THE JOURNAL OF JAZZ & IMPROVISED MUSIC * ISSUE 233 * AUGUST / SEPT 1990 * $3.95 CAN / $3.50 US

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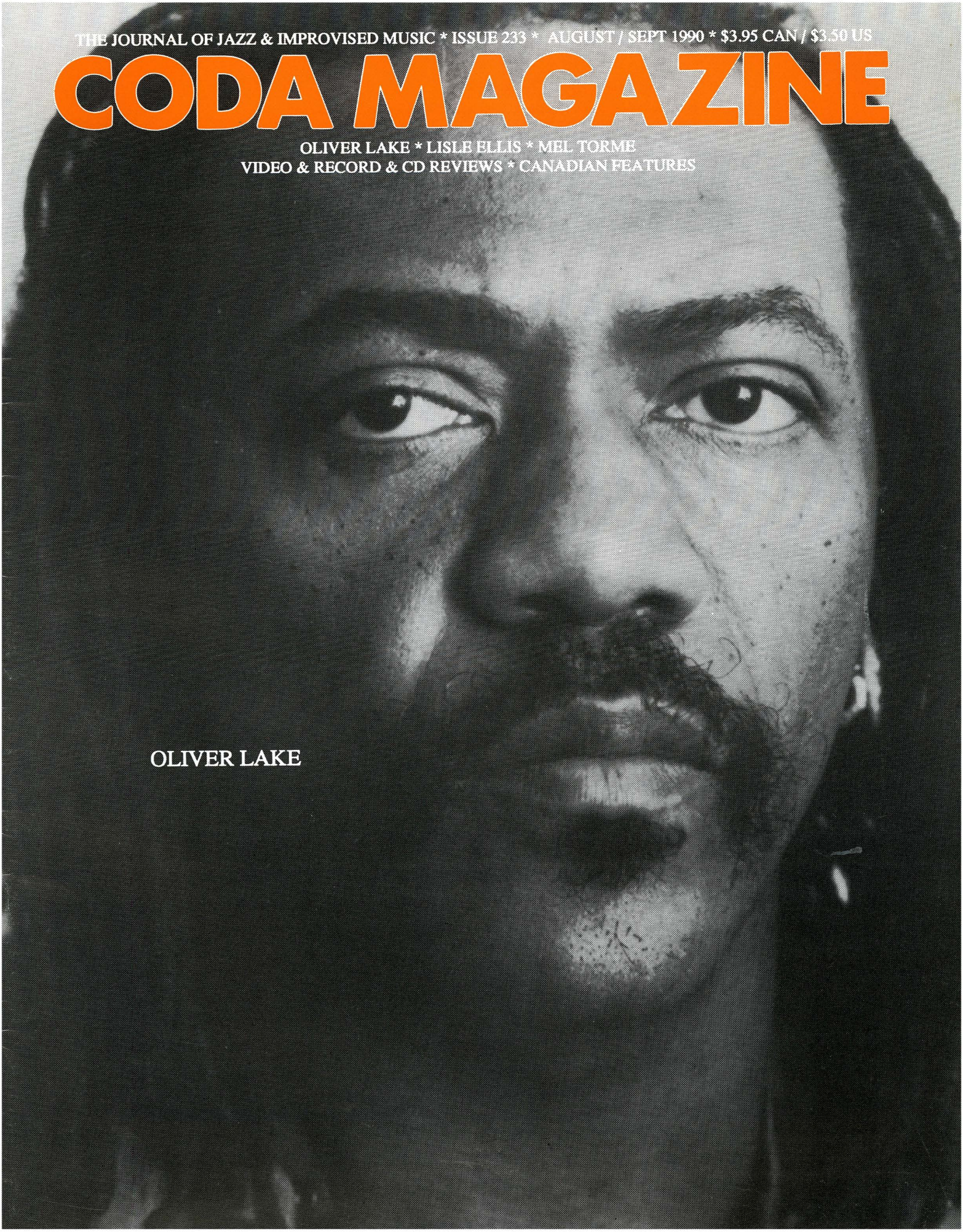

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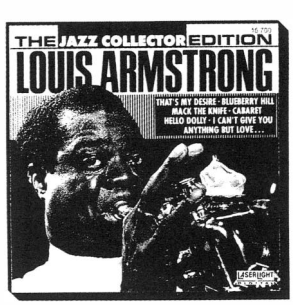

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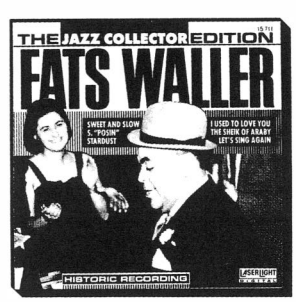

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CODA MAGAZINE

PUBLISHED CONTINUOUSLY SINCE 1958
ISSUE 233 / Published August 1st / 1990

JOHN NORRIS (Founder / Publisher)
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CODA PUBLICATIONS * BOX 87
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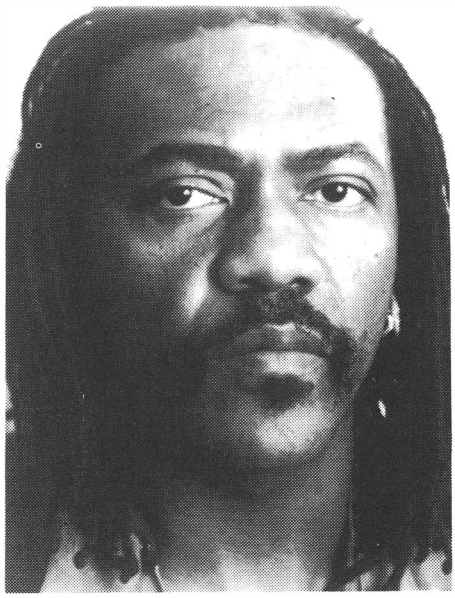

Cover Photograph
OLIVER LAKE

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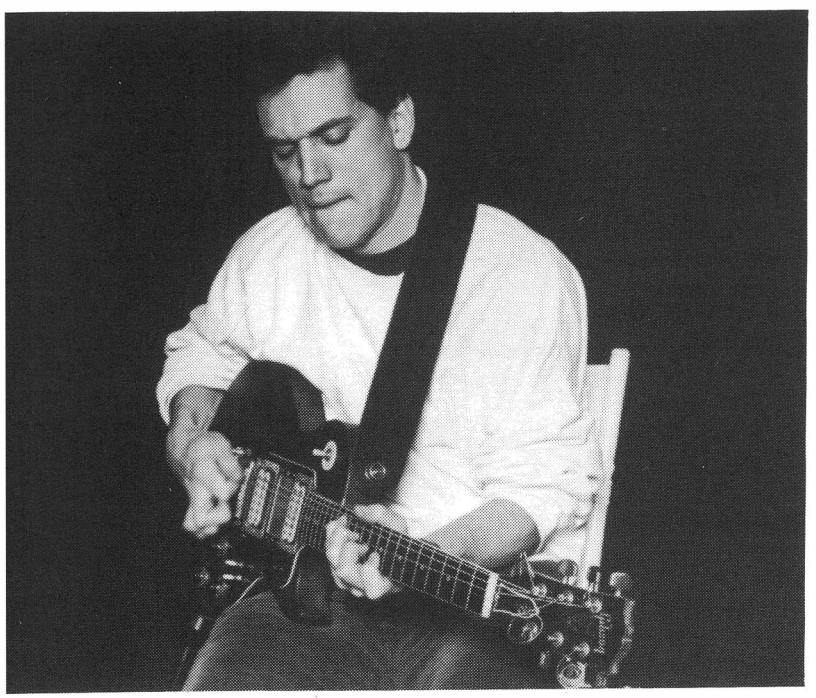
CANADIAN NOTES

MONTREAL
A TALE OF TWO SCENES

To use an old cliché, Canadian jazz has unquestionably **come of age**. From the past decade, it has evolved beyond its longstanding status as a series of isolated communities to that of a national scene. Thanks can refer to John Gilmore's ***Swinging In Paradise*** (Véhicule Press) for further details on that topic. Now in the nineties, the city's recording business is livelier and better than ever, especially so in jazz. Opening



go in equal parts to the festivals which have literally mushroomed across the land, offering touring opportunities for jazzmen in all parts of the country. Of equal, if not greater importance is the abundance of recorded material available. Whereas, in the past, the prime source of information of what was happening elsewhere in the land were word of mouth reports or magazine reviews such as in this one, now we are fortunate enough to have more Canadian labels than ever, the prime source of musical documentation.

Historically, Montreal had been the birthplace of the Canadian recording industry, and one the door was the **Justin Time** label in the mid-eighties whose mainly jazz mainstream catalogue has grown steadily over its seven year existence. Yet, it has developed a pool of musicians from the anglophone community, one whose style is much more in line with the American tradition.

Because of its cultural duality, Montreal is indeed a tale of two jazz scenes and the following will be a survey of new and upcoming releases by musicians stemming, for the most part, from the francophone scene. Last February marked the launch of a new label, **Amplitude Records**. Though it had been already operating for over a year, releasing classical and licensed jazz recordings from **Igloo** records in Belgium, it has now set its sights on local talent exclusively. In its second debut, Amplitude has issued a disc featuring the **Ensemble Pierre Cartier**, a sextet led by an electric bassist of notable subtlety on an otherwise ill-appreciated instrument by the jazz cognoscenti. In ***Chanson du Fil*** (CD 4010 58:42), this pianoless group comprises a complement of two trombones and two saxophones as a front-line with a deft rhythmic support by the leader and a constantly inventive drummer, **Pierre Tanguay**. Stylistically, the extended compositions owe much less to American jazz norms, but lean more towards a mix of a non-Western and medieval music, hence a very lyrical quality to the overall sound. Yet, there is plenty of room for improvisation, individual or collective, and of the players, altoist **Jean Derome** is best at giving a raw edge in his solos tinged by many idiomatic 'Ornettisms.' And for the fall, the same group, minus the bones, will issue another recording, to be called ***Fleurs du tapis***. And judging by a recent concert of the smaller unit, it promises to be somewhat more expansive than their first offering on the label.

