George Benson, Ron Carter – I had the pleasure of working with some of the greatest artists and very good friends of mine. And it was such a wonderful experience. One of the best dates I've ever had. To be truthful, it was very, very gratifying!"*

Roland E. Bush: Stanley, what about your current direction? You've been quoted as saying that you want your music to reach as many people as possible, which, for some, means that you are willing to "cross-over," to produce all kinds of sounds not necessarily associated with Jazz.

Stanley Turrentine: *I let people categorize my way of playing the way they want to. I've been told that I was a "fusion" player, that I was a "bebop", that I was a "cross-over," you know. But I'm basically still playing Stanley Turrentine. So I don't pay too much attention to categories or labels or to what they call the type of music I'm supposed to be playing. I just basically play the kind of songs I like to hear and what I feel. And the direction I'm going in is to try to play* me, *to try to* be *me, and try to reach all kinds of people. Because "commercialism" is not a bad word to me. If they call it commercial, then I guess it's commercial. As long as I'm playing it honestly and with integrity, with meaning* – that's *what counts to me.*

Well, you said "play me," and I'm happy to say that I have at least fifteen of your albums and there are many phases represented by those records. If pressed to say who Stanley Turrentine is musically and what Stanley Turrentine is all about, how would Mr. T. define himself?

Well, Stanley Turrentine is one who is trying to play with honesty – a direct approach – and not to play anything that I don't feel is meaningful, and to try to learn. Because a lifetime is not enough time to learn all the music there is. That's

STANLEY TURRENTINE (Photograph by Gilles Larrain)

why I love music so much. It's an everlasting learning experience. And that's what I want to continue to try to do.

My things are sound, feeling, emotion. That's what we're doing when we're on that stage; that's what we are selling – sound and feeling in music. And when I'm playing, say, a ballad, I learn the lyrics to the ballad and try to tell the story without words. I try to express it in such a way that it's almost like talking to someone. I try to express the song not only by learning the melody, the chords, the structure of the song but the words, to express it in a way that a singer would. That's the way I approach it.

Where are you going from here?

Well, I wish I had a crystal ball, But, specifically, we're going to South America again.

Where?

Well, we were in Caracas, Venezuela, Peru, Rio – and I love it down there! Man, there's so much music *down there! And the people are beautiful. I just love South America. I plan to go there. Then, I understand, we're going to London.*

May I ask you about some of your influences?

My influences were Charlie Parker, Lester Young, Coleman Hawkins, Stan Getz, Sonny Rollins, John Coltrane, Illinois Jacquet, Arnie Cobb. Those were the guys I was listening to when I was developing. There are many, many influences and I am thankful that I was able to be in the company of many of them. For example, Illinois Jacquet. I used to play with him when I was 13 or 14 years old. He used to come to Pittsburgh and say, 'Hey Junior, come on. Bring your horn!' And he'd sneak me into the musician's club and let me sit in.

How did you get started in music?

My father. He's the one who put the horn into my hands. He played tenor sax and clarinet. He's the one who really started me playing. He and I were very good friends. We would practice every day. He'd take me to concerts. He took me to see people such as Illinois, Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie's bands. He was really influential in my life. A father who took his time with me and taught me how to play the horn. He died two years ago.

What would you say to a young, aspiring Jazz musician who wants to play with musical integrity?

First of all, you must love it. You have to love it – *because there's so much adversity in this business. You must study hard and try to learn as much about your craft as you possibly can. But I stress that* love *for what you're doing. Because you'll find that you'll enjoy it. But never get out of those books. That's very, very important. Study all phases of music you can cram in. As I've said before, a lifetime is not enough time to learn about all the music there is!*

Aside from studying hard and developing a love for what he does, what additional advice would you give to a young musician, to a young saxophonist?

Well, he has to learn humility, patience, to be sincere within himself, to not be afraid to try something else, and to not get too discouraged.

Do you feel that Jazz gets its due in the music industry?

No, I don't. No. It doesn't get the response. It doesn't get anything.

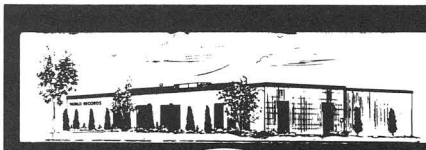
Do you feel that the Jazz musician has to deal with the "cross-over" phenomenon in order to succeed?

You see, that word "Jazz" is a very difficult thing to analyze. If you put ten people against a wall and asked for their definitions of what Jazz is, you'd get ten different opinions. So it's a very delicate situation. Because Jazz is so many things – it's the roots of the whole thing. It's the roots of all this rock 'n roll and all this stuff you hear on the radio. It's the roots of that. That's the only reason Jazz is alive and it always will be alive *because it is the root! It is what makes everything else go. But, unfortunately, this music doesn't get the exposure and the right type of marketing and packaging that it should have. I haven't heard of a Jazz video yet. Why? I think we are capable of making videos and it could be a saleable item – if somebody would take the time and spend the money they spend on the other forms of music with Jazz.*

What do you think it will take for that to come about?

I have no idea. There will have to be *more education. Many times I give seminars across the country and I'm amazed at what the kids* don't *know about the music itself. They know all about rock and rollers, but they don't know about Jazz. Charlie Parker – they often don't know who he is. And I think that Charlie Parker contributed as much to the world of music as a Beethoven or a Bach. That's who* I *was listening to when I was coming up. Lester Young, man, he contributed a lot to music. Count Basie, all of those guys. In Europe Jazz is a curriculum, you know. But right here in the country where it originated hardly anybody knows anything about it. That's strange isn't it? Now if that's not a conspiracy what is?*

Maybe I sound bitter. I don't know. But it won't stop me from playing, playing what I feel. Because I'm not looking for that pot of gold, that stardom or whatever they call it. I just want to play something that I can say, well musically, that's meangful and that's me!



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Saxophone Variations

Let's start from the classic platitudes about the tenor saxophone in jazz. Once Coleman Hawkins established his robust brawn and energetic throatiness, the only way out of his influence was to assume the light muscularity and cool smoothness of Lester Young. So we have two schools of tenor – it's a convenient summation, and obviously you can slot many players on one side or the other. But more and more the division breaks down, for the tenor sound and style got shaken up mainly by Coltrane who returned to the full tone of Hawkins after the dominance of the cool sound. Players after Trane emulated him, grafting onto whatever style they had the breathy slurs of Hawkins and the dancing quality of Pres. So if you listen to tenor playing from the mid-fifties on, you'll hear that old platitude breaking down, for style is no longer so easily divisible in an either/or way.

Take the old master, Ben Webster. With his rhapsodic slides, big breathy slurs, growls and attacking rasps, he is certainly on the Hawkins side. Yet, when Webster plays ballads, there's a delicacy of tone, and the breathiness is often whispery. Listen to his lovely opening statement of ***Georgia On My Mind*** on **At The Renaissance (Contemporary C-7648)**. It's not that far removed from Getz, and indeed those two cool ones, Getz and Sims, in their recent recordings often lean into Websterian tones. Of course, when Webster returns after the opening for a short solo, he heats up with hoarse reaches, hurrying his phrases, heightening the tension, relaxing it for the bridge, only to shout out again in a coda – an admirable treatise on both sides of the tenor.

Even on ***Caravan*** he resists the temptation that tune offers to be milked by exhibitionist hollers. Webster has an almost laid-back feel to his playing, a slinky effect as if he's tiptoeing to avoid the steamy jets that might escape from his horn. But the hot steam is implied as he side-steps it.

Jim Hall plays a very horn-like solo, digging in but keeping the sound down, tightly reined but tense and cool, Pres-like. And Webster never really lets fly even at the close. In fact, throughout this live set recorded in 1960, Webster sounds closer to Pres than Hawk; maybe it's the West Coast influence of the others, though you can't really class the eclectically knowing piano of Jimmy Rowles, the bouncy bass of Red Mitchell, Hall's inventive guitar, Frank Butler's fine drumming as heavily influenced by West Coast ideas – but then maybe West Coast style is another platitude that needs re-examining.

Anyhow, this album is a good, if understated example of late Webster, especially on the ballads ***Georgia*** and ***Stardust***, richly melodic, comfortably relaxed though the tenor's perhaps less certain at the other medium tempos.

Then there's Dexter Gordon, who connects that easy Pres flow with a Hawkish robustness and a fleetness borrowed from Bird. All this captured a kind of popular jazz following in the late 70s on his return to the U.S. and Gordon seemed determined to act out his own legendary status so that often these Columbia albums of that time occasionally overdramatized the music, with Gordon almost aping his own propensity to use quotes inside his solos.

It's the middle period of Gordon that strikes me as the best, those Blue Note albums and a couple on Bethlehem before he went to Europe. They catch Gordon's mix of the effortless and the dramatic, and I think that's the Dex that influenced Trane.

The Shadow Of Your Smile (SteepleChase SCS 1206) has that admirable mix. Dex rolls out ideas fluently on four standards, his fluidity and ease exemplified by his long extension of the two-bar tag on ***Once I Had A Secret Love***. On form, Dex is perhaps the real match for Webster's strong-toned statements on ballads: there's a lovely, thoughtful performance of ***Polka Dots And Moonbeams*** and a rather stark reading of the title song here. He gets solid support from a Swedish rhythm section on this live recording from 1971 in Sweden. Lars Sjosten shows, as he did on some Brew Moore sides in the 60s, that he understands the necessity of prodding and laying back at the right moments and he provides interesting solos. Sjosten gives Dex a jumpy, almost funky introduction to ***Summertime***, and his tenor takes the hint by loping in strongly, keeping at full, booting stretch.

Spike Robinson resurrects the essence of the cool school on the standards he plays on **London Reprise (Capri 44360)**, recorded in 1984 with an English rhythm section. But it's all been done before and Robinson doesn't have a sufficient sense of self to claim much attention. He's very Getzian without Getz's rougher Websterian side and without Getz's immaculate feel for phrase coupled with his melodic gift. Not that Robinson isn't smooth and melodic. He makes pleasant music but never pushes to any real urgency and he lacks the riffy elegance, the inevitable working through of an idea that Pres had. These are quietly interesting cuts but with no improvisatory stretch to them.

In recent recordings, Frank Foster has taken some of the rough bluster of Texas tenor playing, that brashly exuberant, almost brutal extensions of Hawkins. He shows the seeds of that approach on **Hope Meets Foster (Prestige LP 7021)** in quartet and quintet format led by pianist Elmo Hope. Here Foster seems looser than he was allowed to be in the Basie band of that time (1955). The opener, ***Wail Frank Wail,*** is a fast blues and Foster wails with some of the Texas keening cry, an occasional honk and grunt and a clever teasing out of phrases. He's recording with a slight echo which emphasizes the vocalized honking he does. His playing is fluent, digging into his phrasing, worrying away at it, skipping around happily – good, firm playing, driven on by Art Taylor's patented, implacable high-hat swing and crisp punctuations.

Hope's piano playing has never appealed to me much. Like Mal Waldron, he never quite seems to execute what he wants to play and you get an odd sensation of ideas fumbling to be expressed, squared off, but occasionally oddly emphasized that give something of a Monkish aura without managing to keep it up for long. Trumpeter Freeman Lee offers some clean trumpet sounds on three cuts but Foster's tenor makes the real impression – strong, and on the verge of being very authoritative.

The story of the alto sax is perhaps not so clear. We can say one side is represented by the swoop and bounce of Hodges, with Carter, Holmes and Willie Smith on that team, and then the sharper edge and clean attack of Parker on the other, with a tributary in the cool area, following Lester Young rather than other alto players. Konitz is the prime example with the West Coast cool sound added in Desmond, Shank et al. Maybe an early forerunner was Tab Smith, though he mixes in the dip and swoop of Hodges, a style that's out of favour nowadays except in the work of people like Norris Turney and Bob Wilber, and of course Carter is still doing it.

Perhaps there's even a fourth stream in alto playing, a thinner, shriller approach, a kind of squeezed keening sound, used a great deal in pop music on the wave of the success of David Sanborn but it also seems part of Anthony Braxton's sound on alto.

One of the mixers was Art Pepper. Starting principally with that cooler sound (listen to his sound on the **Early Art** double album on Blue Note), he also retained the Bird sharp attack though he always maintained that Pres was his main influence (just like Bird himself). Then later, during his last return to jazz, Pepper took a reaching and rougher sound from Coltrane.

This hybrid sound made for some splendid albums and **New York Album (Galaxy GXY-5154)** recorded in 1979 gives us that style and sound. In his late blooming Pepper always seemed to me the most nakedly personal of altoists. Often one can hear a kind of mad scramble and flurry in his solos as if he wants to dig out the perfect phrase and is desperate to find it. It's a highly charged sound, constantly fascinating and when those furious outbursts come at the listener, it sounds as if he's balanced on the edge of chaos, an open raw dance on a tightrope that's dangerously frayed. That sense is on this album at times, especially on ***A Night In Tunisia***. One would presume that his unaccompanied solo on ***Lover Man*** would be the most strong self-revelation but in fact there's almost no venture in it, apart from a fragmented cadenza. And his version of ***Straight No Chaser*** is simply a blues – Pepper's good with the form – and it has no hint of Monk's quirkiness except in the oblique intro. It is surprising that Pepper makes nothing of Monk for the best cut, ***My Friend John***, is an original that has some Monkish elements in it. There's another blues just with Ron Carter's bass: it's instructive to listen to this against a similar early duet, ***Blues In***, from the 50s. Pepper shows how comfortable he is in the blues but his early sound is thinner, veering over towards Desmond and Konitz whereas on this album there's that raw rip he loosed later on.

Carter is absolutely unwavering. Hank Jones is splendid and Al Foster shows what a fine

drummer he is, something we might forget if we only hear nowadays his thud and blunder with Miles. It's the steadiness of the rhythm section that perhaps gives Pepper the nerve to attempt some acrobatic grace within his jagged and rashly stumbling forays. This album is one to add to your Pepper collection, especially for those three fine cuts, ***Night In Tunisia***, the blues and especially ***My Friend John***.

Bud Shank, another West Coaster, is also a musician who's become more forthright over the years. On **California Concert (Contemporary C-14012)** he's teamed with Shorty Rogers whose writing has always kept tight rein on groups, though he understood the force of bop (witness his pieces for the Herman band of the late 40s). But Shank blows more freely. Listen to his rising fragments at the beginning of ***Makin' Whoopee***; in fact, his whole solo here is a clever alternation of the jagged and the lyric. Rogers offers some catchy ideas in the writing: ***Kansas City Tango*** is an engaging funky waltz (?) and Shank chews up this line, ***Ah Leu Cha*** splits into two neat cross-lines and Shank makes cunning use of that jagged/lyric mix again, and ***Echoes Of Harlem*** gets an interesting and intermittently recurring doubled beat. Altogether, it's a pleasant enough live romp.

On his own album, **This Bud's For You (Muse 5309)**, Shank blows with his hard tone, sometimes growly, sometimes thinning but the sense is that of an altoist who wants to burst out (perhaps like Pepper). Sometimes his fierce breathing gives a buzz to his tone.

The album has an aura of modern bop — there are three bop tunes: Bird's ***Visa***, Silver's ***Nica's Dream*** and Powell's ***Bouncing With Bud***, all bouncing steadily along on the rhythm section of Carter and Foster again but with Kenny Barron this time somehow lacking the rich flair and drive he's been unleashing on recent albums. That might apply to this whole album — steady playing, engaging themes but never quite releasing the drive they seem to be reaching for.

The same might be said for Frank Morgan's **Easy Living (Contemporary C-14013)** though Morgan settles into quietly breezy playing and Cedar Walton's piano digs a little deeper. Morgan sounds relaxed, promising a little more than he gives when he blows harder, though his version of the title tune is very engaging. He knows his way around the blues. Still, it's Walton's piano that's the standout here.

While Morgan retains more of the cooler side in his tone — it works well with a sharper attack on McCoy Tuner's lovely tune, ***Three Flowers*** — he moves in the end to show his Bird wings on ***Embraceable You*** and ***Now's The Time***. While this album is no blockbuster, it's good to welcome Morgan back after a long hiatus.

A new player on the title of his album, **Introducing Kenny Garrett (Criss Cross 1014)**, keeps fast company with Woody Shaw and Mulgrew Miller and he leaps out at the listener with a confident brashness, airy and spacious yet sloping into that contemporary edginess, that thinned sharpness, wailing and crying, yet with plenty of bite. And two other new names in the rhythm section, Nat Reeves (bass) and Tony Reedus (drums), are no slouches — listen to Reedus' insistent snap on cymbal with crisp snares on ***For Openers***, on which all hands do fancy dance steps, a tight ensemble flowing out to cross patterns by trumpet and alto towards the end.

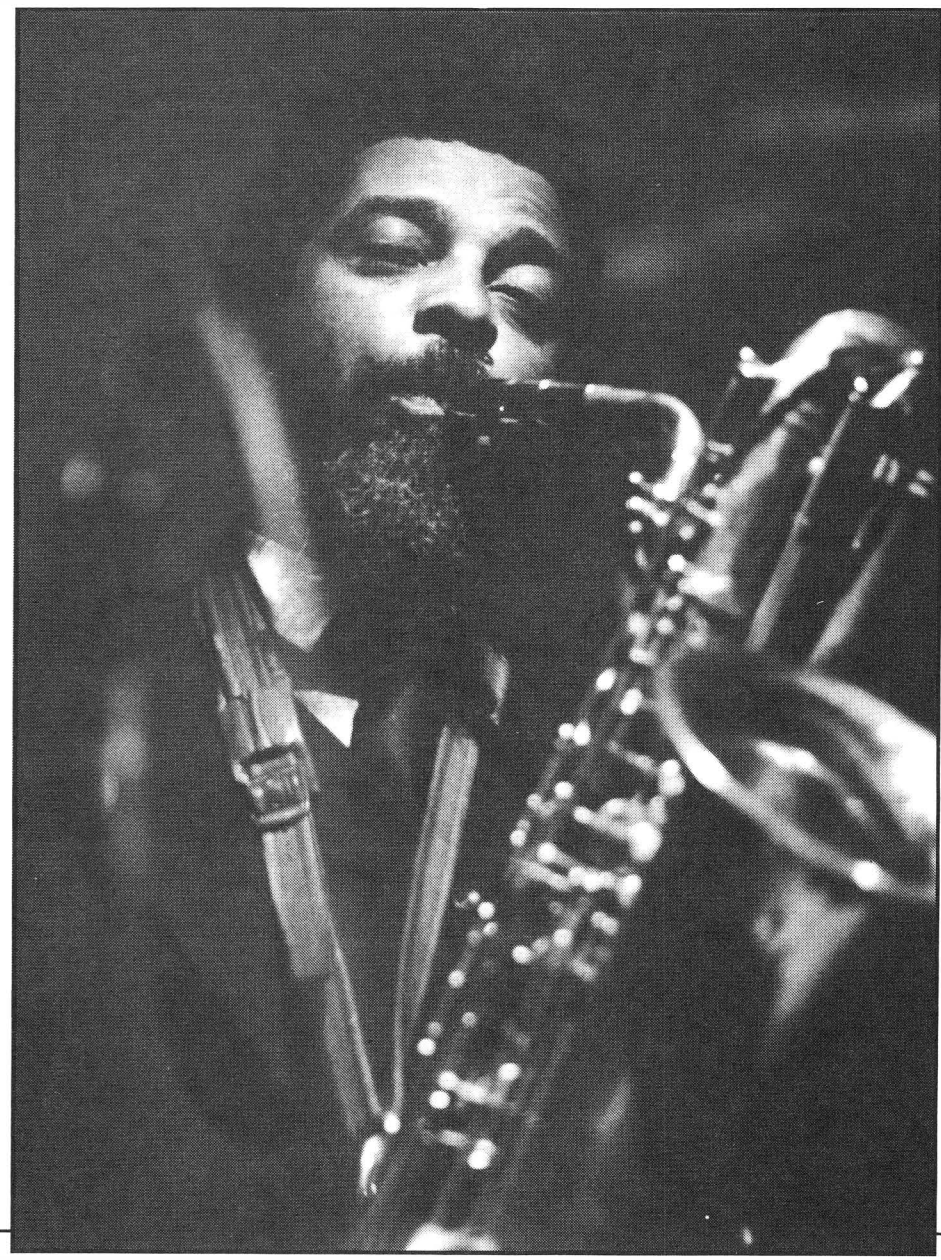
Garrett offers a nicely judged ***Have You Met Miss Jones?*** at a relaxed lope, still attacking in tone but with some Hodges-like swoops on the opening statement. That Hodges manner then melds with Woodsian heat (and remember that Hodges was the very first influence on Phil Woods). Yet Garrett seems to be moulding his own style and sound, with that reedy angularity popping out at times. On ballads he lets tone do most of the work — little decoration or flourish around the melody but there's an admirable sense of dynamics to set the mood. ***A Silent Prayer***, as the title implies, makes its point by being understated though he pushes the other ballad, ***Until Tomorrow***, into a double tempo urgency as do Shaw and Miller.

