

CODA MAGAZINE

THE JOURNAL OF JAZZ AND IMPROVISED MUSIC * ISSUE 223 * DEC '88 / JAN '89 * THREE DOLLARS

JAZZ GOES TO THE MOVIES * CHARLIE PARKER * CHET BAKER * THE NEW MUSIC IN CANADA
MAL WALDRON * MIKE MURLEY * THE COMPLETE COLLECTION * BERLIN DAZE * THE JAZZ LP
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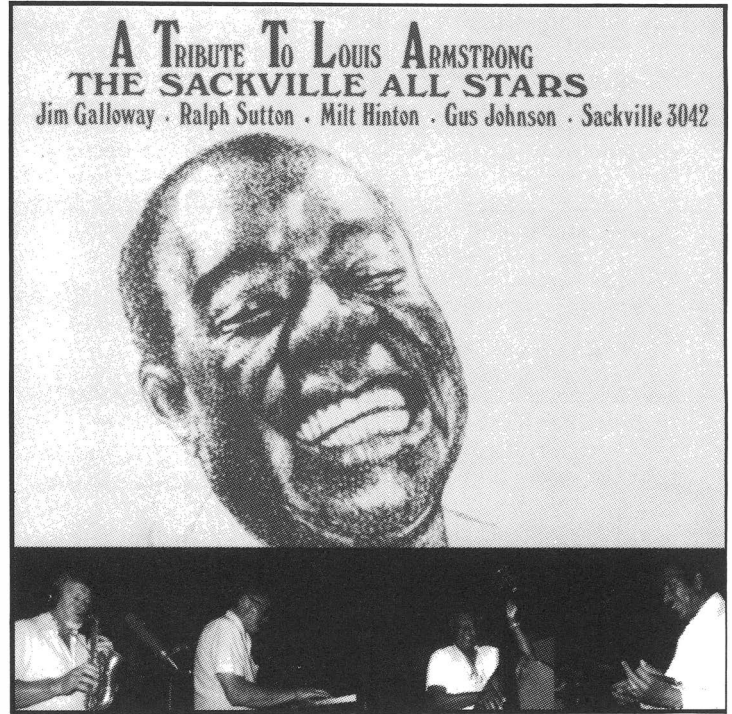
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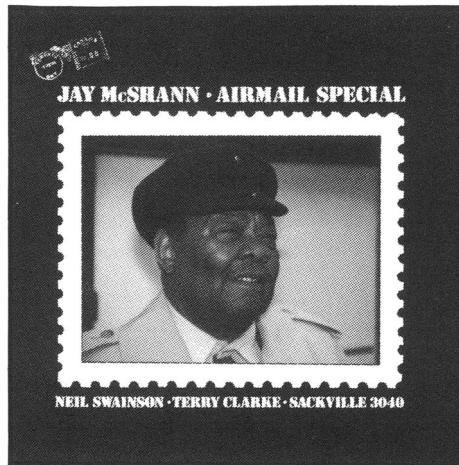
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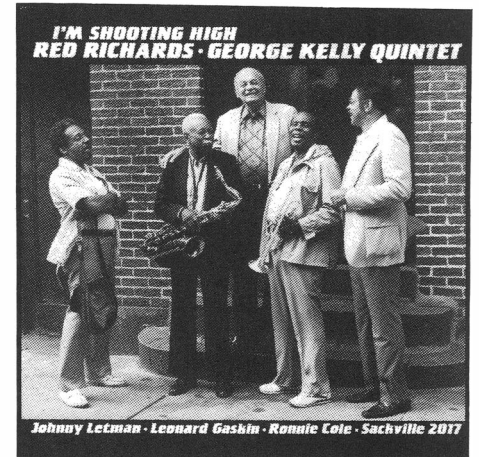
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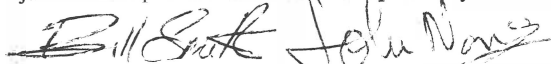
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Bill Smith & John Norris (Publishers)

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JAZZ GOES TO THE MOVIES

LET'S GET LOST

A film directed by Bruce Weber

He looks out at us now, in a bewilderingly large range of still photographs, with his eyes slightly averted from the camera lens, always maintaining a sense of what was cool. In the shots from the fifties he is dressed as a denizen of the Beat Generation, wearing a light t-shirt, black baggy slacks, white socks and suede shoes. At that time, one realizes, he was the epitome of White male hipness. He was Mr Chet Baker, the New Star of '53. One sees him as he was then in the photographic portraits by William Claxton that later appeared on some of his album covers. His face was taut and narcissistic. His hair, full and black, remained slicked back except for a forelock which would hang boyishly on his forehead; his lips were sensual yet oddly thin for a horn player. The physique was trim but muscular, reminding one of a bantam-weight boxer.

The later shots tell a different tale. The self-absorbed eyes now peer out in mute supplication from a visage that has literally caved in from seeing too much of the high life. A closely cropped moustache covers the lips that adolescents had once coveted. Yet the arms embracing the trumpet resonate with the strength of one who still has possession of his art. As a photographic subject, his prideful appearance holds the power to entrap a viewer. Even after the harrowing vagaries of time, these later photos still reveal a great subject for a portrait: Chet Baker, the uncrowned King of the Beat Trumpet.

Was it Chet Baker's stylish appearance that drew Bruce Weber towards him? On the face of it, one can think of fewer artistic couplings as odd as this collaboration between an aging trumpeter and a renowned fashion photographer. What drove Weber to choose Baker as the subject for "Let's Get Lost," his second documentary film? His standard reply is:

"Everyone asks me why I made a film about Chet Baker. Why a film about 'love and fascination' and jazz? It all started many years ago when I first met Nan [Bush, his associate who was the Executive Producer of the film]. Over a bottle of wine during our first dinner together we discovered that our favourite



record was an old Chet Baker album from the 50s called "Let's Get Lost." I ordered two more bottles of wine and we fell in love."

This response is, paradoxically, as open and enigmatic as a concert performance by Chet Baker. One senses that his answer is clear but Weber's lucidity sheds no true light on his motivation for making this film. To find a rationalization for a photographer of Calvin Klein ads to shoot a jazz portrait, one must search into the film itself.

What does one see in "Let's Get Lost"? The first startling element is the colour, or rather the lack of it. Weber has shot the film in black and white, a style which is suited to his photographic predilections but also reflects the boundaries of Baker's musical and personal philosophy. One quickly realizes that Chet Baker is neither loquacious nor personally reflective. Classically an American musician, his loves are the white heat of fast cars, free improvisation and stylish women. His darkness is perceived viscerally by the spectator when one hears accounts of Baker's unfaithfulness to his wives and sees clippings of his busts for heroin possession.

Weber chose a difficult subject in Chet Baker. The man's silences are typical of a generation that put a high price on keep-

ing one's cool. One recollects the anecdote of a jazz aficionado approaching Baker's colleague during the fifties, Gerry Mulligan, at a Thelonious Monk gig. "I love the notes he's playing," the fan gushed to the saxophonist. To which Mulligan responded, "I love the notes he doesn't play." Portraying this sound of one man clapping becomes Weber's formidable task as the film unfolds.

The fashion photographer did not come unprepared for his job. He arranged to shoot Baker for a week in artificially arranged settings. The viewer gets to see Chet driving late at night in a sports car, his singular presence harmonized by the appearance on each side of beautiful women. Weber put Baker on a beach in Southern California, again surrounded by pretty young females and their male counterparts. Chet is given an opportunity in these scenes to improvise and create a persona to reflect on this version of the fast life. Although this simulacrum hardly recreates the reality of Baker's high times, it allows the spectator to ponder on the exploits that the occasionally undocumented trumpet player might have achieved.

Performance films have certain traditions. One must always show the artist, like a sparrow in full cry, dominating the screen with a vivid portrayal of fine work

being done, seemingly effortlessly. The player must be seen in repose, as well, talking about the personal history that has allowed his great moments to occur. Loved ones and knowledgeable foes should be brought on screen to discuss the subject's private flaws and public virtues. Bruce Weber honours these homilies and verities.

In "Let's Get Lost," the spectator is led on by endless snatches of songs and instrumental breaks. One hears Baker in soft romantic cadences imparting a poetic cast to tired Tin Pan Alley tunes. The trumpeter's carefully varied and precisely enunciated solos are often there to be savoured as well. Unfortunately, Weber demonstrates a distressing tendency to cut out some improvised delights in order to allow the inevitable "voice over's" to ruminate about the protagonist's life. Baker's Romantic art remains an essential feature of the film, anyway, and Weber returns to scenes of Baker recording in a studio consistently throughout the work.

Those omnipresent voices of Baker's past begin to appear in full photographic regalia as the picture progresses. Several of the trumpet player's wives and mistresses arrive on the scene to discuss his many peccadilloes and prevarications. One woman talks ruefully, but lovingly, about his latterly unstylish garb. If Baker started his career resembling the young Monty Clift, he ended it looking much like the staunchly Grant Wood-ish grotesques of Richard Avedon's "American West" photographs. An ex-wife denounces Baker's other women as "whores" and "bitches", while looking confidently at Weber's camera-eye, saying, "You won't print this will you?" Another woman recalls that Baker had characterized his wives as "psychotics, or virgins, or frigid." The trumpet player's daughter remembers his then-current mistress's wardrobe. To paraphrase Marlene Dietrich in Orson Welles' "Touch of Evil," Baker's life is "a Mess, Baby."

When Weber attempts to capture Baker in an intimate director-to-subject interview format, he finds the trumpet player politely resistant. Baker had gotten off of his heroin habit for the film and was using methadone as his relaxant during the shoot. Weber felt guilty about manipulating Baker and asked him how he felt about participating in his own cinematic

portrait. "How the hell am I supposed to feel, Bruce?" was Baker's repeated reply, but he quickly moved to reassure the director, and the presumed audience, that he was enjoying himself. Having already heard several of Baker's children affectionately cutting up their father for his irresponsible ways, Weber is able to elicit irony by having the trumpeter state that he has always told his kids to "pick one thing and be the best at it." Good as this advice may be if you are as gifted as Chet Baker, this bit of paternal wisdom is hardly helpful for the musician's pleasant, but normal, offspring.

In documentaries, one always shoots for the revelatory moment. Weber captures several great episodes which occurred in, and around, Baker's checkered life. The director did not bother shooting interviews with Gerry Mulligan or others of Baker's notable jazz cohorts. Instead, he sought out Jack Sheldon, late of the Merv Griffin television program, in order to discover the bawdy aspects of Baker's character. His anecdotes, particularly concerning a sly entry that Baker made into an amatory bout which Sheldon had initiated, are personal yet amusing and ribald. Other tales, from wives and children, reinforce one's sense of Baker as a charming but irresponsible figure.

And yet, there is something oddly false about Chet Baker. His perfunctory air in interviews and self-absorbed image belie the notion of the natural man turned Romantic Outcast. Perhaps it was fitting that his life story up to the late fifties was the basis for "All the Fine Young Cannibals," a Robert Wagner / Natalie Wood melodrama. Baker always seemed a bit studied, a bit Hollywood to be a true jazz musician. Weber scores points with his audience by screening large segments of Baker's appearance in an Italian "dolce vita" styled party film of the early sixties. Rolling out from under a couch, the trumpeter player starts playing a tune, startling a middle-class Italian male in this film-within-a-film. Europeans took to Baker as a jazz celebrity with a fervour never equalled in the States after his first drug bust. Perhaps they saw in him an image of a jazz-man that was studied enough for them to react to and enjoy.

Bruce Weber sees Chet Baker as an icon of Jazz and Beatitude. If there is a

falsity at the base of Baker's style, it can hardly concern the finest fashion photographer of this decade. "Let's Get Lost" celebrates the high life and hard times of an essentially Romantic player. If Weber can never penetrate the core of Baker's persona, perhaps it is because the trumpeter really *was* an enigma, even to himself. To jazz fans, and a discerning film audience, the sad voice and gloriously melancholy horn of the man who played the finest version of *My Funny Valentine* will be allowed to resonate one more time. That is the truest memorial for a trumpeter who blew the saddest popular tunes.

— Marc Glassman

BIRD

A Movie

Directed by Clint Eastwood

For more than a decade Hollywood has been promising us a film about Charlie Parker. His life had all the essential ingredients for the kind of sensationalism germane to the film industry while his legendary status in the jazz world equalled that of larger than life characters in other walks of life.

"Bird", however, is far from sensational in its viewpoint. Instead it is a sensitive portrait of an artist whose life has gone out of control and his headlong descent into his own personal hell.

We do not get the full story of Charlie Parker, the fabulous jazz musician, who came out of the mid-west with Jay McShann's band and turned the jazz world upside down with the brilliance of his playing and advanced musical concepts. Instead we have the personal story of his relationship with his wife Chan within the framework of his career over the period since their first meeting in 1945 on 52nd Street. There is no portrayal of any other of Parker's relationships, including Doris Sydnor whose period as Parker's wife interlocks with his association with Chan. His musical associations with Earl Hines, Billy Eckstine and Miles Davis are also ignored.

"Bird" is told in as complex a way as the musician conceived his own solos. There are flashbacks within flashbacks and some knowledge of Parker's career and jazz itself will make some of his actions clearer to the audience. But the

storyline is an engrossing portrait of an artist struggling with his own demons as well as those imposed upon him by society.

“**Bird**” is set in “dark” tones. The scenes are either at night, in a curtain-drawn apartment or a smoky nightclub. It rains incessantly and the only time the sun shines brightly is when Parker plays a Jewish wedding and at the funeral of his daughter. Not even his meeting with Chan in a park following his return from California is blessed with sunlight. Raincoats and puddles remind us that the rain has only recently stopped.

Despite his excesses Parker is portrayed as a warm and loving person who has accepted the grim reality of his addiction as something he lives with rather than something he enjoys. He cares for his children, has affection for his wife and there’s almost a boyish streak to his humour.

“**Bird**” is an important movie for the way in which it integrates the music into the personal day to day experiences of Parker rather than being a simplistic document of a musician’s career. Music is not only the central force of Parker’s life it is the only way in which he can make a living. His frustrations at not being able to do this in a manner commensurate with his skills is a underlying theme in the film.

While in Hollywood he drives past Stravinsky’s house, stops and rings the bell. He knows, deep down that he will never have such a house but he also knows that his musical gifts should entitled him to such a reward. Parker’s long suffering manager surfaces periodically throughout the film. As Parker’s erratic behavior deepens the job offers are fewer and financially less attractive. But Parker has to take them to survive.

The daily hassle of life as a junkie is there but it is implied rather than graphically illustrated. Musicians were among the people hounded by the FBI during this period and their zealotry for a bust often led to them planting dope on unsuspecting victims, blackmailing users into giving away their connections and continually harassing the victims. Parker’s mental collapse in California can be directly attributed to police heat and the subsequent shortage of heroin. Users, at that time, were

viewed as criminals so treatment was only possible if you were rich and white.

The warmth and camaraderie of the jazz community is well captured — as well as its competitive pressure for excellence. Best of all, though, is the well drawn relationship between Parker and the young Red Rodney. The banter and humour, so much a part of a musician’s social life, is set against the irony of a white trumpeter working for a black saxophonist. The sequence where they tour the south has some of the film’s warmest moments while the Jewish wedding is hilarious in its outrageousness. It also has the film’s best line. “These boys may not be Jewish but they play good”.

“**Bird**”, like “**Round Midnight**”, will provoke endless discussions. Both depict musicians in decline who ultimately fail to beat the demons which bedevil them. In their different ways both films capture the incredible warmth and boundless generosity of the jazz musician. These men, deprived of any possibility of leading what society regards as a normal life, gave bounteously of their talent and energy before society assassinated them as its way of saying thank you. While “**Round Midnight**” touches you with its romanticism “**Bird**” will chill you with the intensity of its destructive course.

The music in “**Bird**” is portrayed by the actors rather than in “**Round Midnight**” where musicians play the music as actors. It gives the music a different feel but Forrest Whitaker convinces us that he is playing the saxophone. Of course, we know that isn’t true. Modern technology managed to isolate Parker’s playing and the soundtrack is built around him and newly recorded accompanists. Long-time Parker enthusiasts will feel as betrayed as those movie buffs who recoil from colorisation. But the dynamic energy of the newly recorded parts seem in keeping with the spirit of the film as well as matching Parker’s own playing.

It has always seemed to me that Parker’s playing completely overpowered his accompanists on the old recordings. Except for Dizzy Gillespie and Bud Powell, the musicians were always struggling to keep pace with him. Then, too, the recording techniques of the day favored the horns, thus accentuating the

weaknesses of the rhythm sections. Certainly within the context of the film the music sounds fresh and exciting. It is also important to realise that the music flows naturally within the developing contours of the film rather than being a musical pause.

Above all, though, “**Bird**” is a successful dramatization of a highly volatile individual who happened to be one of the greatest musicians of this century. And like so many gifted artists, his stature grows with each decade — long after he laid down his horn for the last time. Bird Lives! — *John Norris*

BIRD IS A TURKEY! by Kalamu ya Salaam

This Clint Eastwood dredging of the life of Charlie Parker which both film and music critics have been hailing as a masterpiece is the year’s biggest turkey. “**Bird**” the movie is about drugs and interracial relationships, not about jazz.

After sitting for over two hours and watching a movie which is touted as a sensitive portrayal of one of the greatest jazz musicians who ever lived, you exit without even the foggiest notion of what made Charlie Parker’s music important. There is literally no discussion of bebop’s place in jazz as a whole, nor the innovations of Parker within the world of bebop.

Because of all the hype, millions of people are going to see this movie and leave thinking they have received some insight into the life of a great jazz musician. But it is not Charlie Parker the drug addict we celebrate. Charlie Parker is a musical hero.

“**Bird**,” the movie, is a criminal, albeit adroit, manipulation of bebop and the musicians who created this important music. The sophistication of “**Bird**” is that it manages to remove Blacks from the core of the music and deny the serious social thrust of this artform while at the same time making most of the audience believe that they are viewing an insightful presentation on the life of a jazz legend.

The film raises many disturbing questions. How is it that in a feature length film on a jazz great nearly as many classical musicians are actually called by name as are jazz musicians? In fact, except for Dizzy, no major Black bebopper is both shown and named. No Bud

Powell or Thelonious Monk, no Kenny “Klook” Clarke or Max Roach. Not one.

In a long sequence concerning an auto tour of the south, Bird never calls any of the Black musicians in the band by name. All the Black musicians who created bebop along with Bird, again except for Dizzy, are relegated to the status of nameless “niggers in the band.”

No matter how closely you listen, you won’t hear about Klook and Max, the two drummers responsible for the bebop innovation in drumming, but Gene Krupa, a swing drummer, gets mentioned a number of times. Swing trumpeter Harry James’ name is dropped as if he were a major mover and shaker. This is a criminal emasculation of a musical movement part of whose purpose was to achieve respect for Black jazz musicians as artists.

Second, we see a lot of white women, but where are the Black women? In the whole movie there are only two minor speaking parts by Black women. One is a singer, shown in flashback as Bird recalls her giving him the evil eye and telling him

to stop playing that crazy shit while she’s singing. The other, whose voice we hear but whom we never see, is Dizzy’s wife, Lorraine. She too is telling Bird to stop playing because it’s too early in the morning. Are we to believe Black women only told Black male musicians to shut up and stop making music?

If you’re telling the true story, Black women can’t be cut out of the picture completely except for two brief and disastrous cameos as sapphirish sirens who are trying to censor the music. If nothing else, Eastwood could have shown Bird’s mother giving Bird his first horn. But, no, Black women don’t exist in this movie.

So Black musical geniuses are rendered nameless and Black women rendered invisible. Is this really the Charlie Parker story or what some white male would have us believe is the Charlie Parker story?

Eastwood obviously wanted to do a portrait of Charlie Parker the man rather than Charlie Parker the musician. My point is that Charlie Parker the musician

was the best part of Charlie Parker the man.

Though we hear Bird speak with intelligence and insight, we are given no evidence that he was a brilliant thinker. The man read books, studied music. We aren’t shown this. He’s shown reading liquor labels and studying white women. Makes you think jazz musicians are not serious musicians who study their craft.

There have been literally hundreds of thousands of drug addicts but there has been only one Bird the musician. Interracial relationships, both overt and covert, have been going on since day one in the Americas. So why not focus on that which is unique about Charlie Parker and the contribution he made to jazz, America’s congressionally declared “national treasure”?

Clint Eastwood makes the same mistake that a lot of musicians who wanted to play like Bird did. Many of those musicians imitated Bird’s lifestyle in a vain attempt to achieve his musical excellence. Eastwood projects and sensationalizes Bird’s lifestyle in an attempt to shed light on Bird’s musical genius.

“Bird” the movie subtly projects the common myth that arts and athletics are just natural to Black people. Therefore, we never see Bird or any other musician really working at making their music. No shedding, no rehearsing, no discussions, no studying theory. Are we really to believe that bop, like Topsy, just grew?

The truth is musicians like Bird and Dizzy, Monk and Bud Powell, Kenny Clarke, Max Roach and all the others, those musicians worked and worked hard at developing themselves and their music. They studied, they practiced, they played and sacrificed to continue making their music despite numerous obstacles. Their work deserves to be recognized as the result of human achievement.

We are not some mythical “noble savages” who can’t help making thrilling music and who, at the same time, also can’t help making a mess of our lives. I think this movie has been highly praised precisely because it perpetuates the stereotype of the “immature, irresponsible, childlike, Black male, musical genius.”

Most writers who have been praising this movie saw a different movie from the one I saw. They saw what they have been taught by this society to expect Black



men to be. I saw a stereotypically racist portrait of Black frailties and failure, and a business-as-usual ignoring of Black achievement.

Except for an important scene between Dizzy and Bird on the beach when Dizzy helps Bird to the social significance of taking care of business and keeping yourself together, except for that one moment, I would swear this was an advertisement for a white supremacist view of the jazz musician as an emotionally immature, intelligent albeit ultimately pathetic, junkie and alcoholic who spends the majority of his waking hours abusing himself.

Forrest Whitaker won a Cannes award for best actor for his lurching and lumbering stumble from scene to scene seeking a fix and emotional refuge. He did an excellent job portraying a junkie. But we're talking Bird here, and there was not one scene that communicated Bird's love for music. Nothing showed us why, given the mess his life was, he persisted as long as he did in playing music.

As for the cinematic technique, what was the purpose of numerous scenes of Bird wandering aimlessly in the night rain crying as though he were seeking a ritual absolution of his sins, a cleansing of his seemingly self-damned soul?

Outside of brief moments with Chan, the only time Bird is shown really happy in the daylight is when he is playing at an outdoor Jewish wedding, a gig secured by soon-to-be-hired white trumpeter Red Rodney, who is falsely presented as a major character in Bird's life. Why the elevation of Red Rodney to a major character?

With the introduction of Rodney, the movie turns into a charming, interracial buddy movie, complete with comic racial references, a la "I Spy," and Maurice Hines / Billy Crystal: Bird plays the Jewish wedding, Red gets to sing the blues.

In casting Rodney as the good buddy, Dizzy is subtly presented as the bad buddy. None of Bird's encounters with Dizzy are shown as happy times. We are never shown them playing ensemble parts together even when they are on the same stage. Moreover, the dramatic encounters between Dizzy and Bird are all emotional downers which concentrate on some rift between Dizzy and Bird. In fact, when they have dialogue, one of them is always

shown leaving the other.