Other titles worth looking for too are ***In the Myth*** by the trio of **Yannick Rieu**, whose drummer, **Michel Ratté**, is also bringing out his own project, ***Musique-idée,*** with his unit, the **Trio d'improvisation de Montréal**. The former group is an offspring of the once heralded quartet of pianist **Jean Beaudet**, busy in other projects both locally and nationally, such as working off and on in the group of Toronto saxophonist **Jane Bunnett**. Yet, Rieu hasn't forgotten the piano completely, in that **Paul Bley** dropped by to add just enough of his fleeting notes to tinge the session with his pensive musings. Ratté, for his part, offers a series of playing strategies in various combinations, one drum solo, one in duet with his keyboardist **Guillaume Dostaler**, three with altoist **Yves Charuest** (whose splendid sound is a highlight) and an alternate of one of the previous cuts with an added string trio.

Another Amplitude title that will surely attract attention is a live set featuring local guitar legend, **Nelson Symonds**, who, at age 56, will be heard on record for the first time! Sharing the spotlight with him are pianist Beaudet and a rhythmic team in fine fettle that evening (I was there) of bassist **Normand Guilbeault** and drummer **Bernard Primeau**, himself the leader of a mainstream hard-bop sextet. To round off things, an added percussionist joined the band on half of the tunes played at the concert.

Also a guitarist, although of a totally different ilk, **René Lussier** has spearheaded a circle of Québécois musicians operating a collective label, **Ambiances Magnétiques**. For years, this has been the weather vane for the whole **Musique actuelle** phenomenon, further magnified by the Victoriaville festival, and Lussier's sound collages are indeed indicative of this group's orientations. His latest project, ***Le trésor de la langue*** (AM 015 CD 65:45), can best be described as a 'creative linguistic ethnography.' In it he splices together snippets of personally recorded conversations and excerpts of archival material, overlapping musical lines in unison over them and setting them in a larger context of rhythm and harmony. The underlying concept is that of an orchestral work concerning the survival of the French

RENE LUSSIER (Photograph by Léopold Brunet)

MONTREAL BY MARC CHENARD

language in Quebec. The first half hour of this suite was in fact presented as part of an international radio competition amongst Francophone countries, its creator having won the rather prestigious "Paul Gilson" prize for his submission. Because of its parochial nature, its meanings, political and social, are best understood here, as is the language. However, a bilingual presentation will allow other listeners to follow the jist of the story, for this is essentially a narrative replete with cultural signifiers, though devoid of dogmatic ideologies by its conceptor.

Though the Francophone community may be more alternatively-minded, this does not mean that it is their sole province. Bassist **Lisle Ellis**, for one, has been stalking his own turf in town after moving out from his native British Columbia some 10 years ago. Heavily indebted to the free jazz tradition of the 1960's, he has pursued his own road in various projects, the most recent one being a quartet in residence at **Bar G-Sharp** in town where he teams up with long time friend, percussionist and visual artist, **John Heward** and two younger musicians, drummer **Peter Valsamis** and guitarist **Eric St-Laurent**, all but 20, yet showing promise. In terms of recordings, Ellis is long overdue and his turn has now come up with the Spring release of ***Both Sides of the Mirror***, a CD on **Ninewinds** with a long standing sparring partner of his, pianist **Paul Plimley** (See profile in issue 231).

Another exception too is guitarist **Tim Brady**, a soundscaper of unmistakable character. Though versed in jazz, his interests are definitely more focused on sound, mainly created through various electronic accessories. A composer as well, he has written chamber-like works, one of them recorded and featuring **Kenny Wheeler**, and scores for modern dance choreographies, such as *Inventions*, which he presented last fall with guests **Barre Phillips** and **John Surman**. His new recording, ***Double Inventions*** (**Justin Time** CD JTR 8415-2 67:05) is, according to his words, "a real dose for guitar freaks." Out of the 14 variations, all based on the same harmonic scheme, as he points out, most are played by him, either in overdub or solo with electronic manipulation; five of them feature cohort **John Abercrombie**, but because of all of the sonic wrap-around, it is not always easy to know when the latter is playing. In fact, it matters little who plays what and when, it's more of a total picture of improvisation and composition that won't really be the cup of tea of jazzfans who are in search of individuality in soloing.

Essentially, the contemporary jazz and new music scenes are as vibrant as they are pluralistic and, for risk of overstating the case, a most unique situation prevails here in Montreal. In a sense, it can be likened to that of a melting pot of sounds, yielding unlikely mixes of American, European and non-western influences.

- Marc Chénard

ABOUT CANADA

Music publishing copyrights are only marginally beneficial for most jazz composers. The major portion of the collected funds is divided into the pockets of artists in the popular music fields.

Until recently there were two societies representing composers in Canada. **CAPAC** and **PROCAN**, besides representing Canadian composers, were also the agents for ASCAP and BMI respectively. These two organizations have now merged together as **SOCAM** with a single membership. The newly elected board of directors (those who will determine the policy and direction of the organization) does not include a single representative from the jazz community.

This column is being written while the summer jazz festival season is in full swing. Festivals are being held in **Victoria, Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Saskatoon, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, Quebec City** and **Moncton**. There may be others which we didn't hear about. What is common to all of them, though, is the lateness with which they announce their lineups. This year they were marginally better but were still unable to meet the deadlines of all but the most frequent of publications. The overview is that the organizers did a good job of lining up talent and audiences should have been able to enjoy a bonanza of good music in widely varied styles.

As only a minority of listeners travel elsewhere to hear the music, therefore, it makes a lot of sense for the various funding agencies to provide the financial support to move the Canadian musicians out of their own communities and establish a travelling circuit. In this way Canadians would be able to experience the music of other regions.

It was in the summer of 1983 that **Café des Copains** launched its famous Jazz Piano series. Now, in 1990, two more clubs have chosen to launch jazz policies during the summer months. Hopefully the new venues will be successful and that the audience will expand sufficiently not only to support the newcomers but to ensure the continued existence of clubs like Café des Copains and **George's Spaghetti House**, the city's long running six night a week clubs.

The Bermuda Onion (131 Bloor Street West) began its full time jazz policy with engagements by the **Phil Woods** Quintet and the **Elvin Jones** Jazz Machine. These two groups generated a great deal of excitement. It has been at least fifteen years since Toronto has had a club presenting major jazz groups on a weekly basis. The current edition of the Woods Quintet performs in the classic bebop style with **Hal Crook's** trombone the second horn voice along with the long time rhythm section of **Hal Galper, Steve Gilmore** and **Bill Goodwin**.

While Woods' music was tight and orderly the Elvin Jones Drum Machine was loose and highly energized. The music is built upon the years the leader spent with John Coltrane and while all members of the quintet had ample solo space it was still somehow the leader who remained the central focus. **Wallace Roney** (trumpet), **Pat LaBarbera** (tenor and soprano saxophones), **John Hicks** (piano) and **Donald Pate** (bass) were the secondary voices who contributed significantly to the totality of the occasion.

Benny Golson came in next and shared the stage with pianist **George McFetridge**, bassist **Steve Wallace** and drummer **Jerry Fuller**. Golson's compositions, now part of the basic language of jazz, presented few difficulties and the first evening flowed smoothly with Golson

BY JOHN NORRIS

being particularly authoritative.

The fourth week of music at the Bermuda Onion showcased the recently emergent sextet of vibraphonist/pianist **Hagood Hardy**. While Hardy has sustained himself extremely well writing film and jingle music he has never abandoned his jazz roots. This sextet performs music developed through the influences of Horace Silver and Bill Evans and is notable for the leader's arrangements and the ensemble strength of the two horn front line of saxophonist Michael Stuart and trombonist Terry Lukiwski.

While the Bermuda Onion is a glass and chrome emporium without a particularly well focused stage for the music it does generate a decided Continental flavour which is emphasized when the room is full of people.

Top O' The Senator, on the other hand, makes you feel you are in New York. It has the advantage of having been designed specifically for its policy rather than having to adapt surroundings already in place. It has a good stage and the sightlines are good for a room which is long and narrow. Tenor saxophonist **Dewey Redman** was featured with the **Jane Bunnett** Quintet for the opening week. The highlight of the second set on their opening night was an expressive down home blues from Redman where all the guttural nuances of his unique style were emphasized. He also managed to negotiate the quirky lines of a Bunnett original without calamity but it was on this number that the leader's soprano saxophone was heard to its best advantage. Pianist **Don Thompson,** bassist **Kieran Overs** and drummer **Barry Elmes** gave the music its rhythmic lift while trumpeter **Larry Cramer**'s tightly muted solos were always cogent and coherent.

Public performances are always a challenge for big bands. They tend to be long on rehearsal and short on paying jobs. Much of the time the musicians are forced into a situation where their efforts are mostly of a voluntary nature. It is hard to sustain commitment when there is little possibility of anything significant developing. At least **Dave McMurdo**'s Big Band has a first rate recording to showcase its excellent original material and distinctive soloists. It has been performing Monday nights at the BamBoo on an irregular basis. Audience support has been sufficient to make these evenings sustainable.

This spring **Club Berlin** began a Thursday night showcase of big bands with appearances by the **Brigham Phillips** Big Band, **Jim Ahrens** and the **Tribal Unit** and the **Russ Little** Big Band, who featured the vocals of **Joe Coughlin**.

Singer **Arlene Smith** launched her new recording June 20 at the Underground Railroad where she appeared with a rhythm section. The CD recording features her in a variety of settings (big band, sextet and strings) in arrangements conceived by Rick Wilkins who also directed the musicians. **Kenny Barron** and **Bob Cranshaw** are guest performers on the recording. **Until Today** was recorded in January 1990 in Toronto and is distributed nationally in Canada by Fusion 111.

Perry White, Walter White, Dave Turner, Moe Koffman, Terry Lukiwski, Charles Papsoff and **All In One** are at George's Spaghetti House in August / September.

At Café des Copains you will be able to enjoy a summer of duet performances with **Art Hodes / Jim Galloway, Ronnie Mathews / Dave Young** and **Don Friedman** with a bassist still to be announced. **Jay McShann** returns to Café des Copains September 4 for a two week engagement when Jim Galloway will appear with the pianist on both Sunday nights.

Jim Galloway's Wee Big Band gave a special pre-festival concert at The Underground Railroad on May 10... Vocalists now have their own rendezvous. **Trudy Desmond** is scheduling the singers who will be appearing Friday and Saturday nights at the **Church Street Café**.

Jon Ballantyne returned to Montreal for a duet performance with **Joe Henderson** following their performances at festivals in Western Canada... New Music America 1990 is being staged in Montreal between November 1 and 11 with a broad-ranging mix of contemporary viewpoints and styles of music.