In contrast, Garrett's blues feeling reaches into odd corners and intervals. And he can do the virtuoso flash, as he shows on that old warhorse, ***Lover***. All in all, a remarkable recording debut.

Another debut on **Treaty (Jazz Beat JB101)** is that of Christopher Hollyday, only fourteen at the time of this recording. Again there's that jaunty strut, bubbly and dancing, though Hollyday is ill-served by comparisons to Bird, Cannonball and Stitt. While boppish in style, his sound is altogether thinner. He has an assured air in his playing though at times his phrasing gets choppy and clipped, at other times jumpy and squared off, so the flow is impaired and there's an odd feeling that, on occasion, his pauses are not part of his phrasing — there's a tinge of desperation about them as you can almost hear him working out in his mind where to take a phrase — and sometimes it doesn't work out.

The other teenager, pianist John Medeski, also has an assurance without quite convincing the listener that his style is fully formed, though he has fluency.

There's no doubt that Hollyday already has the right attitude to improvising and most of the time the technical control to execute his ideas. But facility and attitude aren't every-



HAMIET BLUIETT (Photograph by Gerard Futrick)

cordings) and I was left somehow dissatisfied with this album. The solos too often leave the impression they are simply running motions not fired by that fine edge of risk — an atmosphere of clever exercises takes over on most cuts. Which isn't to say that Hollyday and Medeski don't show promise of becoming deeply involved in the music and then crafting distinctive solos. Hollyday's management of see-sawing tempo on ***A Night In Tunisia*** shows how the technical facility lifts into something beyond itself, and his tune, ***Bop Bop***, has some neatly turned extensions outside bop so that his playing develops the tune well.

In a way, Anthony Braxton's playing on **Seven Standards Vol. 1 (Magenta MA-0203)** is new, a whole album devoted to playing changes, though of course he brings his own characteristic freedom to these pieces. The listener needs to adjust to Braxton's approach for its untypicalness brings a strangeness to these tunes, especially as his cohorts, Hank Jones, Rufus Reid and Victor Lewis, stay strictly within the usual parameters. In this context, then, Braxton sounds at first a little ill at ease. I detect some unclear fingering on occasion, a blurring effect, but he exerts some pressure in his soloing with squeals and high keening rushes, the phrasing breaking across bar lines, off-centering the music. The effect is not unlike those fierce, almost chaotic outbursts from Pepper. Braxton builds to this effect and that, together with his creaky angularity, gives that tightrope mood again, dancing slap-happily, sometimes floppy, sometimes tight, sometimes sloppy, his alto veering into that contemporary thinness.

I'm aware that some ***Coda*** reviewers chose this album as one of the best in 1985. I can't rate it that highly, though it has some delights. They occur when Braxton finds room to wander within his own territory — ***Spring Is Here*** has a lovely plaintiveness, his fluttery bluster on ***I Remember You***, full of bubbling clusters in mid-range, keeps threatening to soar higher but the tight rein on it gives the solos a tense flow, and he makes a springy bounce of ***You Go To My Head***.

Three of the tunes are good jazz standards and they are the ones least convincing in Braxton's versions. His thematic statements sound squared, almost choppy, and his improvisations, though they bubble and flurry, never establish a real fluency. Maybe my memories of versions by others stand in the way: the joyous fling Cannonball makes of ***Toy***, Brownie's lyrical sway on ***Joy Spring***, and Marsh and Konitz dovetailing smoothly yet hectically on ***Background Music***. Yet Braxton is closer to early Konitz than any other altoist, with an almost cool sound that increases that off-centred feel, for his phrasing is busily hot.

So the album is uneven and finally, for me, it only reaches to a convincing urgency, a strong sense of commitment to form and its development now and again, though part of this may arise from the general straightforwardness and near staidness of the rhythm section.

Bobby Watson is probably best known for his work with the Jazz Messengers though he made more of an impression on me when I heard him in concert in a quartet with another ex-Messenger, James Williams, some three years ago. He has broadened his concept, retaining a thin edginess while rounding the tone towards Bird sounds.

There's a flavour of Blakey about the unit co-led by Watson with bassist Curtis Lundy as you can hear on their album **Gumbo (Amigo AMLP 851).** Watson shows he's not afraid of the top end of the alto and he comes out of it with a clean, hard sound on his own piece, ***Point The Finger***, which has an infectious vamp figure. This quintet does not quite burn like a Blakey unit yet it can push. Watson shows some luscious lyric touches with a few nods in the direction of Hodges on the ballad ***Luqman's Dream***. Trumpeter Melton Mustafa provides a catchy ***Latinized From East To West***, adding mid-Eastern touches, with Watson running around the soprano, his tone slightly North African in its wailing sound. Mustafa's trumpet is steadfast, staying comfortably in mid-range, but without suggesting as yet any fully developed style. Mulgrew Miller is as steady as ever, a good man in the section and a fine soloist.

Generally, the group impresses with a clear, tight ensemble sound, interesting original themes and a good, solid rhythmic punch, yet it ultimately lacks some fire at its heart. The sound of the group is fattened on the title cut by the addition of Hamiet Bluiett — and that inspires Watson into a flexibly choppy dash and swoop in his solo.

Bluiett is part of that solid movement to use the whole range of the saxophone so, in the world of the baritone sax, that generally means using the extremes. Unlike the tenor and alto, it's not easy to make that twin division of sounds in baritone playing. Soloing on the baritone came later than the other horns and the instrumental style was dominated by Carney, so the deep textures remained in place until the fast scurrying of bop demanded a quicker, many-noted style and that lightened the tone in Chaloff and Mulligan.

But the deep husky grunt and growl seems in style nowadays — of course, it always remained in place in Pepper Adams' playing and most of the time in John Surman, though he was one of the first to stretch into the upper reaches (listen to him on an early Mike Westbrook album, "Celebration").

On some albums I've heard by Nick Brignola, he's seemed a take-charge player; gruff, wallowing in intricate technical blowing, sometimes sacrificing taste and solidity for the easy gesture. On **Northern Lights (Discovery DS-917)** he's more thoughtful, at times even introspective, if that's possible on the baritone. The opening title cut starts with an almost unrecognizable sound in the higher register, and in fact Brignola makes good use of the whole range of his instrument throughout, smooth-toned in the higher reaches, some grunty-gruffness at the bottom end, though not as growly as I've heard from him before, so the sound veers more to the Chaloff side. His rendition of ***Lush Life*** is almost gentle, though he heats up to toughness on ***Star Trick***, on which pianist Jim McNeely plays a splashy, Tyner-tinged solo — throughout, the pianist's comping is good, with melodic underpinnings and neat fills. Bassist John Lockwood's theme ***3 A.M.*** is a torchy and bluesy lope that he and Brignola make the most of. Brignola plays two brawny swingers on Side 2, straightahead with two-fisted percussive piano and the baritone coming through wide open and fast-fingered.

The liner notes on Glenn Wilson's **Impasse (Cadence CJR 1023)** is an interview in which Wilson says it's no harder to play fast on a baritone that it is on an alto or tenor. Well, Wilson certainly can play fast and he's on that hard and deep kick — he cites Carney and Adams as main influences. He digs in immediately on the opener, ***Beautiful Love***, pushy and plumbing the bottom end, ripping to the upper register at times, creaking into odd corners, rampaging around with growls, grunts and blistering runs, with fine support from Harold Danko (piano), Dennis Irwin (bass) and Adam Nussbaum (drums). Wilson also cites his admiration for Shorter, Rollins and Coltrane and they all surface in his playing. The ballad ***Satori*** is Shorter-like, the title tune might also be a Shorter piece from the 60s, though Wilson treats it to a few Coltrane-ish rasps and stretches. That Coltrane energy comes out on his duet with Nussbaum, an almost free-form romp on ***Stablemates***, the theme appearing only at the end. The perky ***Zippy's Blues*** has that Rollins' bounce and his aptly named ***Sonny's Pal*** works in the same vein. The Carney richness emerges through the filter of Mingus in Duke Ellington's ***Sound Of Love***, a duet with Danko.

All in all, Wilson shows a many-sided personality yet he's beginning to sound as if he's well on the way to a recognizable style of his own, making for a finely varied set of music.

And that leaves us the soprano, still dominated by the overwhelming presence of Bechet. No one has his broad vision and fluttery vibrato. Most other players treat the instrument as a second voice, choosing a clear, linear approach, aware of the soprano's vocal qualitites and its keening sharpness at the upper end. David Liebman has used the soprano often on other albums but on Klaus Ignatzek's **The Spell (Nabel Nbl 8414)** he uses the soprano exclusively. Side one is a suite in three parts, ***Trilogy*** by pianist Ignatzek. Some selections have interesting see-saw rhythmic motions, the whole has a loose flow, the music generates some drive but essentially it remains characterless, for it doesn't sustain itself by any clear direction or focus. Side two works better. The opener, ***A Taste of Caramel*** shows Liebman's strengths, a broad tone in mid-range, building up pressure as he forges phrases in long sweeps, interspersing high wails and sudden clustering runs, all seeming to come out of Ignatzek's theme with its occasional leaping intervals.

In this group there is some thrust from Uwe Ecker's drumming, Dieter Ilg's bass offers interesting lines behind Liebman on the ballad ***Mysterious Dream***, and the title cut is propelled by Ignatzek's piano, a long fluent solo taken up by a fine Ilg solo before Liebman states the theme to close out the cut. Ecker's ***Katzenjammer*** has some of his De Johnette-like drumming; impressionistic music but again with no distinctive colour to it, in spite of Liebman's sharp squeals and full-blooded blowing inside his otherwise reflective solo, with its wavering ascents and raspy squeals.

The music on the album sounds honest and committed but it's somehow amorphous, flopping about, attempting different modes but never quite sustaining itself.

So, the jazz saxophone, the traditions and styles still alive, with some extensions and developments in these albums, some new names, some valiant attempts, some safe music — perhaps a reflection of the state of all contemporary jazz.

— Peter Stevens

JAZZ LITERATURE

FOUR LIVES IN THE BEBOP BUSINESS
by A. B. Spellman
Limelight Editions. $8.95

This book by A. B. Spellman, though first released twenty years ago, is still quite revealing. I remember getting it out of the library during the latter 60s, and being incorrigibly saddened by its "waywardly lyrical" pathos.

Yet, supposedly, everything in "Jazz" changed, "evolved," since the telling of these musicians' mid-60s stories (the least of which is that Herbie Nichols is dead, and riding high on that peculiar type of posthumous fame so characteristic of those possessing unique vision).

After all, who doesn't have at least respect, if not down right appreciation, for the music of Cecil Taylor nowadays (seen in this light, Taylor's account of his mid to latter 50s musings is a sobering tale indeed!). And when one thinks of Jackie McLean and all those fabulous records: "Let Freedom Ring," "Destination Out," "One Step Beyond," "Right Now!" – there is often no pause at all for what caused them, or the history of the man before the 60s. Jackie McLean, the fervent user of hard drugs during Bop's heyday, and much of the time afterwards – hardly smokes a joint now. The 80s version of Jackie McLean is concerned with the educational prospects of this music, and has only recently come back to performing (most times with his saxophonie playing son, Rene). And as for Ornette.... Well, Ornette is still trying to figure out why he doesn't own a limousine(!).

No. As I say, "everything in 'Jazz' has changed, evolved," or that's *supposed* to be the case. And that suppose is extremely provisional, leaning tough toward a negative skepticism. That is, we have to face the fact that, economically speaking, American record companies aren't even interested in serious "Jazz" anymore, only re-issues (with the notable exception of Wynton Marsalis, and perhaps to a far lesser extent Charlie Rouse, and the cooperative band "Sphere"). Hence, from still another angle, the economics of "Jazz" (what Spellman's book is really about) have not only not changed, but have gotten worse, worse in the sense that now Stateside record companies (with very, very few exceptions) pay hardly any fees at all to currently active "Jazz" bands.

As Spellman's book importantly points out, the problem with "Jazz" musicians and the record industry is this: by being a representative "ethnic" force in the Americas, improvising musicians become marginal/"universal" publicizers for the record industry (marginal for the art of "Jazz" itself, "universal" for the engrammatic selling of product for the record companies). That is, they become only tangentially powerful as artists – players of the "art of Jazz," which they, in fact, are. Thus, in the words of Ornette Coleman:

It seems that production and publicity are so closely related that they turn into the same thing. What I mean is, in jazz the Negro is the product. The way they handle the publicity on me, about how far out I am and everything, it gets to be that I'm the product myself. So if it's me they're selling, if I'm the product, then the profits couldn't come back to me, you dig?

This has been my greatest problem – being short-changed because I'm a Negro, not because I can't produce. Here I am being used as a Negro who can play jazz, and all the people I recorded for and worked for act as if they own me and my product. They have been guilty of making me believe I shouldn't have the profits from my product simply because they own the channels of production. They say, "Here is a guy who can play off the top of his head and he's not a part of the structure, so we'll take it and use it for our own betterment and let him feel that he's just becoming a human being, you know, expressing himself." They act like I owe them something for letting me express myself with my music, like the artist is supposed to suffer and not to live in clean, comfortable situations.

Now Ornette said this in the 1960s. The deal now is that American record labels are not even using the idiom of "Jazz" as a come-on to make exploitative money. Rather, the powers that be have torn the aesthetics of this music so badly that many musicians have been permanently disabled. Those that aren't look to Europe for, at least, reasonably fair record contracts (Giovanni Bonandrini's Italy-based Black Saint/Soul Note label, for example), and the opportunity to play where this music is now.

Of course, Spellman's book implies (it's a kind of hidden thought running through all the interviews) that the music dubbed "Bebop" (Parker, Gillespie, Monk, Clark, Powell, Roach) is the real culprit. In that these participants of modern "Jazz's" first wave not only went along with a lot of the bad treatment they were receiving (both financially and socially, as well as psychologically), but also, over time, became somewhat irresponsible musically (at the micro level, Bird going from club to club and begging clubowners to let him play for free, *for free!*; at the macro level, one could even say that the "Boppers" method(s) of substitution on popular [song form] material became, over time, an extremely suspect and dubious practice).

And then too, when looking retrospectively at the music that grew out of the 40s, somewhat inappropriately termed "BeBop," we realize that it was only one way among many of doing music. For example, Mary Lou Williams, Herbie Nichols, and Thelonious Monk are three entirely different, though related, approaches to the keyboard – each using the mediational tool of composition to get their message across. Monk himself – Williams and Nichols for that matter too – are not really what you call idiomatically-enclosed "BeBop" players or composers at all; but are more like soloists who have applied their pianoistic concepts to variously sized ensembles (listen to Monk's *Skippy*, 1952 – for an example of Monk's far too often forgotten orchestral writing style).

Finally, it would be reasonable to assume that one of the reasons, perhaps the major reason, why Nichols never really got out in front of the jazz public with his music and persona, was largely due to the categorical ambiguity of his musical style. In other words, the industry already had one "weird motherfucka" – Monk, and that was enough! (Note: In a somewhat altered vein, one could even say that Don Byas was actually more prepared to lead a Modern Movement on reed instruments than Parker. I say this, primarily, because of Byas' awesome knowledge of the capabilities of reed instruments in challenging and fresh harmonic situations. In other words, Byas would have attracted a whole other type of saxophone stylist, than did Parker, within the ranks of modern "Jazz").

Getting down to cases: It was really Ornette Coleman who actually made modern "Jazz" authentically Modern Jazz. Along with Cecil Taylor's constructionist principles, and Ornette's rhythmic freedom (which were both, by the way, pretty much in place by the latter 50s), you have the dominant – and most profound – directions, improvised would take (re: "move in") for the next twenty-five or thirty years. Let me say here too, with all due respects to John Coltrane – and his enormous contribution on the

harmonic level; that his semi-late modal phase was, unfortunately, unabashedly abused by lesser players (and the evidence for such an assertion are numerous and various), and probably did more harm than good for "Jazz's" advance. That is, Coltrane's brand of modality wasn't of the "opening-out" sort that characterized Miles Davis' classic "Kind of Blue" album, but was a vampish modality that continually held rhythm captive).

Again, Coleman took the fundamental rhythmic thrust of "Jazz" to a new level, and removed those irritating method(s) of substitution endemic to the "Boppers." While Cecil Taylor took the relativity of tonal/atonal tone clusters to the level where they actually predict the course of improvisatory extrapolation. Finally, the segmentality of his music has created a variable sonic range that has moved "Jazz" away from a tune concept and more toward a layered-clustered concept (the 1966 recording, *Unit Structures*, points this out beautifully).

Conclusively: If Cecil Taylor's unfledging integrity, Herbie Nichol's near complete disillusionment, Jackie McLean's hard life but happy music, and Ornette Coleman's total understanding teach us anything, it's that art might very possibly be what Amiri Baraka contends, "... one of the most despised terms in the American language." Particulary so, I might add, when its perpetrators (re: its pioneers) are independent African-Americans.

Spellman's book is necessary, still.

– Roger Riggins

JAZZ HERITAGE
by Martin Williams
Oxford University Press.
Hardcover, 288 pp. $17.95 in U.S.

The primary complaint one can make about Martin Williams as a jazz writer is that he doesn't release books often enough. Williams is one of the very best writers in the field.

His "Jazz Tradition" (1970) won the ASCAP-Deems Taylor Award for music criticism and was rightly described by *The American Record Guide* as "the best one-volume history of jazz we have."

Now Williams has released a successor volume, "Jazz Heritage," and it is nearly as good.

One finds in it the same densely-packed, thoughtful writing, the same encyclopedic knowledge of jazz past and present that marked the first book. If it seems ultimately a bit less rewarding, a bit less important than its predecessor, that is simply because Williams used up, in a sense, some of the very best subjects the first time around.

Williams' "Jazz Tradition" dealt with all-time giants, including Louis Armstrong, Bix Beiderbecke, and Billie Holiday. For this new volume, he is either dealing with people who are not quite so significant as the ones he wrote about in the previous book, or else he is offering us additional information about major figures (such as Miles Davis and Duke Ellington) that he already covered quite nicely in the first book.

Still, this book is certainly recommended. It offers glimpses of artists as varied as Bud Powell, Bill Evans, Gerry Mulligan, Thad Jones, Jack Teagarden, Charlie Christian, Albert Ayler, Benny Carter, Earl Hines and the World Saxophone Quartet.

Williams does not like to write conventional biographical profiles. Others can write those for us. Williams prefers to give us glimpses of artists at work. As time passes, we may be increasingly grateful that Williams was on hand to capture, for example, the way it was when Duke Ellington and his men made a television show, or the way Paul Desmond worked in the recording studio, or the flavor of an early appearance of the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Big Band at the Village Vanguard.

One of Williams' particular strengths is that he knows the history of jazz so thoroughly, and can appreciate the strengths in both modern and oldtime performers. This is rare. You'll often find buffs of current jazz who are unable to get into music from before, say, Charlie Parker. And you'll find traditional jazz afficionados lost by modern developments. Williams can serve as an interpreter to members of both camps. He can tell just what is worth listening for in records from 60 years ago (by, for example, King Oliver) that many young listeners may not find easy to appreciate. And then he'll turn around and do the same thing for Ornette Coleman and Charlie Parker. He can trace a lick by a contemporary trumpet player back, in its various appearances, to the early years of jazz. (One gets the eerie feeling, at moments, that he's listened to every record there is).

Williams writes with an economy of words that can be maddening. There are times when I wished he'd expand on his ideas a bit. He can raise an intriguing notion, drop it, and move on to the next point, before you've had a chance to give the first point much thought. He mentions, for example, that he finds Mick Jagger's whole act a makeup-less blackface routine, an appalling ripoff of a style created by black blues singers. But then it's on to another notion, as if he hasn't time to debate the first point with you.