Eastwood presents Bird as a Black genius who is emotionally helpless on his own, alienated from his Black musical peers, and most happy and at peace when hooked up with his wife, Chan, or his road buddy, Red. The subtext of this movie is all about Black desires to escape Blackness and embrace whiteness. I'm sure Eastwood and others will argue against that interpretation, but if one dispassionately analyzes the images put on the screen, the conclusion is inescapable.

On a more cerebral note, Eastwood overuses the metaphor of the cymbal tossed at Bird's feet by a drummer who gonged Bird off the stand when a young and upcoming Bird forgot the changes and got lost musically. Does Eastwood really think the musically mature Bird was traumatized by feelings of musical inadequacy and plagued with these emotions throughout his life?

Perhaps my biggest reservation about this movie is the music. Offering the lame but frequently cited "technical considerations" rationale, Eastwood ordered Bird's solos kept intact but all accompanying music erased. Contemporary musicians were then hired to play along with Bird and produce movie quality music. In a word, this is bullshit.

All of jazz, from traditional to avant garde, and especially bebop, is an interactive music — a music which is composed as it is performed. This spontaneous composing, or improvising, was a give and take that is lost when you try to make posthumous music.

Moreover, as heretical as it may sound to the legion of Bird's admirers, "bebop" was not the sole creation of Bird. Although Bird was clearly the pre-eminent soloist, he was not the only major innovator nor the only great soloist of bop. This musical deification of Bird and damning of his co-creators is antithetical to the communal spirit that is at the core of jazz.

It's almost like the spirit of Stalin lives somewhere in one of the deep inner recesses of Eastwood's brain and encourages him to wipe out any references to Bird's bebop peers. Stalin airbrushed people out of historic photographs, but Eastwood, with all kinds of new technology in hand, goes Stalin one better. Eastwood not only visually removes the

musicians from the movie, he also aurally takes away their musical contributions.

Whereas millions of people could have heard Bird with trumpeters Dizzy Gillespie, Miles Davis or Fats Navarro, backed by pianists such as Bud Powell, Al Haig or Duke Jordan; bassists such as Tommy Potter or Charlie Mingus; and drummers such as Max Roach, Kenny Clarke or Art Blakey, instead what we get is Bird backed by contemporary musicians, almost all of whom never played with Bird when Bird was alive.

Except for King Pleasure's wonderful vocalese (lyrics fitted to a famous jazz solo) on *Parker's Mood* backed by pianist John Lewis, bassist Percy Heath and drummer Kenny Clarke (the original rhythm section for the Modern Jazz Quartet), what you hear on the movie soundtrack is not classic bebop.

The sound quality excuse is an outrageous big lie which no genuine jazz fan ought to accept. If some of the very first jazz classics from the twenties, such as early recordings by Louis Armstrong and Jelly Roll Morton, which were recorded on wax, can be cleaned up using existent digital technology, imagine what could have been done with existing masters from only thirty years ago. Quality was not the question; Eastwood had a different agenda at work.

The truth is, even though Bird's solos were kept, the overall music sounds lackluster compared to the original music. Anyone interested in doing their own comparison can buy the soundtrack and compare it with hundreds of Charlie Parker albums currently available — not to mention comparing it with Parker's great recordings, some of which, such as the *Ko-Ko* masterpiece, are available on Warner Brothers records (like in the same company which released this film).

This is not "The Jazz" movie which most of us had hoped for and which many critics claim that it is. This is not the story of Charlie Parker. This is a racist caricature of a genius and a left-handed putdown of bebop. "Bird," the movie, does nothing to advance jazz — the music where Bird the man left a lasting mark.

Kalamu ya Salaam is a New Orleans writer and producer of a three-volume anthology of contemporary New Orleans jazz available on Rounder Records.

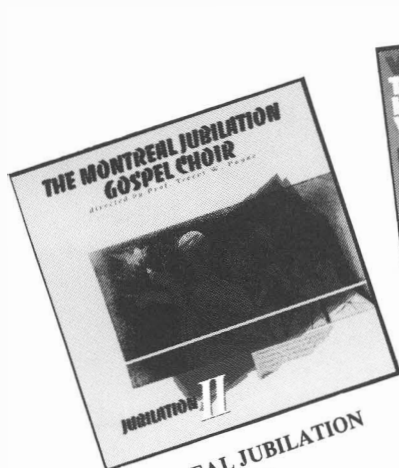
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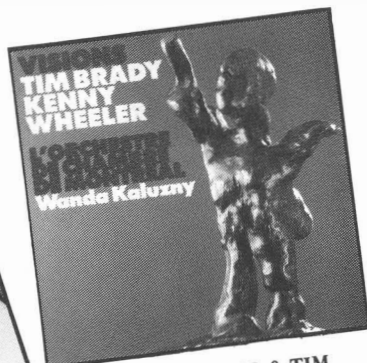
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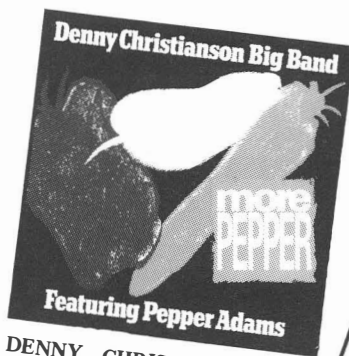
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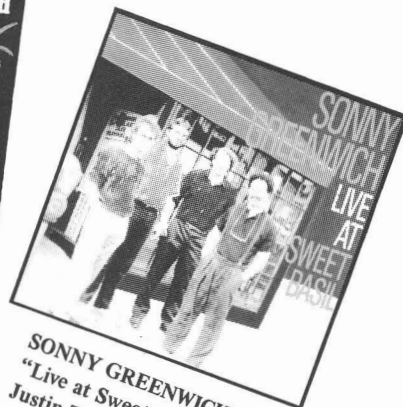
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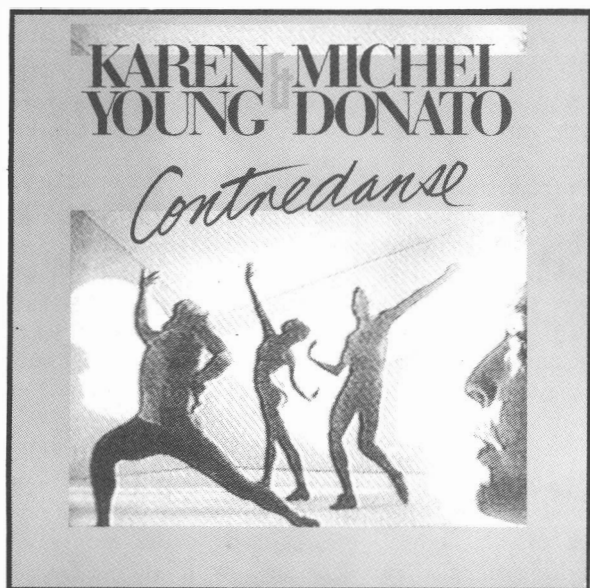


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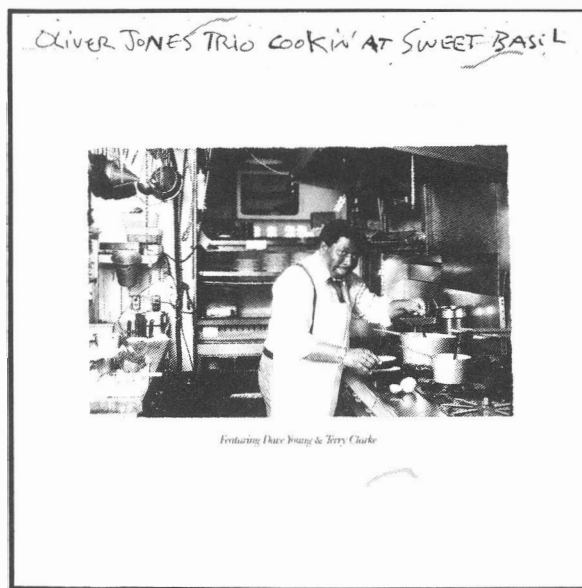


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THE NEW MUSIC IN CANADA



BOBBY WISEMAN/JOHN OSWALD
EVAN PARKER
Clinton's, Toronto
October 2, 1988

SAXOPHONE COLOSSUS: Evan Parker,
Wolfgang Fuchs and Bill Smith
Music Gallery, Toronto
October 4, 1988

October began with the much-anticipated arrival of English saxophonist Evan Parker for a rare solo performance, at the downtown venue, Clinton's. This concert was part of a tour that was undertaken by Parker in the company of the German multiwind performer Wolfgang Fuchs and Canadian music artist Bill Smith. The music Parker performed in his solo set drew in part from the fiery improvisational materials he explored in collaboration with guitarist Derek Bailey and others of the Incus/Company musicians collective. Parker's music appears to have broadened and deepened over the years as he further adapts his voice (on soprano and tenor saxophone) to allow a greater accessibility for the listener yet maintain the rigorous high-wire activities for which he is known. This same adventurous sense compels him to set himself challenges on the order of the solo woodwind concert, itself a discipline requiring a clearly thought-out system

of investigation and expression. Parker's set was prefaced in this concert by a duo performance of improvisation (or instant composition) by pianist Bobby Wiseman and altoist John Oswald, whose music was, by turns, frenzied, soothing, and mechanical, as in steam-driven. Wiseman explored a variety of conventional piano techniques while still treating the piano from a 20th century perspective (all surfaces are playable, inside and out). These possibilities were taken up by Oswald, tossed around with a casual determination and then discarded. Certainly a format worth repeating, their duo set contained many moments of vividly colorful playing. Though their music was non-derivative, Wiseman underscored the debt that he and Oswald felt toward Parker for his pioneering measures in pursuing this music, commenting before they began their set that Parker's work had changed many musicians' way of thinking, and they wished to express gratitude for it.

After a brief interval, Evan Parker began his performance for the almost sold-out house, a surprising thing given the lack of radio exposure for this music. Still a relatively unknown artist in North America, Parker seems to be gaining ground with university and small community-based radio programmers warming to his music's unique sweeping line

and incremental timbral effects. It is a music that requires repeated listening and reaching on the part of the listener to actively hear the multiphonic line that Parker superimposes in his patterns.

Parker's first selection in his set of four pieces, two each on soprano and tenor, was a tenor saxophone recital that referred to the blues in a distant third person form, the reedman picking at the tenor's upper register that recalled Don Byas' full-throated tone. Moving away from the tenor, Parker plunged into one of the series of compositions that center upon his still remarkable multiphonic approach to the soprano saxophone. Captured on a number of small-label recordings, this approach yields a markedly different response over time as Parker's lines take on greater resolution with each successive project. Consider the differences between the Incus release, "Monoceros" and the Metalanguage "Live at the Finger Palace". This is a music of science and emotion that is alive with possibility for the listener, a hypnotic proposal of sound language. With the second round on each instrument, the pattern of Parker's overall logic for solo performance became clear, seeming to travel on an arcing motion, beginning with the invitingly gruff full voice of the tenor to lead the listener to the highly-figured orna-

REVIEWS FROM TORONTO AND VICTORIAVILLE

ment of the soprano. Returning to the tenor, Parker maintained the multiphonic aspects, altering the pace to cycle into a ferocious display of dexterity that in turn was opened up rhythmically to develop silences, staggering the flow of the music to reshuffle its time values. The final piece on soprano completed the arc of the performance with a psalm-like long-toned resolution that was very satisfying to the capacity audience.

Parker's solid performance at Clinton's presaged the intensity of the trio concert held October 4 at Music Gallery. Joining Parker in this unique international trio of improviser/composers was Wolfgang Fuchs on bass clarinet and soprano, and Bill Smith on soprano, making this concert (a few days prior to the trio's participation in Victoriaville's Festival Musique Actuelle) a rare event and an opportunity to witness three improvisors whose methods reveal a shared intent developed in an individual way. The trio opened the evening performing together a piece entitled *Palindrome*, a composition whose name derives from the word, verse, or sentence that reads the same backwards or forwards. Incorporating fast moving interaction between the players (Fuchs on bass clarinet, Smith on soprano, Parker on tenor), the tone of the proceedings was set with all three artists advancing clusters of notes that bounced and rebounded with an eye toward maximum contrast of timbre and color. The exchange of energetic solos and ensemble sections between the three was fascinating to watch and listen to; the complexity of question/answer dialogue became so involved/evolved that the listener could have been persuaded that the musicians were able to hear in advance the rise and fall of their conversation. The unexpected was highlighted in the duet that followed featuring Smith and Fuchs, two very different players each on soprano saxophone. Their duet was marked by a biting intensity that seemed at odds with their outward affability, gracefully swinging back and forth while howling at the tops of their horns. A perplexing blend of sound that untangled and spread out like a spider's web, inviting with a frightening intent. Following their duet, Evan Parker performed a soprano solo piece. Again Parker's distinctive use of overtones, circular breathing,

and his knowledge of the soprano's ability to leap octaves made an unmistakable impression on the audience. This aspect of Parker's work is one that requires much of the listener but is ultimately an area where some of the strongest, most emotionally affecting work of the freely improvised music is being accomplished. Not for the faint-hearted, this music gives the listener the auditory impression of standing directly above a furiously flowing river, as details present themselves only to vanish an instant later.

In the program's second half, Wolfgang Fuchs and Bill Smith also performed solo pieces, with the soprano's secrets being viewed from a variety of angles. While Smith's piece, *Rickety Steps*, was a chirping song sounding tones that strongly suggested the children's play it was conceived for (dedicated in this performance to Smith's late friend and collaborator, the poet bpNichol), Fuch's solo was its opposite number, a squalling quarrelsome tune that was provocative in its arresting presentation. Fuch's work on both horns that evening was riveting, a masterful improviser's sensibility underlying his formidable technique. Many thanks to the Goethe Institute for their support of this vital music. A second duet, this time featuring Smith and Parker, showcased the composition *Bristol Boys*, dedicated to the performers' shared birthplace. Soprano and soprano cascaded, weaving in and out, creating a dizzying effect. The empathy between Smith and Parker was complete, with lines arching above our heads so as to suggest holography. The work as well investigated further the circular patterns that are a distinguishing feature of Parker's solo saxophone vocabulary. The concert concluded with *Palindrome #2*, an ambiguous manifesto for trio spun out at lightning speed. Spiky turns of phrase, overtone blending, and numerous tableau-like moments of stillness created a soundscape of unusual beauty, a truly artful collaboration. The listener who is intrigued by this music should go out of their way to catch this trio's Victoriaville concert when it is broadcast on CBC this winter, and to look for recordings by these saxophonists on Incus, Sackville, and FMP, particularly Wolfgang Fuchs' solo debut "So - und? So!" available on Uhlklang disc UK-7.

— Stephen Vickery

FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL DE MUSIQUE ACTUELLE DE VICTORIAVILLE October 6 - 10, 1988

From the local happening it once was six years ago, the Festival international de musique actuelle de Victoriaville (or FIMAV for short), has finally confirmed its reputation as a world class New Music event. Not only is that visible in the programme, but also in the increasing numbers of journalists and media people covering the event.

Even if success is knocking at their doors, the organizers have been careful not to let it get too big or too slick. A tip of the hat must go to the person in charge, Michel Levasseur, for keeping it to a manageable size. In contrast to his careful administrative policy, Levasseur is surely one of the most open-minded people with regards to the music. What other festival would have invited musicians of such divergent interests as Robert Ashley and Terry Riley on the one hand, and Evan Parker or Leo Smith on the other? Between minimalism and free improvisation, there is indeed a wide spectrum of styles to be heard within the realm of new music, and that is where the FIMAV best serves its purpose, namely, as an open musical forum for tomorrow's music today.

As for this year's edition, there was somewhat of a stronger emphasis given to written music and compositional forms. Of course, this tendency characterizes most music in the "contemporary" idiom, but this was also the case for many concerts featuring some of today's better known improvisers. Two names which come to mind here are **Anthony Braxton** and **Maarten Altena**.

Two years ago, Mr Braxton made his festival debut in an impromptu duet performance with British guitarist Derek Bailey (as captured on the release "Un moment précieux" on the Victo label). This time around, however, he was fronting an ensemble consisting of **Evan Parker**, **Bobby Naughton**, **Joelle Leandre**, **Gerry Hemingway**, **Paul Smoker** and **George Lewis**. As an organic work, hastily assembled out of the leader's annotated reams of sheet music and sundry compositions, the suite nevertheless lacked an overall focus or unifying factor in its

development. In short, the sum did not come up to the level of its parts.

On the previous night, bassist Maarten Altena's octet performed a set of well-rehearsed and intricately conceived pieces, most of which have appeared on their new release "Rif". In spite of that, the band did not seem at ease on stage as they interpreted the material without really extemporizing on it. And when they attempted to stretch out, they seemed unable to make some sparks fly. However, it must be said that a lot of the dynamic subtleties inherent to the music did not carry that well in Le Grand Cafe, which basically is the town's community hall, a venue not at all designed for concerts of a more acoustic ilk.

As the opening act in that double bill, the **Belgische Pianokwartet** consisted of four musicians playing two pianos in different combinations. Joining the regular members **Fred van Hove**, **Christian Leroy** and **Walter Hus**, was **Marilyn Crispell**, who most ably stepped in at the last minute for an ailing Eddy Loosen, who had to remain home in Brussels. Together, they played a well-balanced set of written pieces and free formed improvisations. A satisfying performance interspersed with many playful exchanges.

More traditional in its style was the quartet of **Louis Sclavis**, which was the headliner of the first evening. Combining gallic undertones with electronic overtones is their forte and in so doing they achieve a synthesis which, without being totally commercial, is more readily accessible. Clearly, Sclavis is an impressive technician on bass clarinet and all of his solos were proof of that too. Behind him, his three young accompanists were up to the task, providing a tight backdrop, though cluttered at times through the use of electronic keyboards.

Even though much composed music was heard throughout the festival, there was still a good deal of improvisation taking place in the majority of shows. In that respect, two concerts stood out as the most open-ended performances, the first being the trio of **Wolfgang Fuchs**, **Evan Parker** and **Bill Smith**, the other being the three-way encounter between **Fred van Hove**, **Sabu Toyozumi** and **Leo Smith**.

While the first group divided up its programme into distinct parts, the latter

played a non-stop set. In both cases, though, they played in different combinations, be they solo, duo or trio. As for the reedmen, they chose to play in a set sequence, namely, a trio, a duo, three separate solos, another duo and a trio in closing, a musical palindrome of sorts. As the case is for that musical style, there were both hits and misses. Parker going round and round with his non-stop sound layers on soprano. Fuchs spinning out jagged and diffuse ideas on bass clarinet and Smith telling a well-crafted musical story based on what he called "an imaginative structure."

In the latter unit, the Japanese drummer seemed at odds with his partners in that he was eager to play in time, while his partners were trying to avoid that at all costs. For all of its spontaneity, this meeting was like another installment of the "sound in time" approach: fleeting in its development but offering few lasting impressions afterwards.

Achieving clarity in openly improvised forms is a difficult task, but experience has shown that very small groups, like trios and duos, yield the best results. Just an hour after the van Hove trio had finished their set at the Cafe, the sax/guitar combo of **Jean Derome** and **Rene Lussier** recounted their trademark parodies, most of which mockingly disparage the weak spots of the "quebecois persona". As an avant-garde form of musical comedy, their style appeals best to a local audience, though it elicited a few chuckles from the non-francophones in attendance.

On the other end of the scale, the duets of **Marion Brown** and **Mal Waldron**, as well as of **Aki Takase** and **Maria Joao** were totally untheatrical in their form and content. True to the high standard set in their initial release ("Songs of Love and Regret", Freelance Records), the Brown-Waldron team offered the most introspective of statements. For close to eighty minutes both musicians immersed themselves in an intense conversation, achieving a mature balance between emotion and intellect. Benefitting from the splendid acoustics of the Ste-Victoire church, the pianist and the saxophonist played as though they were making their musical devotions. Be it beautiful in its austerity or austere in its beauty, the music heard on that evening proved once and for all that being emotional need not

be the same as being loud, a common fallacy nowadays.

As for the other duo, the Japanese pianist and the Portuguese singer turned out to be the "discovery" of the festival. As much as the latter impressed by her very good range, an undeniable jazz feel (reminiscent of Sheila Jordan) and an interesting variety of vocal techniques, the former displayed steel-edged fingers behind her keyboard. In fact, she demonstrated flawless command of a vocabulary which ranges from right within the jazz piano tradition (Tristano and Powell being the reference points here) right out to the outer limits patrolled by Cecil Taylor. Not to be overlooked either was their well-constructed programme which prevented them from getting caught up in one bag. By and large, their work dares to be accessible and accedes to be daring all at the same time.

Interestingly enough, only two solo concerts were presented, both of them by women. Harpist **Anne Le Baron** toyed around with her strings, either amplifying them electronically or bowing them with various objects. Whatever the musical category she ascribes to, her music is probing, yet restrained in its emotional content. By contrast, French bassist **Joelle Leandre** injected a few notes of humour into her outing, which included a stark recitation piece by John Cage and a couple of amusing skits, one of them dealing with the frustrations encountered when travelling with a bass.

Last, but surely not least, the latest and "baddest" out of New York's Downtown scene. At the cutting edge of today's new music one finds a group of heavy-handed whizzes, busily soaking up every musical style around them. Spearheading that movement is the omnivorous eclectic himself, **John Zorn** who, with his frequent associates **Wayne Horvitz** and **Bill Frisell**, are clearly moving onto center stage. And so they did at the festival, both together and in separate shows. First off, John Zorn opened one of the 9 p.m. double-bills with a torrential duet confrontation with guitarist **Fred Frith**. True to his reputation, he twisted funky blues licks around assorted squeals and burps, keeping almost everyone off balance. Cathartic motion indeed.

Horvitz, for his part, wound up play-

ing with trombonist and live-electronics man **J.R. Deane**. An impressive soundscape bounced off the inner sanctum of the Church, but on sheer sound does not one make music alone. As for Frisell, he was to lead his own band on the last evening, but an early return to Montreal with friends hastened his departure. And with Waldron and Brown, there could not have been another ending on a winning note...

As for their joining of "forces," so to speak, these three headliners were the principal players in "Naked City," the main act for the "rock" evening concert. With Fred Frith (on bass this time) and **Joey Baron** in tow, the band blustered their way through heavy-metal free-for-alls as well as churning out some movie music and a funky blues, courtesy of Big John Patton. As much as John Zorn is trying to put everything but the kitchen sink into his music (and why not that too!), the question remains as to whether his style is just an aggregate of existing genres or whether it is (or will be) more than that. Time will tell... maybe.

More eruptions were heard in the first half as the German-French trio **Gestalt and Jive** thumped through their set. If bassist **Ferdinand Richard** and drummer **Peter Hollinger's** insistent rhythms were the "Gestalt" part of it, then **Alfred "23" Harth's** was clearly busy at "Jiving" his way through his free solos on alto and tenor sax. After awhile, the loudness of it all becomes stilted and rather limited in its scope.