Guitarist **Peter Leitch** returned to Canada in July for festival performances in Ottawa and St. Irenée (Quebec) with **John Hicks** and **Ray Drummond**. Between September 15-24 John Hicks, Walter Booker and Marvin "Smitty" Smith join the guitarist for a tour of midwest U.S. venues in support of his first Concord recording (Mean What You Say).

Alex Dean, Big Miller, Bobby Watson's Horizon, Laurel Masse, Denny Zeitlin, Eddie Harris and the **Lent Brothers Band** were showcased at Edmonton's Yardbird Suite in the weeks prior to this summer's festival activities.

PERRY WHITE & DAVE YOUNG (Photograph by Bill Smith)

Vocalist Trudy Desmond and guitarist **Pat Coleman** were at Vancouver's Cafe Django May 31-June 3. A month of duets continued with **Ross Taggart / George Ursan, Oliver Gannon / Ross Taggart, Hugh Fraser / Phil Dwyer** and **Hugh Fraser / Blaine Wikjord**... Jazz accordionist **Frank Marocco** appeared at the Alma Street Cafe June 13 with **Fraser MacPherson,** Oliver Gannon and Torben Ohbol...

The Coastal Jazz and Blues Society organized pre-festival concerts with **Thurman Barker / Joseph Jarman** Duo May 12 and **Bobby Watson's** group the next day. On May 19 the society presented the **Salif Keita** 13 piece band from Mali.

New recordings of Canadian artists continue to appear in ever growing numbers. Vancouver's **Fifth Avenue** (who won the Alcan competition in 1989) recorded ***Urban Sprawl*** for the CBC's Jazz Image label and it is now available... Stony Plain records has issued a CD of **Big Miller** recorded live at Athabasca University... Victo Records has released two CDs from their Victoriaville festival. ***Camouflage*** is a solo bass CD by **Barre Phillips**. ***Dix Improvisations*** is a sampler of festival performances from the 1989 festival with **Ladonna Smith / Davey Williams, Hans Reichel, Paul Plimley / Lisle Ellis, New Winds, Rothenberg / Parran, Rothenberg (solo)** and **Schweizer / Nicols / Cooper** ... Sackville has reissued on CD **Pete Magadini's** ***Bones Blues*** with **Wray Downes, Dave Young** and guest saxophonist **Don Menza**. An alternate version of *Freddie Freeloader* has been added to the original material. Sackville has also issued a 1983 concert performance of **Doc Cheatham** and **Jim Galloway** at the Bern Jazz Festival with **Roy Williams** (trombone), and a rhythm section of **Ian Bargh** (piano), **Neil Swainson** (bass) and **Terry Clarke (drums)**... The latest Unity release is a CD by **Fourth Inversion** which features the piano and compositions of **Bob Fenton** with trumpeter **John McLeod**, saxophonist **Mike Murley**, bassist **Dick Felix** and drummer **Mike McClelland** the other musicians.

- John Norris

CANADIAN MUSIC

Ranee Lee: ***Deep Song***. Justin Time Just 33-2 (CD).
Renée Rosnes: ***Renée Rosnes***. Blue Note CDP 7 93561 2 (CD).
The Dave McMurdo Jazz Orchestra. Innovation Records JCCD-0019 (CD).
Ensemble Pierre Cartier. ***Chanson du Fil***. Amplitude JACD-4010 (CD).
Hugh Fraser Quintet. ***Pas de Problèmes***. Jazzimage 2-0119 (CD).
George McFetridge. ***Solo Piano***. Unity 108 WRC1-6154.
Jeff Johnston Quartet. ***Trinity***. Unity RDR-12-28.
Robin Shier Quintet. ***Depth of Field***. Unity WRC1-6242.
Peter Leitch Quintet/Sextet. ***Portraits and Dedications***. Criss Cross 1039.
Orhan Demir Trio. ***Windmill***. Hittite WRC1-6250.

Composer and bassist **Pierre Cartier's** ***Chanson du Fil*** offers a novel textural sound. Two saxophones, two trombones, bass and drums fully articulate his music without the support of any chordal instrument. The resulting music sounds spacious and clear. Sometimes introspective, sometimes free-wheeling, Cartier's music offers depth and substance and beckons the listener into its moody atmospheres.

Cartier and alto saxophonist **Jean Derome** reunite here after many years of collaboration in the bands Nebu and la G.U.M. in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

The saxophones of Derome and **Jean-Denis Levasseur** and the trombones of **André Vereault** and **Robert Ellis** blend gorgeously, particularly during the angular lines of *Le Range De l'Irlande*, the lilting jazz waltz *Lettre au Bon Dieu*, the minor tonality of *Maieutique*, and the countermelodies of the pretty *Chanson du Fil*.

The rock rhythms and stuttering horns of *Nu-Mains* suggest industrial machinery, and the ensemble builds intensity by repeating a dramatic 16-bar figure. *Jagara* evolves from odd-meter and West African-sounding vocal and percussion textures, into a melancholy circus-like theme.

Cartier chose to record this project in an acoustically live concert hall. Hurrah! More jazz should be recorded this way, as halls allow the instruments to breathe and the notes to sing more naturally than do most studios.

By adding just a few more instruments and striking forth in a slightly different direction, Cartier's ensemble would be transformed into a big band. **Dave McMurdo's** music isn't only good big band music, though--it's simply good music.

In a generous 74-minute CD, the razor-sharp ***Dave McMurdo Jazz Orchestra*** boasts the same high musical caliber as Rob McConnell's Boss Brass, including intelligent use of dynamics, a gorgeous blend of brass and winds, effective intonation, and clean phrasing. The soloists shine, nestled in hushed ensemble lines.

McMurdo's contributions to the band book include *You Can't Go Home Again*, a feature for **Mike Malone's** flugelhorn, and a bittersweet samba setting of *How My Heart Sings*.

Don Thompson, well known as a bassist for Jim Hall and George Shearing, plays piano on this set and contributed three arrangements, including his Thad Jones-ish *A Face Like Yours* that calls for many complementary textures including a flute choir, a wind ensemble without rhythm section, and Spanish guitar.

Phil Nimmons's arrangement of *Emily* features McMurdo's lush, almost reedy trombone sound.

Dave McMurdo has a lot in common with trombonist **Hugh Fraser.** Both write engaging arrangements and attend to musical fine points that transform good bands into excellent ones.

No Problem is indeed the impression one takes away from the seemingly effortless performance of this musical juggernaut. The soloists speak with distinction and the ensemble sparkles.

Fraser's moods vary widely, from the cheerful samba *Pas de Problèmes* to the gospelly funk

Him for Her. His teammates interpret the music with verve. Saxophonists **Phil Dwyer** and **Campbell Ryga** engage in musical dialog during *On It* and steal the show during *Postlude*. The relentless drive of **Chris Nelson** (bass) and **Blaine Wikjord** (drums) can seem to verge on losing control while keeping *Mode to McCoy* smoothly boiling.

Fraser's quintet offers almost squeaky-clean playing, at the individual and ensemble level. The high calibre of musicianship and potential for fresh compositional approaches leads to some interesting developments. I guess my main only quibble is the idea of relying on two 12-bar blues tunes as filler.

Not surprisingly, the group has racked up some impressive credentials, taking a residency at Alberta's Banff Centre in 1983 and winning a Juno award for Best Canadian Jazz Album, 1988, for ***Looking Up*** (Jazzimage JZ-115).

Like Fraser, **Renée Rosnes** is an impressive young pianist. Before moving to New York, she was called by Mark Miller among the brightest of Vancouver's new faces."

Rosnes's imaginative music is a natural extension of the Benny Golson/Art Blakey tradition. Although her piano concepts are her own, one notices the influence of Herbie Hancock, especially during Playground. Part of the familiar sound on the ***Renee Rosnes*** CD is no doubt due to the carefully-cultivated Rudy Van Gelder-Blue Note sound.

Rosnes's tight ensemble includes **Ron Carter, Wayne Shorter, Branford Marsalis,** and **Ralph Bowen** (whose tenor playing forms a foundation of this project. But Rosnes holds her own. Her *Fleur de Lis*, an impressionistic duet with **Herbie Hancock**, successfully uses a follow-your-instincts approach in a free form environment while remaining true to semi-classical sentiments.

Wayne Shorter's tune *Diana*, set as a duet with Shorter on soprano and Renee at the synthesizer, raises little musical exclamations and questions in rising and falling waves.

Such liquid motion also characterizes **George McFetridge's *Solo Piano***, which dispenses with the reassuring company of musical teammates and places the piano out alone on the concert stage.

In this carefully balanced program, McFetridge draws from an emotional and stylistic heritage incorporating elements of Claude Debussy, Mose Allison and Igor Stravinsky. Typical of McFetridge's spirit are *Story Book*, a beautiful, impressionistic ballad. He presents most of his music as subtle suggestion.

For contrast, he includes the rather jumpy *Igor's Blues*, recalling Stravinsky's sound clusters, and the energetic swinger *New Day*. Dedicated to Elvin Jones, *That's the Way It Is* seems to owe its spirit to Mose Allison's bluesy gospelly easy swing. As McFetridge's left hand vamps, his right hand plays increasingly complex improvisations.

Your attention will certainly be captured by *January, Part 1*, a tense and uncharacteristically dark piece in which McFetridge pops strings inside the piano and plays skittish Cecil Taylor-ish patterns. As a few glimmerings of major key tonality appear, the composition evolves into lyricism.

The dark and subtle elements of **Robin Shier's *Depth of Field*** recall the music of Wayne Shorter, Miles Davis and Herbie Hancock (circa 1968-70). Par-

ticularly during the tunes *Serene Seurat, Stream of Subconsciousness* and *Depth of Field*, Shier's interest seems to center on the time when jazz was entering fusion, incorporating an electric edge and the straight-edged eighth-note feel of sambas, bossa novas, and rock.

Special moments occur during *Ripples*, where Shier's vibrant flugelhorn solo electrifies the band, and during *Night and Day*, as tenor player **Pat Caird** comments on Sheir's flugelhorn melody. Bassist **Richard Kilburn** makes an effectively bluesy solo statement during his introduction to *Serene Seurat*.

Just as Shier's compositions reflect his impressions of other composers, **Peter Leitch's *Portraits and Dedications*** offers impressions of people he has met along his musical path. In upbeat moments the band plays the Latin/swing *Modes for Wood*, the swinging *Pepper* and *The Blues for 'Nita*, an uptempo 12- bar blues.