Williams states his opinions plainly. He will tell you exactly which year he believes Ella Fitzgerald's voice began to deteriorate. He will tell you which sides of Fats Waller you should listen to and which albums have the best transfers of those sides. He can't understand why more critics were not appreciative of the Count Basie Band of the 50s. He's baffled by all the enthusiasm for the Preservation Hall Jazz Band (who he sees as amateur musicians venerated for their age, and a mistaken sense of what New Orleans jazz was really about). His views are expressed directly, dryly, in a no-nonsense style.

These essays have previously appeared over the past 20 years in a variety of newspapers and magazines (and even, in some cases, as record album liner notes). But they will no doubt be new to most readers.

Williams is also known as an author of books on movies and TV. Those fields, however, have armies of writers covering them. There are so few good jazz writers – particularly with the grasp of the whole field Williams exhibits – that it is a shame he does not write about jazz more frequently.

– Chip Deffaa

WITH LOUIS AND THE DUKE: The Autobiography of a Jazz Clarinetist.
by Barney Bigard, edited by Barry Martyn.
Oxford University Press, New York.
$18.95

Throughout his career, Barney Bigard worked with three of the most influential catalysts in the jazz tradition – King Oliver, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong. Probably the finest of the gifted clarinetists from New Orleans, Bigard was also the most important performer on his instrument to have worked with the Ellington Orchestra. In this brief but compelling autobiography, based on two years of taped conversations with British-born New Orleans musician/researcher Barry Martyn, Bigard discusses his boyhood in New Orleans, his major influences in jazz and his musical allegiance to its three kings – Oliver, Armstrong, Ellington – and his later years in semi-retirement, when he tended to be forgotten.

In the first part of the book, Bigard talks about growing up in New Orleans, providing yet another picture of the cradle of jazz in its earlier years, when trend-setting bands like Kid Ory's and Papa Celestin's attracted flocks of followers, among them the young Barney (christened Albany Leon) Bigard.

The jazz bug bit Bigard while listening to Kid Ory's band, with Johnny Dodds on clarinet, rehearsing in his house. His uncle Emile, a violinist and the band's leader, got the youngster a tutor – the

much-respected Lorenzo Tio, whose pupils at the time included Albert Nicholas, later to become a close friend, and Omer Simeon, whom Bigard calls "one of the great unsung clarinet players."

Steady work came Barney's way, including a stint with the house band at Tom Anderson's club, led by Albert Nicholas and featuring Luis Russell on piano and Paul Barbarin, drums. Later, he was to play with these three (and Simeon) in King Oliver's Dixie Syncopators band in Chicago, beginning a tenure with Oliver that was to take him on the road and share some rough times with the King. Bigard's touching portrait of King Oliver ("He was the King, all right.") gives us a good idea why fellow musicians like Louis Armstrong revered him and held him in such high esteem. Bigard was a member of Luis Russell's small dance band in New York when Duke Ellington invited him to replace Rudy Jackson (who had involved Duke in a lawsuit with King Oliver over *Creole Love Call*, which Oliver claimed was stolen from his *Camp Meeting Blues*), playing clarinet (where before he was playing mostly alto and tenor sax).

It was with Ellington – the first of "two geniuses" that he worked for in his lifetime (the other was Armstrong) – that Bigard enjoyed his most glorious years; certainly, Duke didn't have a clarinetist who so well suited his music (Bechet was an earlier choice), and Bigard was never better showcased than with Ellington, particularly on many small-group recordings under his own name. In all, Bigard spent fourteen years with Duke and it's a pity he doesn't devote more space to this memorable association or reveal anything that's new. He describes the thrill of playing alongside his "all-time favourite" Johnny Hodges every night, mastering Duke's "crazy chords" and some of the rigours of going on the road with Duke. When he quit the band, shortly after Hodges, it was for a much needed rest, and not to set himself up in business, as *Downbeat* reported in 1942.

After a few gigs with his own group, including a stint at the Onyx Club in New York, Bigard was hired to replace Jimmy Noone, one of his early influences. ("Jimmie was the main one for me... I stole a whole lot from Jimmie...") in Kid Ory's band for the history-making Orson Welles broadcasts. Bigard and Ory were friends from the early days, but he didn't think much about the New Orleans Revival, then in the middle of its two-beat stride, or many of its players. Talking about the Lu Watters/Turk Murphy bands, for instance, he says: "I never cared for their kind of music at all... it seems that everyone plays out of key... the clarinet player was so out of tune the whole time. What kind of ears do they have? I don't like that kind of rhythm either. They pull the rhythm down on me."

Bigard instead was associated with the man who symbolized the New Orleans tradition in its most creative form – Louis Armstrong. His association with Louis – the other of his "two geniuses" – began on the set of the movie "New Orleans," which also featured Kid Ory, and continued with the All Stars in its earliest manifestations. Though he worked on and off with the All Stars for eight years, Bigard rarely achieved the creative brilliance he demonstrated with Ellington. But he took pride in the contributions he made to the All Stars in the three periods he worked with them and makes a strong stand for the group's place in jazz history. "There is no question," he says, "that the six musicians involved in that band changed the world of jazz, and I was proud to be a part of them. The band bridged the gap between show business and art."

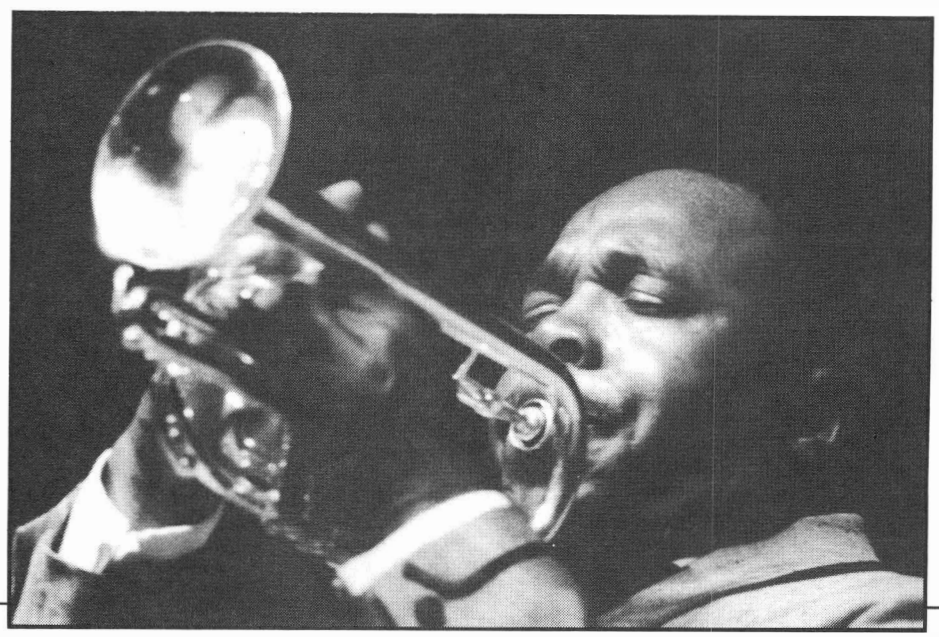
In thumbnail sketches, Bigard shows appreciation for all his fellow All Stars, particularly Earl Hines (who wrote the book's introduction at Barney's request), Jack Teagarden (Barney describes Jack's passion for steam engines and toy trains), the much underrated Trummy Young, Sid Catlett and Cozy Cole, but reserves his greatest adulation for his boss Louis. "When the good Lord made Louis Armstrong he must have 'thrown away the mold' because there has never been another like him. He was truly a 'man of the people,' " says Bigard, going on to state that "In all the years I worked with Louis Armstrong, I never once felt that I was working with a 'big star' personality.... He was just one of the gang. It has been said in print that Louis was on the surface a happy guy but really was a bad tempered, morose kind of man, and all those smiles were for show only. That is the biggest lot of crap I have ever heard. Louis was exactly the same on stage as off stage. Exactly. There never was any hidden side to him. You bought what you saw with him. He came 'as is.' "

In fact, Bigard's glowing assessment of Louis is one more reflection of James Lincoln Collier's clinical assassination of the man's character in a book that has dismayed and disgusted much of the jazz fraternity. (Ironically its publisher, Oxford University Press, seems to have made some amends by publishing Bigard's book – though with less fanfare. So you might do well to buy this and ignore the other, which was one of those misguided funded affairs that pose as scholarship).

However, Bigard can be frank and critical of many of his associates, including Armstrong. He scores Joe Glaser and Louis for not getting Velma Middleton adequate medical aid, after she collapsed on stage from a stroke in a remote part of Africa and later died: "This woman gave her all, and they just leave her here, like that, in some little African town. She died right there in Africa."

While focusing on his years with Louis and Duke, Bigard gives an insider's view of the jazz world in general that is both valuable and entertaining, including anecdotes on such key figures as Jelly Roll Morton, Sidney Bechet, Chick Webb, and yes, even Benny Goodman, who was involved in a tempermental clash with Armstrong when both their bands teamed up for a tour in the early 50s.

There are sixteen pages of photographs from Bigard's personal collection – including King Oliver's AFM card for 1927, when Barney was in the band – and an index. – *Al Van Starrex*



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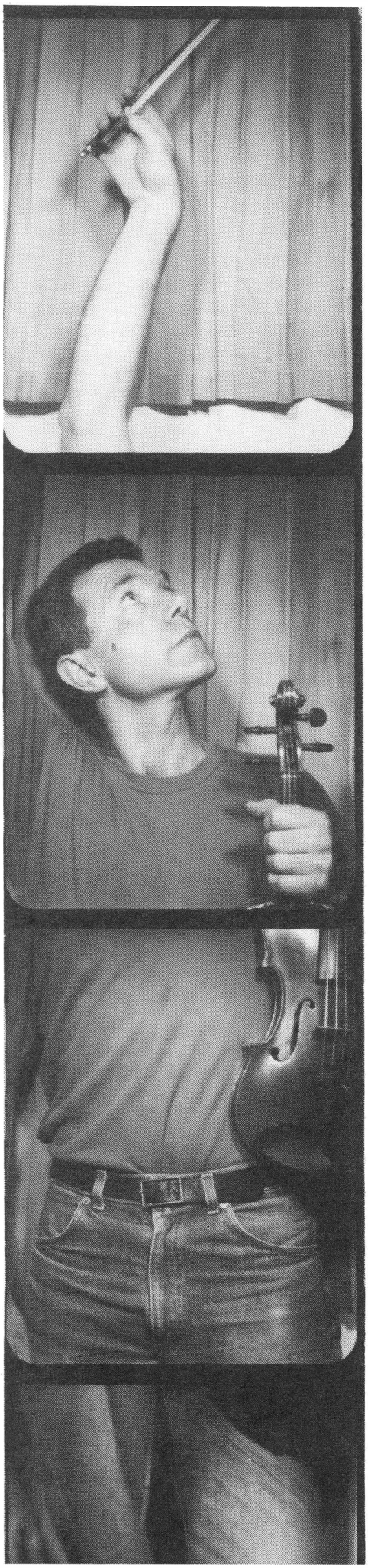

David Prentice

THE THIRD IN A SERIES OF CANADIAN INTERVIEWS BY Bill Smith

When one considers the violin in the history of jazz music, it becomes instantly clear that there has not been a very large number of performers who have utilised this instrument in a very interesting way. The tradition that has developed for most instruments has eluded the violin, and with the exception of the very famous, such as Stephane Grappelli and Jean Luc Ponty, the players have not received much recognition. There are, of course, a number of violin players of great talent, some who come immediately to mind would be Leroy Jenkins, Claude Williams, Stuff Smith, Billy Bang, Phil Wachsman and, in this period in Canada, David Prentice. Over the past eight years DP, as he is affectionately known, and I have become comrades not only in music, but have also developed a special friendship. His first real experience, at least in public, was with the formation of the Bill Smith Ensemble (with myself and bassist David Lee in February of 1979), and since that time he has developed into an improvisor of world stature to the point of being nominated for three years in a row in the *Downbeat* Critics Poll, under the description of Talent Deserving Wider Recognition, a recognition that is slowly becoming a factual reality. With the ensemble he has performed with Gunter Christmann, Julius Hemphill, Peter Kowald, Roscoe Mitchell, Paul Rutherford, and has recorded with the Ensemble, Leo Smith and Joe McPhee.

Prior to 1979 his experience had not been connected with improvisation. "I played for a while with some of the small community orchestras around Toronto. The Oshawa Symphony and the North York Symphony, and played a bit of chamber music with other people around the city. Outside of that... that was my public experience with playing. Mostly traditional stuff. I mean, playing Beethoven, Mozart and Haydn quartets. Learning the violin for me in the first instance was coming to terms with the classical music techniques and the music."

Although David Prentice is thought of as being a Toronto musician he, like a large number of Toronto residents, is from a small northern Ontario town.

D.P. — Originally I lived in Sault Ste. Marie which is really a wonderful town, in a lot of ways. I wish that I could actually live there. I mean, it is the environment really that persuaded the Group of Seven (famous group of Canadian traditional painters) to go up there and spend all their energy painting because the landscape is so powerful. It's just a wonderful environment to live near. Unfortunately, except for the odd visual artist, there is not much happening and there just isn't enough of a community to support the kind of energy that's required for the investigation let alone the participation in music in any kind of way. After having finished university and trying to live up in the Soo I decided in the early seventies that I actually had to come to Toronto, being the large city in Canada where I thought that this might be possible. In order to find out more about music and to play and study a bit more.

My first experience with the instrument was in Sault Ste. Marie. I'd been kind of a collector of small string instruments during the time that I went to high school. And at university I'd pick up a used mandolin or a used ukelele, an old four-string banjo, I even had a guitar. I remember at one point coming up with an old violin, actually it was a new violin, a $15 violin that included a case, a bow, a hunk of rosin that I'd sent someone off to buy me. But coming to terms with that, of course, was not the same as coming to terms with those other instruments which seemed easy by comparison and one summer I found myself with quite a bit of time and pulled out the violin and started trying to play it again and found someone in the Soo, actually a wonderful man named Edward Gartshore who's done a lot to promote mostly the classical music tradition in Sault Ste. Marie, and took some lessons from him. Also, I ran across a touring chamber ensemble that summer and listened to them. That was my first first-hand experience of listening to someone play the violin at a very high level. I knew as soon as I heard that sound (I'd heard it on recorded music but of course it's never the same as when you hear it in person) and I remember being grabbed by it. So it looks like my soul was stolen away in the Northern Ontario woods by the sound of the violin it's true.

BILL SMITH — ***What kind of music did you like in that period of your life?***

Rolling Stones, the blues, rock'n'roll, of course. Hey! I was a young man in Canada, what else would I listen to? I mean, that was my experience of music, listening to the radio, listening to records, my Dad and Mom when I was a kid used to play records, of course, old '78s. They actually loved the music of Duke Ellington and that period in the 30s was one of the highlights for them in music and a lot of the swing music they used to play.... Louis Armstrong; I remember hearing ***I Found My Thrills On Blueberry Hill*** many, many times

Photomat compilation by David Prentice

when I was a kid. So, I listened to a lot of that music but I think that set up rock'n'roll music in later years.

So, when you came to Toronto, how did you find your way into the new music scene?

Initially I started just going to concerts. I remember in that period there were a lot of Americans playing in Toronto, much more than now it seems. I'd kind of lost interest, by that point, in classical music. I mean, I'd listened to it all and all I was going to do was listen to it all again, as far as I could tell. I went to a concert of the Art Ensemble of Chicago, I heard Cecil Taylor play at the old Horseshoe, a few players from Quebec at the Music Gallery and then I ran across a young man named Andy Haas and through him I actually met David Lee, who was the first player I ever got together with, I remember in the back rooms of the old ***Coda*** on King Street, and played. I think that was the first time.

You got dragged away from popular music very quickly....

Forever!! Well, I actually lost interest in it by that point, that's why I started to investigate classical music to more of a degree.

One year I was out in Prince Edward Island and I went to a shrimp festival. There were lots of fiddlers. They would do the thing with stamping their feet and they seemed to play very fixed patterns, unlike improvising violin players.

It's a kind of technique that's different to improvised violin. The vocabulary they use is a very traditional one and the players' left hand generally stays in what's called first position. The left hand would be in the very lowest position possible on the fingerboard. A lot of the technique and the style of the music comes from the use of the bow. Of course, the wonderful thing about the violin is the bow. Lots of instruments have strings on them; the guitar, ukelele, mandolin can all be played with strings, but the thing that makes the violin so special is the bow. One of the aspects of the bow that makes the violin jump out as being so unique is that sort of rhythmical shuffle that can happen. Really, you're just stopping a couple of strings with your left hand and shuffling back and forth from one set of strings to another with the bow and that creates a wonderful, raw shuffling sound.

Would you say that this system of patterns is totally different to how you actually play the violin.... it's not the same way you approach the instrument.

Not completely. The bowing is completely different. The left hand can just be made up of standard chord patterns which I might use sometimes. If I were playing in a certain key area I might stop the same strings with my left hand that a traditional player would. But what I'd be doing with my right hand would be different. I might be tremeloing or I might bow very quickly back and forth or I might just use a long tone. So the kind of right hand bowing shuffle isn't the kind of technique that I would use.

Why, in traditional music, do you think that they would use a fiddle and not a saxophone? Do you feel that it's a vocal instrument, that it's close to the voice?

Well, I don't think, back when fiddle playing started happening, that they had saxophones. I think it's a relatively new instrument. In the Old West I didn't think people carried saxophones around with them so much. Dr. Sax was a relatively new person. But you are right. It is a very vocal instrument. I think it's an instrument that's been around a long time and people brought them from Europe and carried them around a lot. My experience of traditional fiddle music is North American but it's one of those instruments that I think has been around a long time and a lot of folk players just had them and it was the instrument that was used to develop that music.

Is one of the advantages of the violin the fact that it doesn't have any pitch?

Some people wouldn't see it as an advantage but I think it's a wonderful element of the instrument. I know for myself when I first started studying the violin I went through an agonizing period of having to come to terms with that aspect of the instrument. That is, as there are no frets where you put your fingers (the pitch) and there is technically only one right spot if you're talking about the idea of just intonation. Only now have I really freed myself from really wanting to hear that. To me all of the music that includes folk musics, that includes Arabian music, and all kinds of Eastern musics, they're not actually constrained by this idea of having perfect intonation that has been the hallmark of European classical music. Once you leave that I think it's only another step to being able to play music where you're not really worried about the pitch at all, and so from that kind of viewpoint I feel like I've developed along with my technique, my own sensibility as far as intonation goes. This idea of finding your own intonation is a very wonderful thing and a quite refreshing move in modern improvised music, that it's not being stamped on everyone that they should be playing in this perfect sense of intonation.

In a way, the violin is a very physical instrument because it is a wooden box and it vibrates through your hands while you're playing it. You also have to imagine all the sounds, you can't push down the A on the violin, as on the piano. So the vibrations are perhaps organically part of you. You can feel the instrument in your hands, can't you?

It's not so much the vibrations, though you can feel those right under your chin. It's a very physical instrument. The motion of the left hand moving up and down the fingerboard and the motion of the bow arm leads to a very physical activity, much more so than most other instruments. One thing I've found that's resulted because of this is a kind of dancing motion when I play. This physical motion often takes me away and actually becomes part of my playing, and I think dictates a certain kind of rhythmical impulse to the music just because of its nature.

Which brings us to another point about the visuality of instruments on stages or the performers playing the instruments on stages. I know that the audience sometimes tells you about how visual you look, and you develop this as part of your idea. Are you really conscious of how visual you look?

Well, I think it's like becoming aware of something and extending it, or perhaps originally this was just a natural thing but as you become more aware of it then you become more sophisticated about it. The more sophisticated you become, the more you try and present yourself both visually and musically. I remember when we played a concert with Roscoe Mitchell at the Rivoli, Cecil Taylor was in the audience and he commented that the band had a very visual approach. I thought that was interesting that he would remark on the sort of physicality or presence of the band.

Yes, I don't think we're "cool-looking" on stage or anything like that. I feel it's an advantage for us the fact that we are physical you know, that we look different to most people...