Overall, this year's FIMAV maintained its eclectic course. Because of the festival's emphasis on "newness", one cannot always expect significant musical developments, let alone breakthroughs, in every performance. However, the organizers have not ignored the inputs of those whose music express more familiar values, and in combining this perspective with that of the more radical thinkers, then one has a well-dosed programme. Moreover, the scheduling of the events is excellent, and one does not have to contend with the hustle and bustle of overlapping shows. Finally, many thanks to all of the people in charge who are always willing to accomodate their guests, musicians, journalists and public alike. And for that alone, it is worth a mark on your cultural calendar for next year.

— Marc Chénard

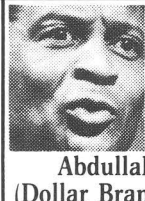
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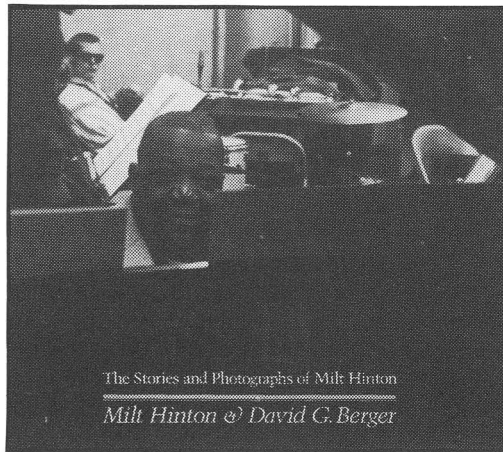
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When he enters the stage of Toronto's busy downtown Bam Boo Club, the spotlights key on the tall elegantly attired man. The hip and trendily dressed crowd murmurs in anticipation as he strides with careful purpose towards his object of desire, the piano. Settling down, his long fingers strike a series of chords creating a lyrical, impressionistic effect. The pianist shifts subtly forward, *towards* the keyboard, as if to coax the instrument into a greater melodic response. His right hand begins to manoeuvre up the keys, sketching alternatives to the melody that has already been established in the audience's ears. The left hand keeps up the rhythms and harmonies while suggesting that still other configurations are always possible. The crowd, rapt in attention, listens to the beautiful interior dialogue that is being composed before their very eyes — and ears. They know that they are listening to one of the finest contemporary players in the jazz world. They are listening to Mal Waldron.

After the concert, with the applause of the receptive audience still resounding through the club, Waldron meets his smaller audience of aficionados. Musicians, fans, acquaintances and reporters are all treated by the pianist with deference and respect. He *listens* to people — a rare quality — and responds to what they want to know about him. The names of his mentors and fellow players fly out as they inevitably do wherever Waldron travels. Charles Mingus, Eric Dolphy, Booker Little, Steve Lacy, are the names on everyone's lips, as is that most immortal of all, "Lady Day".

Mal Waldron talks to the acolytes who surround him with an affability that is instructive to behold. The conversations go well into the night as the Bam Boo's long bar closes down and the club's staff begin to take their departures onto the city streets. Inevitably, it is time to go. Mal, a friend and I make our way out to Queen Street, which is uncharacteristically quiet on a weekend night. The street has been lightly dusted by snow, and as the flakes slowly fall, illuminated by the lampposts outside the club, we recall urban landscapes in other wintry locales — New York, Paris, Munich. We hail a cab and, as we depart, it is agreed that my interview with Mal will take place the following day after his recording session

has been completed.

The next evening, a few of us are privileged to hear a marvelous solo piano concert. Mal is in fine form playing a host of his compositions and those of certain of his favourites, including Thelonious Monk. Spurred on by producer Bill Smith and the congenial environment created at the sound studio by the presence of friends and supportive technicians, Waldron improvises sparkling solos brimming with exciting compositional ideas and explorations.

After the session, Mal and I sit down for an interview. I ask him about Billie Holiday, the great "Lady Day", whom he accompanied for the last two years of her life. He and I know that the question is redundant. Mal has been asked about Billie Holiday thousands of times. Was there something different for him to share with me, and the public? How was she as a cook, for example? "She was a fantastic cook," he replied. "She would make collard greens, black-eyed peas and everything." How did she relate to him as a person? Did she act like a star? "She was so relaxed that pretty quickly you forgot that she was a star. There was [between us] a sense of family... She was the godmother for my first daughter."

While playing with Billie Holiday, Mal Waldron had his first taste of European life. The experience obviously excited him because in 1966 he decided to move to Germany. American jazz musicians have left their homeland since the 1930s to pursue a new life on the Continent. Mal Waldron is a representative example of a movement that began with Coleman Hawkins, Bill Coleman and Sidney Bechet. Why did he decide to leave the U.S. and make Europe his home base?

"The real reason I left the United States [was that] I had the chance to go on tour with Billie Holiday in 1958 and at that time in the U.S., NYC where I was living was in a rat race, cut throat competition and all that. People would do anything to get a job and there were ten thousand musicians in New York and about seven, maybe ten clubs but only about five musicians working each club. There were long lines waiting just to get into the clubs to play. Also the colour problems in the United States were such that coloured musicians were considered



to be junkies and were treated that way by the police. Musicians were considered to be the lowest man on the totem pole. If a girl said she was going to marry a jazz musician, her father would say, 'Are you out of your mind, do you want to marry a bum?'

"Then I went to Europe and I got the other side of the coin. There the black musician was considered ahead of the other musicians, because he was black and the music was respected there, and given a status that wasn't given in America. So after forty years of experiencing one side of the coin, I decided to give the other side forty years.

"A good set is forty minutes on, forty off, so really," he concluded, "it was like that."

Describing Billie and his reasons for leaving the States had put Mal in a jocular mood. In telling anecdotes after that, he would often indulge in a deep baritone laugh that lit up his face and suggested that his soulful disposition hid a reservoir of warm good feelings toward most people and, certainly, most musicians.

I inquired about some of Mal's contemporaries. What were his thoughts about Eric Dolphy, with whom he played in a legendary session at the Five Spot club with Booker Little, Richard Davis and Ed Blackwell? "[Dolphy was] very driven. It was almost as if he knew he wasn't going to live a long time and he had to get it down in a hurry. Men like

this, who have this drive, they usually die very early."

John Coltrane, Dolphy's mentor and an influence on Waldron, inevitably came up in the conversation. It was true, Mal admitted, that Coltrane was much like Dolphy. "Coltrane wouldn't take the horn out of his mouth. He was constantly working, working."

Another driven soul and major musical influence was Charles Mingus. About the great composer/bassist, Mal stated: "He was like an older brother. He taught me how to play the piano and shaped my concept of the piano. Told me to be myself, insisted on that. He would stop me from imitating anybody."

During the fifties and early sixties, Mal Waldron played blues, bop and free jazz with everyone from Lucky Thompson to Charles Mingus, from Gigi Gryce to Billie Holiday, from Lucky Millinder to Eric Dolphy. After all of those experiences, he was ready for any musical challenge that would come up in Europe. In his twenty years with Germany as his home-base, Waldron has been able to place his distinctive stamp on a wide variety of Continental groups, always maintaining his integrity as a jazzman. Concerning his musical philosophy, Mal Waldron was emphatic. "There were never any compromises. Jazz musicians don't make any compromises. Other musicians make compromises, they sell out. Not jazz musicians."

Since the early 1970s, Mal has become a very popular musician and composer in Japan. This unusual development has added a global outlook to this sophisticated player's compositions and attitudes. Waldron has toured Asia extensively, as well as Europe and the United States. I asked Mal to compare the different musical environments of the three continents. Speaking first of the Japanese, he replied,

"They haven't been deafened by the sounds that we in the West have had to hear. The decibel level that we hear in Europe or in America is much higher than that of Japan's. When you go to a restaurant in Japan, you can't hear what the people in the next booth are talking about because they're practically whispering while in the West, we've got a racket of noise going on. There's heavy music coming at you, which conditions you to talk at a higher level.

"[The result is that] the Japanese hear subtle changes in the music because their ears have not been deafened by all of those heavy sounds that the Americans have heard."

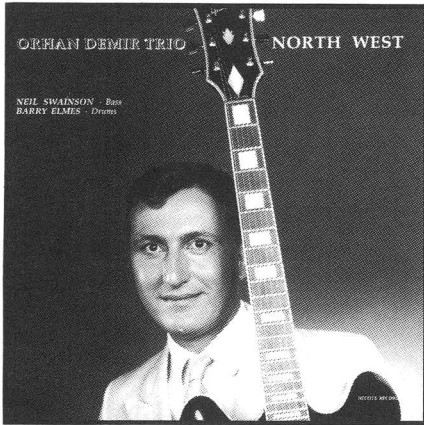
Could Mal compare the decibel levels between the three continents? Yes, he replied: "There is a different sonic level in Europe. It's less intense there than in America, but not as good as in Japan. Even the street noise isn't as bad there as it is in America."

Mal Waldron has experienced an extreme variation not only in music but in life styles over the last four decades. I inquired how he finds his life to be in the late 1980s. "Beautiful. I have the best of all worlds, now. In Europe, I'm still considered to be a black American, so I get good jobs over there. And when I come back to America, they consider me to be an exile, so they want to offer me work, too."

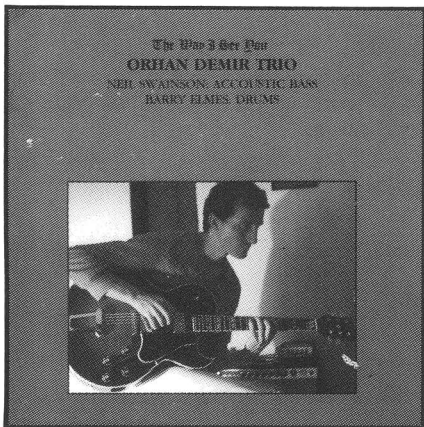
In Japan, of course, Mal is extremely influential and highly respected. For this most continental of all musicians, any recording session is sure to have global ramifications. In his new record we hear Mal Waldron solo in Toronto, but with attitudes that are worldwide. In his philosophy, as in his music, one can see a man who is at peace with himself and truly comfortable with the sonic art that he creates for the world to enjoy.

MIKE MURLEY

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With his first solo album, “The Curse”, issued in September on Toronto’s Unity label, the first part of tenorman Mike Murley’s jazz odyssey is successfully completed. He has served his time with some of Toronto’s best musicians – the brilliantly eccentric Shuffle Demons, Brian Dickinson, Neil Swainson, Bobby Fenton, Rainer Weins’ Silk Stockings and Barry Elmes’ Time Warp. Two Shuffle Demons albums feature Murley, a founder-member of the group, and also albums by Rainer Weins (“A donde esta el mercado”), Time Warp (“Rough Edges”) and Hugh Marsh (“Shaking the Pumpkin”). He has done his share of gigging in obscure clubs, on the road, and playing the streets (Toronto, Berlin, Paris etc.) and is now attracting a growing following among those who appreciate original, inventive and technically exciting playing. The album sums up his origins and development and points the way to the future.

Murley has known he was going to be a jazz musician since his early teens when, under the guidance of teacher Don Palmer in his hometown of Windsor, N.S., he began to develop a prodigious enthusiasm for, and talent on the tenor. Palmer knew what we had. A successful jazz musician in New York twenty or more years ago, he quickly saw that Murley was something special and gave him the kind of encouragement that the young tenorist still remembers with gratitude and affection. That Murley’s talent developed early is not in doubt: there are cassette tapes of him playing at jazz camps

while still in high school where his well-developed technique and confident ear for rhythm and harmony produced work of independence and imagination which is surprising in someone so young.

While studying at York University, Murley played with a number of bands in Toronto, continuing to broaden his repertoire and consolidate his development. At that time he was influenced by Sonny Rollins, Wayne Shorter, and John Coltrane, but struggling to find his own voice, especially in an increasing number of compositions of his own which were closer in style to Ornette Coleman’s post-modern “free” jazz.

Murley’s trademark is his inventiveness and dazzling technique. To see him ducking and weaving while he coaxes new and unexpected harmonies or interpretations from numbers we all thought we’d seen exhausted of possibilities, is to know that Murley takes nothing for granted, nothing easy. He shifts key, stretches the logic of the melody as far as it will go... and then some, and shunts and swaps rhythms with panache and style, while never losing sight of the basic structure of the melody. He is nobody’s slouch in getting around his instrument either, producing startling originality at break-neck speed, or real and controlled lyricism from the most basic blues sequence; his own blues composition *Sometimes You Feel That Way* exemplifies his quality.

A Canada Council grant in 1987 enabled Murley to live and study in New York where he studied saxophone

GETTING OFF THE SPADINA BUS

with David Liebman, and composition theory with the English bassist David Holland, filling in his evenings playing at clubs in Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens. Now, at the conclusion of two years working consistently with his own band, and of writing and arranging for musicians with whom he is completely in harmony, "The Curse" gives Murley the opportunity to lay down a set of tracks of *his* ideas in music. There are six tracks, five of which he composed himself, on a record which features well-known Toronto musicians John MacLeod (cornet and flugelhorn), Shuffle Demon colleague Jim Vivian (bass) and Barry Elmes (drums). The record took more than a year to put together and vividly illustrates the direction Murley is taking. From the title track which he wrote to put the 'fluence on the Minnesota North Stars when they were playing the Toronto Maple Leafs, *Orny*, a characteristic dazzling tribute to the influence of Ornette Coleman, and ballads such as *Thanking Duke*, Murley's music is a chart of his experience and development. If you aren't lucky enough to have heard the man live, "The Curse" will go a long way towards filling the gap. Catch where he's come from, and watch where he's going.

— Roger Burford Mason

Roger Burford Mason is a lifelong jazz addict who works in Toronto as a freelance writer.

The recordings mentioned in this article are available from Coda Magazine:

Ruin - John MacLeod - Unity 1 - (\$10.00 pp)
The Curse - Mike Murley - Unity 2 - (\$10.00 pp)

MIKE MURLEY: THE CURSE

It must seem an impossible task these days to make an original statement on the tenor saxophone, an instrument possessed of a history of risktaking and innovation. This formidable backdrop has done little to discourage new performers (and old) from exploring the horn, and in the past three years, many new voices have emerged, all working within the tradition that was begun by Coleman Hawkins, the generally acknowledged "father of the tenor". Transformed through the fifties and sixties, the tradition is further distilled in the playing of Mike Murley, a native of Nova Scotia who resettled in Toronto

seven years ago, whose recent Unity records release, *the Curse*, successfully blends the modernist structure of improvisation with the traditionalist's high regard for tonal quality. Murley's first effort as a leader on holiday from bop-rap ensemble the Shuffle Demons is a good indicator of the calibre of musicianship among the new community of jazz players in this city. Murley's tone on the tenor has a bright-chiming quality that sits well alongside the darker tones of his front line partner on this session, John MacLeod. MacLeod's cornet and flugelhorn functions as Murley's chief foil on this recording, complementing the saxophonist's phrasing with a keenly developed melodic sense. One would assume MacLeod's own recent release, "Ruin," also benefits from this inventive harmonic exploration. Murley's choice of rhythm section makes the decisive component of this quartet all the more inviting, given that the ensemble leans towards a fairly even mix of composition and free improvisation. Jim Vivian (doublebassist with the Shuffle Demons) and Barry Elmes (drummer and co-leader of the Time Warp ensemble) play with an assertive directness that centers the quartet's experimentation and provides a solid support for the horns.

Murley's compositional stance on *the Curse* draws upon the music that evolved from the work of Ornette Coleman and Charles Mingus, both leaders whose quartets of the sixties displaced the piano as harmonic control preferring the more equitable distribution of sound throughout the quartet. The music performed on this release, all original Murley compositions save for a live reading of Mal Waldron's *Soul Eyes*, is a pleasing yet harmonically adventurous set that showcases the saxophonist's work as a composer. The title tune features bassist Vivian and drummer Elmes at the top leading into MacLeod's first solo on cornet. Murley, in his own solo on the tune, displays a facility on the tenor that is underplayed for the most part but sneaks through on occasion. The track really connects when the two horns work together since Murley's fluency is brought forward most noticeably when he is pushed by MacLeod. *Elvin* features Vivian's bass dexterity, a quality that has, as yet, to be captured by the Shuffle Demons on record but is a welcome sight

in club performances by both these units. Playing with a measured control, Vivian adopts a bass vocabulary more suggestive of Scott LaFaro than any latter day offerings in the spirit of Mingus. This track as well is noteworthy for the smooth, tempered work of MacLeod's solo, evocative of middle-period Miles in its lyricism. *Thanking Duke*, the first side ballad, is an attractive tribute to the master composer and highlights the blues instinct that is ingrained in Murley's playing, a combination of youthful candidness and emotional understatement that is refreshing. *Orny*, leading off side two in tribute to Murley's compositional forerunner, begins with a breathy theme statement over bowed bass that jumps straight into the theme. Throughout the tune, there are occasional nods in the direction of the theme but it is never overtly referred to again in its first form.

Barry Elmes, after restraining himself during side one's song for the master drummer from Detroit, decides to evoke *Elvin* in a short, punchy solo turn, breaking up the time and admirably setting the stage for Murley's solo. As in the saxophone/drum setting that is the fulcrum for Murley's composition, *F.A.I.P.*, Murley interacts with Elmes in a lively fashion, his tenor playing showing an influence of Sonny Rollins while still maintaining its own identity.

The Curse is a successful attempt at covering a great deal of stylistic ground though it is apt to seem bewildering upon first listen. A problematic point in the releasing of new material by a musician whose palette is quite diverse is the question of pinpointing the chosen avenue for your audience.

This recording as an introduction to the work of Mike Murley definitely places him in the running for the majors but in another way, it may cause radio programmers to overlook him in the sense that this is entirely too strong a personal statement of intent to be competing with the aural wallpaper that appears to be the industry standard for mainstream development. No matter though, there is much in these selections that suggest Murley will have a long time to prove his point. Perhaps this is the unspoken aside that the title is meant to convey, the curse of slowing oneself down enough to get others to pay attention. *Stephen Vickery*

THE COMPLETE COLLECTION

Luxurious boxed sets represent the ultimate in packaging for jazz recordings. They usually bring together the complete works of a particular artist or a comprehensive collection of recordings by a particular company.

This approach has been well established in the classical field but it came late to jazz. In fact it is already something of an anachronism as the compact disc steadily erodes the base of the vinyl disc. Nonetheless it represents an approach which is full of scholarship and invaluable as a means of bringing together in one place a comprehensive collection of material.

Another characteristic of the Boxed Set is its completeness. In many cases the research reveals previously unissued performances or alternate takes of issued material. Box sets can offer the collector/researcher a full look at the recording activities of the particular artist and company.

THE COMPLETE KEYNOTE COLLECTION (Mercury 830 121-1) is a 21 record set which states that it contains 334 immortal jazz performances of the 40's including 115 newly discovered gems. Since the set was released Polygram has also made available a collection of ten CDs which incorporates about 2/3 of the boxed set. The Coleman Hawkins CD is a four disc set and the Roy Eldridge package (which features other trumpeters) is a two disc package. The Benny Carter CD includes still more unissued alternates not found in the boxed set.

Keynote was a major jazz record company for a few brief years in the 1940s. Most of the recordings were produced by Harry Lim and the label's reputation was established through important sessions with Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young and other major soloists of the day. It's an awesome task to work your way through all the performances.

Heard in this way it is soon evident that Harry Lim's personal choices were fundamental to the company's musical philosophy. The Keynote Collection is an impressive overview and Lim's activities fit comfortably between the work of Milt Gabler at Commodore and Alfred Lion and Francis Wolff at Blue Note. Each label was careful not to intrude on the other's activities – sometimes this carried cooperation too far but it did help establish the parameters of each company.

The Keynote Collection contains extraordinary music by some of the music's major performers. It is also quickly

apparent that artists like Earl Hines, Coleman Hawkins and Lester Young were continually seeking fresh ways to make their statements. The many alternate takes at their sessions allows us to hear the evolution of each rendition once the musicians have determined the routine to be used. The solo work in each take by these musicians is always different but equally good.

Lester Young was leader at the second Keynote session in 1943. (An earlier 1941 date with George Hartman was Lim's first effort as a producer.) It's the justly famous quartet date with Johnny Guarneri, Slam Stewart and Sid Catlett. Three standards and an original (Afternoon Of A Basie-ite) were recorded. In March 1944 Lester Young was back for a Basie-led group The Kansas City Seven with Buck Clayton and Dicky Wells the other horn players. Inexplicably they were the only two dates of Young produced by Lim.

Coleman Hawkins fared much better and his various sessions are marvelous examples of his work. Between January and October 1944 he participated in eight Keynote sessions. They range from quartet dates with Teddy Wilson and quintet sessions with Roy Eldridge, Charlie Shavers and Buck Clayton to the unique Sax Ensemble and the Cozy Cole All Stars session – one of Keynote's best. On that occasion trumpeter Joe Thomas, trombonist Trummy Young and pianist Earl Hines were all at the peak of their powers. The results are sensational. No less than six unissued alternates are now available for the first time and they give the whole occasion an even greater ambience. Less distinctive is the George Wettling date where Hawkins finds himself alongside Jack Teagarden, Hank D'Amico and Joe Thomas.

Many Keynote performances were recorded for 12" 78 release. The additional playing time gives much of the music a more settled feel. Musicians with this kind of creativity were already feeling hemmed in by the limitations of the 3 minute 78.

Lim's recording sessions began with some of the major musicians of the time. Soon, however, he began to branch out

in a variety of directions. Keynote is the major recorded depository for trumpeter Joe Thomas – an Armstrong inspired player who is outstanding on all of the many dates he participated in here. Other trumpeters who are particularly good are Buck Clayton, Roy Eldridge, Emmett Berry, Jonah Jones and Charlie Shavers.

Lim appreciated the work of musicians from the Cab Calloway band. Cozy Cole was often his choice for drums while there were also dates under the leadership of Jonah Jones, Milt Hinton and J.C. Heard.

Many of the period's best alto saxophonists were featured. They ranged from the immaculate stylings of Benny Carter (but few of his sides were issued originally) to the rougher jump style of Pete Brown. Tab Smith, an articulate but unvarying soloist, Johnny Hodges (only one date), Hilton Jefferson and Willie Smith were others to record for Keynote. There's one brief glimpse at Don Byas, a rather uninteresting Gene Sedric date, three dates with Babe Russin and one each with Ted Nash and Herbie Haymer.

Lim also dabbled in some dixieland sessions but he focused on some less interesting musicians from New Orleans (George Hartman, Irving Fazola) rather than those in New York. Exceptions to this were the George Wettling date and one under Bud Freeman's leadership. There is magic every time Edmond Hall performs and his solos are a highlight of Freeman's date.

There's an attractive Barney Bigard session with Joe Thomas but, for the most part, the clarinetists who recorded with Keynote were players with good technique but limited musical personalities.

There were also sessions reflecting the impact of the bebop generation. Lim played it safe, however, by organising sessions around members of the Herman band of the day. Chubby Jackson, Bill Harris and Neal Hefti took charge at three sessions. There were also some dates involving Red Rodney and Lennie Tristano. Lim never had the same success with this music as he did with the earlier styles.

There were also a number of singers

JOHN NORRIS REVIEWS A VARIETY OF BOXED SETS

who recorded for Keynote but their impact was minimal and ordinarily would never have resurfaced. Probably half of Keynote's recordings never found their way onto LP so much of this set is a brand new listening experience for many people.