Ballads include *Visage de Cathryn*, a waltz offering a sensual guitar and **Bobby Watson**'s saxophone, an effective lyrical duet between Leitch and Watson during *Warm Valley*, the pretty flute-alto-guitar voicings of *Portrait of Sylvia*, and the solo guitar feature on *The Winter of My Discontent*.

I can't think of any drummer I'd rather hear and watch than Leitch's hired gun, **Marvin Smitty Smith**. Smitty is tasteful and relaxed, yet he thinks and reacts extremely quickly, generating a relentlessly taut feeling--not tense, but almost painfully taut.

Pianist **Jeff Johnson** augments a fairly conservative piano trio with the hip tonalities of guitarist **Martin Rickert** for ***Trinity***. The concept works well. Rickert's allusions to guitarists John Scofield, John Abercrombie and Pat Metheny complement Johnston's references to Keith Jarrett.

Johnston evokes different personas to communicate different messages: he cooks at full speed on *Syzygy* and casually rambles, free style, over skittish bass and drums during *Hubtown*.

Rickert whispers a lazy solo over a drone vamp for the title tune, *Trinity*, while his *Hubtown* solo recalls Ornette Coleman's style of improvising: building from the melody rather than over chord changes.

Bassist **Jim Vivian** makes genuine musical statements. His relaxed *Trinity* solo, for example, is spare and melodic, and actually ebbs and flows. But he can also burn when required to, and plays a blistering bass on *Syzygy*.

Jeff Johnston leads a precision ensemble playing melodic music. But Johnston's music generally seems to hold back--it's awfully *polite*.

One strong voice, drawing from the tradition set in the 1940s, belongs to **Ranee Lee**, whose music suggests a classy night club act. Her rich alto/contralto voice, flawless pitch, liquid interpretation of melodic line and silky singing texture recall Nancy Wilson. Her use of terminal vibrato suggests classical training, yet she allows some huskiness and a full throated shout when necessary.

This collection of songs, called ***Deep Song***, shows that, although Ranee Lee seems comfortable in a variety of settings, she seems most comfortable in a relaxed swing groove, and although all her material is familiar, it sounds fresh.

She has programmed this set to reach increasing intimacy and subtlety toward the middle, presenting *Easy Living* as a vocal/piano duet and *Strange Fruit* as a Spanish guitar/vocal duet.

Any singer who tackles Billie Holiday's repertory (*Somebody's on My Mind, God Bless the Child, Don't Explain, Them There Eyes*), invites comparison to Ms. Holiday. Like Billie, she gives generous amounts of time to her accompanists (who include bassist **Milt Hinton**) and has carefully crafted her arrangements.

But Ms. Lee knows that any attempt to copy Billie is self-defeating. Instead, she strikes out on her own, inspired by Billie, yet with individuality.

Pianist and musical director **Oliver Jones** plays florid and frisky, and is a good match for Ms. Lee. As Mark Miler said it, "At heart, Jones remains a '40s pianist."

If Ranee Lee's heart lies in swing, **Orhan Demir**'s lies in fusion. Demir's music is exciting, nervous and flashy. Repeated listenings to ***Windmill***, though, leave a sense of emotional shallowness, because this music too often focuses on chops for the sake of chops. ***Windmill*** would really benefit from more breathing room. It's simply too many notes for the listener to digest.

Demir's brittle guitar tone and his solos that rely heavily on simple arpeggios executed at fast speed define the music. *Liberty Square*, for example, sounds like the John McLaughlin / Billy Cobham / Rick Laird power trio in all its bombast. Excellent fusion music, I suppose, but rarely is there a change of tempo or volume or development of mood.

In all fairness, *Orient Express* does offer some contrast, a middle-Eastern drone allowing free guitar and bass improvisations, and delicate percussion colors, and *Duplex Planet* shows some capability for introspection.

But generally, the drums and bass are locked into playing time for the guitar to ride on. Shades of Oscar Peterson...

- Paul Baker

DAVE McMURDO

OLIVER LAKE * PASSIN' THRU

SOME MEMORIES DREAMED

One night as long past as five years, Elvin Jones made one of those rare appearances at a Toronto club. I had not witnessed the miracle of his music for sometime, so this seemed to be an opportune occasion. Arriving early, as is my custom, gave me the possibility of not only securing a table in a perfect location, directly in front of this drummer, but also the experience of observing the preparation of the future event. Of participating in the history of a music that had influenced and directed my listening as a young man, those years ago. The evening tumbled out those wonderful old Coltrane memories, filling my heart. A lost art. And there he was, that "drummer" (what a minuscule word when applied to Mister Jones), who had led our hidden pulse into rhythms not yet imagined. Never is it possible to be in past times, memories dreamed, but the large excited audience, rhythm surround, the energy of this event, all gathered me up in its joy.

INTERMISSION

A young man approaches the table.

"So whadayathink about that then. A great band eh?"

"Well I don't know, I was only listening to the drummer."

"It's OK for you, you heard the real band (Trane, Elvin, Jimmy Garrison & McCoy). But I wasn't born yet."

THE TRUTH IS MARCHING IN

Out into the unsuspecting sixties poured such a wealth of art, even an awareness of its existence, and, for jazz music, a re(s)(v)olution of its formal history in the form that was to be labelled "The Avant Garde." John Coltrane, Ornette Coleman, Cecil Taylor, Scott LaFaro, Eric Dolphy, Ed Blackwell, Rashid Ali, Don Cherry, Charlie Haden... A new set of standards for the creative process to enlarge upon. A music created from jazz history, the melody and rhythm intact, but with a new social and political stance. A time of Black Power in America. For more than a decade it gave us hope and shouted Never Let It End. This development, sustained and brought to fruition by the likes of Paul Bley, Albert Ayler, Archie Shepp, Sonny Murray, Andrew Cyrille, Andrew Hill, Richard Davis... seemed so powerful, how could it pass such a message on? What more could there be?

Chicago was to be the city, and the way prepared by Muhal Richard Abrams and the formation of the A.A.C.M., Roscoe Mitchell, Anthony Braxton, Lester Bowie, Joseph Jarman, Don Moye, Malachai Favors, Leo Smith... a new original language, based in part on the immediate history, had been invented. Yet another frontier exposed.

The Association for the Advancement of Creative Music (AACM) was to become a model, an inspiration for many organizations that were to evolve, and some to continue until this very day. Among them, initially, was the Black Artist Group of St. Louis, and with this organization the discovery of saxophonist Oliver Lake.

NEVER LET IT END

A small back street in the downtown area of Toronto, a performance space, A Space, dreamlike this second floor loft, an invitation to allow our imaginations the time to develop. A new music to search for. A wondrous time. Never let it end. Don Pullen, Dollar Brand, Julius Hemphill, Roscoe Mitchell, Muhal Richard Abrams, David Holland, George Lewis, Anthony Braxton, Joseph Jarman, Karl Berger, David Murray... just writing these memory names tugs at my heart strings. Never Let It End... and then New Delta Ahkri, with Leo Smith, Anthony Davis, Pheeroan Ak Laff, Wes Brown, and, my live introduction to Oliver Lake.

THE BLACK ARTISTS GROUP (BAG) - 1968

Oliver Lake: Yeah, there's definitely something happening in St. Louis. I don't know if it's because it's St. Louis or because it's a place where it's not very rushed. It's very relaxed, you know. We had good facilities to work in, that is the Black Artists Group (BAG) did, we had a large space to do our thing in. We had a two-storey building, and it involved about fifty artists. Within

Photographs by Barry Thomson & Mark Ladenson

that we got a chance to work out all our musical fantasies. Anything that we wanted to do was OK.

"Let's start a big band." BOOM: we did.

"Let's do a concert for 24 hours." OKAY: we'd do that.

"Let's go into the street and play the sunrise." We did that.

So it just kept going. It was a very creative atmosphere. It was having that many people under one roof that was so creative. And all the fields within; poetry, dance, art, drama... The people that were involved are all over the planet now, they've moved all around, and we continue to communicate with each other and some of us continue to refer to BAG as a development period for us. That way it exists in spirit, but in terms of a formal, meeting, organization type thing, it's not.

The idea was germinated from the A.A.C.M. I had gone to Chicago and seen the AACM and felt that strength that had come about from their unity. I went back to St. Louis and said, "Hey, let's get together." I called up all the players, Julius Hemphill, Charles "Bobo" Shaw, Floyd Laflore, Joseph Bowie... different players... I wanted a branch of the AACM, that was the original concept. But when we came together, it came out that we wanted to involve all the disciplines. Drama, poetry, acting, and dance, the whole show. So that's where we became different from the AACM. But we kept a very close relationship with them in terms of exchange, and bringing groups there. It was a really good exchange.

Bill Smith: *Oliver Lake comes from a part of American jazz history that is saturated with the blues, and part of his learning process has been focused in this area. A tradition that many so-called avant-garde players stem from. The likes of Ornette Coleman, Dewey Redman and Julius Hemphill help to illustrate this point.*

I was with this rhythm and blues band, with Lester Bowie and Phillip Wilson, we travelled around the country... so throughout my musical career I've been doing different kinds of things, even now I have various musical situations which are completely different from each other, which are happening right now in various bands that I play with from time to time.

INTER/VIEWS

November 1989, and the Time Flies Festival was in full swing in Vancouver. Oliver had presented a solo workshop in the afternoon, and a quartet performance that evening, and we arranged to spend the remaining night time together. The following conversation is culled from that evening.

One of the subjects that I thought was very interesting today, was pertaining to education. Music education. It seems as though music education is singled-handedly removing all the wonderfulness from the music, in those universities where they are so academic. So I would like to hear your views on education, how you learnt to play as a young man, what you think it is now, and is there something wrong with how they are teaching the young people in this period?

You know, I guess, I learned a lot from friends, musicians who were playing, and doing jam sessions. More than what I learned at school. I mean, even at school that's what I was doing, going to jam sessions. That's the way we really learned the music. Between the other musicians. And today I don't know if I can say if there is something that's wrong, it's just that I don't think that the jazz education system is broad enough. It's not including enough of the things that are happening today. They're just kind of stuck, and that's the problem. I think they need to bring in some other musicians, especially some of my contemporaries, into the universities. Not so much to be a permanent fixture, but to come in and let people hear some different things.