I like when you're playing, especially improvised music, it actually takes you over and I think not just in your head. It's not just music that is coming from your head, it's from your whole being. It's a very physical music as well, and emotional. So the emotions are very tied to the physicality of your playing.

Because it's a hollow-bodied wooden instrument of some delicacy, the violin also has great ability to bring out overtones.

There are a lot of harmonics and I think that overtones get blended into the overall sound. At this point I'm trying to develop an electric instrument that hasn't got that kind of hollow body and then you're more dependent on the electronics and amplification that you use but this is also a direction that I would like to investigate a bit further.

People always talk about violins with some reverence and they always talk about names like Stradivarius ***because of the legends of the small village in Italy or whatever.***

An old man carving away for his life...

We think of it like that. But in actual fact over the last few years you have yourself developed not only as a violin player but also as an instrument maker. How did you come to this? It's an unusual thing for a musician to do, make his own instruments.

Yes, of course, it's possible with the violin because it's still made of wood and as such is within the realm, I think, of someone who is interested in doing it. I became interested for a couple of reasons. One was that I wanted an instrument that had better qualities about it than the one that I owned at the time. The second reason was that violins have become kind of ridiculous in terms of price for a decent sounding instrument so it had set me off on an interest that I had developed already and that was to try making an instrument. I spent a year putting the first one together which seemed like a heck of a long time but when I'd finished, I ended up with an instrument which I did a recording with and it was one that I was really pleased with the sound. I was using North American woods, Canadian fir, Douglas fir, which I got from Tepperman's used lumber yard, cutting up old beams which had been removed from buildings. And this wood seems to have a wonderful quality about the sound and so it's also part of my plan to support myself in the future. One of the realities of being an improvising musician is that it's impossible to completely support yourself, there has to be other elements to your life to make this happen. So this is part of my plan to actually make a career, or a partial career, in violin making.

Now I do recall that we were on tour once and we were talking about the idea that you had entered a violin in a competition and one of the reactions to your violin was that it didn't

sound like all the other violins, as though that were a good thing. That it should sound like other violins because of the attitude of symphony orchestras...

It could be that. I know that the sound of it is more dark than a lot of other instruments that were there. They tend to have a very bright top end. I think the makers are concentrating more on the top strings, where I find a lot of the emotion and content of the instrument that I like is the quality found in the bottom strings, in the G and D strings, and so that's a quality that I try and bring out in them.

Of course, in an orchestra where one thinks of the violin in classical music, there aren't that many soloists.

Oh, you don't want to hear them. They don't want to be heard. They want to hear the section. That's an element I think about a lot, that many players don't want instruments that are too loud. I think they definitely want a certain quality in it. I, however, want an instrument that has the ability to project and play with a trumpet, a saxophone and a drummer. Amazingly enough, I've been able to play acoustically with a large number of ensembles and have not had to rely on amplification. This has been a liberating effect because I haven't had to worry often about microphones or amplification and I can just rely on the sound that I've created.

Well now, you didn't just suddenly wake up one morning and find out how to make a violin.

No. One of the things that I found through the wonderful learning process that I've gone through in improvised music is that if you want to learn how to do something you don't go to school, you go out and find someone who does it. That's what I did really. I searched down another violin maker and therefore asked him a little bit but just hung around. I first observed that he was a very good violin maker and the instruments that he was producing were something that I could really take to. Through his help, the help of a couple of other people, and a summer course at the Ontario College of Art that was to do with actually making wooden instruments of all kinds — I mean, basically I couldn't sharpen a pencil when I started, I had to learn some techniques and had no tools — I was able to synthesize some kind of knowledge that allowed me to proceed. Often step-fashion to the conclusion of an instrument.

Who is this violin maker?

Joe Curtain was the first one that I ever met. He was a student originally of Otto Erdesz, who worked for many years in Toronto. He's since left and he's what you might picture a violin maker to be. An old Hungarian, sort of hidden away in the third floor of a building, whittling away all hours of the night at his instruments, but he made wonderful instruments. A very idiosyncratic maker actually. Not thought of well by a lot people because he didn't work in a very pristine way. He worked in a very rough way and his instruments looked like old instruments to begin with because he thought that's what they should look like. He had a very unique and personal idea of what he thought instruments should look like. So that's sort of the impulse that I got at the very beginning. I don't want a perfect instrument, as though it were spray-lacquered, that just came off the assembly line. I want an instrument that looks like an instrument.

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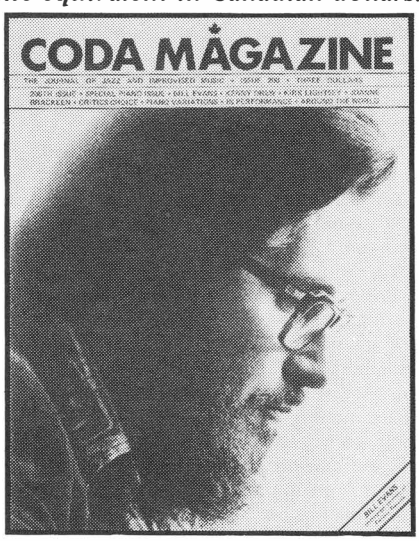

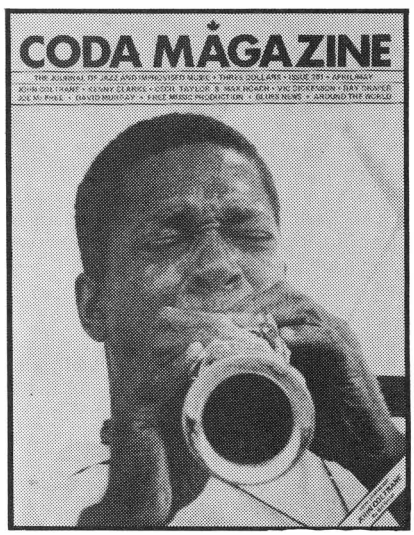

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ANATOMY OF A FESTIVAL TWO

PACIFIC JAZZ & BLUES FESTIVAL
Vancouver, B.C.
June 23-29, 1986

The Coastal Jazz And Blues Society has hosted many individual concerts and a small festival last summer, but the du Maurier Jazz Festival on June 23-29 was their first shot at the big time. Let's not try to think too hard about the ethics of having the major sponsors being Expo '86 and a cigarette company with South African interests, but the opportunity was there, and they took advantage of it very successfully. In a year when both the Edmonton and Montreal festivals were conservative in their programming, the Vancouver organisers were much more creative, and it paid off; much of the music was outstanding and the sponsor has given a commitment for next year.

There were the inevitable problems. The sites were scattered over a wide area, rendering the logistical considerations of traveling between and parking at the various locations always a challenge. Attendances at some performances were spotty; interestingly enough, except for concerts right on the site, there was little crossover from Expo visitors. Hopefully in future more out-of-town jazz fans will drop in to relieve the poor exhausted locals, who can't go to everything! The soundmen were certainly inexperienced at jazz music — muddled sound buried the intricacies of Ornette Coleman and Prime Time — but things improved as the week went on. Hopefully these now-experienced gentlemen will still be available next year.

The big circus on False Creek drew a panoply of Canadian jazz talent certainly unprecedented in western Canada. The overall impression left with me was solid but unspectacular. Ensembles such as Peter Leitch's quartet, the duo of Karen Young and Michel Donato, and big band V.E.J.I. were enjoyable, but they didn't break new ground the way the best of the foreign performers did. There were some exceptions — the Bill Smith Ensemble, both its regular show and the Last of the Red Hot Dadas presentation, which included music, recitations of poetry and a Beckett play with musical and visual accompaniment, and films, slides, and strange costumes and behaviour; Wondeur Brass, a five-woman collective from Montreal attempting to fuse a number of genres; and the Paul Plimley Octet, the addition of trombonist Hugh Fraser from V.E.J.I solidifying the lineup of a strong band playing challenging and original music.

I didn't see any of the high-priced heavily-publicized shows at the Expo Theater, but apparently Miles delivered R&B and Wynton Marsalis, Blue Note mainstream as expected. (Is it really true that Prince is going to be on Miles' next album?) Still, by driving really fast and chancing a few parking tickets, I managed to catch for seven days in a row a concert each night at three different venues. The Steve Lacy Sextet's two nights at the Western Front — they also delighted 250 the next night at Open Space Gallery in Victoria — were the highlight; six experienced, committed musicians playing challenging compositions, remaining right on the edge in spite of having performed together for so many years. I knew Lacy's work, but every other member of the band was a revelation to me and the rest of the audience. Steve Potts' fire and grace on soprano and tenor provides the perfect foil for Lacy's probing intellectual dissection of melody and theme. It's certainly a mystery how Bobby Few's thin, wiry frame can produce such powerful pianistics; he is a true original.

Two similar men — shy but innovative — appeared in a variety of contexts, alas never on the same stage. Kenny Wheeler and his array of horns fronted V.E.J.I. and a quintet, and graced an interesting improvisational quartet with Jay Clayton (vocals), Eric Jensen (cello) and James Knapp (trumpet/synth). His quicksilver creativity and beautiful tone shone in every format. Bill Frisell seems to have mastered the difficult task of making electronically-processed guitar live and breathe enough to be a workable improvisational tool. Whether solo, with a Tim Berne group, or battling for room with Henry Kaiser and his manic compatriots, his swelling, fractured lines stayed in this listener's mind, as did the big grin that lit up his face at the end of every solo.

Frisell, alto saxophonist Berne, and percussionist Alex Cline pushed each other to some beautiful improvisations at the Western Front, while Berne and Cline together with John Roberts and trombonist John Rapson tellingly explored Berne's compositions before a disappointing crowd at the Robson Square Cinema. At the clubs was a mixture of blues, rock and jazz — highlights here included former Monk sideman Charlie Rouse and his quartet, and the week's residency by Olympians Bert Wilson and Rebirth, who hosted the best jam sessions at the Classical Joint.

With the exception of Jan Garbarek's awful performance and the bad sound for Prime Time, the New York Theater series was outstanding. Roscoe Mitchell and the Sound Ensemble delivered a typically varied and virtuosic set, including freebop, composed, free improv, and rock/reggae numbers; Hugh Ragin was amazing on piccolo trumpet. Abdullah Ibrahim and Ekaya impressed the audience with a heartfelt concert of straightahead, swinging original compositions. Veterans Charlie Haden, Cedar Walton, and Billy Higgins played a strong if somewhat unadventurous program of standards and originals. The festival was closed by a powerful performance from Soviets Ganelin/Chekasin/Tarasov. Not too much of their repertoire could be called jazz, but they combined instrumental skill, improvisational familiarity, humour, and strong compositions into a crowd-pleasing mix.

One strong impression I gained during this music-drenched week was the essential meaninglessness of the label "jazz." The music was so varied in technique, content, and aim that it is virtually impossible to typify as a whole; surprisingly little was what most non-aficionados would think of as jazz. Perhaps the only constant was an underlying passion and commitment to creativity and communication with the audience, qualities shared with great musicians of ***any*** stripe. Still, I'm sure I'll keep on using that old tired word! ***— Scott Lewis***

Festival International de Jazz de Montreal
June 27 - July 6, 1986

Since the "bigger and better" philosophy characterizes all major jazz festivals, of which Montreal proudly belongs to, it is no surprise then that our festival, now in its seventh year, just keeps growing. Despite an increasingly commercial content, with a series of quasi or non jazz "special events" held at one of our bigger concert halls, there was plenty of action worth catching; so much so that this reviewer had to hop, skip and jump between overlapping shows, rarely staying for a whole performance. Apart from the usual plethora of outdoor concerts, which I had very little time to see, there were nine series indoors, the most interesting

BOBBY FEW (Photograph by Bill Smith)

one being the late night **Jazz dans la nuit** series. New to this event was the participation of eight bands sponsored by member countries of the UER (Union europeene des Radiodiffuseurs) in a series devoted to European jazz. The trombone, guitar and saxophone trio of Wierbos, Kuiper and Van Kemenade from Holland provided one of the few original moments of the festival, since this group had something else to say than almost anybody else. Just about as interesting was the Danish duo of John Tchicai and Pierre Dorge who played a much more inside set than I expected: some blues, a bit of Monk by the guitarist, a few vocal hollers by Tchicai, whose expressive sound on tenor was surely one of the nicest and most expressive heard. Irene Schweitzer also provided an interesting set of solo piano with some unexpected humour and a good many references to Cecil Taylor, though much more subdued in her approach than her role model.

Through the ten day splurge, with the customary day off half way through, there were plenty of special moments, even after one weeded out a lot of the non-pertinent concerts. **Clarinet Summit**, easily the most significant jazz event of the festival, was a rare and privileged moment for this was the group's fourth public performance in four years. Not only does it reinstate a sadly neglected instrument (to use the old cliche), but it transcends jazz history by linking the roots (Jimmy Hamilton) with the present (Alvin Batiste and John Carter) and the future too (David Murray on bass clarinet). Through two finely paced sets, alternating between group readings of Ellingtonia and open-ended improvisations by Batiste and Carter especially, one knew by the end of the evening that it was truly a memorable occasion.

As for the festival's overall programme, it was varied at best with a good deal of emphasis given to the tradition and a sprinkling of more audacious groups. In the latter category, one can mention **Dave Holland**'s quintet, a band that gave us some tight ensemble work and interesting compositions, even though the solo parts lacked a bit of spark. However, that wasn't the case for David Murray and his quartet. Supported by the ever-wonderful Ed Blackwell, a fine Ray Drummond and an excellent John Hicks (as he always is), David Murray offered us an unrelenting performance, packed with flurries and flourishes in all registers of his main ax, the tenor sax. In contrast to his supportive role with the clarinet summit, he was center stage all night and didn't let up a second. Yet, he offered a bit of a respite on the ballad ***I Want To Talk About You*** (which no one has dared to touch since Mr. Coltrane made it his own), and succeeded in creating his own version by refusing to duplicate the master's own interpretation. As David Murray did "lift the bandstand" (to use one of Monk's expressions), **Steve Lacy**'s sextet came up short, this due in part to the lack of a sound-check and their coming on stage over an hour and a half late (through no fault of theirs however). Essentially, their material hasn't changed that much since their last tour in 1983 and their interpretations were fairly standard. Nevertheless, Steve Potts was the most consistent performer of the evening, preventing the band from becoming too lethargic. To complement the group's concert, there were three showings of Peter Bull's documentary (entitled with the aforementioned Monkism), by far the best made film shown during the festival, both in terms of sound recording and visual quality.

Just glossing over a few other headliners, veterans like Jay McShann and a spry looking Benny Carter (now 79 years old) played familiar old tunes with no surprises. Gerry Mulligan and his quartet played with a measured enthusiasm once Mr. Mulligan demanded that no drinks be served or smoking be done during his performance in what he did not know was a night club. Such are the exigencies of a concert artist. In contrast, the other baritone sax king, Pepper Adams, was warm and friendly on the very next evening, even though his battle with cancer is gradually sapping his energy, though not his creativity or musicality.

Still in the tradition was the **Paris Reunion Band** with Joe Henderson subbing for the little giant himself, Johnny Griffin. (We missed you Griff!). As a well-heeled band – with veterans of the Blue Note days for the most part – they took off since Benny Bailey stood up for his first solo and he kept the band going in each of his spots. Second to him was Slide Hampton, whose playing was really at its best, and whose arrangements are models of clarity and swing.

Despite the wealth of talent and good shows, this year's festival was marred by an "incident", namely, the Chet Baker/Paul Bley duet. Billed as a follow-up to their recent album, the errant Mr. Baker arrived in town the day of the concert from Belgium. Suffering both from jet-lag and his customary chemical problems, he wandered on stage after a Bley solo, sat down on his chair, motionless, then blew a series of cracked tones and muffled sounds, then attempted a ***But Not For Me*** whose opening words only heightened the tragedy of the occasion. The pathos of the artist was only surpassed by that of the cat-callers and boo-birds in the audience more interested in their fifteen dollars than in the plight of a man living by a thread. Yet, those compassionate enough to stay around after Paul Bley asked the trumpeter to leave, which he did, were nevertheless treated to a solid performance by the pianist who was unusually vigourous, playing proficiently and even profusely at times, which is quite unlike his usual laconic and moody style.

There was a lot more piano to be heard the following night as Hank Jones and Tommy Flanagan traded lines in a sterling performance of standards. After all, one can't go wrong with two of the most competent journeymen of the post-bebop era. Another mainstreamer who was in top shape was Harold Mabern, who as a part of James Moody's quartet was in full flight, so much so that he outdid the leader on more than one occasion.

As for the piano series, no real surprises there. Performances ranged from the interesting (Jaki Byard and our own Lorraine Desmarais who is developing and honing her own skills), to the average (Ellis Marsalis, Amina Claudine Myers, Monty Alexander) all the way down to the objectionable (Bobby Enriquez, a man of impeccable bad taste!). Other mentions should be given to Al Cohn, a man of class who (as always) made it sound so easy during his appearance on the opening night with a youthful Woody Herman band, even if the leader himself looked visibly tired, but kept his cheerful stage presence throughout. Our own Vic Vogel had his big band in top shape on the closing night concert, as they played some of the classic Dizzy Gillespie charts of the late forties, with the trumpeter himself conducting the proceedings and giving a few brief (but flawed) solos.

Now that the Montreal International Jazz Festival has established its credentials, it has overcome the first challenge, which is to prove its viability as a financial venture. For the future, it must now confront a second challenge, namely, to survive as a ***jazz*** festival. Other festivals have started that way, but have been forced to drop the word "jazz" in order to survive. One can only hope that our organizers will avoid the trappings of success which have been the downfall of many a festival.

– Marc–A. Chenard

CONNEAUT LAKE JAZZ FESTIVAL

Conneaut Lake Park, Pennsylvania
August 22-24, 1986

Judging from the Conneaut Lake Jazz Festival, jazz is an exceedingly good profession in which to grow old. For the fifth year, producer Joe Boughton assembled a fine mix of young and old players from all parts of the country. And once again it was the veterans who provided many of the most imaginative, memorable moments. You'll sometimes hear younger players suggest that jazz is basically a young man's game. Certainly younger players often have the edge in terms of technical prowess and stamina. They may be able to play faster, higher, longer. But this festival brought home the fact that technical skills are only a small part of a jazzman's art.

For example – there may be many faster, louder drummers around than Ray McKinley, 76. But he still has such fantastic ***style***. His is really a unique jazz voice. It was fun hearing him trading phrases with Bud Freeman, 80, on ***You Took Advantage Of Me***, one of Freeman's longtime specialties (and Freeman commented afterwards he loves playing on the solid beat McKinley lays down). Freeman would go into his wonderfully convoluted phrases and then McKinley would talk back to him on the drums – hitting each cymbal with such care (often a tad after you'd expect him to, creating just the right tension), then ending his breaks with stylized, slow motion shrugs (as if to tell the audience: "I guess I'm through now; you can clap if you want" – and we did). McKinley took an infectious, extended solo on ***Fidgety Feet*** that has to rank as one of the all-time best solos I've heard. From the ricky-tick of the drum sticks on the rims and on the shell of the tom-tom to the resonant splashes of his ancient Chinese cymbal, it was sheer magic. They were performing those numbers in a group led by Ed Polcer, which also included Bob Haggart on bass, Johnny Mince on clarinet, Johnny Varro on piano, Howard Alden on guitar, and Dan Barrett on trombone.

Eddie Miller, 75, showed how to handle a ballad on ***What Is There To Say***. Freeman, Miller, and Scott Hamilton teamed beautifully on several numbers, most notably ***Crazy Rhythm***. (They'd play the theme together, with Freeman adding his own whirling flourishes as they'd near the end of a phrase).

Hamilton also led a septet, which got a

good, chewy sound, much different from that of his usual recording group. Trumpeter Joe Wilder and trombonist Dan Barrett often teamed as a brass section, answering Hamilton's phrases on classic swing tunes like ***Taps Miller*** and ***Stompin' At The Savoy***. Drummer John Von Ohlen kept the music moving.

At one point, Boughton had 15 players jamming together onstage on ***Linger Awhile***. It provided an excellent chance to see how different stylists on the same instrument (Johnny Mince and Mahlon Clark on clarinet, Miller, Freeman, and Hamilton on sax, Ed Polcer, Joe Wilder and Randy Reinhart on trumpet, Dan Barrett and Bob Havens on trombone, etc.), handled the same material.