This Complete Keynote Collection includes the few sessions produced by Leonard Feather (Lionel Hampton with Dinah Washington), John Hammond (Lennie Tristano), label founder Eric Bernay and Steve Smith (Rex Stewart, Billy Taylor).

The CD collections put the music into sharper focus. The Roy Eldridge, (830 923-2), Coleman Hawkins (830 960-2), Lester Young (830 920-2) and Keynoters (830 967-2) collection contain the masterpieces. The Ellingtonians (830 926-2) and Benny Carter (830 965-2) collections are worthwhile with the remaining four CDs focusing on dates by Red Norvo (830 966-2), Lennie Tristano (830 921-2), the Herman sidemen (830 968-2) and the Red Rodney, Neal Hefti and Dave Lambert (830 922-2).

The CD collections missed the wonderful Benny Morton Trombone Ensemble date (with Vic Dickenson, Bill Harris and Claude Jones) and the Freeman session would also sound good on CD.

Everything is there for your listening enjoyment in the boxed set. The sound restoration is excellent, Dan Morgenstern's notes are a wonderful guide to the music and the box includes a photographic booklet drawn from pictures taken at various recording dates. All in all this is a wonderful achievement.

Equally impressive is **THELONIOUS MONK: THE COMPLETE RIVERSIDE RECORDINGS** (Riverside VIJ 5102-5123). All of Monk's Riverside recordings are spread over 22 records in a handsomely designed box. The set includes ten previously unissued performances as well as additional snippets of music and studio conversation. The music on the originally issued albums has been continually available for many years in one form or another. Fantasy (who own Riverside) has been busy putting out the original albums on CD and this set will probably receive the same treatment before too



long. Why, then, should you make the considerable investment to own this box set? The answer to that question depends upon the depth of your involvement with Monk's music. He is one of the major innovators in jazz and the Riverside sessions (arranged here chronologically) are the most wide ranging of all his recordings. His association with Orrin Keepnews was a fruitful one. The neophyte record producer was a catalyst who gave Monk the encouragement to fulfill his destiny.

This set showcases Monk's piano music in a solo setting (Thelonious Himself, Alone In San Francisco), with a trio (plays Duke Ellington, The Unique) that includes Oscar Pettiford and either Kenny Clarke or Art Blakey; the quartets with Coltrane (Monk and Trane) and Johnny Griffin (Mysterioso, In Action); the influential band dates with Sonny Rollins, Coleman Hawkins and John Coltrane (Brilliant Corners and Monk's Music); the first sessions involving Charlie Rouse with the additional horns of Thad Jones and Joe Gordon/Harold Land (Monk Five By Five and at the Blackhawk); the wonderful Town Hall Concert with the Orchestra and two quartet concerts from Europe in 1961.

Issued for the first time is the aborted session with Shelly Manne. The three surviving performances are of San Francisco Holiday, Just You Just Me and Round Midnight. There are also addition-

al selections from the first Five Spot session (Evidence, Bye-ya/Epistrophy) and the Blackhawk (Four in One). Additional material from both these dates was issued a few years ago for the first time on two Milestone LPs (Evidence - 9115 and Blues Five Spot - 9124).

Orrin Keepnews' notes add a great deal to our knowledge of the sessions as well as providing insights into the mysterious world of Monk. The photographs are spectacular and the only downer is the illogical layout of the material. The tune titles (by record sides) are on one two page spread complete with times of each tune. The second list (on the following page) gives the personnel and recording dates and shows which sides of the records these sessions refer to. Next up are Orrin Keepnews notes on a session by session basis. Finally, at the back is another list of the tunes on a session by session basis showing where they were previously issued. At the end of that listing is another one giving the titles of the various LPs. It would have made much better sense to have listed everything on a session basis so you don't have to continually flip backwards and forwards when checking information.

The 1961 quartet concerts were the only ones not produced by Keepnews. They were issued as fulfillment of Monk's contractual obligations to the label. The sound quality seems much better than I remember on the original LPs. These

performances were a harbinger of what was to follow at Columbia Records. Charlie Rouse's tenor sax followed the convolutions of Monk's lines to produce unison ensembles which became the final shape of Monk's compositions. The basic repertoire of the band was reworked continually for the next decade with a variety of bassists and drummers. John Ore and Frankie Dunlop made the trip to Europe and Monk is generous in his allocation of solo space. Both players are rhythmically attuned to Monk's needs but Ore's walking bass solos detract from the cohesion of the music.

A further sampling of the band from that tour has recently been issued in Sweden on Dragon Records. The two LP set (Dragon DRLP 151/152) includes performances of Ba-Lu Bolivar Ba-Lues-Are, Round Midnight and Blue Monk which are not on the Riverside set. The sound quality of the Swedish Radio remote is excellent and this becomes one more additional performance to add to the Monk collection.

With only a few additional selections this box set doesn't have the cachet that the same label's Bill Evans box offered last year. It still remains an essential purchase for the dedicated Monkophile!

Kiyoshi Koyama is the genius behind the reissues of Polygram material in Japan. That company has already issued box sets of Helen Merrill and Sarah Vaughan. Now it is the turn of Dinah Washington. The major change is that these are only available on compact disc. The new technology has made such major inroads into the marketplace that it is no longer viable for them to issue the music in multiple formats.

THE COMPLETE DINAH WASHINGTON ON MERCURY VOLUME 1 AND 2 (Mercury 832 444-2 and 832 448-2) covers the periods 1946-1949 and 1950-1952. Each set contains three CDs with a total playing time of around six hours. Once again there is a generous amount (23) of previously unissued material as well as 28 selections which have never previously been on LP. Needless to say this is a treasure trove of material for anyone interested in Dinah Washington. She was a seminal figure who was to be a major influence on other singers. Her distinctive way of phrasing has been incorporated into the styles of many

singers who were to achieve much wider fame. But Dinah Washington was an unique artist. Her gifts were many. She could take a song and transform it into a highly personal vehicle for her expression.

This collection is a graphic example of the tug of war endured by so many artists from this period. Most producers and executives could never accept the reality that the original material created by these performers (including Fats Waller, Billie Holiday, etc.) was the essence of their art. Time has shown that it is also the material which defines them. There are numerous sessions here where Dinah is required to sing dumb songs with inappropriate backings. But there are also the magnificent blues and soulful ballads which helped make her famous. They are all here in this definitive collection. An earlier Mercury LP collection "A Slick Chick On The Mellow Side" (Emarcy 814 184-1) is a suitable alternative if you only want a selection from her best material of the time. The CD sets give us the full range of her early work.

THE PRIVATE COLLECTION OF DUKE ELLINGTON (LMR CD 99000) is a five compact disc collection of music recorded privately by Duke Ellington for his own use between 1956 and 1970. If you order direct from LMR Records (40 West 57th Street, New York, N.Y. 10019) the set comes in a tasteful cardboard box. The CDs are also available individually in many stores in the U.S.

Duke Ellington enjoyed the privacy of the recording studio. It was there that he could indulge his fancies and experiment with fresh ways of playing his established music as well as investigating the possibilities of his new creations. His orchestra was on salary so the expense of recording was lessened for him. Through the years he accumulated an extensive tape library which is now finally beginning to enjoy circulation for the first time.

Volume one (LMR 8300), three (LMR 83002) and four (LMR 83004) are studio session from 1956, 1962 and 1963. Between them they fill out the available material from a very prolific era of Ellingtonia. Despite its dismissal by James Lincoln Collier in his recent attempt at a biography of Ellington this period was one of intense activity with many excellent new compositions. The return of Johnny Hodges and the addition of

Sam Woodyard on drums revitalised the band and a new recording contract with Columbia were crucial factors in the transformation of the band.

It is soon apparent in listening to these informal sessions that the same principles which always guided Ellington were in force here. Despite his sophisticated facade the blues were always an integral part of his musical language and his soloists relished opportunities to perform in these settings. Each CD is rich with the work of all the major soloists but it is Johnny Hodges, Paul Gonsalves and Ray Nance who are the principal voices.

The remaining two CDs are less effective. Volume two (LMR 83001) documents a dance date in 1958 and the band is typically casual. The material is familiar but it is interesting to hear the band working through a Dick Vance arrangement of Stompin' At The Savoy and a Buck Clayton chart of One O'Clock Jump. The latter is one of the highspots. The band really comes together here. But this was simply another one nighter.

The final volume (LMR 83004) combines music composed by Ellington for widely diverse reasons. The Degas Suite was the soundtrack for a movie about the artist which never came to fruition. The 1968 version of the band gives exploratory performances of these compositions. There wasn't enough time for them to evolve into their final shape. The River is even more fragmentary.

Both suites are a continuation of Ellington's normal practice. He assembles a group of compositions to fit a particular purpose rather than attempting to write extended, interlocking compositions. Ellington fully understood that jazz composition was a short form designed to wrap around the statements of the soloists. He shows us here, once again, that he was a master at his own art.

Ellington's piano is more to the forefront in these final performances. He sensed, as the band went into decline, that his own solo contributions were needed more. Hence the expansion of his pianistic responsibilities.

This set of five CDs is an invaluable addition to the body of recorded work by Duke Ellington. The many new compositions and the outstanding performances by the orchestra make this essential listening.



Early on Sunday morning, 26th June, I arrived in European Culture City, 1988, West Berlin, by train, having slept through East Germany, for a bumper eight days/daze. Immediately, I check into the Hotel des Nations, on Zinzendorfstrasse, a name I like because of the ZEN in it, and subsequently learn that FMP (who published a very fine document earlier in the year describing their plans for this cultural bonanza, covering the period 1st April to 17th September, with plenty of monochrome photographs of all involved) have used this place for many years as one of the hotels where they accommodate visiting musicians and that a number of those engaged for the current activities are resident, William Parker, Martin Mayes, Enrico Rava, Tomasz Stanko, Gunther Hampel, Peter Kowald... with some of whom I was able to converse over the ensuing days, mainly at breakfast which, in this uncommonly obliging, homely hostelry was served at any time of the day or night.

In the evening to the Kongresshalle (KH) Berlin, in John Foster Dulles Alle for the first of eight consecutive evenings, all scheduled for 9 p.m. kick-off, in the same side hall of this grandiose edifice; this one being **Cecil Taylor** in duets with **Paul Lovens**. Two sets, the first of some 76 minutes is opened by

the appearance of Mr. Taylor from the curtained rear of the dimly lit room, to execute – passing through the audience (of about 100) on his way to the platform, an audience comfortably spread out in seats or on cushions immediately adjacent to the platform – his now frequent sanctification of the space, an activity which usefully settles the audience and focuses their attention on the purpose of the occasion – voice, dance, piano tapping (when he eventually gets to it), declaiming of poetry, (a scrap of paper serves as the source); slides on to piano seat, playing commences, kermite-like hands make almost imperceptible excursions over the entire keyboard, such occasional power as to move the hardy C. Bechstein (until its wheels are re-secured by Jost Gebers); Mr. Lovens, energetic, pursues an individual line, demonstrating that it is not always essential for there to be an attempt even to achieve a mutual understanding for the results to be rewarding. Second similar set, some 60 minutes.

Monday, 27ths, to Behaimstrasse Jazzcock for a visit to friend Dieter Hahn who, every evening at KH is to be seen with a collection of records for sale (there are also other things for sale, memorabilia of this significant period), where I enjoy pleasant conversation and acquire a number of records.

Post p.m. siesta, back to KH on foot by way of the beautiful Tiergarten, passing by the Grosse Stern with its high-columned golden angel watching over us all, and the sad, damaged statues of river personifications, for the first of four consecutive evenings of performances by groups essentially created out of the 16 musicians (in addition to Mr. Taylor) present in Berlin to constitute the **Cecil Taylor European Big Band**, namely Enrico Rava and Tomasz Stanko, trumpets; Hannes Bauer, Christian Radovan and Wolter Wierbos, trombones; Martin Mayes, french horn; Peter van Bergen, Peter Brotzmann, Hans Koch, Evan Parker and Louis Sclavis, reeds; Gunter Hampel, vibes; Tristan Honsinger, cello; Peter Kowald and William Parker, basses; Han Bennink, drums and percussion.

For this first evening, the combination was announced as follows:

1. **Rava; Mayes; Brotzmann; Honsinger**
- 2a. **Kowald/solo**

2b. **E. Parker; Wierbos**

3. **Rava; Brotzmann; Bauer; Schlippenbach; W. Parker; Bennink**

and we (some sixty aficionados) had for the first set, the quartet, twenty-two minutes - Brotzmann on bass clarinet, tenor saxophones and clarinet, powerful, strutting, confident stuff; Enrico, conventional, laid-back, Mayes adept on a difficult machine, occasionally using his voice, and hands; Honsinger, whistling, vocalising and executing his very effective staccato, grotesque arabesques about the platform; then forty minutes of Peter Kowald demonstrating his quasimodo virtuosity on the bass; and, for set two, before a diminished audience, a quarter hour with inimitable (as previously stated) Evan on tenor and Wierbos on trombone, (or half a trombone at one stage), with voice periodically; Evan also contributed an exquisite short soprano sax solo (while a drunk loose about the house caused a slight disturbance); approaching 11:30 p.m.; Messrs Bennink, Brotzmann, Rava, W. Parker; Alex Schlippenbach who, although not formally included in the overall proceedings was nevertheless a welcome addition; Bauer and Sclavis, all embarked on a three-quarter hour septet extemporisation, for a diminishing audience, due to the lateness of the hour, which terminated, after the definitive drum beat for which Han is well-known, with a short, somewhat surprising (by virtue of its out-of-placeness) quote by Alex of what appeared to be a composed item. Noted that Jost Gebers records everything very carefully, and has no compunction in boarding the stage during performance to make adjustments.

Tuesday afternoon, I visit the Neue Nationalgalerie (New National Gallery) with a fine permanent exhibition – wonderful Grosz and Schwitters, Arp and Kokoschka and an excellent sculpture garden where the ivy grows artistically on the wall – and exhibitions of works by Janis Kounellis, Mario Merz, Nam June Paik (splendid family of robots, cast-off televisions put to good use), Richard Serra, whose “Berlin Elliptical” is like the Berlin wall – what is on the other side?, Cy Twombly, and Frank Stella, ten fantastic dynamic and mysterious wall-mounted 3-D sculpture/paintings, bright colours not too precisely applied. Back through Tiergarten, in whose great

ROGER PARRY VISITS THE CULTURE CITY

trees birds freely improvise; in sun, on the shorn grass, breasts are bared.

In the evening, to KH along with some fifty others for the announced:

1. Koch; Honsinger; Bennink (Mr. Koch on tenor and soprano saxes and bass clarinets)

2. Bass clarinets (Brotzmann, Koch, Fuchs, Sclavis; Wolfgang Fuchs being another welcome addition to the formal list, this quartet also did a second piece with Brotzmann on bass saxophone, Fuchs on soprano, Sclavis on clarinet and Koch retaining his bass clarinet.

3. Van Bergen; Bauer; W. Parker; Bennink (to start, this latter is sitting on the floor, employing two pieces of plywood as his percussive source; advises us that “sometimes it’s handy to have a wooden leg;” later, he suffers a minor injury to a finger, the treatment of which, by Tristan Honsinger, becomes incorporated into the performance; Bennink employs his blue sticks box as a Pac-man cymbal eater; he drags a vibraphone about the stage by its black covering cloth, disappears under this cover to play the vibes – I tell you all this as a reminder of the tremendously visual, not to mention humorous character of these performances).

Wednesday morning, to the Hamburger Bahnhof, Invalidenstrasse 50-51, a war-damaged church-like station of the great age of railways very close to “the wall”, now minimally restored for use as an exhibition space, currently for “Zeitlos”, ‘timeless’ and materially obsessive works by, amongst many others, Long, Serra, Bueys, Marisa Merz, Twombly. In the afternoon, I take a boat trip under the bridges of Berlin (more than Venice, we are told) which ends under a fierce thunderstorm. By two comfortable, clean double-decker buses, on the second of which I note a certain young Japanese gentleman who has been at every performance, armed with portable tape recorder, I make my way to KH for this evening’s menu:

1. Stanko + Bennink – Plus; starts with Stanko (dark navy suit, dark hat, bright T-shirt) sitting in audience, making occasional low noises on trumpet; conversations continue until he boards stage together with Bennink; these two are subsequently joined by black-hatted, pink-shirted relentless Cecil Taylor, Peter

Brotzmann and Tristan Honsinger; later, this quintet is reduced to a trio as Honsinger and Bennink drop out, but three minutes later the group becomes seven, with the appearance of Hannes Bauer (consistently dirty trombone), Christian Radovan, Hans Koch (tenor sax and bass clarinet), and Louis Sclavis (soprano sax and bass clarinet); two minutes later, Stanko is away – four minutes after that, it’s Brotzmann out; by now it’s something like an hour since these permutations got underway, and I am frankly bored with this music – this is dispelled by a duo by Taylor and Radovan, and, eventually, this piece closes (total, 86 minutes).

2. Sclavis; Koch; Bauer; Radovan (as part of the foregoing). After the interval, during which I spoke briefly with Enrico Rava and learned that fellow Italian Andrea Centazzo, of whom I have heard little in recent years, is into making videos of contemporary (serious(?) music.

3. Rava; Stanko; Mayes; E. Parker; Honsinger; Kowald + W. Parker; Hampel; Bennink; Peter Kowald opens up in an “acoustic” environment – no mikes, although the three strings are each amplified – this reduction in the ambient decibel level was satisfying to me, allowing individual instruments to be more readily ascertained during the intenser periods of full group playing.

In this satisfied condition I took to the road “home”, but had not gone far when I was picked up by Messrs Schlippenbach and E. Parker to be transported to “Walhalla”, Alex’s local alehouse where we joined Wolfgang Fuchs, Swedish Sven-Ake Johansson and the Finns, Mr. & Mrs. Harry Sjoestroem (he is a pianist currently resident in Berlin), for beers interwoven with brown tequila with orange slice, these latter on the house. Happy conversation in several tongues took us past closing time at 2:30 a.m., a reasonable hour....

Thursday, after an afternoon of siesta and literature, I made my usual way to KH, where the programme list announced:

1. Bauer; Sclavis; Hampel; two pieces from a fine trio; exquisite Kammermusik, elegant dynamics.

2. Mitteleuropaisches Duet; Peters Van Buren and Brotzmann: firstly, two strong tenors; secondly, powerful tenor (Van

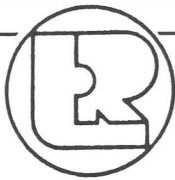
Buren) and foot-stomping clarinet (Brotzmann), played from the depths of their middle-European souls....

Post-interval, a superb seventy-four minutes from:

3. E. Parker; Honsinger; Taylor - Oulipian restraint, finely-wrought delicacies, a finale to these four nights of contrived serendipity which, by its mind-etching effect, has rendered them all that much more memorable for me.

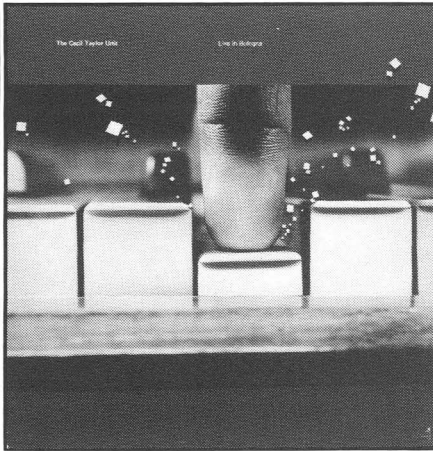
Friday, 1st July, breakfast at 10; joined by Martin Mayes and a little later, Tristan Honsinger, chat, not least on last night’s fine finale and its character, which latter observing that Mr. Taylor had “had the opportunity, no drummer around”. To the Bauhaus Archiv; interesting material, both documentary and diverse works. Thence, Museum of Industry, just to photograph the exciting external wall-painting. Thereafter to the National Gallery for one in their Jazz in the (sculpture) Garden series, featuring the East German “Central Quartet”, previously a.k.a. “Synopsis”: **Ernst-Ludwig Petrovsky**, alto saxophone; **Connie Bauer**, trombone; **Ulrich Gumpert**, piano and **Gunter ‘Baby’ Sommer**, drums. Three snubbers (for some 45 minutes): swinging, jokey, bluesy, the second an intense dirge, the third including an amusing pseudo-drum solo by Sommer - the large audience loved it. Impending rain stopped play – everyone left, for where I know not – so I never did hear James ‘Blood’ Ulmer/Jamaaladeen Tacuma Project which was to have followed the East Germans. Made my way to KH, escaping the worst of this evening thunderstorm and heavy rain.

At 2120, voices from behind the arras – banging – musicians gradually pour forth and wend their way to the stage; the sound develops – acoustic save for piano and strings and two microphones for soloists; that particular, muddled sound which results from 17 musicians simultaneously playing out of which emanates the occasional figure (the result of three afternoons of rehearsals); a minor solo by Stanko, followed by more extensive efforts by Van Buren, Rava, Radovan (on a weak bridge); Brotzmann on alto; Koch, tenor; Stanko again and Hampel on vibes (almost destroyed by Bennink); now, piano, vibes, cello and the two basses – sound whose composi-



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tion is indistinguishable, until the return of Han (I am reminded of the story told by Evan Parker, of the raising of the white flag by a section of a large Chicago audience when confronted with a similar situation and wonder if this is what Alan Silva's Celestial Communications Orchestra of long ago Paris was like!). This is definitely a curate's egg. Solos again, Sclavis on soprano, short and uninventive; Taylor, with vibes, two basses, cello and drums; a grinding bridge leads to Wierbos, with Bauer, Brotzmann on clarinet, the dervish Mayes, Rava, Brotzmann again, this time on bass sax, joined by Van Buren on tenor. We are now at 10:30 p.m. A longer bridge, with Brotzmann on tenor; voices, clapping, stamping bring us Evan Parker's first solo after which I adjourn to the bar for fifteen minutes, during which I can hear the continuing deroulement; on return, Sclavis on soprano leads to the departure of the musicians, still playing, from the stage, diverse routes through the audience, disappearing eventually behind the arras, save a trio of Brotzmann, Sclavis and Koch, who finally stop at 11:10; 110 minutes have elapsed since those first stirrings. Such was the first night of the Cecil Taylor European Big Band.