When you first played, how did you actually learn to play? You must have had a process.

Well you know, it's the same way. Practising and studying and practising and practising and practising and actually applying that into your performance. Because for me I started off, almost at the very beginning writing my own compositions, and I think that had a lot to do with it. I was always trying to write something like something else I had heard, but still writing my own piece. And then practising that, and rehearsing, and jam sessions. That was just the whole process for me.

This is a traditional concept, though, this idea about going to play with friends, sitting in at your local bar, and holding jam sessions, seems not so much so today as in the past.

That's true, that's true! No, that is gone and I think it has been replaced with the schools. I've only been in a few of those schools, but from what I've observed, it's not broad enough. It's as if they have blinders on and they're just going down this one track and the kids are not being exposed to the full spectrum of the music.

Is there some kind of reason why the professors, whoever they may be, in which ever schools, would be so limited? What is it they think jazz is? From what background, do these professors, that are stifling the music, those who have these teaching degrees, come from?

It seems like most of them are based in a more traditional style of jazz, and that could be part of it. They are not being open to all of the changes that have gone on in the music. Some of them stopped at 1960 and that was it. I don't know if this is going on in all the schools, but I do know that kind of mentality makes up a lot of the instructors there. And it's not healthy. I know when I did a workshop at a university, they had never heard anything like that. The alto saxophone, their favourite players were, I mean I'm not putting these cats down, but their favourite players were David Sandborne and Brantford Marsalis, who are excellent musicians. I'm just saying that they were excited to hear a different approach to the instrument, and there are a lot of players who are approaching the music from a different angle. They just heard some of the possibilities, and I think that's the responsibility of the instructors to show that it is the nature of this music, to continue to move forward. They are dealing with just one area and there is a tendency to turn out a bunch of clones. A lot of the students sound alike.

Is this part of the current conservative attitude? You know when we refer to music that's developed since bebop, we are talking about more than thirty years ago, even longer since the time of Charlie Parker. To stifle all these ideas would seem like a very odd idea to me, but as we know, the planet politically and economically has become very conservative, it has gone very much to the narrow band, the corporate band, the bankers band, and it seems to me to be reflected in the arts.

That's exactly what is happening, be-

cause it seems to be parallel with some of the attitudes that are going on in America, and probably Canada too. But yeah, I agree with that.

Do you think this brings about the popularity of players like Wynton Marsalis?

Well you know it would seem he could have his popularity, and what I'm talking about could be happening simultaneously. It's unfortunate that some of the young players have totally excluded players who have been doing this for the past thirty years. When you are talking about the extension of the music, a lot of those younger players either have an attitude toward this, or they exclude them from being an important part of the music. Like I said today, it's all one music, and we are all one people, so all this is used to keep us apart, or to keep our ideas apart, or to keep some kind of feud going on. It's ridiculous.

This idea about keeping culture separated so that it cannot become a massive force, the kind of interference that is put toward the artist, is put toward us by who? Who is trying to separate us, and to what advantage?

Well I don't know if it's a conscious move, it's just that it can end up being the result of that, where you have different camps. It's not really healthy for the music and it's not really healthy for us as a people, so it's most unfortunate that some of the younger musicians will get caught up in that bag of tricks.

When you started out so long ago with the Black Artists Group (BAG) in St. Louis, did you ever think that you would expand your music into this international level? Did you ever think you would become "Oliver Lake - STAR?"

I was always curious what my place in the music would be if I pursued it for a time, because at that time in St. Louis I was teaching school. So, I just felt that, without consciously thinking about whether I would be a star, or be internationally known or anything, I was just thinking that I had to do this, because I saw myself teaching, like you see a vision of yourself, in the same room for twenty years, going to the same school, teaching these kids, and your fifteen-year-old students coming back when they're adults and teaching school, too. I said I've got to get out and try the music. And the result has been, that it's been rewarding, especially with the World Saxophone Quartet, being able to play music only. I mean that's very fortunate, I feel very fortunate from that perspective. I don't think back then I was actually thinking that, but I knew that could be a definite part of what could happen if I concentrated on it, doing only that.

And you did. There are not so many people who can make a living just playing the saxophone, the world in general has not been very kind to most artists over the years, they have not all been able to elevate themselves from driving a taxi or whatever. So I think in your case, without being too syrupy, that it means you are actually good at what you do, and that what you put out self-popularizes you. (Is it because your music is very funky?

That could be part of it. But you know the blues have been an important part of what I've been doing for so long, even, starting out in St. Louis, playing in rhythm and blues bands, so that's incorporated into the music that I do. Even though a lot of times it can get cerebral, that line of blues is going through there. Or then it could be the fact that it's sincere and the people can feel and enjoy that.

[Although Oliver has presented himself in multitudes of musical combinations from duets with Joseph Bowie, on stage performance in the musical drama, ***Coloured Girls****, to a big band dealing with the music of Eric Dolphy, perhaps the two most well known groups would be Jump Up and the World Saxophone Quartet (WSQ).]*

There is a certain amount of controversy among intellectual scribes of jazz as to the origin of the WSQ, because the first edition of it seems to have appeared on an Anthony Braxton recording on the Arista label, with you Hamiet Bluiett, Julius Hemphill and Braxton, but without David Murray. So a lot of people think that is actually where the germination of the WSQ came from, but I understand that is not actually so.

No, that just kind of happened, and when we walked out of that session, none of us thought about starting a saxophone quartet. Braxton had called us in, but the three of us never committed anything of any desire to play in that format until we did a performance in New Orleans, which was brought together by Kid Jordan. That was the first concert we did, with the four of us and a rhythm section, and it was in response to what we did, and to that music, that inspired us to the point of starting that group. And that kind of inspiration didn't even get thought about in the session with Braxton. So even though that was a formation, it had nothing to do with a seed for the idea. "Oh yeah, there we are, so we should," because honestly, I don't even think the three of us were really that much into those compositions, or felt that strong about what we had recorded. And that's not to put Braxton down, but I'm just saying there was no real excitement like there was after the concert in New Orleans. It was like WOW! This is IT. Then we started the group. So, no, the beginning was in 1976 at that concert.

Do you think the WSQ is an interesting and enlarging situation all of the time? I'm only hearing the recordings.

Well, it's not always interesting, but some of the projects that we've been doing lately with Ellington, the fact that they are focused and theme-oriented has helped the career of our group quite a bit. There is such a great popular appeal that the WSQ has, which all of us really enjoy, and it is a group that over the years has actually made it possible for me to earn a living as a saxophone player, because those are the best-paying gigs that I do. I get a lot of enjoyment from the group, especially with the kind of spaces we have between concerts. You know, time for me to do this, David (Murray) does a lot of things on his own, and Hemphill's doing his own stuff, so it works out really comfortably.

The theme idea, such as Duke Ellington, the Blues etc... this helps to focus audiences?

We made all these albums of original material, and a lot of times when people hear melodies that they've heard before, they get a chance then to listen to our originals with a more open mind. They hear how we approach something that they've heard for many years, then when they come to us they can start relating to our original compositions, in that same way. That has brought a lot of people to us. When we did the Ellington album, that brought a lot of new people to the WSQ, who now maybe will come to our concerts and see us because they were first introduced to something they had heard before. ❑

THE CD REVIEW • MY FIRST ENCOUNTER

"Holy laser beam, Batman! I think he's done it! I think he's finally bought a CD player!"
"Yes, Robin, I believe you're right. It looks as though he's finally dipped his big toe in the tides of technological change."

SADIK HAKIM (Photograph by Bill Smith)

"There will be time," I kept telling myself, "time yet for a hundred indecisions, and for a hundred visions and revisions before the taking of the new CD." Well, I was wrong. In truth, "I grow old... I grow old, and I do not think the record manufacturers will sing to me" any longer. So now I must wear a chain of discarded LP covers, suffer a plague of ticks and pops, and humbly eat crow. I absolutely refuse to drown in CDs, however. Nevertheless, my tiny sea of jewel boxes has already begun to flood my record shelves, compounded by the wave of those I have before me for review. *(with apologies to Batman and T.S. Eliot)*

Though tenorman **Lors Møller** is only in his early 20s, he already projects a talent and sophistication generally accorded far more experienced players. This is quite evident on his first release, ***Copenhagen Groove***, for **Stunt Records (CD 18902: TT c44 min.)**, with no fewer than six of the eight cuts being Møller originals. The presence of renowned Danish pianist, **Thomas Clausen**, and proven jazzmen, **NHOP** (bass) and **Jimmy Cobb** (drums), on six sides (I still think of CDs as having "sides!"), all studio recordings from Copenhagen, is a bonus for the listener. The remaining two numbers, drawn from a live session at New York's Jazzcenter, substitute pianist **Joel Weiskopf** and bassist **Ben Wolfe**, but are equally rewarding, for this is, indeed, a Lars Møller disc, featuring a young man with an exciting future in jazz, if this is any indication of what we may anticipate. What a great beginning to my CD initiation!

If the **Spike Robinson** on ***The Odd Couple*** **(Capri CD 74008-2; TT c60 min.)** is the same reedman who graced the British jazz scene back in the early 50s, he certainly hasn't lost any of that easy, breathy flow which he once generated in the company of such illustrious performers as Ronnie Ball and Victor Feldman. The CD springs from a 1988 outing at Denver's Media Centre, with relative newcomers **Rob Mullins** (co-leader, piano, synthesizer), **Fred Hamilton** (bass), and **Jill Fredericksen** (drums). The results are not "odd" at all, especially in the way that Mullins and Robinson are able to share the spotlight on such numbers as *Melancholy Baby, I Love You,* or *Theme*, without any loss of musical continuity; even the synthesized sound on *You're Blasé* or *Street of Dreams* is tastefully suited to the fluid outpourings from Robinson's often Getz-like tenor. Nearly all of the compositions are recognizable standards, and, although this doesn't break any new ground, it makes for good, relaxed listening. I wonder if Spike has ever met Vancouver's Fraser MacPherson? What a "chase" sequence they might fashion together!