A quintet co-led by Howard Alden and Dan Barrett, including Jackie Williams (drums), Michael Moore (bass) and Chuck Wilson (alto), offered more modern themes, mostly arranged by veteran Buck Clayton. They got a distinctive light, spongy, ensemble sound. A number of people asked where they could get records of the group. Alden said they had not yet recorded — and one record producer in attendance told them he'd like to record them.

Randy Reinhart's pure-toned singing cornet provided an impressive straightforward lead for ***Pete Kelly's Big Seven***. Reinhart was a last-minute substitution in the California-based band for its longtime leader Dick Cathcart, who was ill, and he did a fine job.

The setting itself seems ideal for vintage jazz. The base is a sprawling, white, wooden, turn-of-the-century resort hotel, next to a lake and an amusement park. The musicians and guests all stay in the same hotel. They mingle in the lobby or on the veranda, or chat during brunches in which musicians, singly and in groups, take turns entertaining. There's a cozy, relaxed atmosphere. It seemed entirely typical, for example, when George Van Eps, 73, asked the audience to sing along with him as he played ***Happy Birthday*** for the four-year-old son of bassist Michael Moore (who probably had no idea he was having one of the world's great guitarists salute him in that way).

One could make minor criticisms of the festival. There were too many numbers showcasing individual musicians. If you have eight stars in a band, it's better to have them all play and get the interactions between them, than to send half offstage (as I felt happened too frequently) so that a single player can work in front of a rhythm section. Records are available of most of the individual artists working by themselves in that fashion. One attends a festival like this for the much rarer opportunity of hearing the musicians working together, of hearing them in ***band*** contexts. Boughton also has tended to invite many of the same players year after year. While the desire to repeat what has worked before is understandable, offering new combinations of musicians should make the festival even more appealing for people who return from year to year. And there were some minor sins of omission. Why wasn't McKinley hired to ***sing*** at least one of his favorite old numbers, as well as play the drums? And why wasn't Alden heard more on acoustic (rather than electric) guitar? He's one of the best young acoustic guitar players around.

Some superb records could be released from this annual get-together. It probably would not be economically feasible to pay the artists what they really deserve. (As Ed Polcer commented at one point, "You've got a million dollars worth of talent here.") But these veteran players are not going to be around forever. And the rare reunions of still-vital older players that occur at this festival — not to mention their work with rising stars young enough to be their grandchildren — ought to be preserved on records.

Boughton has created an excellent annual event. Efforts should be made to make some of the music available on disc — so that far more people than the couple hundred who may have packed Conneaut Lake Park for three days and nights will have a chance to hear, say, the way Johnny Mince strutted his stuff on ***Our Monday Date***. Or how movingly bassist Bob Haggart put across ***September Song***. Or the rich ensemble sound of ***Pete Kelly's Big Seven*** (with Reinhart, Bob Havens, Ray Sherman, George Van Eps, Eddie Miller, Gene Estes, Ray Leatherwood, and Mahlon Clark playing charts by Matty Matlock and others). Or what it was like when Bud Freeman, Scott Hamilton and Eddie Miller bounced ideas off of each other.

People travel hundreds of miles to this festival each year, because they know they will be hearing some unique and important voices in traditional jazz. And because they know that when these individuals are gone, we won't hear their likes again.

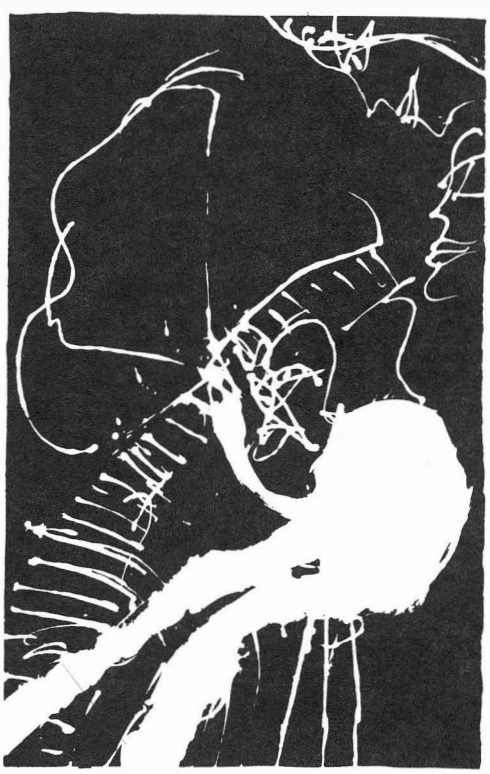
— Chip Deffaa

Café Des Copains

50 Wellington Street East, Toronto 869-0148

The Cafe des Copains is a small, charming French cafe situated in the heart of the Saint Lawrence area of downtown Toronto. It features a moderately priced French bistro menu, with a fine selection of wines.

Copains Jazz Festival



OLIVER JONES — *September 29 to October 11* * Montreal's gift to jazz piano. His intensely swinging approach to the music reflects a debt to Oscar Peterson but his style is uniquely his own.

MULGREW MILLER — *October 13 to October 25* * A strongly talented pianist who looms as one of the most impressive members of an exciting new generation of jazz pianists.

ANDY LAVERNE — *October 27 to November 8* * A soloist of distinction who was inspired by the horizons established by Bill Evans and Don Friedman. "One of the world's finest pianists," says Dan Brubeck.

RAY BRYANT — *November 10 to November 22* * A master of the blues and one of jazz music's major pianists. All the elements are in place when Ray plays piano and he exudes authority as he redefines the blues and jazz standards.

And more to follow..... including **Jay McShann, Hilton Ruiz, Lou Stein.**

*PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE * Monday to Thursday 8:30 to 12:30 / Friday and Saturday 9:00 to 1:00 * COVER CHARGE AFTER 8:00 PM*

EDMONTON JAZZ CITY '86 FESTIVAL
Edmonton, Alberta
June / July 1986

After many years of hard work and audience development the Jazz City Festival has finally, in its seventh year, become just that - a festival and a successful one at that. It's a triumph of sorts that the Edmonton Jazz Society /Festival Society was able to bring off their largest, most diverse event yet when they were faced with subsidy cuts at the same time. Several changes in the makeup of this year's festival helped to decrease costs and increase public enthusiasm.

The most immediate change was that the dates of Jazz City were moved up from mid-August to late June and early July. During the previous six years other music and entertainment events had been too close for comfort, competing for the already depleted late summer vacation dollar. The new dates also coincide with most of the other jazz events across the country, helping to cut booking costs by enabling performers to stop off on their travels between points east and west.

Despite these more favourable conditions it was still surprising that this festival did so well on a roster which included more Canadian talent than has been featured in earlier years. Traditionally, festival organizers operated on the basis that it was necessary to bring in costly names, usually from points south of the border, in order to drum up interest. This year's budget realities forced the festival organization to think again and it may have been a blessing in disguise. Certainly there were still a few star attractions — Wynton Marsalis, Tony Williams and others — but many of the finest moments of this ten-day period came from lesser known national talents. Total attendance figures (as yet incomplete) made it over the 80% mark showing a major increase from last year's figure of just over 50%.

One of the single most important factors in this success was the incorporation of free outdoor live jazz performances on a previously unknown scale. Dubbed "Jazz Street," the series of concerts which took place in the midst of Edmonton's downtown core on the Sir Winston Churchill Square offered four concerts daily for the ten days of the festival with some groups appearing several times during that period. It was a chance to reach those members of the public who might not otherwise be prepared to spend money on paid events featuring artists and music unknown to them. Jazz Street ran in tandem with "The Works" — an outdoor visual arts project which involved numerous tents set up around the area featuring artists working on the spot in a variety of media. Food, beer and cooler sales also helped to lend a relaxed atmosphere to the occasion. On Canada Day an all-Canadian lineup including Edmonton's own Clarence "Big" Miller and his blues band, Toronto's Shuffle Demons, the Edmonton Jazz Ensemble, and groups led by pianist Bill Emes and saxophonist Jim Pinchin received a warm reception from the large crowds out to enjoy the jazz birthday party under the sun.

Paid concerts were spread over more venues than ever before but concentrated around the Citadel's Shoctor stage, the Library Theatre, and the Phoenix Downtown, all within a few blocks of each other. Additional special events featured an evening of Dixieland one night and Tito Puente's Latin Ensemble the next in the ballrooms of the Chateau Lacombe Hotel. The city's convention center also played host to two major events the final weekend of the festival, an evening with the Count Basie Band one night and a blues bash the final night.

But what of the music itself? Perhaps it is not unusual that the most challenging ensemble performances of the festival involved larger groups whose music leans to the freer end of the spectrum. Paul Plimley's Octet from Vancouver managed to play the exciting edge between identifiable arrangements and group improvisation that toyed with cacophonous confusion but never got lost in it. As if to make the music more accessable, Plimley himself set a personable and intriguing cast to the concert, sometimes investigating new sounds on the piano, sometimes conducting the group, always with a bouncing enthusiasm that drew a very positive response from the late night audience at the Phoenix. Steve Lacy's Sextet also showcased an excellent level of playing several days later at the Library Theatre. Although I would have preferred to witness more group interaction and less stratified solo spots, it was a rare and pleasurable experience to catch this master of the soprano saxophone and his group.

Billed as a "Latin Dance Party," the evening with the Puente Ensemble provided an excellent time for those fans of latin jazz and salsa music apart from the lack of space on the dance floor. Equally enthusiastic crowds enjoyed a powerful night of the blues when Little Ed and the Imperials, Koko Taylor and her Blues Machine and finally, the marvelous Albert King took over the sports arena-like atmosphere of the Convention Center, setting many in the crowd of well over a thousand rocking back and forth to a tight grinding beat that offered no mercy.

The Wynton Marsalis Quartet served as proof that star attractions do not always live up to their reputations. But then, this is but one man's opinion. I was not among the many who stood up to applaud the young trumpet player after both of his sold-out concerts. Perhaps those people heard something that the local press and myself did not. What I encountered was a somewhat bored demeanour as the band worked over numerous standards, with more original compositions featured as the evening continued. Make no mistake, Marsalis has an incredible technical precision, but on this occasion there was a missing spark of electricity needed. Several evenings later another acknowledged technical marvel Tony Williams took to the stage with his quintet. While it is always a pleasure to hear such a master drummer, Williams' band rarely lived up to the imagination of their leader. Alas, it seems there is more to being a band leader than playing one's own instrument well.

It's not often that a jazz band is able to sustain performances which involve a high level of communication amongst the musicians. When it does happen it is usually because the group has been together for some time and the members have had a chance to develop the required familiarity with each other to take risks, capitalizing on the spontaneity of the moment. For this listener many of the more intriguing moments of this festival occured at solo and duet concerts in which a tone of intimacy underlined the performers' statements and heightened their interaction with one another.

One of the more powerful sets involved soprano saxophonist Jane Ira Bloom dueting with pianist Fred Hersch. His lyrical, sometimes complex piano lines created the perfect foil for the penetrating sound of Miss Bloom. Although some readers may question the need for any electronic gadgetry, her occasional use of an echo/reverb effect only emphasized the starkness of her sound. That sense of purity also characterized the duet performance of sopranino saxophonist Bill Smith and violinist David Prentice, longtime cohort and member of Smith's Ensemble. Although their set with quartet suffered somewhat from a lack of continuity, this duet was a delight to both the ears and eyes, creating an atmosphere akin to some sort of zen ritual. In addition to witnessing their intuitive powers of communication it became obvious that these two musicians must have spent many hours investigating the more unusual ways of making sounds with their instruments and integrating these sounds into coherent musical ideas.

A variety of solo, duet and group contexts were featured in the Justin Time Records Celebration of Canadian Jazz highlighting many of the artists on that label. Although I was unable to catch the entire concert in its three-hour entirety, certainly one of the highlights had to be a duet with bassist Michel Donato and vocalist Karen Young (the latter having also recently added percussion to her credits). Despite some apparent nervousness in their opening moments the sincerity of their music generated a very warm response. Kudos also go out to saxophonist Bob Mover and the young guitarist Reg Schwager for some memorable soloing elsewhere in the same concert.

Paul Bley, one of the few Canadian jazz musicians with a truly international stature, provided a very satisfying solo performance in one of the Library Theatre concerts. With a quiet air of relaxation Bley seemed more than pleased to play for the appreciative audience, returning easily to perform several encores. He included a few standards along with much of his own material providing some idea of the diversity of his talent while remaining ever alert to the possibilities of improvisation. Only an hour later Bobby McFerrin took to the Shoctor stage next door for what was easily one of the finest (and perhaps one of the most atypical) concerts of the entire festival. Already well-recognized for his amazing vocal abilities, he proved to be much more than just a singer with his open honest humorous presence, and his efforts to involve the audience itself. At one point McFerrin invited people on stage to create an impromptu vocal choir, rehearsed their parts with them and then used them as a background on which to solo over top. The instantaneous standing ovation at the end of the evening brought him back for a brief encore in which he sang his regrets that he couldn't continue all night.

Injecting a zany enthusiasm into outdoor concerts all week were the Shuffle Demons, four saxophonists and a drummer who wear some very colorful clothes and play some very outside music. They have been gaining a lot of well-deserved attention for their ability to make music that tends towards some rather intense extremes more accessible to the general public. With luck future Jazz City Festivals will be able to continue the same kind of popularization of

real jazz music as the Shuffle Demons have done this year. While space doesn't permit me to detail the variety of concerts and club activities further, it is safe to say that this year's festival has been one of the most well-received yet.

— Roger Levesque

OTTAWA JAZZ FESTIVAL
July/August 1986
National Arts Centre, Ottawa

If Victoriaville's Festival de Musique Actuelle is the best-kept secret on the Canadian festival circuit, the Ottawa Jazz Festival (OJF) runs a close second for its combination of a low national profile and a high-quality musical menu. Newer than Edmonton's Jazz City, smaller than the Montreal International Jazz Festival (MIJF) and lacking the media support enjoyed by the Toronto duMaurier Jazz Festival (or virtually ***any*** event based in Toronto), Ottawa has quietly built a festival that's adventurous yet accessible. It's a chummy nine-day affair run by fans for fans.

Thanks to support from spirits and suds companies and several levels of government, the price is right at OJF. Of its eighty-odd performances, the National Arts Centre's three big-name Gala Concerts are virtually the only shows for which admission is charged. The first of the 1986 Galas featured Oscar Peterson in a 90-minute solo set that concentrated on his newer original compositions. The smaller-than-usual helping of Ellingtonia was surprising yet welcome; dazzling technique aside, Peterson's treatments of some Duke and Monk standards now sound a little tired and overembellished as they roll off his fingers for the umpteenth time.

Closing the Galas was a tribute from the Benny Goodman Alumni Band that was occasionally exciting (the playing of leader Peter Appleyard), often elegant (Bucky Pizzarelli's lean guitar solos) and, on the whole, lacking the fire of Goodman's finest bands.

An electrical storm in New York grounded Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers and forced cancellation of the third Gala show. It was the weather's worst blow in a festival cursed by the weather but there was little gloom over it. Blockbuster events have never been that crucial to the Ottawa Jazz Festival. Its strength is in presenting major talents who have minor recognition; musicians that even the jazz community are still discovering.

One of its finds from a few years back, John Hicks, was back again this year, now one of the Big Apple's busiest pianists. Another returnee was Michel Camilo, the fiery pianist who almost stole the show while a sideman to Paquito d'Rivera at last year's OJF. His 1986 performance leading a sextet was no less spirited, thanks in large part to the propulsive drive of percussionist Sammy Figueroa and the chops of trumpeter Lew Soloff.

The 1986 OJF landscape was also graced by two Hills — Andrew Hill, who closed the exceptionally strong Pianissimo series with a rare Canadian date, and Buck Hill, the tenor-playing postman from Washington DC, who made his Canadian debut with a performance of dazzling technique and maturity. Hill's cohorts included the mighty bassist Keter Betts, who took a hurried diversion from an Ella Fitzgerald tour to make the date.

With Canadian jazz musicians so accustomed to backing visiting US stars, it was encouraging that several of the best OJF performances reversed the roles and put Canadians in the spotlight. Ottawa-born guitarist Peter Leitch held his own in a program of bop standards despite the attention drawn by his sidemen — John Hicks, Walter Booker and Terry Clarke (another Canadian who's moved his home base from Toronto to New York).

By contrast, the Canadian/American quartet led by ex-Montreal altoist Bob Mover would have been more successful as a trio led by pianist Kenny Barron. Mover's playing, which he admitted afterward was "a little too restrained," was overshadowed by the remarkable empathy between Barron and fellow Sphere stalwart Ben Riley (Skip Bey completed the quartet).

The OJF menu included healthy servings of adventurous Chicago fare. Trombonist Ray Anderson, backed only by a drummer and the tuba playing of Bob Stewart, presented a strong set that ranged from standards (***Once In A While***) to Free solo improvisations and the funk inflections of his larger band, The Slickaphonics. Theatricality that rivalled Lester Bowie's best shows also helped to make Anderson's performance the most talked-about at OJF 1986.

Playing a solo piano set a few hours before Anderson, Amina Claudine Myers, another stalwart of Chicago's Association for the Advancement of Creative Music, proved to be no easier to pigeonhole stylistically. Her long instrumental explorations were often as dark and dense as her soulful singing was breezy. Her set's only sour notes were a handful of originals marred by flaky and overwrought love lyrics.

Bill Smith's second OJF appearance was a reunion with an AACM member who shares his surname and his delightful lyricism, trumpeter Leo Smith. Smith and Smith easily wove their hornwork into the ample spaces left by Chicago drummer Reggie Nicholson, Toronto bassist David Lee and the adventurous Vancouver pianist Paul Plimley. Plimley's playing, fresh despite its heavy debt to Cecil Taylor, was even more engaging during a later solo performance. A hurried set (weather problems again) to the jagged accompaniment of his trio was less pleasing.

Talking of reunions, fans of Brian Browne were treated to the reassembled Brian Browne Trio that was one of Canada's top jazz acts in the mid- to late-sixties. For their first performance in at least fifteen years, Browne, drummer Doug Johnson and bassist Skip Beckwith played a set that was tight, polite and a little dated.

Other highlights of the concert presentations: solo piano sets from Jaki Byard and Dave McKenna, an appearance from the Edmonton Jazz Ensemble that was faithful to that city's adventurous jazz scene and a spunky and powerful performance from the up-and-coming Denny Christianson Big Band from Montreal.

After last year's shortage of mainstream headliners, this year's OJF line-up tilted too far "into the tradition" for some. As well, the festival — like the MIJF — is yet to find the right formula for post-concert jam sessions. There was little jamming at the festival's club presentations of blues and swing, which were little different from the regular fare at their venues.

These, however, are minor complaints set against an impressive festival that deservedly — and quietly — grows in stature every year.

— Paul Reynolds

A RARE MAGAZINE AUCTION * NUMBER ONE

This is the first of several auctions of rare out of print jazz magazines which have been acquired recently. They are basically in good condition but covers show marks of their age and there is some discolouration of inside paper for the same reason. **Note:** Some 1950-1952 copies of Jazz Journal have a crease line on their covers from the original mailing method. (s)= soiled or damaged cover (t)= taped cover.

Minimum bid is Can $4.00 per magazine. You can also enter bids for a complete volume (year) where available. The minimum bid for a complete year of Jazz Journal is $60.00 and for Down Beat it is $130.00. Postage (at printed matter rate) is extra. Airmail and first class mail is also available. Only winners will be notified. Deadline for bids is **OCTOBER 30, 1986.**

Send all bids to John Norris, c/o Coda Publications, P.O. Box 87, Station J, Toronto, Ontario M4J 4X8.

DOWN BEAT

Down Beat covered both jazz and popular music from its inception in the 1930s. It used a newspaper format until the 1950s when it became a regular magazine which maintained a publishing schedule of two issues per month.