After an afternoon at Wimbledon for Becker beating Lendl and Graf disposing of Navratilova, I set out for KH and was fortunate to get a lift there from Gunter Hampel, with his south-american friend and Christian Radovan, during which fat was casually chewed, from yesterday's session (which was video recorded by Hampel, as was this night to be; he has already made available a number of videos of his own large and small groups, as well as some of his paintings), to the religious significance of trees. 2112 hrs was the appointed time for this evening's behind-the-arras banging, voices, then up to the stage, chanting, "en, see, you" - clapping; the sound is vastly better than the Friday performance; Bennink is restrained; Taylor is audible at all times; the sections are balanced; two sets result, the first of an hour, second, sixty-six minutes, all based upon the material generated in the preceding days. Solos in first set by Stanko, Van Buren (ts), Hampel's vibes, a driving, raving Rava, Radovan; a bridge by Taylor into Sclavis, at first repeating

yesterday's monophony, but subsequently exploring the full range of the soprano, a Honsinger bridge to Stanko 2, Brotzmann (clt), Wierbos, another, slower, bridge, Koch (bclt), Bauer, loud, still dirty, Taylor bridging again, a repeated 3/4 figure, to a septet comprising Bennink, W. Parker, Kowald, Honsinger, Hampel, Stanko (trumpet interjections), and Taylor; a vibes solo, then all back for a closing diminuendo, voices-off. 2250, part two: all on stage - no ceremonial, the dirge opens, subsequent solos by an inspired Brotzmann on tenor, overlapped by Stanko, (Cecil is "in" the piano), a too short, bluesy Evan Parker on tenor, bridge by Taylor with strings and drums; Mayes; Rava, powerful again, Van Buren (ts), Bauer, strong, but short on invention, overlapped by the clarinet of Sclavis; Stanko, with Taylor, strings and vibes, achieves a very effective bridge to Radovan; then, a long tutti, theme, diminuendo and crescendo to E. Parker, tenor again, to an instant stop; chamber-like section follows in which Koch solos on tenor, terminating as Cat Anderson would have! Brotzmann contributes his final, long, brilliant solo (as) and the affair closes with further chamber impressions by Taylor, Hampel, W. Parker, Kowald, Honsinger and Bennink, interjections from Stanko and brass. Exeunt all, playing. A superb night, hopefully to be soon available on disc, on video, even!

Notwithstanding my now sated condition, I did go to Babanussa next day (Sunday), in the afternoon for a pleasant something totally different from the bass of convivial Jay Oliver and his fellow two, Mike Sigal, alto; Michael Clifton, drums; I was joined by William Parker and Tristan Honsinger for a splendid relaxed p.m. In the evening, armed with the news that the Americans have just shot down an Iranian airliner, I taxi to KH for my final visit - I get in the first set of the evening's session: Cecil Taylor in duo with Louis Moholo; quite different from the Taylor/Lovens duos with which I came into all this, these were effective studies in interaction, communion. Escape by bus to the main station, to overnight to Ostend and beyond, swimming gloriously in all the wonder of these incredible eight days - au revoir, Berlin!

PERCUSSION VARIATIONS

GERRY HEMINGWAY QUINTET

Outerbridge Crossing
Sound Aspects sas 017

Outerbridge Crossing/Not Having/Endorphin/Threnody for Charles Mingus/Junctures / (Sept. 19-20, 1985)

Drummer-leader Gerry Hemingway chooses not to display his own playing; rather, he emphasizes the talents of the other players in dynamic collective improvisation.

This music is quite physical. Not to say that it's not cerebral, too, but one can feel the players enjoy their instruments pulsate. *Not Having*, for example, focuses on textures of bow against string and breath through mouthpiece. The instruments emit melancholy descending melodic patterns; cello, bass and tuba wallow in cavernous depths. *Endorphin* owes its spirit to Henry Threadgill, Anthony Braxton, and Monk, as it surrounds its soloists with chattering brass and bleeping strings in an ecstasy of pointillism.

The title tune grows in density and energy. Shifting back and forth between 12/8 and 4/4 metres, it bridges Africa and Kansas City, showing how our music and culture draw nourishment from both.

Trombonist Ray Anderson plays cat and mouse with the baritone and bass. His furious *Endorphin* solo and funky James Brown riffs complement the work of cellist Ernst Reijseger, who pairs off with various instruments, occasionally doubling the walking bass line to create a splintery, fragmented sound. Bassist Mark Helias pays homage to Mingus in *Threnody* with a slow, introspective solo.

KAHIL EL'ZABAR'S THE RITUAL

Another Kind of Groove
Sound Aspects sas 016

The Opening/ Ocean Deep/ Return of the Lost Tribe/ Little Gwen/ Pedro/ Another Kind of Groove/ Freedom of Speech (May 22, 1986)

"Another Kind of Groove", like the Gerry Hemingway project, recasts the traditional role of the drummer. Although El'Zabar's drumming "keeps time" for the



trio, it also shapes the textures and forms of these (rather minimalist) compositions. El'Zabar's style merges "American" and "African" elements to form a rhythmic, earthy, and unorthodox music (*Return of the Lost Tribe* establishes the only "swing" groove on this album).

To his credit, the trio with its limited instrumentation sustains interest over the length of the record. Violinist Billy Bang manipulates musical pitch to this end: during *Ocean*, much of his playing sounds sharp by at least a quarter tone, and although initially disconcerting, it achieves brightness. During *Return* Bang plays a major third against bassist Malachi Favors' minor third, as if to exploit the elusive quality of the "blue note" hiding mischievously between the two. Bang also uses a sharply percussive scraping that triggers responses from El'Zabar. Eschewing the sweet, full vibrato of the academic violinist, he strives for a straight, dry, husky tone that meets the goals of this music.

BRUCE SMITH JAZZ ENSEMBLE

Bright Ideas
Sancia SRJ 903

Zuri/ Bright Ideas/ Euroma/ Duality/ Unison / (May 1987)

Drummer Bruce Smith couches his somewhat grittier approach in Latin grooves weighted with healthy doses of James Brown funk. Unlike Hazilla, who plays in the dead center of the beat, Smith plays a bit behind the pulse, created a laid back if not lagging sense of time. His soloist style is looser and heavier than Hazilla's.

If Hazilla plays mind music, Smith plays body music.

Percussionist Guillermo Cruz and guitarist Martin Aubert control much of the flavor. The samba *Duality* features Cruz's melodic solo on congas and bongos. Aubert's guitar recalls hard blues and James Brown: he really seems to be having fun. Saxophonist Jerry Vejmola fits right in with his ballsy tone.

Tunes most representative of this band include the wicked *Zuri*, well-played Afro Cuban music on which saxist Vejmola and guitarist Aubert engage in call and response; *Bright Ideas*, a samba/funk similar to Hancock's *Chameleon*; and *Euroma*, a 5/4 latin funk.

JON HAZILLA TRIO

Chicplacity
Cadence CJR 1035

Chicplacity/ On a Misty Night/ 10 Little Indians/ What is This Thing Called Love/ Hoodoo/ Yemenja/ Jeepers Creepers (July 1986)

Like El'Zabar, Jon Hazilla creates a warm-textured music, but his message urges the return to a different kind of roots. The younger generation of drummers is "brush illiterate!" Hazilla claims, and rightly so. To demonstrate the value of that lost art he uses brushes with taste, strength, and flexibility.

The pieces *Chicplacity*, *What is This Thing*, and *Misty Night* all testify to the subtlety and wit of this imaginative drummer. His major achievement,

RECORD REVIEWS BY PAUL BAKER

however, is *10 Little Indians*, dedicated to Max Roach. With sticks he plays metrical divisions of 10 while his feet play a "home rhythm" in 4/4. Gradually incorporating tomtoms and cymbals, he cleanly articulates quiet yet rapid single stroke rolls punctuated with silence.

Bassist Ray Drummond, much in demand for his supportive accompaniment, contributes his nimble technique through an incessant flow of ideas. He creates smooth, horn-like solo lines. Pianist John Hicks contributes his compositional talent with *Yemenja*, a bright jazz waltz. One hears in his playing Herbie Hancock, McCoy Tyner, and Oscar Peterson. His own pianistic voice transcends these influences, though, and a smooth precision marks his playing.

On a technical note, I must say I prefer this "natural" method of recording the drums with one or two overhead microphones to the current fad of ramming dozens of mikes down the throats of each and every tomtom,

cymbal, snare, and bass drum. Hazilla knows that the natural resonance of the drums should reverbrate in the studio.

LAJOS DUDAS - TOMMY VIG *Mistral* Konnex ST 5013

Benny/ Folksong/ Capriccio/ Echo/ Koln/ Mistral / (July 1986)

Janos Szudy's drums contribute to this music, but its essence lies in the intertwining of clarinet and vibraphone in duets and quartets. Clarinetist Lajos Dudas, equally fluent in classical, jazz, and pop, joins Tommy Vig, who used to organize jazz festivals in Las Vegas in the 1970s. Neither Dudas nor Vig mold themselves after others, preferring to extend the boundaries of performance practice.

The tribute to the late clarinetist, *Benny*, acknowledges Goodman without xeroxing his style: Vig and Dudas define tonal center and structural form much more loosely than Goodman. Only dur-

ing Dudas's final solo does he make passing reference to Goodman's hit *Savoy*, and Teodossi Stokjov's very un-1940s bass solo requires acrobatic double stops, smears, and buzzes. In its collective skittishness, *Mistral* features various pairs of instruments interlocking in rhythmic attacks.

Yet within the modernism echoes a voice from the past. *Capriccio* acknowledges the nineteenth century violin virtuoso Paganini as Vig hammers out at breakneck tempo relentless streams of notes over Paganini's chord progressions.

Reviews by Paul Baker, a musician residing in Madison, Wisconsin.

Addresses:

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AROUND THE WORLD

CANADA — Some revitalization of the Toronto scene seems imminent even though Max Roach's appearance at the New York Hotel was cancelled at short notice. The future, for that venue, seems uncertain. East 85th has returned, once again, to the fray. They reopened with a highly electrified quartet which featured the drums of Dan Brubeck. A quartet with Pat LaBarbara and Don Thompson were in the club the following week. Emersons, as well as continuing to feature the long running "Lady Day" musical now presents the **Dave McMurdo Big Band** on the first and last Monday of the month. The band personnel was revamped over the summer and the addition of several more experienced sidemen has helped solidify the band's sound. New arrangements are a challenge and the band is building an unique repertoire. The club is home for the **Rainbow Gardens Orchestra** on Sunday nights.

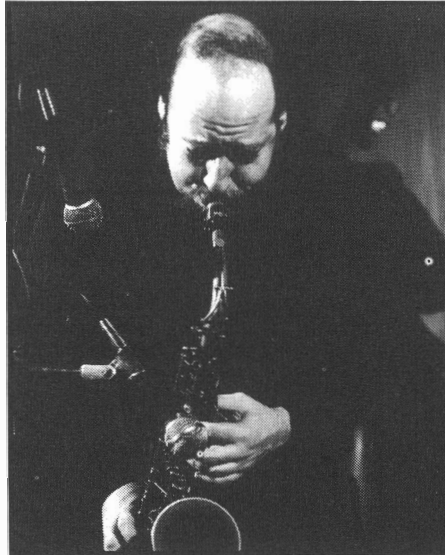
Sunday has become a busy night for clubs. You can now hear jazz at several venues. The Cafe des Copains presents the more established players while Clinton's offers a good cross section of today's young innovators. Highlighting the first segment of the winter season at Cafe des Copains was an evening with tenor saxophonist **Fraser MacPherson**, guitarist **Oliver Gannon** and bassist **Steve Wallace**.

Marion Brown and **Mal Waldron** were at The Bamboo on October 5. They were appearing opposite the **Jane Bunnett Quintet** in a well attended event. The Clinton brought in from Montreal **Jean Beaudet**, **Charles Papasoff** and **Yannick Bieu** as well as featuring English saxophonist **Evan Parker** on October 2. Parker was also at the Music Gallery in a Goethe Institute sponsored event with German saxophonist **Wolfgang Fuchs** and Canadian saxophonist **Bill Smith**. That trio also performed in Peterborough, Quebec City, Matane, the Victoriaville Festival, and Roulette and the Knitting Factory in New York.

"Pushing The Envelope" was a month long presentation of "New Jazz" by **Bill Grove** at the Music Gallery. There was an impressive mix of Canadian, American and European artists — many of whom rarely perform in Toronto.

Barry Harris was in Toronto for a concert at the McMichael Gallery and nightclub appearances at Myers Deli on York-

ville. He also conducted workshops for his students. He then headed west for an appearance in Vancouver... Vocalist **Trudy Desmond**, who has recorded for Unisson Records, was at George's Spaghetti House in September. Her opening night performance, with support from Don Thompson, Ed Bickert, Steve Wallace and Terry Clarke, was a benefit for the Canadian Cancer Society. Don Thompson, Scott Alexander and Barry Elmes worked with her for the remainder of the week... The Ragtime Society held its annual "Bash" on October 22 at the Cara Inn... The U of T Jazz Ensemble (under the direction of **Phil Nimmons**) gave its first concert of the season at the Faculty of Music on December 3. There will be a further opportunity to catch the band on April 8.



Bob Mover will be lecturing on the Life and Music of Charlie Parker at the McMichael Gallery in Kleinberg on January 12. The gallery presents jazz every Sunday during the winter from 1 to 4 p.m.

The Vancouver based **RIO** (Ron Johnston, Ian McDougall and Oliver Gannon) were presented by Jazz Calgary for three nights (October 27-29) at the Calgary Centre Inn... Edmonton's Yardbird Suite inaugurated its Fall program with an appearance by **Mark Murphy**. Following him were the **George Robert / Tom Harrell Quintet**, **Joshua Breakstone** with the **Charlie Austin Trio**, the **Ken Myers Quintet**, the **Bill Emes Band** and the **Jean Beaudet Quartet**... Tempus

Fugit was a celebration of contemporary jazz and improvised music in Vancouver between November 1-5 with **Michael Brecker**, **Kate Hammett-Vaughan**, **Jean Beaudet**, **Tom Cora / Hans Reichel** and **Marilyn Crispell**.

The Japanese Improvisational Music trio of saxophonist **Shoji Ukaji**, bassist **Tetsu Saito** and drummer **Sabu Toyorumi** were in Canada for performances at the National Arts Centre Theatre in Ottawa, the Victoriaville Festival and the Music Gallery in Toronto.

Ross Porter is the new (but temporary) host of CBC's Jazz Beat... Western Canada has already set the dates for its 1989 festivals. They are in Calgary (June 16-25), Edmonton (June 23-July 2), Vancouver (June 23-July 2), Victoria (June 23-July 1) and Saskatoon (June 29-July 3). This two week spread will allow the festivals to share many of the same artists... Maxine Schacker's paintings, drawings and pastels of such famous musicians as Jay McShann, Buddy Tate, Ralph Sutton, Marty Grosz, Jim Galloway and Oliver Jones attracted a lot of attention during their showing at Toronto's K. Griffin Gallery... **Charlie Mountford** recorded for Unisson Records at Cherry Beach Studio on October 17. Fraser MacPherson, Oliver Gannon, Dave Young and Barry Elmes were the other participating musicians... **Pete Magadini** has released a new recording (made live in Montreal) on his Briko label. Trumpeter **Charles Ellison** is featured... Justin time has released a CD only recording by **Tim Brady** and **Kenny Wheeler** entitled "Visions"... The newest recordings from the Victo label are **Jean Derome's** orchestral work "Confitures de Gagaku" and a solo piano recital by **Marilyn Crispell** called "Labyrinths".

ELSEWHERE — New York City's Jazz Center closed its doors at the end of September. The landlord won its right to raise the monthly rent to \$8000. Cobi Norita and her cohorts at Universal Jazz Coalition were forced to not only move but to raise the \$10,000 necessary to return the 3rd floor space back to its original empty space. It seems incredible that such a vibrant showcase for jazz should be forced to close its doors in Manhattan. The Jazz Center was an im-

portant alternative venue for the jazz musician to present the music. Now it is gone. The whole funding process for the arts in the U.S. is called to question over situations such as this. The Universal Jazz Coalition is now at C.S. 9030, Hicksville, N.Y. 11802-9030... **Sammy Price** celebrated his 80th birthday on October 6. His music was heard all day on WKCR Radio in New York.

Steve Tintweiss' Space-Light Band was heard at the Forest Park Music Grove on September 10... The William Hooker Quartet was at P.S. 122 on September 14 and featured the saxophones of Claude Lawrence and Alan Michael... The **Carlos Ward Quartet** was at First on First on September 16... The Bottom Line presented the East meets West Festival between September 20-25... Tom Guralnick, Bill Smith, Wolfgang Fuchs and David Moss were heard at Roulette on October 12... Colette Michaan was at Paradise October 14/15... An Evening of Improvised Music was held at Saint Peter's Church on November 6... **Leroy Jenkins, John Blake, Billy Bang** and **Julie Lynn Lieberman** were at Hunter College on November 10 in a program entitled "Improvising Violin: Four Personal Views"... the Cecil Payne - Joe Carter Quintet was at Birdland November 10 with Richard Wyands, Jeff Fuller and Al Harewood... BMI has created a Jazz Composers Workshop. The weekly series began on September 20 and will continue through May 1989. The participating composers will have their works evaluated by Bob Brookmeyer and Manny Albam... The Tommy Flanagan Trio followed behind The Leaders at Sweet Basil at the end of November. George Mraz and Kenny Washington worked with the pianist... The International Art of Jazz began its fall season October 9 at Garden City's Ethical Humanist Society with a concert by the **Roy Haynes** Quartet. Jazz harpist Daphne Hellman was heard November 6 at the same location with guitarist Eddie Berg and bassist Lyn Christie.

The Bobby Zankel Trio, Jack Wright, Kuntu and Bill Lewis participated in an evening of live "avant garde" music at Philadelphia's Ethical Society Building on October 28... Eclipse Jazz in Ann Arbor began its Fall series with duets from **Carla Bley** and **Steve Swallow** (October 4). They were followed by **Michelle Rose-**

woman (November 4) and **Courtney Pine** (November 13).

"**Phil Woods** brought his quintet into Peabody's Downunder October 5 to open a subscription series that included Kenny Burrell (October 19), Mark Murphy (November 2), Houston Person/Etta Jones (October 16), Monty Alexander (October 30) and an octet playing music composed by leader and guitarist Bob Ferrazza of Cleveland (December 4)... **The Northeast Ohio Jazz Society** kicked off its subscription series "Jazz At The Institute: Modern Masters of the Jazz Piano" with a stunning performance by Ray Bryant on October 1. Two hundred attended this one at the Cleveland Institute of Music's Kulas Auditorium. Kenny Barron (October 29) and Tommy Flanagan (December 10) followed. Another venue opens up at University Circle, a new nightclub/party center with two large rooms and tiered seating. **Vel's on the Circle** started off with The Milt Jackson Quartet (October 14) with Jimmy McGriff following in November... The Liberty Hill Performing Arts Center is beginning a series that will include **Lionel Hampton** (November), **The Jimmy Wilkins** band and chorus from Detroit playing Duke Ellington's Sacred Music (January) and **The Toshiko Akiyoshi Band** (March). This is a 1300 seat auditorium that traces its use back to a synagogue long since departed for the suburbs, now a baptist church, in the inner city.

A Cleveland Heights restaurant, **Night-town**, has replaced Chung's as the mecca for mainstream/traditional piano lovers. In the last year they have featured Jim Dapogny, Art Hodes, and others with Dave McKenna the most recent man at the Steinway (October 1-2). Up to one hundred people can be accommodated for these 2-hour intimate sessions. It's usually packed." (a Jon Goldman report)

The Artie Shaw Orchestra and Max Morath were part of a concert series in Meadville, Pa... The University of Pittsburgh's annual Seminar on Jazz ran from November 2 through 5. Freddie Hubbard, Terence Blanchard, Grover Washinton and Monty Alexander were among the seminar guests. The event is directed by Nathan Davis who was profiled in the September 1988 *PITT* Magazine... Edward Baker is the new Jazz Studies Director at Roosevelt University.

Three separate programs of jazz related music are being showcased this winter at Washington's Smithsonian Institution. The String Trio of New York were heard there on November 13 as part of the Resident Associate Program. "Big Jazz, Little Jazz" is a separate series which presented Kenny Davern and Art Hodes on October 16. Upcoming are the New Black Eagle Jazz Band (January 15), the Clark Terry Quintet (March 12) and a retrospective look at Count Basie by the Doug Richards band. Finally, "Jazz in the Palm Court" is a series presented by Members of the Smithsonian Movement in Classic Jazz, an ensemble composed of Washington-based musicians who collectively specialise in various forms of classic and contemporary jazz. The five concerts look at different aspects of the jazz tradition.

Bud Shank returned to Southern California for four nights at The Loa from September 15-18... **Horace Tapscott** was back at Catalina's on October 27-28 and **Buddy Collette** was heard at the same venue November 11-12... The all star trio of Peter Erskine, **Buell Neidlinger** and **Marty Krystall**, known as Aurora, were at The Loa from November 10-13.

The Capital City Jazz Festival took place in Washington September 22 to October 1... The fourth annual WNOP Jazzfest was held September 23 at Stone Valley in Harrison, Ohio... The 1989 Paradise Valley Jazz Party will be held March 11 and 12.

The Phil Woods Quintet toured through the midwest in early October playing gigs at The Major Chord in Columbus, Ball State University in Muncie and for the Louisville Jazz Society. They then departed for a four week European tour. Upon their return they took up residence for a week at New York's Blue Note. Woods sounded off on the state of jazz recently in *Windplayer* when asked how he perceived the evolution of the jazz saxophone in the next 20 year. "We're graduating more saxophone players than we can possibly employ. They are being sold a bill of goods by the colleges, by the establishment, by the whole goddamn shooting match and the only people that make out are the instrument makers and the teachers. But when the kids graduate, there's no job for them. There is not a place in America for 30,000 tenor saxophone players who all sound like they

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studied with the same cookie-cutter teacher.”

Andrew Voigt, a founding member of **ROVA Saxophone Quartet**, has left the group. **Steve Adams** took his place for a six week European tour... Larry Steen was the winner of the jazz competition for solo bass at the August 1988 International Society of Bassists convention in Los Angeles... Jane Ira Bloom will write a suite of compositions based on her experiences in attendance at the launch and landing of the 26th Space Shuttle mission... Vibraphonist Tommy Vig performed successfully in Europe this past summer... The Jazz Journalists' Association is a new organisation attending to the needs of jazz writers. More information is available from P.O. Box 9654, Madison, WI 53715.

Marc Edwards wrote with additional information pertaining to his and **David Ware's** performance at the Second International Sound Unity Festival:

“Jazz fans of David S. Ware should realize that David and I have been playing together longer than the review showed. As of today, we've been playing together for twenty years. Your magazine reviewed our performance during a summer festival at Sam River's Studio Rivbea. Long term readers can refer to the September 1974 issue of *Coda Magazine*. This group was recorded on David S. Ware's "Birth of a Being," Hat Hut Record, letter W. The record is now out of print however readers can order it from Cadence Record Sale in *Cadence Magazine*.

“When David added Raphé Malik (trumpet) after Gene Ashton (piano) left the band, Cecil Taylor hired us after having heard the band play on various occasions. This special edition of the Cecil Taylor Unit can be found on "Dark to Themselves", Enja Record 2084. Your critics, Elliot and Noble Bratton, deserve a pat on the back for doing such a fine job. Instead of the usual review format, the Brattons carefully analyzed what we were doing and wrote an accurate account of the concert. Jazz can use this style of constructive criticism. In doing so, the musicians, the critics, and the general public gains.”