Cookin' On All Burners **(Stash CD - 24; TT c55 min.)** is still another co-led aggre-

gation with alto-soprano player, **John Mastroianni** and drummer **Sherrie Maricle** sharing those honours. Both are young musicians in their 20s who, with some obvious consideration, have surrounded themselves with such stalwarts as **Roger Kellaway** (piano), **Michael Moore** (bass), and **Peter Appleyard** (vibraharp), and have chosen to augment several original compositions of their own with the likes of *Scrapple from the Apple, Sophisticated Lady* and *Our Love Is Here To Stay*, among others. The results, in my opinion, are mixed. The veterans often steal the show here: Kellaway and Appleyard on *Lady*; Kellaway again on *Scrapple*; Moore on *Our Love*.... Quite frankly, I would like to hear more from the newcomers who clearly indicate that they are more than just competent musicians; Maricle is not just a time-keeper though her solos (*Three and One/Scrapple*) are too "show-cased" to be memorable, and Mastroianni displays an intriguingly reedy alto on *Cookin'* and sets a torrid (but too brief) pace on *Scrapple*. I particularly like his clean soprano rendition on *A Quiet Bossa*. "The musicianship on this album is beyond reproach," state the liner notes. This is true. However, despite some good moments, there seems, to my ears, a general lack of familiarity among the players who should be enjoying the shaping of a musical experience. The garish CD cover doesn't help either.

And yet a third co-led quintet finds vibist **Charlie Shoemake** teamed with tenorman **Harold Land** (***Stand-up Guys* - Chase Music Group CMD 8016: TT c45 min.**) for 7 numbers, 3 of which are Shoemake originals. A young **Randy Cannon** takes over the piano slot, while bassists **Andy Simpkins** or **Bob Maize**, and drummers **Lawrance Marable** or **Carl Burnett** share this two-day session. The originals are interesting enough, with two easy, swinging compositions (*Season's End / Stand-up Guys*) and a relaxed *Mourning for Mr. Mobley*, suitably styled to commemorate the passing of reedman Hank Mobley, all 3 highlighting good solos by Shoemake and Land; as well, there is a surprisingly provocative and controlled vocal by **Sandi Shoemake** on *When Your Lover Has Gone*, though a bit "too slow" for my liking. My personal favourites are the opening, *I Can't Resist You*, done in Brazilian samba fashion (quite removed from my memory of a 1940 Benny Goodman/Helen Forrest presentation), and the fast-paced Miles Davis *Out of the Blue*, a re-working of the *Get Happy* tune. I was especially drawn to pianist Randy Cannon's brief but exciting forays on *Out of the Blue, Season's End*, and *Stand-up Guys*. More from him, please. I like this disc. It's a pleasant romp by good players, well-attuned to each other, and obviously enjoying the opportunity to play together as they explore a well-balanced repertoire.

I have a soft spot for solo piano, jazz or otherwise. I'm almost predetermined to like it. **Leon Chuck Moutsoulas'** self-produced ***A Time for Love* (LCM 101: TT c50 min.)** is easy to like. Though occasionally his chording and blocking techniques seem to impede the rhythmic flow of ideas (*Sunny Side of the Street*), or his humorous "free interpretation" evolves into Erroll Garner plays Cecil Taylor (*Love for Sale)*, the overall impression is of a player who projects his ideas with great authority and dedication, who knows how to employ the whole keyboard in a playful yet exhilarating way, and who can readily draw upon a wide variety of sources for his inspiration. He is at his most serious self, it would appear, with his own compositions; I particularly liked his beautifully introspective ballad, *Solace*. No, he is not an Erroll Garner, or an Oscar Peterson, or a stride pianist, for that matter; however, his playing reflects the element of surprise, a freshness of interpretation, and a confidence in his ability to make it all meaningfully apparent. I truly enjoyed my listening time with this performer.

One good piano player deserves another, although **Sadik Hakim**, alas, is no longer with us. This CD (***Lazy Bird* - Storyville STCD 4156: TT c42 min)** was recorded in Tokyo in 1980, with bassist **Errol Walters** and drummer **Clifford Barbaro**. Apart from 2 Hakim originals, the session is a blend of such standards as *Stella by Starlight, I'll Remember April* and *Body and Soul*, along with three classic Charlie Parker masterpieces (*Now's The Time, Yardbird Suite, My Little Suede Shoes*), and Coltrane's *Lazy Bird*. Hakim's roots extend well back to those early boppish days of Parker, Lester Young and James Moody, yet there is ample evidence that he wasn't always totally comfortable in that exclusively bop-oriented milieu. In fact, his style is difficult to pin-point, and that is borne out on this date, notably on the three ballad cuts, but even on his own compositions (*48th Street* and the punned, *I'd Ling*). Nevertheless, he had achieved, perhaps his greatest personal success as a bopper, and it is only logical that such identifiable numbers should remain an overt cornerstone of his recording dates. It's a fine outing by the trio, and a fitting tribute to a jazz player too often lost in the shuffle of pianistic talent. Liner notes, sadly, are non-existent for this CD. 'Tis a pity!

Drummer **Mel Brown** fronts a sextet on a CD of music chiefly by pianist/composer **Gordon Lee**, featured here at the keyboard (***Gordon Bleu* - Gleeful Music GL 001: TT c52 min.)**. I find it difficult to recall clearly any of the numbers after a first hearing, with the exception of *Dues Blues* and *Without*, both composed and played by the pianist. Yet the overall impression is of a tightly-knit combo playing all-out. The musicianship is certainly of a high calibre, notably reedmen **Warren Rand** and **Michael York** on *Land Whales, The Czar* and *Passin' On The Curve*, **Thara Memory** (taking licks from the Marsalis notebook) with *The Czar, Dues Blues* and *Passin' On The Curve* (I like his open trumpet on the latter), and Lee, especially on his own *Cherie's Garden* and *Without*. Mel Brown and bassist **Tim Gilson** are the omnipresent catalysts throughout. Though the liner notes attribute the virtues of "furious... spontaneous... and hot" to the session, I honestly can't place this at the top of my priority list; however, it's interesting enough to warrant attention, if only for the solo spots. The arrangement of Rachmaninoff's *Full Moon and Empty Arms* should just not have happened, by the way.

***Give The Drummer Some* (Stash CD-22: TT c65 min.)**, a sextet album, sometimes reduced to quintet or quartet format, has something of the same feeling as the Mel Brown CD. Drummer/leader **Mike Clark** observes that, "... we've succeeded in establishing something that might be considered our own style, our own language that extends out of bebop and modern jazz." Well, I'm not sure of that. Undoubtedly Clark's stints with Herbie Hancock's 1974 group, or Eddie Henderson, Joe Farrell, and the pop aggregation, Brand X, have had a strong bearing on the kind of music that he deems significant. Certainly the widespread popular appeal of this music is without question. Whether it has any lasting qualities that will help to further the advance-

ment of the music we have come to call "jazz" is not for me to say. Only time can pass that judgement. It's often difficult to take "a path less travelled" when the world around you makes pressing demands rooted in the concept of "now." Louis did it; so did Ellington, Parker, Gillespie and Coltrane. And they outlasted a lot of good musicians largely because of a personal, serious commitment to their own ideas. The musicians here are good players, without exception, but, in my opinion, relegated to a style that lacks distinctiveness. Fans of this sound will obviously take offence. Buy the CD! You'll love it!

As the title ***Bopera House*** **(VSOP 72CD: TT c68 min.)** suggests, this outing takes its chosen path from boppish beginnings. However, the principle that "mainstream bebop... keeps renewing itself" guides the players into fresh, swinging re-shapings of numbers like Navarro's *Wailing Wall*, Parker's *Sippin' at Bells*, and Duke Pearson's *Is That So?*, under the tutelage of trumpeter **John Marshall** (ex-Buddy Rich, Mel Lewis, Gillespie) and pianist **Tardo Hammer** (ex-Charlie Rouse, Johnny Griffin), with a fine rhythm section (**John Webber** on bass and **Tom Melito** on drums) and tenorman (**Ralph Lalama**) to boot. Of the eleven cuts, five are originals, and they, too, capture the overall flavour of the meeting. It's a bop session, and pretends to nothing less. There's even Coleman Hawkins' *Bean and the Boys*, freshly revitalized, for those who cherish such things. Good musical variety, plenty of energy and unquestionable virtuosity make this a CD disc to seek out.

Lastly, for a change of pace, there is **Sathima Bea Benjamin's** ***Lovelight*** **(Ekapa CD 008: TT c46 min.)** with an interesting cross-section of material from Noel Coward to Franz Lehar to Jerome Kern, as well as four original compositions. From the opening tribute to Winnie Mandela, one is aware of a rich, lushly-shaded voice capable of expressing powerful emotions, lyrics that are meticulously phrased, a styling quite unlike anyone you might have heard. There is a strong supporting cast. **Buster Williams** and **Billy Higgins** are among the best on the scene today, and, explanations being superfluous, show why. Tenorman **Ricky Ford** shows (*Music / Gift of Love*) what an original talent he can be when the mood is right and the path clear. I was also impressed by the strong sensitivity displayed by pianist **Larry Willis** on such numbers as *I'll See You Again* and *You Don't Know What Love Is*. There is no gimickry here. What an impact this vocalist might have made with the full coloration of the Ellington orchestra behind her. Needless to say, this is highly recommended.

Well, I've done it. My very first CD review. I actually enjoyed my initial trip through CD-land: the convenience of projecting the music, the exemplary sound, the extended length of programme. However, now I'm going to take some time off, years literally, and play some of my old 78s, just to clear my head of all this technological wizardry.