DOWN BEAT

1945: December 15
1947: January 1
1948: May 5
1949: October 7
1951: March 23, June 15(s), November 30, December 14, 28
1952: October 22, December 3
1953: January 14, 28; February 11, 25; March 11, 25; April 8, 22; May 6; June 3, 17; July 1, 15, 29; August 12, 26; September 9, 23; October 7, 21; November 4, 18; December 2, 16, 30
1954: February 10, 24; March 10, 24; April 7; May 5, 19; June 30 (20th anniversary issue - 138 pages); October 6; November 17
1955: January 12, 26; February 9, 23; March 9, 23; April 6, 20; May 4, 18; June 1, 15, 29; July 13, 27; August 10, 24; September 7, 21; October 5, 19; November 2, 16, 30; December 14, 28.
1956: January 11, 25; February 8, 22; March 7, 21; April 4, 18; May 2, 16, 30; June 13, 27; July 11, 25; August 8, 22; September 5, 19; October 3, 17, 31; November 14, 28; December 12, 26
1957: January 9; February 6; March 21, July 25; September 5; October 3; December 17
1958: January 9, 23; February 6, 20; March 6, 20; April 3, 17; May 1, 15, 29; June 12, 26; July 10, 24; August 7, 21; September 18; October 2, 16, 30; November 13, 27; December 11, 25
1959: January 8, 22; February 5, 19; March 5, 19; April 2, 16, 30; May 14, 28; June 11, 25; July 9, 23; August 6, 20; September 3; October 1, 15, 29; November 12, 26; December 10, 24
1960: January 7, 21; February 4, 18; March 3, 17, 31; April 14, 28; May 12, 26; June 9, 23; July 7, 21; August 4, 18; September 1, 15, 29; October 13, 27; November 10, 24; December 8, 22
1961: January 5, 19; February 2, 16; March 2, 16, 30; April 13, 27; May 11, 25; June 8, 22; July 6, 20; August 3, 17, 31; September 14, 28; October 12, 26; November 9, 23; December 7, 21
1962: January 4, 18; February 15; March 1, 15, 29; April 12, 26; May 10, 24; June 7, 21; July 5, 19; August 2, 16, 30; September 13, 27; October 11, 25; November 8, 22; December 6, 20
1963: January 3, 17, 31; February 14, 28; March 14, 28; April 11, 25; May 9, 23; June 6, 20; July 4, 18; August 1, 15, 29; September 12, 26; October 10, 24; November 7, 21; December 5, 19
1964: January 2, 16, 30; February 13, 27; March 12, 26; April 9, 23; May 7, 21; June 4, 18; July 2, 16, 30; August 13, 27; September 10, 24; October 8, 22; November 5, 19; December 3, 17, 31
Grabbag: an assortment of early Downbeats which have had articles clipped and/or are in deteriorated condition: 2 from 1930s, 17 from 1940s and one from 1953 - 20 in all to highest bid.

JAZZ JOURNAL

Jazz Journal has been the most influential English jazz magazine since it began publication in April 1948 under the editorial direction of Sinclair Traill. Each issue contains articles, reviews and opinions. It is also illustrated with many photographs.

JAZZ JOURNAL

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AROUND THE WORLD

CANADA — All has been quiet in Toronto except for the summer festivals. Harbourfront's weekend showcases of jazz blues attracted large crowds who endured inclement weather which interfered with the scheduled performances. The events were good showcases for some of the area's homegrown talent as well as a limited number of headliners from the U.S.

The Music Gallery is presenting a month of jazz in October. In addition the gallery will play host to a performance by Mike Westbrook's trio on October 7... Concern about the declining jazz scene has reached into the Toronto Musician's Association who have formed a special committee to find ways to stimulate the scene. The biggest stumbling block facing would-be promoters of the music is the high cost of American performers. The rate of exchange adds 40% to the costs of anyone presenting U.S. musicians in Canada. This is one of a number of reasons why it would be extremely difficult for anyone to emulate the success of Joe Rico's new club ("Milestones," 2610½ Main Street) in Buffalo.

Pianist Jill Hopple was a new face at George's Spaghetti House. Dave Young and Jerry Fuller worked a week with her at the end of July. Rick Wilkins made a rare club appearance in August with Ed Bickert, Steve Wallace and Jerry Fuller on hand and they were followed early in September by Reg Schwager's Trio.

The disparate talents of Barry Harris, Sammy Price and Don Friedman brightened up the summer scene at Cafe des Copains. Between them, the three performers defined many areas of the art of jazz piano playing.

Radio station CKLN is compiling a directory of musicians in all disciplines. Call the station at 595-1477 if you want to be included... The Blue Note Record Shop's next Record and Memorabilia Show takes place October 19. After ten successful years at the Thornhill Farmers Market the show is moving to the Queensway Lions Centre at Kipling and The Queensway.

The Kitchener-Waterloo Jazz Fest took place September 11-13... Montreal pianist Oliver Jones followed up a successful appearance at the JVC Festival in Saratoga with his first featured New York performance at Sweet Basil (August 28) during the Greenwich Village Jazz Festival... The Andrew Homzy Jazz Orchestra will be heard in concert October 10 at Concordia University. The highlight of the concert will be the first performance of Francy Boland's specially commissioned suite of Hoagy Carmichael songs.

A concert featuring new works by composer in residence Muhal Richard Abrams was one of the highlights of this year's Banff Jazz Workshop. Additional concerts featured all of the faculty staff as well as many of the workshop participants... John Abercrombie was at Edmonton's Yardbird Suite in July.

"Black Music in Canada" was the subject of two hour-long programmes on the CBC's "The Entertainers" which were broadcast August 2 and 9. The documentaries were produced by Keith Whiting and hosted by Jackie Richardson and Jeff Jones... The CBC's "Jazzimage" series has released four new recordings: The Francois Bourassa Trio's "Reflet 1"; "Andiamo" by the Lorraine Desmarais Trio; "Melosphere" by Helmut Lipsky and Arnold Farber's "Mallet Busters" with special guest Don Thompson.

— John Norris

CLEVELAND — Summer on the shores of Lake Erie. Fireflies in the grass, horse chestnut trees and crab apples, sun showers, air still and tolerantly humid, cool in comparison to my native L.A. where the slow burn under the Aztec sun cooks the hammers on pianos bone dry thru September.

The provincialism that exists here is of a type similar to many cities on this continent — homogenous to the larger culture of the whole. In the U.S. only does the deep south (ie. Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana) to a certain extent pervade a provincial patois. Other areas serve as a repository of what is known and gone on before. Where convention is learned and practiced, a breeding ground for development before moving on to the larger arenas of Los Angeles and New York City. The many fine schools and excellent museums here evidence that. The continuum is important, but not in and of itself, only forward into the avant will we find ourselves, we define the now.

This is mainstream Americana in an ocean of corn and soybeans, the heartland, a watershed junction from the towns of Sherwood Anderson stories, a flowing thru place, a community that relinquishes its best to the sea. Hart Crane wrote of Cleveland's smoking factories and river port to the world before leaving himself to NYC. This city's other great poet D.A. Levy deemed to stay, "I have a city to cover with lines" and killed himself at an early age. A hard analogy to be sure. And a community art is noble but in America to survive by one's art is to pander to the community's want. One can guess that the milieu here was no different during the formative years of Albert Ayler. Every city has a history. And a community. With Cleveland it is shaped by the country.

There is no club at present here that books international acts. The Northeast Ohio Jazz Society (P.O. Box 6658, Cleveland, OH 44101) presents periodic concerts of nationally known artists as well as sponsors local acts. Music is also available at many bars and dinner clubs. It is possible to catch on a regular basis the groups of Ernie Krivda, Kenny Davis, Robert Jr. Lockwood, Neil Creque, Chuck Braman, Mark Gridley, Ace Carter and Lamar Gaines.

Krivda came on the set in the early 60s when the 105th and Euclid Avenue scene was in its heyday. His reed playing can be heard on various recordings, from Quincy Jones 1975, three late 70s recording on Inner City, and three albums on the North Coast Jazz label (3152 Bay Landing Dr., Westlake, OH 44145), with an upcoming lp from Cadence. He devotes himself entirely to the tenor saxophone these days and his empassioned artisty is an asset to the area. His current band consists of Chip Stephens, p; Jeff Bremer, b; and Joe Brigandi, d.

Another highlight of the area is trumpeter Kenny Davis who we catch regularly at Club Isabella with his quartet, Kip Reed, elec. b; Scott Kania, d; and Bob Ferrazza, d. A frequent collaborator with Krivda over the years, alumnus of the Mercer Ellington Orch., teaches at Oberlin, his gigs attract a traveling show of musicians passing thru hungry to jam with this able unit. Ramon Morris taking a break from NYC, veteran of Blakey, Woody Shaw, Max Roach, et. al, scorched the club with his sure shot tenor hammer. Other young deadeye surprises have been pianist David Berkman and tenor saxophonist Mike Lee.

Another you're sure to hear from in the future is drummer Chuck Braman who augments the various aggregations of flutist Mark Gridley and fronts his own trio with "tasteful" churning percussive sense derived from his avowed paragons Roy Haynes, Philly Joe Jones and most notably Paul Motian. Jeff Bremer on bass and Chip Stephens piano.

In terms of blues, let me tell ya bout that next time. Blues are everywhere. *— Mark Weber*

HARTFORD — The Real Art Ways August Jazz Festival presented a daylong sampling of the spectrum of sounds known as the jazz avant-garde. John Zorn opened the August 3 event with an iconoclastic solo performance that ranged from shrieking alto rages to bluesy whispers and bird whistles made through a mouthpiece sans horn. Less zany than his ensemble efforts, Zorn's performance nevertheless communicated the magical madness at the core of his work.

Bill Barron and his Jazz Associates brought the music closer to its roots, although his and Bill Lowe's compositions retain an experimental edge. Barron's polished improvisations played nicely against Lowe's grainy trombone in the front line while Fred Simmons, Nat Reeves and Eddie Blackwell established a solid grounding for their solo flights.

The duet of Charles K. Noyes and Elliot Sharp brought the program back to the cutting edge of experimentation. Their short, discordant pieces featured abrasive textures and intricate interplay between Sharp's various reed instruments and double-necked guitar and Noyes' expanded trapset and saw. After an hour's listening, though, I found their jarring iconoclasm growing more monotonous than provocative.

Blood Ulmer's trio swung the musical pendulum back toward the basics with its set of free-form funk.

The final act, John Carter's quartet, established a kind of middle ground between the other performers. Carter, an Ornette Coleman associate in the 1950's, writes and plays in a post-Coleman vein. His palette encompasses blues, abstraction and a wealth of texture. Although he and Bobby Bradford soloed impressively, Fred Hopkins stole the show with his awesome arco work. Hopkins employs bowing techniques and textures that most jazz bassists use sparingly; ringing harmonics

and screeching, scratching sounds have become an integral part of this increasingly radical improvisor's vocabulary.

The CRT Festival of Jazz offered a more homogenous, mainstream music. A tribute to Papa Jo and Philly Joe Jones, the Monday night concerts featured drummers as leaders, for the most part. Unfortunately, the groups of Leroy Williams, Charlie Persip, Rudy Collins and Vernell Fournier did not reach the level of inspiration appropriate to the tribute. Jimmy Cobb's quartet, however, reached the desired level, with assistance from J.R. Monterose. The finest set of the summer festival came when Jackie McLean teamed with his son Rene on a sizzling set of original material. The performance seemed even more impressive when I learned the following day that Jackie had played despite the pain of a broken ankle. Several of the festival's opening acts performed respectably and passionately: Larry Rivers' east Thirteenth Street Band, Dave Hubbard's Labor of Love, a two-trombone quintet called the Tenor Clef, and Norman Gage's sextet with Bill Barron.

Wesleyan University hosted a symposium entitled, "Jazz Improvisation in a World Music Context." Organized by Bill Barron and Bill Lowe, the three-day event featured panels of musicians, scholars and critics discussing the nature of improvisation and its relationship to the music of other cultures. Many of the panelists performed in the symposium's evening concerts.

August 7, the Bill Lowe-Andy Jaffe Repertory Big Band opened the symposium's first concert. An assembly of the finest musicians in Connecticut and western Massachusetts, the band featured fascinating compositions, arrangements and solos by Lowe, Tom Chapin and George Alford. Its freshness and strength make it an ensemble worth hearing.

Max Roach followed the Lowe-Jaffe band with a solo drum performance. Roach's musicality and technical prowess were especially evident on a hi-hat piece dedicated to Papa Jo Jones.

The following evening's concert demonstrated the diversity of improvisation in world music as it juxtaposed Javanese Gamelan music and South Indian music against Bill Barron's quintet, Leroy Jenkins' solo violin and the duet of Don Cherry and Eddie Blackwell. Cherry and Blackwell incorporated many elements of world music into their dialogue. For an encore, they brought Paquito D'Rivera and Wes Brown onstage for a piece that brought a Dixieland flavor to the crossing of cultural bridges.

The symposium's final concert featured the Fred Houn Ensemble, Paquito D'Rivera and Billy Taylor.

In one of its infrequent summer presentations, the Hartford Jazz Society featured Barbara London and her quartet July 27. The quartet is nothing less than versatile; London sings and plays flute and piano while Charles Dennison plays saxophones, piano and synthesizer. London is a strong flutist and a fluid pianist; her vocals, while respectable, reflect an instrumentalist's approach to phrasing more than a singer's sensitivity to lyrics.

The Connecticut Jazz Confederation featured a set of contrasting styles July 31 at the 880 Club. The Eddie French Sextet caroused through its repertoire of Armstrong, Basie and King Oliver compositions. Alto saxophonist Dickey Meyers, backed by the Don DePalma Trio, performed material in a post-bop vein. Meyers' blend of sound collages and Birdlike phrases marks him as a unique stylist.

The 880 Club's All Star Jazz series featured Randy Johnston, Junior Cook, the Arch Ensemble and Melvin Sparks with Bob Cunningham. The Arch Ensemble, formerly the George Sovak-Mario Pavone Ensemble, reached new heights in its June 26 outing, playing with a cohesiveness that allowed them to incorporate elements of free playing into their challenging repertoire of Mingus, Shorter and Curtis Fuller compositions. Sparks and Cunningham were dazzling in their August 7 engagement. Cunningham is one of the most impressive bassists playing in the modern mainstream idiom.

Wednesdays at the 880 Club, drummer Larry DiNatale leads an exciting quintet. DiNatale's front line recently included Peter McGuiness, a polished young trombonist, and Pat Zimmerli, a highly-acclaimed tenor saxophonist.

Mercedes, a New Britain nightclub, recently began to feature jazz on Sunday evenings. The club's featured artists were C.I. Williams, Tom Chapin and the Arch Ensemble.

— Vernon Frazer

NEW YORK — Sweet Basil presented a special tribute to the music of Eric Dolphy and Booker Little between September 30 and October 5. Mal Waldron, Richard Davis, Ed Blackwell, Donald Harrison and Terence Blanchard will be the featured musicians. Cedar Walton's trio (with Ron Carter and Billy Higgins) was in residence the two preceding weeks and Dave Holland's Quintet were at the club September 9-14. Gil Evans' Orchestra continues its Monday night residence while Eddie Chamblee and Doc Cheatham continue to host the Saturday and Sunday brunches... Sheila Jordan was at the Jazz Center of New York September 5 with Steve Kuhn, Buster Williams and Al Foster. The following weekend (September 12/13) Ahmed Abdullah, Marion Brown, Billy Bang, Fred Hopkins and Andrew Cyrille — "The Group" — were in residence at the Jazz Center. The Joe Carter/Cecil Payne Quartet performed September 4 at the Jazz Times Convention in the Roosevelt Hotel... The Extraordinary String Trio (bassist Reggie Workman and violinists Akbar Ali and Jason Hwang) performed September 13/14 at the Middle Collegiate Church (50 East 7th Street)... Yoruba Proverbs, a performance by Julius Hemphill, Olu Dara, Joe Daley, Abdul Wadud, Gerald Veasely, Bill Cole, Hafiz Shabazz and Warren Smith, took place September 26 at Symphony Space.

Musicians picked up a variety of awards in New York this summer. Toshiko Akiyoshi was awarded the New York Mayor's 1986 Liberty Medal. She was the only Japanese person and the only jazz musician to receive one of the '86 awards... George Shearing was presented with BMI's Commendation of Excellence certificate during the JVC Festival... Marian McPartland received the National Association of Jazz Educators Hall of Fame award for 1986... Billy Taylor and Grover Washington were in Russia September 15-19 as part of a culture exchange delegation to the Soviet Union.

— John Norris

"THE LEADERS"
d.c. space, Washington

Washington, not known for its enthusiasm for jazz, showed that it has a good sized audience which is not only ready for the music but diverse in race and age as well. This proof came when "The Leaders," a group composed of Lester Bowie (trumpet), Chico Freeman (tenor saxophone and bass clarinet), Arthur Blythe (alto saxophone), Kirk Lightsey (piano), Cecil McBee (bass) and Famoudou Don Moye (percussion) played three sets at d.c. space, each one to a packed house.

In the last set, the group opened with Thelonious Monk's ***Epistrophy***. After a brief introduction by Moye, Blythe took the first extended solo and got the crowd jumping with an exploration of the horn that ranged from piercing screams to Albert Ayler-like moans and growls. I was disappointed, however, by its similarity to Blythe's solo on the same piece on his "Light Blue" album. Freeman followed and kept up the intensity with an intricately woven solo which left the audience wanting more. Not to be outdone (musically or theatrically) Bowie, dressed in characteristic white lab coat, took to the stage as if on fire and played a brilliant solo during which he gyrated frantically to the sounds of the trumpet as if possessed by the horn itself. Lightsey and McBee, both solid musicians in their own rights, were the glue that held the group together along with Moye's inventive percussiveness.

After over thirty minutes of nonstop musical madness with a Monkish theme, the group turned a complete 180 degrees and performed a beautiful ballad, the name of which escapes me. Consisting of Freeman on tenor and the rhythm section, the musicians seemed intent on proving their virtuosity at both ends of the spectrum. The piece ended in the style of the first, with all six musicians regrouping on stage ending the piece with even more avant garde fire.

In response to the overzealous crowd, the group ended the set with (in the style of Bowie's ***The Great Pretender, I Only Have Eyes For You***, etc.) a good-natured mockery of Fats Domino's ***Blueberry Hill***, much to the delight of the audience.

Each of the six "Leaders" has found his spot at the forefront of the "new music" scene. Their collective efforts certainly add tremendously to the wealth of individual talent.

— Peter Robbins

ODDS & SODS

The International Art of Jazz is a concert organisation which brings jazz to the suburban areas surrounding New York. It is funded by various state and local agencies. Its programs reflect the enduring qualities of the music's main streams. On July 26 the East End All Stars (Dick Hyman, Major Holley, drummer Ron Traxler, Phil Bodner, Eddie Daniels and Hal McKusick) were at Marine Park in Sag Harbor. The Count Basie Orchestra under the direction of Frank Foster was at Heckscher State Park on August 16. The Great South Dixieland Jazz Band was at the Village of Rockville Center August 21 while the Widespread Jazz Orchestra was at the Yacht Basin in Westhampton Beach August 22. The final

event of the summer took place August 30 at Heckscher State Park with Ed Polcer and the Eddie Condon All Stars, Dennis Rowland's trio and Mongo Santamaria's Latin Band.

The Boston Jazz Society's 10th annual barbecue and festival was held August 17 on the campus of Curry College. Junior Cook, Jon Faddis and Carol Sloane will share the spotlight with a rhythm section of James Williams, John Lockwood and Alan Dawson plus a wide variety of Boston area performers.

The Montreux Detroit Jazz Festival was held over Labor Day weekend. Helen Merrill, the Dirty Dozen Band, Joe Williams, Betty Carter, Sadao Watanabe, Billy Cobham and Miles Davis share the various stages with Detroit area musicians. Hotel Pontchartrain has special weekend packages for jazz fans. Their summer schedule of special presentations included Ramsey Lewis, Lionel Hampton and John Scofield. Bess Bonnier's trio perform nightly in the Garden Court Lounge while there's a Sunday brunch with saxophonist Larry Nozero and friends.... A gala benefit evening for Orchestra Hall was held September 27 at Somerset Mall. Al Hibbler, Harry Edison, Buddy Tate, Hank Jones, J.C. Heard and Milt Hinton were the headline musicians. An exhibit of Milt Hinton's photographs were also on view.

Terence Blanchard and Donald Harrison were recipients of the Chicago Observer's first annual **Chicago Jazz Awards**.... This year's Big Horn Jazz Festival will be held November 7-9 at the Sheraton International in Rosemont, Ill. with Peanuts Hucko, Bob Havens, Eddie Higgins, George Masso, Marty Grosz and Brian Torff among the featured players.