Both the **Vienna Art Orchestra** and the **George Gruntz Concert Jazz Band** were on tour in Europe this October... There was an extensive jazz film festival in

Vienna in October... The Groningen Jazz Marathon takes place December 10. The artists are being presented in cooperation with New York's Knitting Factory... The 1988 Total Music Meeting was held in Berlin from November 3-5. This year the focus was the role of the bass in contemporary music with **Joelle Leandre**, **Klaus Koch** and **Barre Phillips** performing. There were also saxophone/drum duets by **Willem Breuker** and **Han Bennink**, **Peter Brotzmann** and **Gunter Sommer** and **Evan Parker** and **Louis Moholo**... Zurich's Widder Bar presented such well known names as Ray Brown, Phineas Newborn, Toshiko Akiyoshi, Lou Donaldson, Joe Pass, Phil Woods and Oliver Jones in October/November. Hot Mallets, with Isla Eckinger and Henri Chaix were heard in concert at Baden on September 10... The Zurich International Jazz Festival took place from November 3-6.

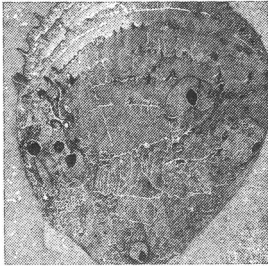
Sylvie Finkelstein reports on the Red Sea Festival:

“Something very special happened at the end of August in Eilat, Israel: for four days and nights the city harbour sounded with jazz. James Moody, Phil Woods, Randy Brecker, Dave Liebman, Richie Beirach, Eddie Palmieri, Joe Pass, Azimuth were both giving master classes in the afternoon and concerts at night. Four halls whose walls were... containers, and whose ceiling was nothing less than the star-spangled middle-east sky. The magic of this festival didn't end with the concerts: in the lobby of the hotel, jam sessions went on until five or six in the morning, putting together local saxophonists and famous New York pianists, Cuban percussionists and Russian jazzmen, journalists that had just transmitted their articles to the next day dailies and amateurs from the whole country, the city Mayor and tourists discovering jazz. The best Israeli jazz groups actively participated in the party: Viacheslav Ganelin, Zaviot, the Platina, Over Draft, Amos Hadani... the atmosphere was so different, so warm that it was still pouring out, two days later, from the 13 and 15-minute reports broadcast on hebrew and arabic television news!”

Argentinian jazz photographer and broadcaster Jorge Lardone (5600 San Rafael (Mza), Buenos Aires 374) would like to contact jazz lovers in North



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America to exchange ideas and viewpoints. He plans his first overseas trip in 1989... "Meeting the Blues" documents the rise of the Texas blues sound. It's a new book by Delbert McClinton published by Taylor Publishing Co... "Producing Jazz: The Experience of an Independent Record Company" by Herman Gray is a new book published by Temple University Press. Theresa Records is the company around which the story revolves... **Art Hodes** took an affectionate look at his career and its place within the jazz community in the July 17 edition of the Sunday New York Times... The No Name Jazzletter has relocated in Cincinnati. The new address is P.O. Box 9208, Cincinnati, Ohio 45209... There's an article on Memphis Gospel Quartets by Kip Lornell in the summer issue of "Rejoice", the gospel music magazine... Names & Numbers, produced by the same people who created Micrography in Holland, has ceased publication... Dick Bakker, founder of Micrography, has published the first number of an occasional magazine entitled "Discographical and Micrographical Basics." It is available from The Golden Age Records, Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal 51-53, NL 1012 RD Amsterdam, Holland.. Peter von Bartkowski has published a large size poster depicting the roots and branches of the "Jazz Story in USA". It lists 553 musicians and bands. You can obtain the poster through the author at P.O. Box 80 04 24, D-2050 Hamburg 80, West Germany.

Ace Records in England is issuing material from the Fantasy archives. Sonny Rollins' "Freedom Suite," Clark Terry's "Top & Bottom Brass" and Thelonious Monk at Town Hall are the most recent releases. There's also a single lp collection from the Bluesville catalogue titled "Volume 1: Folk Blues"... Katie Webster's first Alligator release is called "The Swamp Boogie Queen"... Arabesque Recordings has formed "Taylor Made", a new jazz label to feature recordings produced by Billy Taylor. The first two releases are a trio and solo dates by Taylor himself... "Slalom" is the new Jane Ira Bloom release on CBS... New Cadence Jazz Records releases include "End of a Tune" by Norwegian jazz guitarist Thorgeir Stubo with Art Farmer and Doug Raney making guest appearances. "Sonic Explorations" is a group of

duets by Matthew Shipp and Rob Brown. "Nostalgia in Times Square" features the jazz violin of Pete Compo. "Well You Needn't" is a live recording by the Ernie Krivda Quartet... Johnny Copeland's new lp on Rounder is called "Ain't Nothin' But A Party"... Julius Hemphill's new Big Band recording is on Elektra/Musican... New releases by Art Farmer, Joe Pass, Claudio Roditi and Bill Evans are all available on Fantasy labels... Pianist Mulgrew Miller has recorded his fourth album for Landmark with Joe Henderson, Ron Carter and Tony Williams... Anthony Davis, John Carter, John Blake and Billy Hart all have new releases on Gramavision... MCA/Impulse has released Jack DeJohnette's second lp for the label - "Audio-Visualscapes". Also on Impulse is "Blues for Coltrane" by McCoy Tyner, Pharoah Sanders, David Murray, Cecil McBee and Roy Haynes... "Reverence" is alto saxophonist Christopher Holiday's newest recording on Jazzbeat. Cedar Walton, Ron Carter and Billy Higgins are the rhythm section... Andy Laverne has two new recordings available. "Jazz Piano Lineage" is a solo showcase on DMP while "The Music of Chick Corea" is performed by the pianist with John Abercrombie, Marc Johnson, Marc Egan and Danny Gottlieb. The music has been released by Jazzline Records... Mobile Fidelity has a CD release of highlights of the ninth Moscow Jazz Festival... New Soulnote/Black Saint releases include "Not Yet" by the latest edition of Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, "Out There... Like This" by The Leaders, "Etudes" by Paul Motian, Charlie Haden and Geri Allen, "Flutter By, Butterfly" by the Kenny Wheeler Quintet, "Six Monk Compositions 1987" by Anthony Braxton and "Notes" by Paul Bley and Paul Motian... CBS's "Portrait" label has resurrected on CD a number of Epic lps. "This is the Moment" restores to circulation Dave McKenna's rare 1959 trio session. Contrary to the company's claims this was not the pianist's debut recording. The others are repackages of "Encore" collections by The Duke's Men, Big Bill Broonzy, Louis Armstrong and Artie Shaw... John Handy has signed with Quartet Records... BMG has issued on LP and cassette many of the CD only reissues on its Bluebird label... "Now or Never" is Swedish pianist Sten Sandall's newest

recording... Sea Breeze Records has released recordings by Tom Talbert's Septet and vocalist Madeline Vergari (with Roger Neumann's Rather Big Band... Stomp Off Records (P.O. Box 342, York, Pa 17405) has published a new catalog of its most recent 50 releases of contemporary traditional jazz... Vocalist Scotty Wright's debut lp is called "Too Much Fun" and is on the TuSco label... Here's some additional discographical details for the Charly (Affinity) CD release of Thelonious Monk on Tour in Europe" (122). The details come from Fred Cante, the compiler of the Thelonious Monk Discography:

"Five titles (*Oska T; Epistrophy; Evidence; Blue Monk; We See*) are recorded in Paris, France, 3.11.67. These titles are also released on Esoldun-INA FCD 113 'Thelonious Monk Nonet' (Paris '67).

"The remaining title, *Crepuscule With Nellie* (and **not Monk's Mood**), was recorded in Paris, France, 18.3.66 or 20.3.66. This take is also released on BYG YX-2029 'Best Moments of Thelonious Monk', part 1. (See Sessions 97/98, 'Monk on Records', 2nd edition).

"Note: on BYG YX-2029 '*Crepuscule*' is also wrongly given as *Monk's Mood*."

"The mentioned suggestions (Rotterdam, Berlin) on CD Charly 122 are, in short, *incorrect*."

"By the way, the 1967-tour was *not* 'Monk's third trip to Europe' as you suppose in the liner notes. It was his sixth trip. Monk toured Europe in 1961, '63, '64, '65, '66, '67, '69, '71 and '72. I do have tapes of all these trips."

Drummer **Sam Woodyard** died in Paris on September 21. He was 63 and had been in poor health for some time.

Lawrence Brown, another long time member of the Ellington band died in Los Angeles on September 5. He was 81... **Howard Waters**, author of "Jack Teagarden's Music" died September 17 at his home in Gaithersburg, Md. Arranger/bandleader **Horace Henderson** died on August 29. He was 83... Trombonist/arranger / educator **Ashley Alexander** died while teaching in Canada. He was 53. ...Drummer **J.C. Heard** died in Detroit September 29. He was 71... **Barney Josephson**, owner of The Cookery died September 29 in New York. He was 86... Drummer **James Black** died in New Orleans August 30. He was 48.

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STEVE TIBBETTS

With the concept of "World Beat" music rapidly becoming the next musical commodity fetish, cultural piracy and ethnological forgery is fast becoming fashion again – it's enough to want to make you hock your kalimbas. So it's somehow comforting to know that someone like Steve Tibbetts is making music. A 34-year old guitarist and percussionist from Minneapolis, Tibbetts has been a pioneering force in establishing a global fusion music that blends roots with the future. Taking acoustic guitars, dobros, ago-go bells, mandolins and tablas, Tibbetts, along with his percussionist/sidekick Marc Anderson, mixes third world rhythms, exotica, jazz, tape manipulation and overdubbing into a music mercifully free from ethnocentrism and possessed of a divinely fired spirit.

Tibbetts' love affair with strings began at age six when he mastered the ukelele. Young Steve first heard folk music and work songs as he accompanied his father to union meetings and rallies in Madison, Wisconsin, events that were almost always musical. A Stella 6-string was next, then came high

school, adolescence and amplifiers. The electricity of Tibbetts' stint in the obligatory high school rock band (influenced by the heavy likes of Harvey Mandel and Bill Connors) remains an edge in his music today.

While majoring in Art at Malacaster College, Tibbetts recorded and released his first self-titled, self-produced effort on his own Frammis label, and built his own 8-track studio on the surprise profits from this release. A copy of his second LP "Yr", coupled with his press kit of rejection letters quaintly titled "Critics Rave", found its way into Manfred Eicher's office at ECM Records. Tibbetts was promptly telephoned, and arrangements were made for him to fly to Oslo to record "Northern Song".

Tibbetts has done quite a bit of traveling in his time, and his records often resemble musical postcards from locales along the way – particularly on "Safe Journey", where the circular sketches suggest the pulses of Indonesia, Africa, India. Yet, woven into the tapestry of heavy guitars, exotic percussion and progressive structures is a curious scent of "folk music".

ANDREW JONES: *You've described your music as "folk music". Coming from someone who once said they'd rather see Motorhead than Earl Klugh, this is a bit strange. Could you explain what you're getting at?*

STEVE TIBBETTS: It doesn't fit anywhere else. I suppose you could call it "rock music" because I grew up playing rock 'n' roll in my high school band, Seabiscuit. I guess the reason I would tend to say it's folk music is because I'm an untrained musician, at least I'm not familiar too much with the theory that has to do with notes and time signatures. So it seems like the *music of a folk*. I don't mean like Utah Phillips or Spider John Koerner, but it's not out of a conservatory and it's not exactly rock 'n' roll. Does this make any sense?

Certainly. I asked that because many people when writing about your music place you in the same category as Kip Hanrahan and Don Cherry, pioneers of "World Music", a music which juxtaposes culturally diverse instruments and themes with equally diverse technology. How do you feel about this description? Is it accurate?

I don't think it's a conscious search to assimilate and disseminate world music styles. Whatever instruments happen to be around and end up in the studio I can use. I've always like the sound of a mbira, so I bought one. Kalimbas are around, they're

in music stores, they're easy to find. You can find lots of weird things at estate sales and pawn shops, or garage sales. I bought this really weird instrument, a pianolin, from Claudia Schmidt, who uses it in her records. It's really bizarre – it's got strings you pluck like a harp or a psaltry with your right hand, and on the left hand you bow some strings. It has a very eerie, glasslike sound to it, almost like a glass harmonica. Some twisted inventor in Detroit came up with this contraption and made about 400 of them before he died. So there are probably 400 pianolins sitting around in people's attics.

How did you bring Claudia Schmidt in on the "Exploded View" sessions?

While I was recording "Exploded View", I wanted a woman's voice for a couple of cuts. Not an ordinary voice, but a woman whose voice could sound like a hundred banshees or an electric guitar. One of my students at Naropa suggested Claudia, who of course is best known in Minneapolis for her work with the Prairie Home Companion and her folksy albums on Flying Fish. At first, I didn't think she could belt it out, but I was floored by her.

You teach at the Naropa Institute during the summer. What led you to this venerable Buddhist institution?

I first attended classes at Naropa in the '70s, because I heard it was a neat place to go to school. For the last few years, I've been

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teaching two recording classes. In the beginning class we work with just four tracks, going out and *finding* sounds, then looping them, using them in the context of music.

In the advanced class I assume my students are a little more jaded and want to set up their own recording studio, be their own sonic pilot. So we sync up tape recorders to oscilliscopes and white noise, and everyone is encouraged to get their own little creation on tape.

Your longtime friend and collaborator, percussionist Marc Anderson, has been playing a more important role in your music with each successive release. How did you meet Marc?

Well, Tim Weinhold, a friend of mine who played on my first record, called me up and said, "We should go see this friend of mine play", so we drove up to the St. Paul campus of the University of Minnesota and there was this enormous empty ballroom called the Northstar Ballroom. The band playing there that night was called Clear, and we walked in when Marc was beginning his nightly conga solo. There were five of us, and we just sort of stood there in a row in this empty ballroom and watched this guy play congas like a madman to nobody. And I thought to myself, "If he can do this to a bunch of nobodys, he can do it in a studio".

Your first LP for ECM, "Northern Song", was recorded and mixed in Oslo, while the next two LPs, "Safe Journey" and "Exploded View", were recorded in your own Minneapolis Studio. Did the geographical difference affect your approach to writing and recording?

Yes. The factor of geographical distance played an important part in the sound of my music in that I did a *lot* of traveling in the time between "Safe Journey" and "Exploded View", I went through Asia and Nepal, the Katmandu Valley, and ten thousand miles worth of U.S. highway. I saw a lot of windshield on that tour. By the time of "Exploded View", coming back to my studio was like a salmon swimming upstream reporting back to headquarters, interpreting down all the madness I'd collected.

What prompted the ECM reissue this year of your second album "Yr"?

I asked them if they'd be interested in doing it. That's all. Manfred (Eicher) said, "Sure". It was a very low key kind of exchange. That's why they're such a strong record label — there are no guarantees, no contracts. Nobody on ECM has a contract, and Manfred isn't about to put something

out he doesn't feel strongly about.

"Yr" seems to be a logical progression musically from "Exploded View" Looking back, what do you think of "Yr" now?

I still have a fondness for that album, and it's still very strong to me. I had quite a time making it; I was in my twenties discovering the brave new world of eight track technology. All the songs on that album are like vibrant and colourful postcards of a wonderful summer eight years ago.

Do you regularly perform live? Is there any difficulty in pulling off some of your work in a live situation?

Well, we do, but not that much. When we do play live we do it in bunches of shows. We're just getting into using sampling and trigger technology, so we can really perform live as an ensemble as opposed to slaving to duplicate the sounds of a record. So Bob Hughes, who plays bass, and I are able to feed and sample guitar and bass sounds. As for Marc, he can play drums and congas at the same time, and probably throw jacks and count too. He's *totally* live. I was always disappointed when I saw Keith Moon put on headphones and sync his drums to a ghost synthesizer. So we can go from a trio to a sextet. But I think it's too easy to let samplers run away and dictate everything — there are too many possibilities, so we're being careful. We're still finishing a record where I'd like to avoid sampling as much as possible, and just go for an acoustic sound.

You're in the process of recording a new album, for release in early 1989. You've just mentioned that it will have a more acoustic feel. Are you completing a cycle of some kind?

This record seems to have happened because I inherited and accumulated a whole menagerie of acoustic instruments. So what to do but record with them? It all started when my Dad gave me my grandfather's 1910 Gibson. It's not that great sounding a guitar, it's kind of whiny and tinny. It was from a time when mandolins were turning into guitars; it has a scroll on it, that sort of thing. It compelled me to write a bunch of self-supporting guitar pieces on it and ornament them with all the other instruments I'd coincidentally been given or had ransacked my parents' closets for. Once Dad had given me the Gibson, I said, "Well, what else is lying around here you're not using anymore?"

Do you feel that the direction of this record may change in midstream?

I hope that I always feel a record could take a number of different directions; you



don't want to petrify your music before it's born. The temptation, of course, is always to freeze things — to have your little vision of what it will sound like when it's finished. This gives you a sense of security, a feeling that you will finish it some day. And believe me, when you're six or eight months pregnant with a record, you feel like you're never going to get it done.

Speaking as someone who recently picked up a guitar, what advice could you give to young guitarists who want to find their own voice?

That's hard. Does he want to make a little money? Does he want to find his own voice and be unique? I guess one tiny sage piece of advice would be to try and find your own voice on an acoustic instrument. You can manipulate your voice on an acoustic instrument and make it sound like you, so when you hear it, you say, "that's me." You'll be able to transfer it to any other instrument with your hands. Electric guitar is too easy. You get the right effects, you can get a quasi-Frisell or Metheny sound. But they've really worked hard to get that sound, and you can only approximate it. But on an acoustic guitar, you're in a desert.

Discography

Steve Tibbetts	Frammis (1979)
Yr	Frammis (1980)
	(rereleased on ECM 1355, 1988)
Northern Song	ECM 1218 (1981)
Safe Journey	ECM 1270 (1984)
Exploded View	ECM 1335 (1987)

Frammis Ent., P.O. Box 6164, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55406, U.S.A.

LONG PLAY REISSUES

To the delight of this CD-less writer, jazz LP reissues continue to appear in abundance, often in conjunction with their CD counterparts. One might well ask why, especially, large recording conglomerates such as Warner Communications and Capitol Industries continue to cater to the LP format when the CD seems so firmly entrenched.

Certainly, for older material in particular, the cost is minimized (i.e. the expense of studio time, fees for musicians, technicians, etc.); hence, there is no great outlay in manufacturing both LP and CD. Recent published statistics indicate that only 9% of North American households own a CD player; in other words, there appears to remain a vast record-purchasing populace still committed to conventional vinyl discs. It may be an oversimplification to suggest that factors such as the substantial investment in new recording gear, the hitherto more expensive CD disc, the memory of a short-lived quadrasonic craze, or whispers of high-tech digital tape lingering in the wings are playing roles in the slow demise of the LP. Some adventurous souls consider the CD phenomenon as a transitory stage in the development of the video disc. Even more difficult to believe is that some few executive moguls are altruistically motivated to keeping jazz alive in any playing mode whatsoever. Alas, I ramble and dream simultaneously!

Whatever the reasons, I have two batches of LP's before me for review. The first ten range from 1954 to 1969, with one, a Swedish product, offering alternate takes in a 2-record packet; thus, reflecting a period of some 20 to 35 years ago, these would undoubtedly appeal to many jazz fans nostalgically searching out such golden oldies, much as I did once with the roaring 20's or swinging 30's, voraciously hunting down 78 rpm gems by Henderson's Dixie Stompers, Noone's Apex Club Orchestra, or Shaw's Gramercy Five – all then on very breakable discs. The second group of four recordings on the VJM label do, indeed, take us back to those times when acoustic or early electric recording techniques were in vogue, when many of the numbers were blatant Tin Pan Alley tunes, when group dynamics often overshadowed individual performances. But the



names are magic – Dodds, Armstrong, Henderson, Brunies, Hawkins – and the limited solo breaks remain often startling in their fervour and originality. There is much in all these recordings that is worthy of being heard again and again.

For example, Atlantic's Jess Stacy reissue on its *Jazzlore* series (# 35 - *Tribute to Benny Goodman*) dating from 1955 is a masterful study of later Stacy and classic revival, reuniting such veteran Goodman sidemen as Allen Reuss, Murray McEachern, Vido Musso, Chuck Gentry, Babe Russin, Artie Shapiro, Nick Fatool, and the much underrated trumpeter, Ziggy Elman (listen to him fire up *King Porter* or *Roll 'Em!*). As well, the then 50 year old Stacy still shows that characteristic right hand and a penchant for swinging on *Gee Baby, Ain't I Good To You* and *Blues For Otis Ferguson*, proving what jazz fans knew all along: that his claim to fame did not rest alone on a brief solo break way back on January 16, 1938.

There are other memorable moments that show up on Atlantic's reissue LP label. Alto player **Lee Konitz**, immediately identifiable by his rather stringent approach to improvisation, often at the expense of rhythmic subtlety, shows a more rugged and emotional side to his playing on *Inside Hi-Fi (Jazzlore # 40)*, a 1956 outing that includes him on a borrowed tenor as well, truly a bonus for the listener. One needs only listen to his strong frontal attack on numbers such as *Sweet and Lovely* or *Cork 'n' Rib*, by

way of comparison to earlier, Tristano-influenced dates, to sense that this album represents an evolutionary stage in Konitz's overall development. **Art Farmer**, too, breaks relatively new ground for him on the 1963 *Live at the Half-Note* album (*Jazzlore # 37*), having switched in the early 60's almost exclusively from trumpet to flugelhorn. This somewhat mellow, low-key horn man is paired with guitarist Jim Hall, a player of similar finesse and understatement. The results, cohesively fine-tuned as they are, especially on *What's New* and *I'm Getting Sentimental*, ostensibly standards, are lyrically beautiful, yet without any sacrifice of that rhythmic pulse so inherent to good jazz performances.

Then, of course, there are those albums classified as essential to any personal library of fine jazz. Such are **Charles Mingus'** 1961 LP, *Oh Yeah (Folklore # 38)*, and the *Modern Jazz Quartet's* 1962 *Lonely Woman (Folklore # 36)*, each a milestone in the respective itineraries of its nominal leader. With the former, Mingus is at his raw-edged best on such numbers as *Ecclusiastics*, *Hog Callin' Blues*, and *Wham Bam Thank You Ma'am*, having substituted piano and his own unique vocal explorations for his accustomed role of bassist, given over here to Doug Watkins. With the aid of tenorman Booker Ervin and trombonist Jimmy Knepper (*Catch Devil Woman!*) together with the brilliant though often misunderstood and maligned Roland Kirk (*Eat That Chicken/Hog Callin'*

DOWN BUT NOT OUT

Blues), Mingus, in a continual search for the limits to jazz and his own identity, hammers “out an unmistakably personal language through which he stimulates, disturbs, and re-energizes his listeners more consistently than most contemporary musicians in or out of jazz” (Nat Hentoff: original liner notes). This is powerful stuff for any era. Like Mingus, John Lewis employs his multi-faceted talents in shaping the direction of the group; the MJQ has explored not only the standard jazz repertoire but also the diversity of film music, literary-inspired themes, and contextual responses to classical quartets and orchestras. Here, in part, Lewis transposes three written orchestral settings into vividly portrayed quartet arrangements (*Animal Dance*, *Lamb*, *Leopard*, *Fugaro*). Add to these a delicately stirring treatment of Ornette Coleman’s *Lonely Woman*, and a sprinkling of numbers designed to display the solo virtuosity of its players (Note *New York 19!*), and you have a showcase for what Gunther Schuller coined as third-stream jazz.