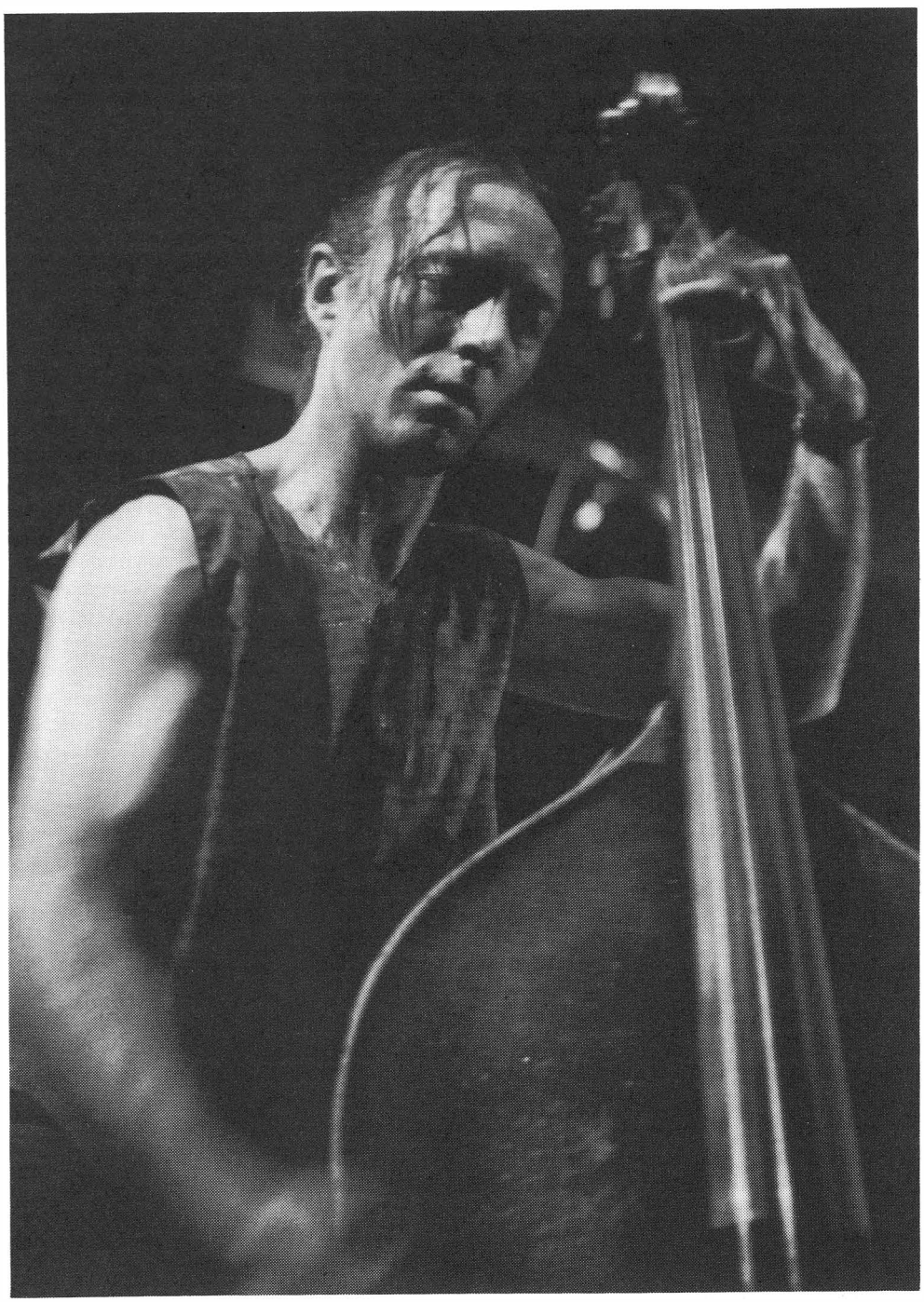
LISLE ELLIS • NINJA OF THE BASS

You never know what darkened corner Lisle Ellis music will strike from, what chops he will use to resonate never-before-heard sounds from string and wood, or what instrumentation/choreography he will incorporate into a work. Lisle Ellis is a musical surprise attack. He is the ninja of the bass.

Last November, Ellis performed his *Archipelago* solo at the Pitt Gallery in Vancouver. The pre-performance stage contained a bass suspended upside-down from the ceiling, a hand-lettered sign reading "Free James Brown", and Ellis' birch-bark paintings.

The lights dimmed, and wood-block percussion was heard. As the lights went up, the eyes were attracted to a bass case with a rattle attached to the top of the neck. The neck was shaking the rattle and body of the case was humping over the floor, like a rattle-snake. Then Lisle Ellis, himself ensconced inside the case while its usual inhabitant hung from the ceiling, read a poem. When he emerged from his cocoon, he unstrung his bass, and began to play. In the middle of the performance, he cried out what James Brown must be imploring the Parole Board: "Please, Please, Please". The performance was a dark one, but as Ellis later said, "There are many different islands in the Archipelago."

I conducted the following discussion with Lisle after the 1989 duMaurier International Jazz Festival. He had been through an intensive 3 weeks: duos with Paul Plimley and Pierre Tange, a trio with Marilyn Crispell and Roger Baird, jamming with the legendary drummer Claude Ranger, and leading the Freedom Force Ensemble, a group of Vancouver musicians put together by Ellis, himself originally from Vancouver.



Larry Svirchev: *I want to ask you about your musical and visual concepts. During the Freedom Force Ensemble, you had the musicians walking in up the aisle from the rear of the hall, just breathing through their horns. It created a tremendous aura in the place - the audience was stunned by the silence. It was like the natural sound of the wind.*

Lisle Ellis: The way we started that concert was something that I thought about, but also it's something that I feel has been given to me at some point from what I've seen other people do. Like from watching Sun Ra a few weeks ago, seeing the Ellington orchestra, seeing Japanese Noh theatre. There's some kind of common ground to all of that which has nothing to do with jazz music or free jazz or whatever we want to call it. There's these traditions that were here before we were here and we try and pick up on them. If you want to get to a certain place, you say "This is some kind of ritual function." From the first step you have to

have a "gong" to get everybody focused. It could be literally a gong -wham- or it could be something that has the same effect. There had to be something and so it was the musicians breathing. Everybody was breathing, the audience was breathing. It's like church. It helped the audience to focus on what was happening then, what was going to come next, and also to help the musicians prepare for what they had to do for their music. If you don't have a lot of rehearsal time, you don't have a lot of time to get a feel for each individual and what they can do. We wanted to get a feeling that everybody's together, a unification of the forces that are available with all that talent in the room and trying to utilize it in the best way possible.

Part of your orchestration was two basses. You were leading and playing bass but Clyde Reed was also playing bass. How does two basses fit in with your music?

Oh, just gives it more bottom. I also knew at times that I would have to put the bass down and do some pointing. It was great to have Clyde because he's so experienced with this stuff. Clyde and I played two basses in orchestras - we first started doing that a dozen years ago.

Later on in the evening you dropped the Ensemble format and did a quintet. Two basses, Dan Lapp on violin, Al Neill on piano, Roy Styffe on clarinet. No percussion.

I had the idea that at a certain point in the music, it might be nice just to have another colour. We had all those saxophones and brass players with a rhythm section and a traditional rhythm section - piano, two basses, drums - and I just thought it would just be nice to do something completely different. It was a good change of pace. It solved an orchestrating problem for me. The chamber piece enabled the other musicians to very subtly move and take their positions around the room. When the chamber piece was over, they were already there in place for the next part.

You had two dancers that evening, Natalie Jean and Beverly Harshenin. What kind of instructions did you give to them?

Very little. I thought that basically they should do what they wanted to do. I had an idea for the beginning and I had an idea for the end and then what they did in the middle was up to themselves. They were fantastic. They added, as dancers always do, something very special. They created a focus for the musicians. In the ear is your centre of balance, so you know it makes so much sense that music and dance go together. We all need that, but dancers particularly need that to move properly, that equilibrium. And right in there too is where the eardrum is too. So it's all interconnected: the music and the dance. When a musician sees a dancer moving to the song that he or she is creating, it feeds back information and you actually see what you're playing.

Well it sure did have some feedback because during his solo, Bill Clark just dropped his horn and started dancing himself.

That's what happens, the whole thing escalates until - well that moment, what Bill did, was so fantastic. If you look at the traditions of the great orchestras of the world, I don't mean just European classical but as well the great orchestras, like the Chinese orchestras, the Persian orchestras, it was always expected that the musicians could dance and that the dancers could play music and their positions were interchangeable. There was not so much of a separation. In Japanese Kabuki theatre the actor, it's mostly male-dominated in that theatre situation, they play music, they're trained as musicians, they're trained as dancers, they're trained as actors. There's no separation. They don't separate things out.

Westerners separate things. The western mind loves to divide and conquer all the time. We separate the rhythm from the melody and melody from harmony so we can really get down to the proton or the neutron or whatever. I'm not so much interested in separation as much as unifying things and bringing them together more, seeing the whole picture and keep talking about the Freedom Force Ensemble. There's a powerful force here for people that are interested in this idea of unification, this idea of some kind of liberation through sound. The sound is the focus but there is also dance. It's fantastic when you see that there's a force here, and it's a very contemporary thing. You know you pulled out that T shirt about human rights with what just went down in China.

Tienanman Square with the one guy stopping the tanks. The shirt logo says "Stand Up for Human Rights."

Yeah, and this is another aspect of this idea of liberation. Our freedom, human rights, humanity is one thing. It's made up of a lot of individuals but together we're a force and the human spirit wants to fly, so to speak, wants to rise up and experience that light, that feeling of lightness, that we find in music and dance, climbing a mountain, being beside the ocean or whatever, and I guess these are the things that are important for me in music, and when I'm talking about music.

Bass players have an overview because bass players, you know we're the foundation. The American Indian, when they did their traditional rain dances, made the lowest note they could make and the lowest note was made on a big drum or by beating the earth with sticks or stomping on it. They beat the earth to make a bass note as just one big note. But it's light as a feather and it floats up; that's hot air, it rises. Bass notes are like big hot air notes and they're very huge but they've got no weight they just rise up. If you could see the notes of the piccolo or the violin, the highest notes, they're like little lead balls. They're like the rain, they're very heavy, very dense. High notes are very dense. The American Indians know about the principles of this kind of thing. They made low notes that would go up and when the low notes go up, they stimulate the high notes, the raindrops, to come down. Bass players, get a good overview in a traditional jazz rhythm section. The bass player listens to what the piano player, or to the guitarist, the chords that he's playing down there, you're getting the bottom note there, plus you're interpreting the rhythm from the drums. So you're acting as a translator for everybody. You're kind of telling the piano player where the rhythm of the drummer is at, and you're telling the drummer what's happening, where the next shift is going to come. And you're communicating that to the front line, to the horn players and so a bass player is the intermediary. You're kind of keeping everybody cool, you're like an octopus.