Washington vocalist Arnae was featured August 10 at D.C. Space with pianist Aaron Graves, bassist James King and drummer Nasar Abadey.... Concerts this winter at the Smithsonian begin October 19 with a salute to Duke Ellington by Mark Tucker, Ronnie Wells and Doug Richards. Vibraphonist Lennie Cuje is showcased January 11 and Vince Giadano takes a look at the beginnings of big band jazz on March 22. The series ends May 17 with Tom Gwaltney saluting the music of Jimmie Noone. ...September 13 was the date of this year's picnic for the Potomac River Jazz Club. At least six Washington area traditional jazz groups provided the music.

Clearwater Jazz Holiday takes place October 16-19 at Coachman Park, Clearwater, **Florida.** There's no charge for the music at this event which features Nick Brignola, Buddy DeFranco, Michel Petrucianni, Joe Henderson, Wayne Shorter, Judy Roberts, Joanne Brackeen, Ira Sullivan, Stan Getz, Emily Remler and Richie Cole.

The Alpine Village Park was the location for the **Southern California** Hot Jazz Society's August 22nd presentation of East Berlin's Dixieland All Stars and Southern California's Chris Kelley's Black and White New Orleans Jazz Band.... Paquito D'Rivera's Quintet gave two concerts August 21/22 at the Los Angeles Theatre Centre. The following two nights at the same theatre Milcho Leviev and the L.A. Jazz Choir were featured.

The Blues Foundation (352 Beale Street, Memphis, Tn 38103) recently sponsored its 3rd annual amateur blues contest. The finals took place August 29-31 on Beale Street in Memphis.... Tex Wyndham will appear at the San Diego Festival the last weekend in November with the Rent Party Revellers. The band's second lp ("Shake That Thing") will be released this fall by George Buck.... Additional activities during the 20th U.C. Berkeley Jazz Festival included noon hour concerts and a series of panel discussions and films.... One of the most active jazz programs can be found at Cornish College. Hadley Caliman, Jay Clayton, Julian Priester and Jerry Granelli are among the faculty working under the direction of bassist Chuck Deardorf.

East Coast promotion man Al Julian, long associated with Concord, now has time to work on behalf of other jazz labels in the New England area. Write him at 40 Cottage Avenue, Winthrop, MA 02152 USA.... Lewis Porter, author of the recent book about Lester Young, has joined the staff at Rutgers University.

Steve Coleman & Five Elements (Graham Haynes, Geri Allen, Rory Stuart, Kevin Harris, Mark Johnson, Cassandra Wilson) were on tour in Germany and Austria the first week of September.... Vocalist Carla White left for Europe September 15 to line up 1987 concert and club appearances.

Wim Wigt Productions (P.O. Box 201, 6700 AE Wageningen, Holland) is one of the busiest brokers for European tours by American bands and individual musicians. He is already projecting tours well into 1987. Tours such as this are a vital part of most musicians' schedules as the jazz circuit continues to diminish in North America.... The fifth European Jazz Competition finals take place during the Leverkusen Jazz Days. Six bands have been selected out of the 100 cassette submissions.

"Like A Human Voice" is a new **Eric Dolphy** discography by Uwe Reichardt. It is published by Norbert Ruecker, Postfach 14, D-6384 Schmitten 1, West Germany. The 80 page book contains the most up to date information on the late reedman's recordings and retails for DM 15.80 (or US$7.50).... The August 26 Village Voice contained a fascinating article about record promotion man **Dave Clark** — who worked with such labels as Decca, Chess, Peacock/Duke promoting recordings by black artists. His scathing comments about the present state of black radio substantiate views long held by listeners despairing of hearing the essence of black culture on such outlets.... **Scarecrow Press's** new catalog (52 Liberty St., P.O. Box 4167, Metuchen, N.J. 08840) indicates we can expect books on James P. Johnson, Pee Wee Irwin, Buddy DeFranco and Shorty Rogers in the near future.... "I Remember — Eighty Years of Black Entertainment, Big Bands and the Blues" is the autobiography of **Clyde Bernhardt**. It is published by the University of Pennsylvania Press, Blockly Hall, 418 Service Drive, Philadelphia, Pa. 19104. Its publication came shortly after the death of its trombonist/author.... "Jazz Festivals Europa" is an up-to-date listing of the European

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RONALD SHANNON JACKSON (Photograph by Gerard Futrick)

festival scene. It's an invaluable guide to musicians and listeners wishing to keep in touch with the continually changing festival scene. US$7.00 will cover the cost and postage to most countries from Ed. Konzert Musikverlag/ KVE, Elisabethstreet 1, D-4834 Harsewinkel, West Germany.... The Summer/Fall edition of "The Black Nation" is devoted to African American music. Articles, essays and poetry focus on many different aspects of the worlds of blues and jazz. The 96 page journal is edited by **Amiri Baraka** and is available for $3.50 from P.O. Box 29293, Oakland, Ca. 94604.

Upcoming CD's from Polygram include songbooks by Ella Fitzgerald, Dinah Washington, Fred Astaire and Billie Holiday; Brown/ Roach Inc. and the Clifford Brown All Stars plus Lee Konitz' "Motion" and Kenny Burrell's "A Generation Ago Today." These last two compilations include three previously unissued selections.... Polygram has also imported from Japan Cannonball Adderley's Sharpshooters, The Charlie Parker Memorial Concert, Max Roach's Jazz in 3/4 Time and Roland Kirk's Domino. Extra tracks have been added to these CD's.... A collection of 334 performances which is the complete Keynote catalog has been compiled in Japan on 21 single lps. This series presumably supercedes the series issued only a few years ago in the same country.

Many new releases are scheduled by Fantasy for this fall: On Contemporary there is "Lament" by Frank Morgan, "Back To The City" by the Art Farmer/Benny Golson Sextet, "The Latin Connection" by Terry Gibbs and a new session by Chris Connor. "Night Mood" is the title of Mark Murphy's first Milestone lp and "Bogie" is Jackie and Roy's first lps for Fantasy. Also on Fantasy is a collaboration between Etta James and Eddie Cleanhead Vinson. Upcoming on Landmark is Mulgrew Miller's second trio date. Back in circulation are Cannonball Adderley's "Lighthouse" and "Poll Winners" lps. Bobby Hutcherson's next Landmark lp will be a live date from the Village Vanguard in December. The Riverside History of Classic Jazz is among many reissues to appear this Fall. 30 new Original Jazz Classics are scheduled and 22 CD compilations are in the works showcasing the talents of such diverse performers as Kid Ory, Bob Scobey, Turk Murphy, Dave Brubeck, John Coltrane, Miles Davis, MJQ, Eric Dolphy, Barney Kessel, Bill Evans, Thelonious Monk, Wes Montgomery and Sonny Rollins. These are domestic productions which present an overview of the artists rather than being straight reissues of original lps. Incidentally some of the Japanese CD's contain tracks not on the original lps.... "Saxophone Colossus" is a ninety minute film about Sonny Rollins which was directed by Robert Moose.

"Water Mystery" is James Newton's latest on Gramavision. From the same label comes "Rhythm & Blue" – John Blake, Didier Lockwood & Michal Urbaniak.... Audio Fidelity has released "Charlie Parker All Stars live at the Royal Roost" and repackaged Dollar Brand's "Cape Town Fringe".... Previously unissued live performances by James P. Johnson and Coleman Hawkins are the new releases from Pumpkin Records.... Blackhawk Records has signed the band known as "The Leaders".... Modern New Orleans music by Irma Thomas, Alvin "Red" Tyler, Johnny Adams and The Dirty Dozen Brass Band are showcased on lps from Rounder.... Vocalist Rebecca Harris has two lps available through Weston-Blair Productions, P.O. Box 2412, Duxbury, MA 02331. ...The banjo and vocals of Jimmy Mazzy are featured in Harrison Records' first studio lp with the Back Bay Ramblers.... Robert Parker has signed a contract with the BBC for the production of 17 new lps/CDs. First up will be compilations of music by Louis Armstrong, Jelly Roll Morton, Bix Beiderbecke, Fats Waller, Bessie Smith and Johnny Dodds. The CD versions of his first three packages contain four additional tracks and overall superior sound quality to the lps. Distribution of the BBC products remains a problem in North America, however.

Pianist **Teddy Wilson** died July 31 after a lengthy illness. He was 73.... **David Eubanks** died July 6 in a drowning accident in New Jersey.... **Eddie Shu** died July 4 in St. Petersburg, Florida at the age of 68.... **Curly Russell** died July 3 in Queens, N.Y. at 69.... **Raymond Burke** died March 21 in New Orleans.... **Thad Jones** died August 20 at the age of 63.

– compiled by John Norris

Dear Coda,

The review by Al Van Starrex in ***Coda*** 208 of "Good Morning Blues" by Count Basie – as told to Albert Murray (Random House, New York) is somewhat flawed, as is the book itself, in several instances.

There is a shocking disregard for the correct spelling of various peoples' names which is not even mentioned by the reviewer. Surely he noticed.

Would you believe Kid Only (Ory)? Carrol Dickenson (Carroll Dickerson); Vick Dickinson (Dickenson) – his name is finally spelled correctly on page 246 after several tries, but is wrong in the index. Reunald Jones is living another life as Rennald (page 312) or Reunauld (page 322) and never does make it into the index. For whatever reasons, Earle Warren and Freddie Green are occasionally named Earl and Greene. The owner of the Lincoln Hotel, Maria Kramer, must be the lady referred to as Miss Cramer (pages 263-5). And there are others, sadly. Poor proofreading, typos, ignorance – who knows?

Some of the song titles don't fare too well, either, with the likes of "Prince of Wales (Wails)', "Up Jumped The Band (Devil)" and "Fat Babies (Babes)". Again, there are other errors in this regard.

The Index is somewhat of a disaster area, too, with a number of musicians who are mentioned in the text and who are not listed in this part of the book.

When I travelled through Binghampton about a month ago, it was still located in New York state and not in Connecticut (reference Enna Jettick Park, page 188). Good morning, boo boos.

Count Basie's reticence about his personal life is certainly acceptable, even commendable in these days of juicy revelations, but his often cagey accounts of some events become irritating. For example, I personally have no idea why his magnificent, long-serving drummer, Jo Jones, left the band and neither will the reader. To quote from the book (pages 279-280):

"... Our first big loss was Jo Jones. One day somebody came up to my dressing room and asked me something that took me completely by surprise.

"What's happened to Jo Jones? Is he leaving or something?"

"Not that I know of," I said. Why are you asking me a question like that?"

"He must be," whoever it was said. "I just saw him going out of here with his drums and sticks and everything."

And when I got down to the stage level, Jo was gone. He cut out just like that....."

Just like that! Really Count Basie/Albert Murray.

Despite the valuable information particularly in the first part of the book, we never do learn, for example, what made that wonderful band tick. I had hoped that this book would have been so enjoyable and informative, but found it otherwise in many instances. The swinging sensation claimed for this autobiography at the end of the review did not, in my experience, anyway, produce foot patting – only chair scraping and feelings of exasperation.

– Art Pilkington, Toronto

Dear Coda,

I would like to respond to John Norris' review of the O'Sullivan Woodside "Mainstream Jazz Reference and Price Guide 1949-1965", which appeared in the Feb/Mar issue. I believe that Mr Norris did Coda and its readers an injustice by suggesting that the guide is "well researched" and would provide "a better idea of what to offer for rare out-of-print lps". As the owner of a store that specializes in rare and out-of-print jazz records and a publisher of jazz record auction lists for almost 10 years, I have had few experiences that would support Mr Norris' opinion. Quite to the contrary, the guide is the work of uninformed amateurs who neglected to consult the half dozen truly knowledgeable dealers in the U.S. to get accurate – if not at least reasonable – estimates for the values of the records they document.

The result is a publication with innumerable shortcomings, the most significant of which is its glaring bias where 10 inch lps are concerned. Almost without exception, the authors have attributed values to 10 inch lps that have no bearing in reality, e.g. Gene Krupa on Clef for $100-$200, Stan Kenton on Capitol for $70-$90, and James Moody on Blue Note/Prestige/ Roost for $100-$250. It is true that in most instances 10 inch lps of the 1950s were original issues, but that fact is irrelevant if the records in question are of little or no interest to the buying public. The value of rare records, as in any other collectible field, is a reflection of demand. It has not been my experience that original recordings by Kenton, Krupa and Moody are in significant enough demand to warrant even a fraction of the prices quoted in the guide. Price quotes for 12 inch lps are equally misleading, with records liberally undervalued or overvalued in random fashion. Two remarkable examples of undervalued lps are Tommy Flanagan "Overseas" (Prestige 7134), which the guide prices at $60 and Ray Bryant "Plays" (Signature 6008), which the guide prices at $35. I have had no problem selling the Tommy Flanagan record for $400-$500 and the Ray Bryant record for $200-$250!

Besides the fact that the authors are unable to provide reliable values, the guide contains a host of omissions and errors that make it barely

useful, even if only as a catalogue of jazz on lp. As a consequence, collectors have no ability to evaluate their own record collections for insurance or disposition purposes and, as consumers, must continue to rely exclusively on the reputation and honesty of record dealers. Unscrupulous dealers will take advantage of the opportunity to severely underpay or overcharge for records, using the price guide as some kind of unimpeachable, authoritative "bible." As a dealer myself, I am the last to quarrel with a bargain, but there must also be an element of fairness and good faith involved in our business. By using the O'Sullivan Woodside price guide as a yardstick, we will all be misinformed and exploited. So we are once again left to rely on common sense and the "shopping around" process.

Sincerely,
Frederick Cohen

BENNY GOODMAN / HANK MOBLEY / BARRY KIENER

There's no real way of explaining the impact certain musicians have on the public consciousness. There has to be talent, stage presence and the good fortune to be at the right place at the right time. Sustaining a public image is often more difficult than the initial achievement of recognition.

The recent deaths of Benny Goodman, Hank Mobley and Barry Kiener are a reflection of the different ways in which performers (artists) are perceived by the public. Goodman, of course, is a revered figure. He was the "king of swing" and he captured the imagination of a generation of young people in the same manner as the Rolling Stones at a later date. But his band was on the point of demise before it hit California on its initial cross country tour in 1935. The rest, as they say, was history.

Hank Mobley's flame burned brightly for a few short years in the 1950s when he was an important member of The Jazz Messengers and the Horace Silver Quintet. He seemed destined to become a major stylist but his personal lifestyle came between him and his music and he gradually slipped into oblivion.

Barry Kiener was only 30 when he died of a drug related incident. He followed in the footsteps of others who suffered the same fate – many, ironically, who recorded for Blue Note in the 1950s which was the label whose music had most inspired Kiener to become a jazz musician. Much of Barry's professional career was with Buddy Rich's band. In between his two stints with the band he performed as a soloist on a regular basis in Rochester, his home town.

All three of the musicians were outstanding jazz stylists but only Goodman managed to reach beyond the music's community. His death, on June 13 at the age of 77, was on the news wires almost before he had drawn his last breath. Hank Mobley, however, died in obscurity in Philadelphia May 30 of double pneumonia. A brief reference to his death by Gary Giddins in his introduction to the Village Voice's JVC Festival supplement on the tenor saxophone was the first I heard of Mobley's passing. It turned out that Bob Blumenthal had written a piece in a Boston paper but to all intents and purposes his death went unnoticed. Barry Kiener's death on May 26 made the news wire services and was given wide coverage in the Rochester papers. He was liked and respected locally and his death at such a young age was a shocking waste of humanity. In a sense his death hurt most. Both Goodman and Mobley made their contributions to the music but Kiener was only beginning to develop an audience beyond his own circle of musicians. As Mel Torme said "He was absolutely one of the best pianists, and not just a jazz pianist. He could have functioned just as well as an accompanist."

But it is Benny Goodman's achievements which have made the greatest mark on the music. His groundbreaking band of the 1930s helped make jazz-flavoured big band music acceptable to audiences who had never been moved by the orchestras of Fletcher Henderson, Duke Ellington and other pioneer jazz aggregations. More impressive was his instrumental command and virtuosity as a jazz soloist. The trio, quartet and sextet recordings in the 1930s with Teddy Wilson, Lionel Hampton and Charlie Christian are among the best of the time. They raised the level of virtuosity deemed necessary for great jazz soloists and were among the catalysts for the music which was soon to follow. The fleetness of Goodman's phrasing and the way he attacked the notes was a yardstick by which other clarinetists came to measure their own abilities. Goodman, himself, was to change his embouchure and his later music never had the same kind of fire. The force of Goodman's musical personality in the 1930s/1940s virtually eliminated other approaches and the clarinet has become a seldom used instrument in jazz.

Neither Hank Mobley nor Barry Kiener had anything like this kind of impact. Mobley came to prominence in the 1950s and was one of several tenor saxophonists who helped to re-establish the instrument as an important voice following Charlie Parker's decade of "alto madness". He recorded prolifically with Horace Silver and some of these sessions remain definitive examples of the music from that period. It would be appropriate to single out the following, of his many Blue Note lps, as representative examples of his work: **Soul Station (Blue Note 4031), Roll Call (Blue Note 4058), Workout (Blue Note 4080), Another Workout (Blue Note 84431)**.

Barry Kiener's legacy is minute. There was a trio recording for Bob Porter's Phoenix Records and a self-produced duo session from Rochester's Strathallan Hotel as well as some solos with the Buddy Rich Orchestra. In fact, the exposure he had been receiving with Rich during his final stint with the big band could have been a launching pad for greater recognition and attention. But fate, in the worst kind of way, stepped in and terminated his life.

All three of these musicians were gifted artists but it is Benny Goodman who will remain in the Hall of Fame – as much for his efforts in popularising the music as for his own musical contributions. All three, however, will continue to attract listeners exploring the inner reaches of the music. *– John Norris*

Editor's note
Since the preceding piece was written, both Teddy Wilson and Thad Jones have died, and many of the same thoughts also apply to them.

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DEXTER GORDON · Round Midnight

dir: Bertrand Tavernier; co-script: Tavernier and David Rayfield; prod: Irwin Winkler; cine: Bruno de Keyser; prod. design: Alexandre Trauner. Featuring: Dexter Gordon as Dale Turner, Francois Cluzet as Francis Borier and Gabrielle Haker as Berangere.

The appearance of "Round Midnight" is an event that every jazz afficionado will applaud. Bertrand Tavernier, the director and co-writer, has had the courage to create a film that incorporates the experience of jazz into its dramatic structure. The tale he has chosen to recount is a deceptively simple one. Francis, a young French artist, meets his idol, Dale Turner, who is a legendary saxophonist now attempting a comeback in Paris. Through the faith of Francis, Dale finds a renewed purpose in his music and his life. Both men understand that this re-flowering might be brief, but the realization only makes their situation that much more piquant. They understand themselves — and their friendship — through their mutual devotion to jazz.

The atmosphere Tavernier creates in the film — the lushly dark hues and the rhythmic but romantic jazz music — is informed by the sadness and beauty of the Dale-Francis relationship. The clarity of the narrative allows him to make the most of events that might otherwise seem stereotypical. The wail of the saxophone playing in a garbage-strewn Parisian back alley miraculously reacquires its authenticity. This is due to Tavernier, and to his most inspired bit of casting. One can certainly believe that saxophone's sad song when it is played by that unlikely matinee idol, Dexter Gordon.

The choice of Long Tall Dexter for the lead in "Round Midnight" was as brilliant as it was inevitable. Drugs and alcohol have taken their toll on his generation of brilliant musicians, the one which produced bebop. Charlie Parker, Fats Navarro, Wardell Gray and too many others died young due to the lifestyle engendered by heroin addiction. Thelonius Monk, Charlie Mingus and Kenny Clarke survived that era but are now gone. The inspirations for "Round Midnight's" plot and characterizations, Bud Powell and Lester Young, are particularly tragic cases. They were great musicians whose sensitivities became brutalized by the U.S. military and medical institutions, establishments that could not tolerate the artistic sensibilities of black men during the early 40s. Dexter Gordon is one of the few survivors of that era, a man who felt the pressures of the period and whose playing reflects his roots in bop music. He has had acting experience as well, which is surely a rarity among jazz musicians. Gordon appeared in an early 50s prison melodrama called "Unchained," which starred football great Elroy "Crazylegs" Hirsch. In 1960, he composed the score and created the part of the leading jazzman waiting to score heroin for the hit play, "The Connection." For his role as Dale Turner Dexter could draw on not only his personal recollections but also a thespian — and musical — background.