Older material continues to show up on the Blue Note label as well, and this is generally a boon for collectors. One of the more consistently satisfying performers on tenor, **Hank Mobley** (**Workout - Blue Note 84080**) demonstrates his solidly rhythmic approach (no bass player needed here!) particularly on the title tune, *Smokin’*, and the 1927 showpiece *The Best Things in Life are Free*, backed by an admirable supporting cast, sadly none of which is with us any longer: Grant Green, Wynton Kelly, Paul Chambers, Philly Joe Jones. It is a swinging date, justifiably demonstrative of Leonard Feather’s accolades to Hank as “the middleweight champion of the tenor saxophone”. Yet another tenor player, **Stanley Turrentine**, is shown to advantage in quartet setting with **Jimmy Smith**, perhaps the father of the organ sounds that so influenced many of the “soul” and “funk” bands pervading the jazz scene in the 60’s (**Prayer Meetin’ - Blue Note 84164**). Turrentine’s somewhat shrill but sinuously robust playing is so well-suited to the staccato style of Jimmy Smith that even such a diversity of selections as Gene Ammons’ *Red Top*, Ivory Joe Hunter’s *I Almost Lost My Mind*, the traditional *When The Saints*,

and the dated Louis Jordan/Ella Fitzgerald hit of the mid-40’s, *Stone Cold Dead in the Market*, work remarkably well in this bouncy context. This 1963 disc, indeed, offers zesty, foot-tapping music.

Cornbread (Blue Note 84222) features characteristic **Lee Morgan** trumpet in almost exclusive Morgan originals, the exception being Harold Arlen’s 1934 *Ill Wind*. Powerfully expressive in technique, with a flat, controlled tone to his horn, his best moments reflect the earlier Navarro or Clifford Brown. Here, following the immense popularity of his “Sidewinder” album some two years prior to this 1965 date, he joins altoist Jackie McLean, tenorman Hank Mobley and pianist Herbie Hancock in some rousing, blues-tinted romping on *Most Like Lee* and *Our Man Higgins*, but shows, too, (*Ill Wind/Ceora*) a melodic side to his style perhaps not accredited to him as frequently as it might have been. Though not the best Morgan on record, it is typical of that period of his development, and makes for good listening once more. So does **Super Nova (Blue Note 84332)**, a **Wayne Shorter** showcase from 1969. This is post-Miles Davis and pre-Weather Report Shorter, and, as such, is indicative of an interesting transitional phase for this reedman. For one thing, his use of soprano sax throughout (Recall Miles’ *In a Silent Way* and *Bitches Brew* earlier this same year) firmly establishes the compatibility of that instrument with his ever-changing musical perspectives; moreover, he has deliberately surrounded himself with musicians with whom he obviously has the greatest affinity for exploring new rhythms and tonalities, especially players with whom he has played often before: John McLaughlin, Chick Corea (drums and vibes!), Jack DeJohnette. Five of the six numbers are Shorter’s own, and, as the title tune would seem to imply, a new creative stage of musical ideas was about to unfold here.

From 1958 to 1961, **Stan Getz** lived and worked exclusively in Europe. The 2-record album, **Stockholm Sessions ’58 (Dragon 157/158)** is not only a classic Getz reissue from three separate studio dates for the Swedish Karusell label, produced for Norman Granz and released, in part, on American Verve, but also includes some hitherto unreleased alternates (two original takes had to be

dubbed from mint copies of an old LP since those master tapes had mysteriously disappeared), one previously unissued take (*Celebrating*), and another released only on a Getz sampler some 25 years after this 1958 session (*Gold Rush*). The transfer (CD or no CD) is impeccable, and Getz, in the company of such notable European (and European-based) players as Benny Bailey, Ake Persson, Lars Gullin, and Bengt Hallberg, blows up a storm on *Honeysuckle Rose* and Mulligan’s *Gold Rush* (take 2), saving his best relaxed, always lyrical, lightly-swinging ballad form for *Topsy*, *Cabin in the Sky* (take 2 especially), and *They Can’t Take That Away From Me*. Hence, this is truly a much-welcomed reissue with bonuses that are Getz gems for the listener. Undoubtedly, this might be a contender for reissue of the year!

The English VJM releases are really reissues of reissues, most cuts having been made available over the years in a variety of formats (LP or EP) and, in whole or part, on a plethora of labels – Decca, Ace of Hearts(English), Raretone(Italian), RCA, Folkways, Swaggie(Australian), Family(Italian), HMV(English), CJM, Coral(German), Columbia and CBS, Jazz Panorama, Milestone, Meritt, Gaps(Dutch), Historical, Ristic, Jazz Collectors, Smithsonian, BYG(Italian), Tax(Swedish), Tax (Swedish), Fountain(English), Rarities (English), Philips(Dutch), Biograph, and King Akwa(German). Whew!

The Halfway House Orchestra, an excellent all-white band of the mid-to-late 20’s (1925-28), named after a well-known jazz venue a few miles outside New Orleans, featured the considerable talents of cornetist Abbie Brunis and, later, clarinetist Sidney Arodin, guided by the brass or string bass of Chink Martin. Electrically recorded, not in studios, but from makeshift mobile vans, music shops, or available hotel rooms, the music (**VJM 62**) captures, in a relaxed manner, jazz of that period with a straightforward but swinging style. VJM had previously issued all of this material earlier, but on two discs, sharing the second with the **New Orleans Owls**, another New Orleans-based aggregation, similar in phrasing and technique (**VJM 19 and 22**). All are immaculately reproduced from master or mint copies, with little to distinguish the quality of the

former from the latter; however, it is good to have all of them together on a single recording. One cut, *Wylie Avenue Blues*, was never released in the U.S.A., appearing only in Australia in 1929. Missing only are two very early sides for Okeh (June 25, 1925), featuring the legendary Leon Rappalo on clarinet and alto; perhaps, we can see an advantage to a CD in its capacity for handling all 22 of the total output of this group rather than the present 20.

Johnny Dodds was one of the early great exponents of the jazz clarinet, reflecting a clarity of tone and a driving excitement matched by few of his peers. Though his best performances seemed fashioned in the competitive company of Louis Armstrong (Hot 5 and 7 groups) or Jelly Roll Morton, some memorable sides were recorded under his own name (Black Bottom Stompers, Trio, Washboard Band and Orchestra) from 1922 to 1929, a fertile period in his playing, featuring in the roles of sidemen Armstrong (April 22/27 only) and Natty Dominique on cornets, trombonist Honore Dutrey (Washboard and Orchestra sides), and drummer Baby Dodds. There have been many LP/EP pressings of these works; thus, a comparative sound check with a few representative releases in my possession seemed a fair method by which to judge the quality of the present disc. In contrast, the April 22, 1967 pressings from my two dated Decca LP's (# 3214: *Jazz of the Twenties* / # 9233: *Young Louis* -

The Side Man) of *Wild Man Blues* (matrix 22725) were noisy, with soloists indistinguishably muffled. They had seemed acceptable until this LP arrived, though the *Swaggie* EP (# 33729) came off much better, even brighter in some ways than the VJM LP. Take 2 of the number (matrix 22726) from *Ace of Hearts* # 169 offers a rough, but rewarding, alternate. VJM, here, makes no concessions to alternate takes, however. By way of further examples, *Sweet Lorraine* (take 2) from the January 30, 1929 Victor files was clear and sharp both on Victor's LPV 558 (released in the late 60's) and VJM 61, though the latter had considerably reduced extraneous surface noise; while on *Too Tight* (take 3) from a Raretone issue (Blue Clarinet Stomp - # 24000), there was little to choose. What all this seems to add up to is that the reprocessing of such early jazz material depends to a great extent on the quality of the source material - a master, a fresh copy, or the best copy available at the time. Whether a CD would enhance these is somewhat debatable. Nevertheless, what it could accomplish for the jazzophile is to extend the playing time to include some of the 10 alternates extant, or some of the missing dates (March/April, 1927; trio cut from February 7, 1929). Mind you, the present 58 minutes from 20 selections speaks well for VJM's efforts to make such classic work readily available once more.

In a career spanning almost three decades, pianist-arranger **Fletcher Henderson** gathered together in his various orchestras and small groups some of the most prominent personalities of the jazz world: Louis Armstrong, Coleman Hawkins, Fats Waller, Don Redman, Buster Bailey, Tommy Ladnier, Rex Stewart, Benny Carter, John Kirby, Red Allen, Roy Eldridge, Ben Webster, Chu Berry, Dexter Gordon, Lucky Thompson. VJM provides us with the opportunity to hear the results from some of these affiliations on two recordings, **VJM 60** with Louis from 1924/25, and **VJM 63**, orchestra studio sessions from February to April, 1931. To dismiss the earlier recording (VJM 60) as sounding too homogeneous is to overlook many of the excitingly unique solo forays that add improvisational fire to ensemble passages. Armstrong's presence, of course, cannot be too highly regarded, as evidenced by his 16 bar solo and growl cornet on *Dreamy Eyes*, or his 32 bar efforts both on *Shanghai Shuffle* and *One Of These Days*. Moreover, a young Coleman Hawkins was learning to swing as well; catch his 40 bar burst over muted brass on *Swanee Butterfly*, or his shorter but no less effective efforts on *Poplar Street* and *How Come... Do*. Then there's Charlie Green, one of the hot trombonists of his day, a cohesive force throughout, but particularly noteworthy for a beautiful, muted 32 bar chorus on *Shanghai Shuffle*; and multi-reedman Don Redman, who could swing on oboe (*Shanghai Shuffle*) or alto (*My Dream Man*); Buster Bailey's splendid 16 bar obligatto on *Twelfth Street*; Charlie Dixon's stop time banjo solo on *Everybody Loves*. Indeed, careful listening brings its own rewards. There are bonuses too: Louis' first ever recorded scat vocal (*Everybody Loves* - take 1, complete with the four bar sax introduction generally omitted on most LP's), preceding by well over a year his own Hot Five version of *Heebie Jeebies*; a rare Oriole pressing (5749 - take 3) of *Naughty Man*; a take 5 rendition of *I'll See You In My Dreams*, quite different in solo performances from the more well known first take (I prefer the latter, however, for its looser style of presentation).

The Henderson band of some six years later (VJM 63) is a different story. At

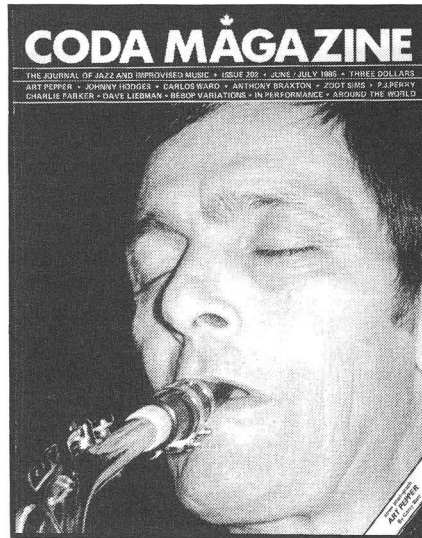
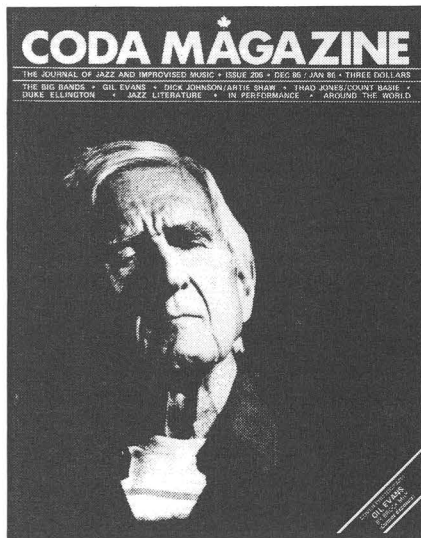


the peak of its performance (unwittingly facing hard times ahead), the orchestra still retained its popularity and had developed a more sophisticated sound built around the superb arranging skills of its leader, of younger brother Horace, reedman Benny Carter, and Bill Challis. Individual performers were strategically showcased now. Hawkins, a well-seasoned player with the band, shines in a 16 bar solo on *Crazy Baby*, in his 22 bar choruses on all three versions of *Sugarfoot Stomp*, and in his 16 bar trade off with trumpeter Bobby Stark on *Tiger Rag*; in addition, he displays a virtuosity both on clarinet (*Hot and Anxious*) and baritone (*Clarinet Marmalade*). Hawkins was fast approaching that form that would win him European accolades a few years later. There are other highlights to note: Rex Stewart's muted contributions to Jimmy Harrison's vocal on *Sweet and Hot* and to *Sugar Foot* (especially the April 29th date), or his Bix-inspired chorus on *Singing the Blues*; Claude Jones' brief but memorable effort behind an otherwise mundane *Somebody Stole My Gal*; Russell Procope's dazzling 32 bar clarinet run on *Tiger Rag*; Bobby Stark's lovely 24 bar introduction to *My Pretty Girl*. And listen, you Glenn Miller fans, to that "In The Mood" riff on *Hot and Anxious!* The four 78 Crown pressings from March/April, recorded in independent studios though under the auspices of RCA and intended for a dance music public, are of inferior sound quality; nevertheless, they are historically and musically well worth having. Again, some alternates (i.e. take 2 of *Sugarfoot* from 19/3/31; the four take 2 Victor sides from 29/4/31) are omitted simply from lack of playing space on the LP. (N.B. Take 2 of *Singing The Blues*, reissued on Meritt # 1, is a winner not to be missed!).

Though, perforce, I have made some concessions in this review to the relative value of the CD format, I still remain either too cheap, too skeptical, or too stubborn to acquiesce at the moment to what the experts claim as the inevitable demise of the LP. And, as long as I can continue to obtain conventional recordings of the quality and scope of the above, I shall persist in enjoying my jazz on 12" black vinyl. "Dites du bien des bonnes choses," I say.

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| 169 (Oct. 1979) | Amina Claudine Myers, Kenny Burrell, Pisa & Bracknell Festivals |
| 168 (Aug. 1979) | Albert Mangelsdorff, Barry Altschul, Blues News, Moers Festival |
| 167 (June 1979) | Evan Parker, Incus Records, Red Callender, Bill Russell, Rova Sax Quartet |
| 164/65 (February) | 1979) SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE COUNTS AS TWO - Jeanne Lee, Gunter Hampel, Lester Bowie, Hank Jones, Vinny Golia, Nick Brignola |
| 163 (Oct. 1978) | Henry Red Allen, Frank Lowe, Albert Nicholas |
| 160 (April 1978) | Willem Breuker, Joe Pass, Enrico Rava, European record labels* |
| 159 (Feb. 1978) | Randy Weston, Milt Hinton, Blues News |
| 158 (Dec. 1977) | Joseph Jarman, Eddie Durham, Bobby Hackett |
| 157 (Oct. 1977) | Bobby Bradford, John Carter, Chet Baker, Butch Morris |
| 155 (June 1977) | George Lewis, Lloyd Glenn |
| 154 (April 1977) | Milt Buckner, Christmann/Schonenberg |
| 153 (Feb. 1977) | Steve Lacy, Marty Grosz, Mal Waldron, Blues News |
| 151 (Oct. 1976) | Don Pullen, Benny Waters |
| 150 (Sept. 1976) | Milford Graves, Will Bradley |
| 135 (Jan. 1975) | J.R. Monterose, Louis Armstrong Filmography, Strata-East Records |
| 134 (Dec. 1974) | Julian Priester, Muggsy Spanier Big Band, Steve McCall |
| 133 (Nov. 1974) | Charles Delaunay, pt. 1, Rex Stewart, Howard King |
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FESTIVAL SCENES

THE CHICAGO OLD STYLE JAZZ FESTIVAL August 30 – September 4, 1988

The “Hawk” blew through Chicago on the final night of Chicago’s Old Style Jazz Festival. It’s debatable whether Doc Cheatham’s sincere request for *I Want A Little Girl* had anything to do with it but the gale force winds and sprinklings of rain created chaos for musicians and organisers. It says much for everyone’s tenacity that all the musicians performed and more than 5000 spectators hung on to hear their hero – **Herbie Hancock**.

Hancock, the final night headliner, could have ignited the spark which would have driven the audience crazy but, instead, he chose a program of standards and lyrical originals such as *Dolphin Dance* to lull the audience. After all the aggravation of the evening people simply drifted away. By the end of his set the audience was down to a few hundred.

This was the tenth anniversary of the Chicago Jazz Festival. As the audience was constantly reminded, it is the largest free jazz festival in the world! Apart from the large audiences who show up at Grant Park there is an uncountable audience listening across the U.S. on NPR affiliate radio stations. Each night, from 6:30 to 10:30, the music was carried on the nation’s airwaves.

The festival’s focus was on the contributions to jazz by musicians from Chicago or musically associated with the city. The spirit of Gene Ammons hung over the entire festival and the many featured tenor saxophonists were an ongoing reminder of his message.

Sonny Rollins came to play and, for once, he had a rhythm section which held things together while he took off in his unique way. **Bob Cranshaw** and **Marvin “Smitty” Smith** were the glue which held the set together. There were also some eloquent moments from trombonist **Clifton Anderson**. But it was **Sonny Rollins** who held everyone spellbound with the intricacies of his improvisations.

Johnny Griffin returned to his hometown to deliver a first-rate set. The highlight was his exploration of Billy Strayhorn’s *Isfahan* and the exciting piano work of **Michael Weiss** – a young man who is making fresh statements within the music’s traditions. The set closed out



with an overabundance of Chicago tenor saxophonists on stage. The guests (**Clifford Jordan**, **Von Freeman**, **Ed Petersen**, **Eddie Harris**, **E. Parker McDougal**) worked their way through many choruses of *Billie’s Bounce* and closed the evening with *Chicago*.

The evening concerts also showcased the mercurial stylings of **Stan Getz** (in a reunion with **J.J. Johnson**), the effluent voicings of **Eddie Harris** in a set he shared with multi-instrumentalist **Ira Sullivan** and an abbreviated performance by **Clifford Jordan** with **Andrew Hill** which promised more than it delivered. There were also some strong tenor statements from **James Perkins**, a Chicago musician whose eclecticism cannot hide the quality of his playing.

It was on the daytime stage that the true nature of Chicago’s jazz tradition was revealed. Audiences and musicians were close together and the special chemistry which transforms a visual/aural spectacle into a spontaneous reshaping of patterns and forms – constituting, on the way, what **Whitney Balliett** has called “the sound of surprise”. There were saxophone “battles” each day – all three of them had their special magic. **Eddie Harris** and newcomer **Ed Petersen** were

one combination and another pitted together **Johnny Griffin** and **Ira Sullivan**. Then there was **Von Freeman** and **Clifford Jordan**. This was muscular saxophone playing where each man sought to complement and stimulate the other. It pitted the solid dependability of **Jordan** alongside the unpredictability of **Von Freeman**. On this occasion he had everything together.

But the highlight of the entire festival was the set by the **Don Bennett Quintet**. Nothing had prepared me for the power, energy, originality and uncompromising cohesiveness of this band. Only curiosity about **Carmell Jones** had made it essential to attend this early noon hour performance. The rewards far exceeded all expectations. The band’s repertoire, all originals, were based within the standards established in the 1950s by those musicians who recorded for **Blue Note**. This band performed its music with maturity and an imagination which set it apart from such revivalist groups as “*Out Of The Blue*” or the present day versions of **Art Blakey’s Jazz Messengers**. **Carmell Jones** sounded terrific while the band’s tenor saxophonist (**Ari Brown**) played with a searing intensity. Holding everything together was the superb rhythm section of pianist **Don Bennett**, bassist **Richard Brown** and drummer **Avreeayl Ra**.

In fact, the strength of Chicago rhythm sections was one of the exciting experiences of this festival. Such pianists as **Willie Pickens** and **John Young** seem to understand what it takes to put together a trio of musicians who come together and think as one.

The festival had many highlights and few real low spots. It offered a broad cross section of the jazz tradition with only token acknowledgement of the musical offshoots mistakenly being identified today as jazz. This makes the Chicago Jazz Festival a particularly attractive event to be a part of – in person or via radio.

Other highspots included **Dorothy Donegan’s** stunning display. Her dazzling display of piano pyrotechnics and hard sell show business went over well on an evening when some excitement was sorely needed. Both the **Art Ensemble** and **Sun Ra** were visually stimulating as well as musically exciting. The way in which **Malachi Favors** and **Don Moye** propel the

REVIEWS OF FESTIVALS IN CHICAGO / VILNIUS

band into a higher musical level is like the “kick” of a world class athlete coming down the stretch. Joseph Jarman (with the Art Ensemble) and John Gilmore (with Sun Ra) further enhanced the language of the tenor saxophone through the strength of their solos. Sun Ra, like Ellington before him, seems to be featuring more and more of his piano while his band becomes more tradition oriented. It also made more sense to hear classic Henderson and Ellington material given a fresh look by Sun Ra rather than the clinically perfect reading of old scores by the Bob Wilber Orchestra in its recreation of the Goodman sound.

Georgio Gaslini's Quintet presented a well crafted set of original compositions/arrangements drawn from their most recent Soulnote recording. The music began with spacious fragments of melody, harmony and rhythm and worked backwards towards something approaching swing. It is a very formal (and European) way of performing the music. Everything seemed to be carefully planned.

At the opposite end of the scale was **Charlie Haden's Liberation Music Orchestra**. They incorporated several different themes which were linked together by the soloists in the band. In fact just about everyone had a say in a set dominated by individual statements. Their orchestral playing was severely hampered by the high winds so, under the circumstances, it was an achievement just to perform as well as they did.

Joe Williams opened the festival in rather a throwaway, but which set up the philosophy of the event. After all, Chicago has been “home” of the blues for many decades and Joe Williams is its most sophisticated interpreter. But it was **Ernestine Anderson** who sold her talent to the audience in the blustery conditions of the final night. **Norman Simmons'** excellent role as accompanist for both singers was a positive note.

Bud Freeman, Art Hodes and Doc Cheatham are elder statesmen of the music but their set was effectively destroyed by the elements. A situation from which they never recovered. Classic jazz of the 1920s was well executed in a reunion performance by **The Original Salty Dogs** at the afternoon stage. It was a charming experience to hear the strains of *Chattanooga Stomp* drifting through the

park on a warm, sunny afternoon.

Other legendary names were to be found within a big band called **Precious Too**. They paid tribute to Chicago's Jazz Masters. **Paul Serrano, George Dixon, Dicky Harris** and **Kansas Fields** were in the band which performed John Mays arrangements of such classics as *Red Top* and *Cavernism*. Both Dixon and Fields were heard to better advantage with bassist **Truck Parham's The Giants of Jazz**. Tenor saxophonist Lucius Washington and pianist Earma Thompson completed a quintet whose musical spirit belied their years.

Chicago's Old Style Jazz Festival derives its name from a brew created by one of its sponsors. It is also an apt description of the festival's setting – a large open air stage, seating more than five thousand people and a vast park space behind that where families can bring picnic dinners, let their kids run free and enjoy the music under the stars. Situated between Lake Michigan and the glittering lights of downtown Chicago's skyscrapers this festival is an oasis of serenity in a sometimes crazy world.

The setting seems to relax people and the boulevard of fast food stands and souvenir stalls helps maintain the ambience. It's also somewhere to escape to when the music is not to your taste.

Music changeovers are brief – amazingly so for a festival – and everything runs like clockwork. The disciplines of live radio are a blessing. Mandatory encores are non-existent and everyone comes on and off stage within the prescribed times. Some artists might leave you wishing for more but even the most tedious sounds are only transitory.

The Chicago Jazz Institute's organizational skills and their programming imagination make this a festival with a difference. Also, through the graciousness of the City of Chicago all the music comes free of charge to the public.

This festival, like the original Newport Festival and the present day event in Nice, has a special ambience. Coming as it does at the end of the summer it is the icing on the cake and shouldn't be missed by anyone interested in enjoying performances which reflect both old and new styles within the jazz tradition.

– John Norris

THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL IN VILNIUS

Glasnost and *perestroika* are penetrating even the smoky realms of international jazz. Vilnius, capital of the Lithuanian SSR, hosted its first international jazz festival from 30 September to 2 October. Five concerts during the three days of “Jazz Forum '88” provided a showcase for musicians from east and west. While most of them came from Eastern Europe – Lithuania, Latvia, Russia, Poland, Hungary and East Germany – the audience also heard the music of Americans, Finns, Dutch, West Germans and Australians.

All of the concerts were well attended. The series climaxed with a sold-out, standing-room-only crowd of more than 1,200 people jamming the hall on the final night.

Many ardent jazz fans live in Vilnius, which is the home of renowned musicians such as percussionist **Vladimir Tarasov** and **Vladimir Chekasin**, horn player and all-round musical magician. Jazz Forum '88 made it possible to bring to Lithuania for the first time such stars as American pianist/composer **John Fischer** and pianist **Alexander von Schlippenbach**, horn player **Gert Dudek** and bassist **Ali Haurand**, all from West Germany.

Two of the highlight of the Forum were solo performances by von Schlippenbach and Fischer. Von Schlippenbach moved freely through well-composed sections and improvisations of his own music and Ellington and Monk tunes. Fischer's music displayed originality, good humour and warmth. The audience responded especially to his interweaving of classical, patriotic and pop melodies in an improvised, ironic march decrying the folly of war. Tarasov joined him in this number.

Chekasin and Tarasov, together with Australian singer **Jo Truman**, engaged in way-out musical high-jinx on stage involving parodies of operatic and other traditions. The “Quartet”, represented by Dudek, Haurand and Dutchman **R. van den Broeck** on piano (English drummer Tony Oxley had a gig elsewhere), played modal, mainstream jazz. The **Jurgen Heckel Quartet** from East Germany offered hard-driving punk/jazz/rock. Leningrad musicians **V. Gaivoronsky** on trumpet and **V. Volkov** on bass comprised

an amusing duo marked by unexpected rhythmic cadences and free jazz elements.

Among the younger musicians who enchanted the audience were saxophonist **Petras Vysniauskas** and pianist **Kestutis Lusas**, both Lithuanians. During part of their duet, Vysniauskas played with the bell of his soprano saxophone immersed in a bucket of water. The other groups who participated were the **Discomfort Trio** (Latvia), **Konig Trio** (German Democratic Republic), **Blues Duo** (Poland), **Labutis-Laurinavicius-Sinkarenka Trio** (Lithuania), **G. Abarius Trio** (Lith.), **Young Power Trio** (Poland), **Martti Hautsalo Quartet** (Finland), **Skirmantas Sasnauskas Jazz Quintet** (Lith.) and **Mihaly Dresch Quartet** (Hungary).

According to Antanas Gustys, one of the main organizers, Jazz Forum '88 aimed to reflect the European jazz scene and to feature more contemporary music. Sponsored by the Youth Entertainment Center, the Lithuanian Jazz Association and Vilnius Culture Management, it was called Jazz Forum in order to include all musical directions – traditional, avant garde, free and mainstream. The entire festival was recorded for television and radio replay. The organizers intend to make the international Jazz Forum an annual tradition. – *Frances Waske*

LOS ANGELES JAZZ FESTIVAL Shrine Auditorium, Los Angeles September 4, 1988

After years of speculation and half-hearted attempts, Los Angeles finally has a jazz festival. The International Association of Jazz Appreciation put on the successful weekend of jazz and there are promises of expansion in 1989. A modest venture compared to the more ambitious marathons held in the U.S. and Canada, the L.A. Jazz Festival was impressive for its consistent musical quality.

I was unable to attend the free Saturday concert which featured **Gerald Wilson's** orchestra and **Poncho Sanchez's Latin Band** but, considering that it was held outside in the middle of the recent heat wave (with temperatures hitting 110), I have no regrets.

Sunday's proceedings were more comfortable since they took place inside the Shrine Auditorium. The 4½ hour show opened with a rare L.A. appearance by

Oliver Jones. Canadians probably take the brilliant pianist for granted by now but Angelenos were quite impressed by his effortless virtuosity, his rapid lines and his taste. Obviously influenced by Oscar Peterson, Jones nevertheless has a distinctive style within the jazz mainstream and worked well with bassist **Andy Simpkins** and drummer **Ralph Penland**.

Next up was the underrated singer **Gloria Lynne**. By carefully placing her lyrics on the most expressive notes, Lynne proved herself to be a masterful jazz singer even though she doesn't scat. Together with her longtime pianist **Ron Kalina** (who doubled on harmonica), Simpkins and Penland, Lynne was in fine form on a set of standards and won over this reviewer.

After Chris Bellious did a bit of tap-dancing, the **James Moody** quartet took centerstage. A rough start on *Autumn Leaves* (during which Moody had difficulty getting his rhythm section out of the opening vamp) was quickly forgotten as the tenorman took a couple of very funny vocals. Although possessing but an average voice, Moody reaches for (and just barely hits) high notes, throws in some silly scatting and even engages in some odd yodelling. On *Benny's From Heaven* (based on "Pennies"), Moody concluded with the line "Benny must be from heaven 'cause he damn sure ain't from me!" He followed with his famous *Moody's Mood For Love* but unlike most singers he did not stick to the original note-for-note version and sang some new runs, sounding hilarious when belting out the female part. When trombonist Slide Hampton joined the group for *Confirmation*, Moody took care of business and played his best solo of the night.

Nat Adderley's playing has been erratic on record ever since the late 60s but, at least on his first few songs at the Festival, the cornetist's chops were in good shape. The star of the set was Nat's discovery altoist **Vincent Herring**, a young player whose solos were quite explosive (influenced by Cannonball and Bird) and explorative. Vincent Herring is a name to look for in the future; he has great potential.

The finale was provided by the all-star 17-piece L.A. Jazz '88 Big Band under the direction of **Buddy Collette**, who provided most of the bop-based arrange-

ments. Guest appearances by **Vi Redd** (who over Collette's protest took a third feature, a very soulful rendition of *Willow Weep For Me*) and vocalist **Bill Henderson** sparked the set. As often happens with overstuffed orchestras, not every player was heard from enough with trumpeters **Clora Bryant** (who hit some remarkable high notes) and **Cecil Bridgewater** only soloing on the final blues and Collette limiting himself to one spot on flute. Among the other major names were **Joe Henderson**, **Harold Land**, **Oscar Brashear**, **Buster Cooper** and **Red Callender**.

Overall it was a well-planned night with each group getting an average of fifty minutes. IAOJA president William J. Coffey promises that next year's event will be more adventurous. I greatly look forward to the 2nd annual L.A. Jazz Festival. – *Scott Yanow*

JVC JAZZ FESTIVAL New York City JVC GRANDE PARADE DU JAZZ Nice, France June-July 1988

Through the years, for both artist and audience, festivals have become routine experiences. Nowadays almost every major city in the United States and Canada has its own jazz festival, and I was told that in the past summer over fifty jazz festivals were held in France alone. Festivals perform several very important functions: they give jazz lovers many live performances concentrated in a short span of time and in a single area, they give work to musicians, and they attract mass audiences. The producers' reason for organizing such events is mass audience in the first place and that presents a serious danger: it pushes them to hire acts mainly for their mass appeal. This is why artists whose music is further and further removed from jazz – sometimes even acts which are blatantly commercial and of no artistic interest whatsoever – find today their way into most jazz festivals. The boom of jazz festivals leads to a frightening sequence: in order to draw a mass audience organizers hire non-jazz performers, jazz audiences stop supporting these events, thus the non-



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jazz acts of the festival draw more people and more non-jazz acts are hired....

The two festivals I have attended in 1988 were big enough to disregard their few non-jazz acts. Both were created in association with local producers by George Wein's Festival Productions Inc. Both had the same sponsor and both were big budget events that featured an impressive array of "names": in New York on Saturday, June 25th there were a Billy Taylor piano recital, an Ella Fitzgerald performance, a concert shared by the Toshiko Akiyoshi Orchestra and the Mel Lewis Band; in Nice on Monday, July 18th on one single ticket one could attend performances by the Gerry Mulligan Concert Jazz Band, Lionel Hampton and his Orchestra, the Dizzy Gillespie Big Band, the Hilton Ruiz trio, Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers, Charlie Haden's Quartet West, B.B. King, Steve Gadd and the Gadd Gang, and two French groups. Both festivals emphasized the mainstream of jazz with token appearances by avant-garde artists and both included fusion, crossover and jazz/rock. Both allowed the festival goer a multiple choice of simultaneous events and both shared acts like Lionel Hampton, Wynton Marsalis, the Carlos Santana/Wayne Shorter Group, Lee Ritenour, the Dave Brubeck Quartet, Hilton Ruiz, Carmen McRae with Clifford Jordan, Dizzy Gillespie, Ruby Braff, the Buck Clayton Orchestra, Miles

Davis, Michel Camilo, and B.B. King.

The New York event lasted nine days, June 24 to July 2, while the Nice one stretched over eleven days, July 9 to 19. In spite of the above similarities, and aside from the obvious difference in geographic and ethnic setting, the two festivals are planned differently and result in a substantially different experience. In New York, a choice is made by buying a certain seat for a specific concert, which is advertised well in advance and which is either built around a central unifying theme or features artists playing in a similar "bag". In Nice, the ticket entitles you to spend seven hours at the festival grounds, where you can attend a choice of about sixteen one hour sets by a similar number of assorted groups performing simultaneously on three stages; the exact program is announced only the night before, although the dedicated fan can obtain a general schedule in advance.

Both festivals included many routine performances. Both presented several acts which could hardly be called jazz by anybody's standards, and some of these acts were trite commercial fare. However — with luck, a little effort, and good planning — one could avoid most of such trash and be rewarded by performances which turned out to be quite memorable.

For the Love of Louis at Carnegie Hall was a warm tribute to Armstrong

which began as a reprise of a similar event produced in 1974 (released as an LP album called "Satchmo Remembered" on Atlantic SD-1671) and proceeded with some new re-creations of Satchmo's great solos of the thirties. The trumpet parts were handled very capably by Warren Vache, Randy Sandke and Jon Faddis, abetted by Jimmy Maxwell and Jimmy Owens. Clark Terry played *Georgia On My Mind* and sang *You Rascal You*, Dizzy Gillespie played a moving *Confessin'*, Wynton Marsalis obliged with a reading of Armstrong's classic *Cornet Chop Suey* and Lionel Hampton improvised on *Shine* and sang *What A Wonderful World*. The four guests joined forces on *Memories Of You*, and the show ended fittingly with everybody onstage and Carrie Smith singing *When It's Sleepytime Down South*.

Jay McShann was a delight both at his Waterloo Village performance and at his recital at the Weill Hall. He played and sang buoyantly many standards and, as usual, excelled in the blues.

Jon Faddis, Jack Walrath, Sam Durtis, John Handy, David Murray, Craig Handy, Nick Brignola, Jaki Byard, George Mraz, and Billy Hart were led by Jimmy Knepper in an evening called **A Charles Mingus All-Star Big Band** at the Kaufman Hall. *Black Saint And The Sinner Lady*, *Jump Monk*, *E's Flat*, *Ah's Flat Too*, *The Shoes Of The Fisherman's Wife* *Are Some Jive Slippers*, and *Duke Ellington's Sound Of*

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Love were performed with fire and depth as if the Maestro himself were prodding the musicians.

Carmen McRae sang at Carnegie Hall backed by her regular pianist Eric Gunnison and the superb rhythm section of George Mraz and Al Foster. She was non-pareil in *What Can I Say After I Say I'm Sorry*, *Am I Blue?*, *Street Of Dreams*, *Silent Tear*, *Old Devil Moon* and *For All We Know* but somehow did not measure up to a program of Thelonious Monk tunes in which she was joined by Clifford Jordan on tenor.

Dave McKenna's recital at Weill Hall was full of fun and artistry and included a masterful key-changing rendition of *I've Found A New Baby*.

Gerry Wiggins' Weill Hall tatumesque recital was another highlight of the piano solo series. Wiggins reharmonized a program of standards on which he elaborated some very personal statements. He started with *The Way You Look Tonight* and included *Yesterdays*, *Don't Blame Me*, *Have You Met Miss Jones*, *When Lights Are Low*, *Body And Soul*, a surprising version of *Dinah*, *Mean To Me*, and *Love For Sale*.

At Town Hall in *A Night For Lady Day*, among many other combinations, producer Ruby Braff was joined by Warren Vache, Barry Harris and Ellis Larkins in a four-way improvisation which was the epitome of taste and swing — one of those unique moments when all the trouble, effort and expense in getting there are fully justified!

The first day of the Grande Parade yielded great playing by the **George Adams/Don Pullen Quartet**, with Cameron Brown on bass and superb drumming by Lewis Nash. The young percussionist had recently joined the group taking the place of Dannie Richmond who died in March 1988. The quartet performed original material such as *Sun Watchers*, *Sing Me A Song Everlasting*, and *Mr. Smoothie*, and played with fire and creativity through each of the eight sets in which they appeared at the festival.

The Buck Clayton Orchestra was supported by the first class rhythm section of Gerry Wiggins, Howard Alden, Eddie Jones and Oliver Jackson. The band included no mean soloists too in Johnny Letman, Randy Sandke, Harold Ashby,

— with Todd Williams, Marcus Roberts, Reginald Veal and Herlin Riley Jr. — led a long set which was quite different from his standard fare. No up-tempo number was featured at all. He called four blues and four ballads including *Yesterdays* and *Do You Know What It Means To Miss New Orleans*. All five young men dug deeply into this material as if searching their souls for the truth.

Charlie Haden's Quartet West — with Ernie Watts, Alan Broadbent and Paul Motian — played six outstanding sets on the last three days of Nice's festival. They improvised extensive solos on material which ranged from original compositions by the quartet members to standards like *Body And Soul*, and to jazz classics like Charlie Parker's *Passport* and *Visa* and Ornette Coleman's *Lonely Woman*. One of the most engaging small groups of the season.

Two outstanding but very different big bands performed on the same three last days of the Grande Parade. **Gerry Mulligan and the Gerry Mulligan Concert Jazz Band** sounded like a well oiled machine on its leader's compositions and arrangements like *Maytag*, *Absent Friends* and *The Flying Scotsman*. Mulligan was the major soloist with worthy contributions by Seldon Powell on tenor. Drummer Butch Miles applied his Basie know-how to support these fifteen men in style. **The Dizzy Gillespie Big Band** was rough and apparently undisciplined but it played with fire and brilliance embodying the best qualities of the music we know as jazz. *Manteca* and *Lover Come Back To Me* were played with increasing gusto. *'Round Midnight* featured Jerry Dodgion on alto; it also included an amazing trumpet duo for Dizzy's muted horn and the soaring open one of Jon Faddis. *Night In Tunisia* featured solos by the trumpet section — Byron Stripling, John Marshall, Virgil Jones and Jon Faddis — and ended with Gillespie's classic coda played by all four trumpets in unison way up in the stratosphere. *Swing Low*, *Sweet Cadillac* was comedy time with Bill Cosby joining the procedure on cowbell. It was an exhilarating set crowning a festival that offered at any time during its whole length something for every jazz lover — at least on one of its three stages.

— Jose Hosiasson

Chuck Wilson, Joe Temperley, Lew Tabackin, Dan Barrett and Urbie Green. All of them, in different combinations, enlivened several jam sessions. So did veteran tenor saxophonist **Flip Phillips** whose big sound was also ubiquitous at this year's Grande Parade.

The Herbie Hancock Quartet — with Michael Brecker, Buster Williams and Al Foster — appeared for only one set at Nice. Hancock's piano was amazing: an endless wealth of ideas, swing and technique were displayed by him in a selection which included *Just One Of Those Things* and *I Didn't Know What Time It Was*. Unfortunately the quartet cut short after only four numbers and left the audience clamoring for more.

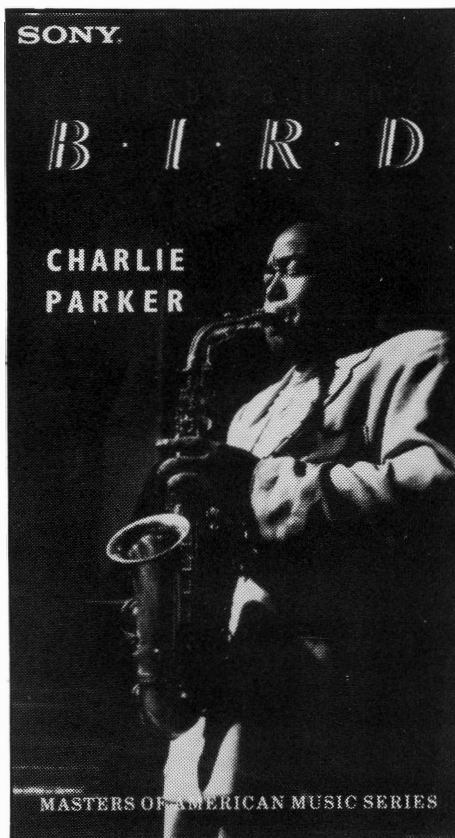
The Ruby Braff Quintet brought to Nice Marty Napoleon, Jack Lesberg and Jake Hanna in the rhythm section. **Scott Hamilton** shared the front line with the leader. Hamilton was at the top of his form and played better than ever, both with the quintet and in jam sessions. Consistently inspired and swinging, he improvised flowing melodic lines which, while very much linked to tradition, were not imitative at all.

The Jazz Hip Trio featured Europe's master drummer **Daniel Humair**, with Marc Ducret on guitar, Roger Luccioni on bass and guest artist Denis Leloup on trombone. They played uncompromising music which included a blues and several originals such as *Balamba* and *Starlight*, *Starlight*.

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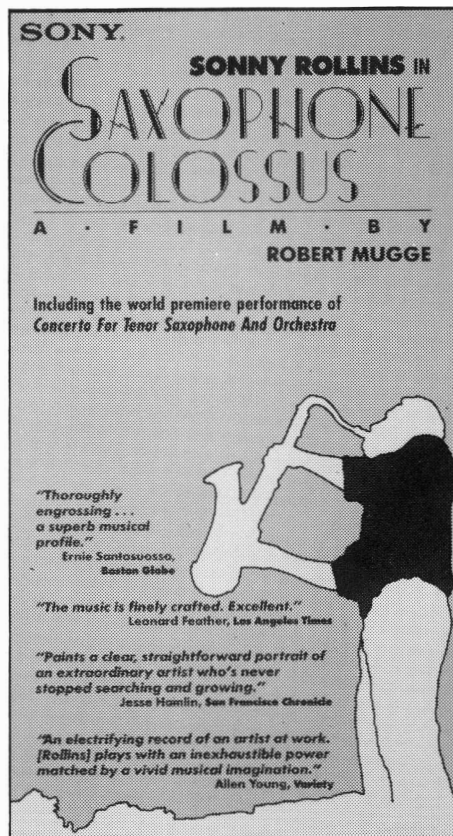


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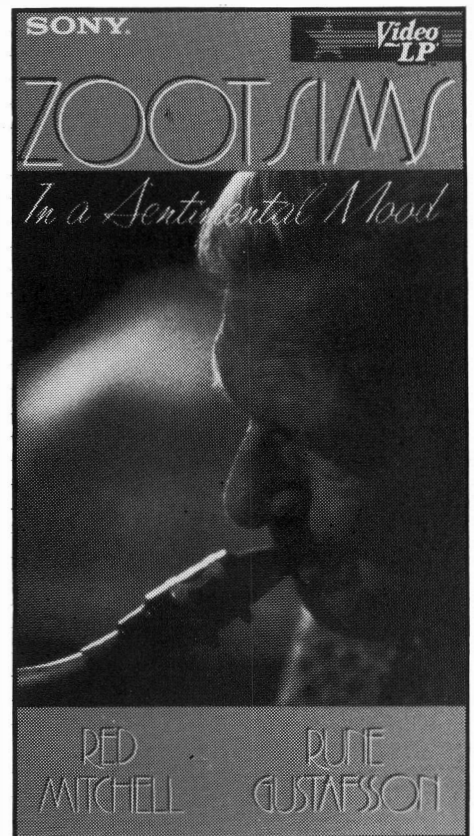
Sonny Rollins performs his new composition *G-Man*. Interviews with Sonny and Lucille Rollins, Heikki Sarmanto, Ira Gitler, Gary Giddins and Francis Davis bridge to the world premiere of *Concerto for Tenor Saxophone and Orchestra*. Rollins also performs *Don't Stop the Carnival* and *The Bridge*

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"In A Sentimental Mood"

Zoot Sims

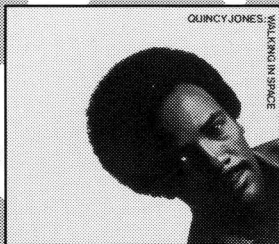
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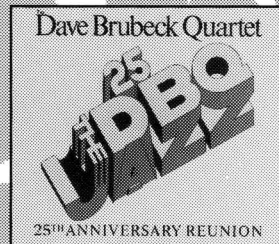
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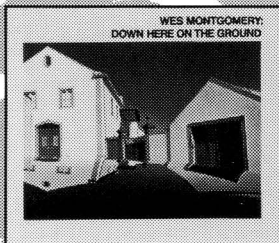


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Walking In Space

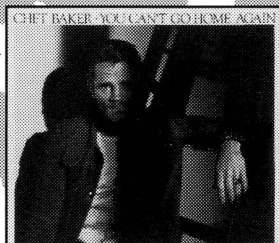
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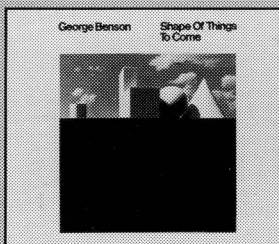
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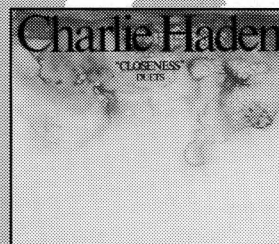
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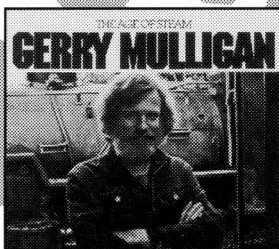
George Benson
Shape Of Things To Come



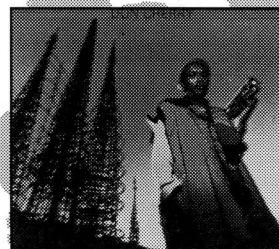
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