"Round Midnight's" plot is acknowledged in the credits as having been "inspired by incidents in the lives of Francis Paudras and Bud Powell." Certainly the broad outlines of their relationship are adhered to during the course of the film. Paudras did take Powell under his wing during the pianist's stay in Paris in the early 1960s. It was due to the support offered by Paudras and the generally enthusiastic ambience of the European jazz scene during that time that Bud Powell was able to enjoy the last resurrection of his creative vitality. Paudras' dedication to the pianist even led him to accompany Powell on his fateful return to New York in 1964, an episode recapitulated in the film.

Though Paudras' friendship for Powell certainly provides the basis for "Round Midnight," Tavernier deviated a great deal from the tale, at least partially due to his appreciation of Dexter Gordon. "People who play horn are completely different than pianists, both physically and in their attitudes," the director has stated, adding with a cautionary note, "Bud was much further gone than the character Dexter plays." The pitiable figure that Bud Powell was by the early 60s, a man who had endured five stays in mental

institutions and multiple electric shock treatments, is a far cry from the sadly charming presence created by the composite Powell-Young-Gordon character of Dale Turner.

As played by Gordon, Dale Turner is a slow-moving, slow-talking diffident man. He is a creature on the brink, still fully in control of his musical powers but ready to fall into the void at the tip of a glass. There is an irony in his eyes that says, "I know you're trying to manipulate me, but don't look now, 'cause I've got you wrapped around my finger." His physical presence is awesome. At 6'5" and a few pounds more than he should be, Dale completely dwarfs his companions. The image of Francis supporting the alcoholic Dale home through the dusky Parisian streets becomes not only poignant but comic.

For his creation of the persona of Dale Turner, Dexter Gordon was able to draw on a lifetime of personal knowledge of the men who play jazz. This wealth of experience informs Gordon's acting performance just as it does his saxophone playing. As a saxophonist, Gordon is often given the honour of being the first major bop tenor-man. He absorbed the lessons of Coleman Hawkins but his major early influence was Lester Young. Prez inspired a host of up-and-coming musicians, including a teen-aged Californian who skipped classes to catch his idol in the Basie Band. Dexter recalled the first time he saw Lester Young at the Paramount Theatre in Los Angeles in 1939. "I ditched school that day to catch the first show... They [the Count Basie Band] opened with ***Clap Hands Here Comes Charlie***, and Lester came out soloing — and he was just fantastic. I really loved that man. He was melodic, rhythmic, had that bittersweet approach." Prez' light tone and subtle rhythmic sense allowed for a freedom of expression that created a revolution in the music.

Gordon quit school soon after hearing Prez and within a year was playing for Lionel Hampton's Orchestra. The young Dexter quickly met many of his favourite jazzmen, including Prez. Lester Young's airy manner, his sartorial charm and oddly eloquent manner of speech affected Dexter Gordon, as it did many of his contemporaries. The coolly manipulative attitude that Dale Turner adopts in "Round Midnight" is surely affected by Dexter's appreciation of Prez. Young's quirky mode of address, calling all of his intimates, "Lady," is appropriated by Dale Turner, in an affectionate homage to the man who dubbed Billie Holiday, "Lady Day."

The only psychological reason offered for the fatalistic approach which Dale Turner has adopted in his dealings with life in "Round Midnight" is his horrific experiences during World War II. Lester Young was very badly treated by the Army after he was drafted in 1944. Prez ended up in military prison in the South during a time when prejudice towards blacks was readily accepted by most elements of society. The brilliant saxophonist wore the scars that were beaten upon him — if not physically, then emotionally — for the rest of his life. Dale Turner, in the film, recounts a similar tale in a mock documentary fashion to an unseen questioner. Tavernier departs from the rich, noirish texture of "Round Midnight", draining the colour, as Turner recounts his woeful war-time tribulations. Using long travelling shots instead of film's usual quick montage structure, this sequence acquires the resonance of a nightmarish home movie being rediscovered. Lester Young's incarceration is a true jazz tragedy. As Dexter Gordon has wistfully remarked, "In his [Prez'] pre-Army days, he had such a zest for living. It felt so good to hear him play." Young returned from the Armed Services a changed man, one whose soul had indisputably been diminished by racism and fear. Commenting on urban jazz musicians — a population which surely includes Lester Young and that composite creation, Dale Turner — Tavernier observed, "The army was a traumatic experience, the worst in their lives."

Dexter Gordon survived the war years and reached an early peak in the bebop hey-day that immediately succeeded the end of the global conflagration. Dexter recorded the classic ***Blue'n'Boogie*** with Dizzy Gillespie. He played on discs with Charlie Parker, the man who had supplanted Lester Young as the muse for all hip jazz performers. By 1946, at the age of 23, Dexter Gordon had already played with Louis Armstrong, Lionel Hampton, a small band with Lester's brother, Lee Young and the great Billy Eckstine Big Band. It was in Eckstine's band that Dexter discovered his own voice. Gene "Jug" Ammons and Dex became a featured segment in the Eckstine orchestra, battling against each other in a series of virtuoso saxophone encounters. Gordon and Ammons had also been participating in the legendary jam sessions at up-town clubs that produced bebop. It was an easy leap for both of them to leave Billy Eckstine for 52nd Street. Dexter's tenor playing had become so accomplished that he could play with anyone, even Bird and Diz. Savoy Records featured Dexter Gordon in a series of 78s bearing titles like, ***Dexter's Cuttin' Out*** and ***Dexter's Minor Mad.*** The tall handsome Californian with the brilliant technique, the easy rhythmic assurance and the sure-handed utilization of bop harmonics became a major figure on the scene. On many of his Savoy sides, Dexter employed a fiery young pianist whose virtuosity was also unquestioned, Bud Powell.

By 1946, Dizzy Gillespie, Kenny Clarke, Charlie Parker, Bud Powell and Dexter Gordon were, as they say in sporting parlance, "on top of their game." They had scaled artistic heights, promoting their new music to a rapidly growing audience. The frenetic rhythms and complex harmonies of bebop proved to be perfectly in keeping with the times in which they were produced. The crowds began to grow and the notoriety quickly spread through most urban sectors. As the pressures to produce more music grew, many of the giants began to crack. Many, too many, sought solace in a quick fix, heroin. Dexter Gordon, like many of his contemporaries, became addicted. He explained, "Psychologically I wasn't ready. Personally I didn't feel I was ready... I never felt right within myself, honest, justified, in getting this acclaim, the spotlight. So in order to bolster my confidence, to immune me, I had to resort to artificial means." Jimmy Butts, a New York bassist, later recalled playing on a session with Bird and Dex during this period. The scene he recounts is eerie, and chilling. "Bird and Dexter were nodding. I knew what pot was, but I didn't know the hard stuff. Dexter would come out of his nod and say, "I'm tired. It's early in the morning," and I said, "Yeah, I know what you mean. I just came in from Atlantic City."

When Francis, the dedicated jazz buff who is willing to stand in the rain in order to hear his idol, finally meets Dale Turner, all the saxophonist wants is a beer. The pathos of the scene, with this poetic character, a man who touched Francis so much that he risked court-martial in order to hear him play, reduced to cadging drinks from fans is all too apparent. The means by which Dale has been reduced to such a low estate are only cursorily alluded to during the course of the narrative. In Paris, with the naive Francis eagerly dogging his tracks, Dale remains relatively pure. New York is another matter entirely: old rules of civility no longer apply there.

Dexter Gordon and Bud Powell played powerful music together. Both men were agile musicians noted for their quicksilver approach to their instruments. Even in the volatile field of bebop, Bud and Dex were notable for their rapid, darting styles. They were virtuosos by their early twenties, dauntingly brilliant practitioners of the music. Most critics considered Powell to be the premier bop pianist. He started in Cootie Williams band in 1943 and was the first pianist to record the Williams-Thelonius Monk-Hanighen tune, ***'Round Midnight***. Awesomely inventive as an improvisor, Powell was able to create memorable solos on numbers for Fats Navarro (***Fat Boy***), Charlie Parker (***Buzzy***), and Dexter Gordon (***Long Tall Dexter***). Powell was an excellent composer, as well; pieces like the Latin-flavoured, ***Un Poco Locl*** and bluesy ***Dance Of The Infidels*** have become classics in the genre.

Dexter, like Bud, spent the immediate post-war years gigging on 52nd Street, creating exciting music with his bop contemporaries. For Christmas of 1948, Dexter and Bud were united in a truly astonishing all-star band, which also included the likes of Miles Davis, Fats Navarro, Lucky Thompson, Kai Winding, Milt Jackson, Oscar Pettiford and Kenny Clarke.

All too soon, the exhilirating scene engendered by bebop changed. Dexter, who had achieved a major success with his recording of a saxophone duel with Wardell Gray called ***The Chase***, left New York for California. He was busted there for possession of heroin and spent two years, 1953 and 1954, in Chino prison. His "cutting session" compatriot, Gray, died under mysterious circumstances which were probably related to drugs in early 1955.

Bud Powell's erratic behaviour became exacerbated by his dependence on alcohol. Dexter Gordon has remarked that "Bud was always — ever since I've known him — he was a little on the border line." Too often, Powell would cross that line, become abusive and get arrested. He spent a great deal of time in mental hospitals. Powell received shock treatments in 1947 and 1949. In August 1951, he was arrested for possession of narcotics, went berserk in the Tombs in New York City and was doused with buckets of ammoniated water. Placed first in Bellevue, then in Pilgrim State, he was given more shock treatments. By the time he was released, in late 1952, Powell's memory had been badly affected. His playing had lost its succulent, fiery quality. He could still be brilliant, but only on occasion, when prodded by good associates.

By the late fifties, the bop era was only a memory. Cool jazz had come and gone as the fashionable idiom and it had, in turn, been replaced by the soulful rhythms and longer solo-

ing of hard-bop. The time was right for those old boppers who had survived to reassert themselves. Thelonious Monk made a major comeback — his goatee and beret fit perfectly into the beat generation era that was developing at that time. Charles Mingus and Miles Davis became major figures on the scene. Dexter Gordon was invited to record for Blue Note Records and arrived for his first extended stay on the East Coast in a decade. What he encountered in terms of racism, hustle and hassle must remain a matter for conjecture. Soon, he Bud Powell and Kenny Clarke became the most notable of a large number of jazzmen to depart the United States for Europe. In 1962, they commemorated their artistic rebirths with the fine Blue Note album, "Our Man In Paris." Jazz fans in Stockholm, Paris, Copenhagen and London happily embraced this migration of musicians and artists and welcomed them into their midst.

It is within this cultural ferment that "Round Midnight" takes place. Dale Turner is an emblematic figure, a representative of all those jazz men — and artists in other disciplines — who chose to make Europe their home in the early sixties. Turner's destination at first is a funky little hotel in a poor section of Paris. We see his dirty dishes sitting in a bidet waiting to be washed. Turner's companion is his mistress/agent, Buttercup, who mothers him but locks the saxophone in his room at night. Ace, another jazz man, lives down the hall and cooks red beans, chitlins and rice. Baguettes and camembert cheese have made no impact on these new denizens of Paris, although Turner does elicit a craving for "vin ordinaire."

Turner plays at the Blue Note Club, the spot where Bud Powell played in the early sixties. Tavernier and his production designer went to great lengths to recreate the club down to the slightest detail. Pierre Michelot, the French bassist who plays with Dale Turner at the Blue Note in "Round Midnight," found himself bumping his head against the beams in the ceiling just as he had in the real club twenty years ago. The stark anonymity of the hotel rooms of Paris and New York are meticulously recreated, adding to the poignant portrait of Turner's life.

Dale Turner's scenario begins to differ from either Bud Powell or Dexter Gordon's at the point at which Francis decides to adopt the jazz man, moving him from the hotel to his own apartment. While Bud's wife — also dubbed Buttercup — and child moved to Paris with him and Dexter prospered in Copenhagen, the lonely Dale Turner is only too willing to accept Francis' unconditional friendship. Francis Paudras had no children in the early sixties, while his namesake in the film has a daughter, Berangere. The relationship between the two men and their daughters — Turner has one in New York — adds a sadly human dimension to the film. The saxophonist tries to relate to Berangere but his efforts are comically off the mark. "Aimez-vous basketball?" is his question for her. Turner is no better at relating to his own daughter, to whom he dedicates a composition upon his return to New York. Disappointed, he remarks to Francis, "I always felt like a stranger in Paris. Don't let that happen to you and Berangere."

Turner's comment to Francis is a rare specifically human moment between the two men. Their admiration for each other seems based on a set of mutually loved cultural symbols. Turner tells Francis that Debussy influenced his work; the Frenchman explains to his estranged wife that "I admire Dale, nobody has inspired me like that." Both Dale and Francis have a sad capacity for ignoring other human beings in favour of musical icons. This obsession for jazz is, within the Platonic conception, simultaneously beautiful and terrifying. Where is the humanity in Dale and Francis? It can only be found in the music.

Bertrand Tavernier and Dexter Gordon invested much thought and feeling into the use of music in "Round Midnight." The film is essentially a jazz musical. Like the films of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, whose ***raisons d'etre*** were the dance sequences, the camera of Bruno de Keyser never leaves the musicians when they are playing. And what musicians they are! Joining Dexter Gordon for his Blue Note band are Herbie Hancock, Pierre Michelot, Freddie Hubbard and Billy Higgins. Other musicians contributing to the brilliantly evocative soundtrack are Bobbie Hutcherson (who also plays Dale's friend, Ace), Lonette McKee, John McLaughlin, Wayne Shorter, Palle Mikkelborg, Cedar Walton, Ron Carter, Mads Vinding and Tony Williams. Unlike Coppola's "The Cotton Club" or Scorsese's "New York, New York", Tavernier's "Round Midnight" never distracts from the statements made by the musicians on the stage.

Dexter Gordon developed his character of Dale Turner through musical, as well as verbal and visual, means. Tavernier has commented, "I showed Dexter Gordon doing two sets at the Blue Note, to convey what the life of a musician really is. I wanted to suggest that the musicians used to play three or four sets a night, way into the early morning hours." Dexter took advantage of Tavernier's fascination with the life of a jazzman to show the developing nature of a group at a club. For his early efforts, Gordon advised the director that instead of sophisticated arrangements, "On the first night I would play the melody. When musicians come to a new club it takes them two or three nights to get it together." Dale Turner plays the saxophone in a more romantic manner than Dexter does in his own performance. A different character emerges playing the saxophone, one who is sadder and, occasionally, less powerful, than Dexter Gordon is as a musician.

The musical sequences in "Round Midnight" are an instrinsic element of the film. Like Fosse's "Cabaret" and Brecht's stage conception for "The Three Penny Opera", the music in "Round Midnight" comments on the narrative thrust of the work. This acceptance of the music is perhaps the most remarkable element in Tavernier's film. "Round Midnight" is a thoughtful, sensitive depiction of men whose lives have been shaped by jazz. Dexter Gordon turned to Bertrand Tavernier on the last day of shooting and asked, "Lady Bertrand, how long do you think it's going to take me to get over this movie?" For Dexter, and for many jazz fans, it might take a very long time.

— Marc Glassman

Research acknowledgements for this review: Ira Gitler for "Jazz Masters of the 40s" and "From Swing to Bop" and Bertrand Tavernier's interviews.

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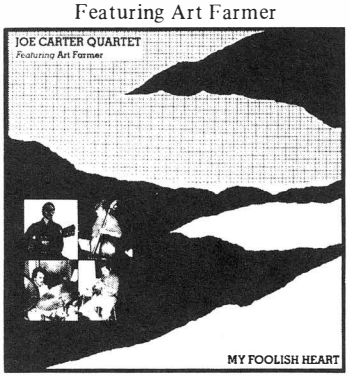

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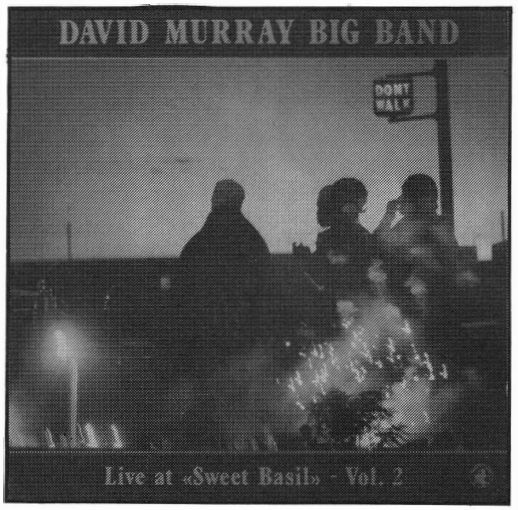

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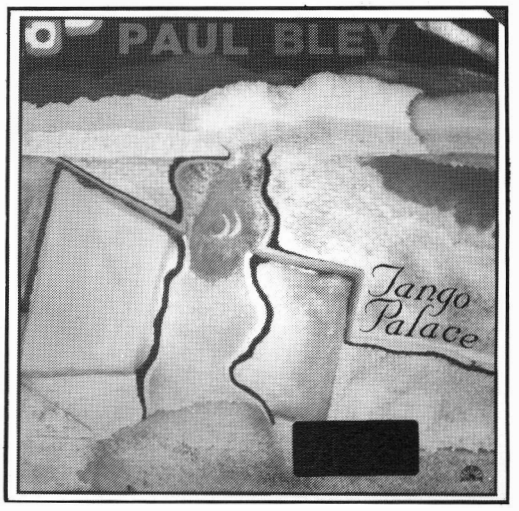

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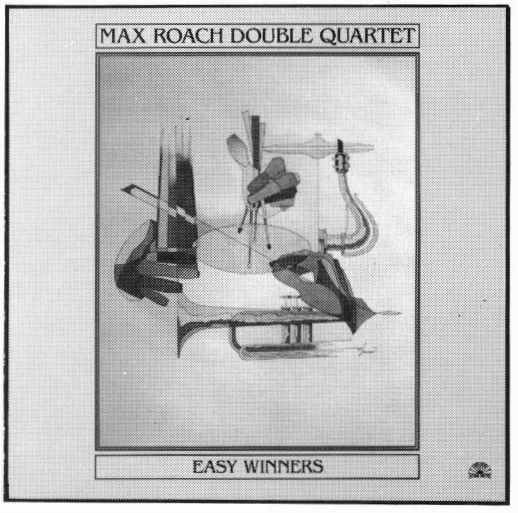

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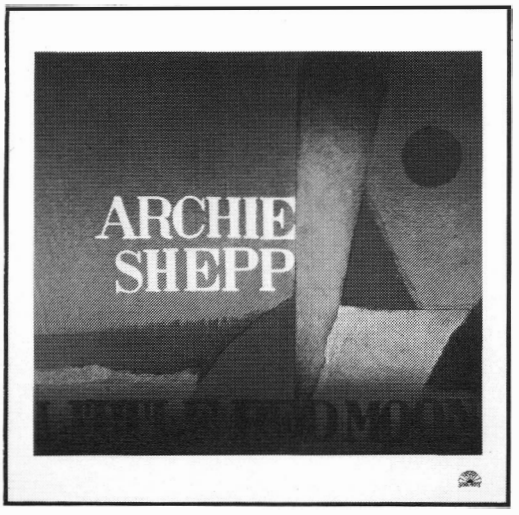

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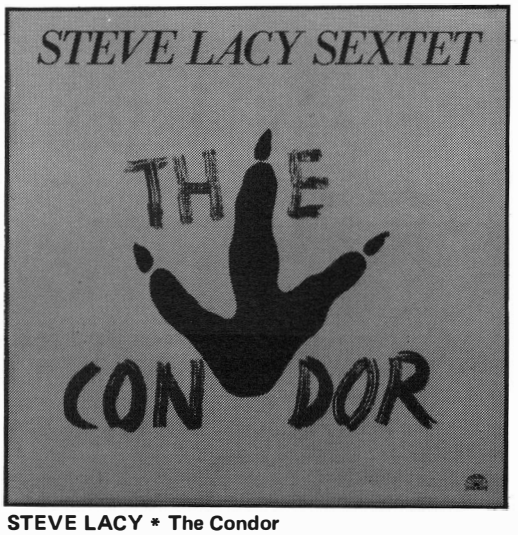

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