I was never really that interested in being political, but when you make your sound it has an affect. You know there are implications in the music and when you start talking about freedom and human rights and liberation and what we were just saying, you know, that just the freedom to be able to look at the mountains and say "Wow, one

BY LARRY SVIRCHEV

day I'll be free enough so that I can get up there and really one day I may be worthy enough to be at the top of that mountain. When that went down at Tienamen I heard that on the radio while driving out here from Montreal and hearing that first news report, I think the only thing that has moved me so much in my life was one time when I was a kid when Kennedy was shot. I thought about that a lot and I started thinking what am I doing with my music. Music is a sound, is a force. Sound goes out, it reaches people, it keeps travelling, it doesn't stop just past the ear, you know. Things vibrate, walls, everything moves. We all know the story of Joshua and walls of Jericho, the trumpets. So, you know, it's a force, and all of this is turning around in my mind. People were asking, "Well, what are you going to call this thing?" I said Freedom Force and for me it's almost a political statement, the closest I've ever come to a political statement. Because I know in my life the first sound that every attracted, the first sound that ever moved me was blues, and you know that was made by black American musicians, but anybody can. There's a similar quality if you listen to folk music from different parts of the world, there's a certain quality oppressed human beings have a certain quality when they make a sound, when they sing or when they play instruments, in oppressed people there's a similar quality to be found.

Although the Freedom Force Ensemble was organized on pretty short notice, it got one of the largest jazz audiences in between times when the recorded and international stars come in. That says something about the ability of musicians in any locality to expand their audience and go beyond what's the hardcore jazz listeners. Sometimes it feels like we're boxed because of musical labels - the folkies over here, and the jazzies over here, and classicals over there, and the rockers - there's a wall between them and it would be nice to break that down.

I'm meeting more and more people that are less interested in jazz per se. I'm finding more and more people, like younger people, are interested in contemporary music and contemporary sound. They want to know what's happening now and they're looking for something with an edge. I'm meeting all these young people that are going back and listening to music of the 60's. You know like kids running around with Jim Morrison T shirts or Jimi Hendrix. I'm not sure what all that means but I know there's this idea - a retro movement going on - as we're coming to the end of the century and the end of a millennium. People are I think at that point in time people where they are going to want to go back and either hang on to the things from the past, it's hard to let go, or else they just want to go back and check it out and make sure everything was okay before we let it go.

Well maybe some people are scared of the future.

Yeah, oh I think that's true too.

There's only scope for solid new expanding music, different sounds.

Mm hmm but there's a lot of resistance, you know. As you said, because people are afraid of the unknown so there's resistance to that and what we did with the Freedom Force Ensemble. It showed me that the players, the level of musicianship here in Vancouver, has really grown since the seven years that I've been away. These people have really worked hard on their music, on their conceptions, in their lives and they've got a lot to say; there's a lot more to be said yet, so I hope the community gets out there and supports what they're doing. It's difficult for all of us to let people know what's happening and it seems to be that the big media channels are not really so interested in this information. I mean there is really no notification in the local press, the daily journals or the big radio stations. Maybe just a little bit on the co-operative radio station and a listing in the local free press.

With no reviews. Not a single review in any of the local press.

No reviews. No, and I'm not sure why that is, you know. Because ...well, yeah. But I feel like these are things that if we remain true to our convictions in the music and we keep trying to understand more and more about the things we are ignorant of, we're going to be building support for this, and I think it'll never be a lot. Obviously this is not music for the masses but I think it's really important that a few people are continuing this work, continuing this music, continuing this band, continuing this artistic perception.

Transcription: Gloria Pomeroy

THE INDEPENDENT ALBERT MARX

Through the years, as the various mediums used in sound reproduction have changed from wax to acetate to analog tape to digital, there has been one constant in the recording studio: Albert Marx. At 78 years old, Marx is probably the oldest living record producer, and is definitely the producer with the longest history. Having started his career in the record business in 1929, Marx began even before such notables as John Hammond, Milt Gabler, and Norman Granz. If his name is unfamiliar, it is only due to Marx's somewhat low-keyed approach, not a lack of accomplishments, for they are many and diverse. Always on the cutting edge of jazz with at least one highly regarded record label at his command, his trained ear has led him to discover and appreciate, then record a multitude of exceptional talent, from Art Tatum to Mike Wofford.

Marx's first exposure to jazz is still vivid in his memory. "When I would come home from high school on Fridays," Marx reminisces, "I'd get dressed, get on my bicycle, and ride to the record store. I had a girl there who would have all the new records ready for me to listen to. In those days, you could play any record in the listening room before you bought it. You just had to be careful not to scratch it. I was heavily into classical, so it made sense when she told me, 'I put this one on top because I knew you wouldn't like it.' She was referring to Duke Ellington's *Black and Tan Fantasy*. So, I played it, then came busting out of the booth, saying, 'Why did you say I wasn't going to like this? It's the greatest thing I ever heard in my life!' *Black and Tan Fantasy* is what turned me on to jazz, and shortly thereafter I got my father to take me to the Cotton Club for my birthday. My father told Duke about me, and Duke came over, sat with us, and talked with me. From that day on, I became a very close friend with Duke Ellington and went to hear him very often."

"One time, I had the privilege of bringing this white girl to hear Duke for the first time. When I picked her up at the Westchester Country Club where she lived, and told her we were going to hear Duke at the Cotton Club, she said, 'Well, is he a nigger? He isn't going to talk to us, is he?' I became very angry and almost took her back, but we went, and by the time we left the club it was four in the morning. We got in the car and she said, 'You have shown me something I have never seen in my life, and I will never call anybody a nigger again.' Duke Ellington had that effect on people. He was a wonderful person."

Born to a wealthy family in New York City, then raised in New Rochelle, New York, Marx had no difficulty deciding at an early age that his father's company, United Merchants, was not the career route for him. "My father said that I should decide what I wanted to do," recalls Marx, "and he tried to help me as much as he could. But unfortunately, he knew no one in the record business. So, I started by walking the streets for about a month before I found a job at American Records. It was located at 1776 Broadway in New York. American Records bought out the Brunswick, Banner, and Perfect labels, along with a few others. The guy that was my boss was Harry Grey, and he was a tremendous guy, a wonderful person. He started me off by having me work in their pressing plant in Scranton, Pennsylvania for four or five months. Next I sold records to stores. I hated it, but I learned about the business. I worked with Harry when I got back, and I got lucky. I discovered two artists who were not jazz musicians, but made a lot of money for us. One was a pianist named Eddy Duchin, and the other was Freddy Martin. Both had instant hits, so that's when my boss really liked me and said I could do anything I wanted. Next was Art Tatum, who I discovered myself. After that was a guy they turned me down on, saying he was too avant-garde: Jimmy Lunceford."

After four years with American Records (1929-33), Marx worked for Rockwell-O'Keefe, renowned talent booking agents. "Rockwell and O'Keefe were both talented guys themselves and knew music very well." claims Marx. "They booked talent in the hotels, clubs, and private homes of every city in every country you could name. One day, I said to Tom Rockwell, 'Hey Tom, did you ever hear any of Ray Noble's music?' When he said he hadn't, I brought him records and played them for him. Well, he flipped out. He flipped out so much that he said, 'Within ten days, I'll be on my way to England.' He went to England, signed Ray Noble, brought him over to the United States (only his vocalist was allowed to come with

SARAH VAUGHAN (Photograph by David Redfern)

him) and he opened the Rainbow Room. He had guys in his band like Tommy Dorsey and Glenn Miller."

It was in 1938 that Albert Marx recorded the monumental Benny Goodman ***Carnegie Hall Concert*** (CBS 450983/1/2), an album that would eventually be elected to the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame. Marx recalls: "I asked Benny whether he was going to record it, and he said, 'Hell no. I have all the air checks I need; I don't need any more.' I said, 'Benny, don't you know that no jazz orchestra has ever played in Carnegie Hall?' He said, 'I don't care.' He said he didn't mind if I recorded it, so I ran a telephone wire from Harry Smith's studio on the 23rd floor of the RKO Building. We decided to run two lathes, one or two minutes apart, so if we ran out on one lathe (we were using acetate), we wouldn't miss anything. That night the band was set up a little off-centre. It was unusual to see the audience sitting on stage with the band. They needed that much extra room for more people. My brother smuggled his camera in and got pictures of everything."

George T. Simon's animated review for ***Metronome*** magazine proclaimed the concert "a howling success... The crowd began to yell; the band began to dig and blast..." But aside from an occasion for frenzy, the ***Carnegie Hall Concert*** was an opportunity for the public and the press to see and hear many black and white musicians performing together. One segment of the concert consisted of an informal jam, a reminder (or, for many, a first exposure) of the consistency of real jazz. Although recorded for Albert Marx's personal enjoyment, Columbia finally issued this material in 1950. Brian Priestley states in his book, ***Jazz On Record***, that it "was edited to fit on to four twenty-five-minute sides and it captured the public's imagination as an event that might have been made for the long-playing record." In addition to ushering in the age of the LP, this revolutionary performance also helped bring about a renaissance of interest in the big bands. The 1950s swing era revival saw much previously unissued material appearing in the record bins, especially broadcast transcriptions. With the advent of superior recording techniques, there was the re-recording of many of the big band "chestnuts," utilizing as many of the original musical personnel as possible. Hollywood picked up on the interest and filmed the Glenn Miller and Benny Goodman biographies (such as they were). More importantly, the big bands began to come directly into homes via television.

After touring the country for Rockwell-O'Keefe, Marx regretfully went to work for his father, believing it was just a matter of time before he was drafted. When, in 1944, the Army physical found Marx to be colour blind and therefore unacceptable for duty, Marx bought into Musicraft. This primarily classical New York based label was leaning toward the prospect of recording jazz and had purchased Guild, one of the first labels to record the sounds of bebop.

I was able to do a lot of interesting things for Musicraft," proclaims Marx in his usual humble fashion. But any jazz record collector will quickly admit that the Musicraft sides (now available on compact disc) are true classics. Much of the Musicraft, Trend, Discovery, and AM/PM catalog is currently being released on compact disc. "I don't want LPs any more," Marx sums up his stance concerning format. "We're not putting them out any more. The sales are so small that you can't make a buck on them. So, most of the labels are cutting out LPs and going to CD." Luckily, many of the original Musicraft acetates were available, in good shape, for use in the digital transfer to compact disc. As a result, the sound quality is exceptional.

Shaw Nuff / **Dizzy Gillespie and His Sextets & Orchestra** (MVSCD-53), from 1945-46) includes outstanding sides recorded for both Guild and Musicraft. The personnel reads like a bop encyclopedia, including Charlie Parker, Dexter Gordon, Sonny Stitt, Milt Jackson, Al Haig, Kenny Clarke, Ray Brown, et al. "We had Dizzy under contract," says Marx. "In fact, I gave Dizzy his first chance with the big band. He talked to me and said he'd like to do the big band, so we went right ahead." Marx's faith in Dizzy led to these performances, which are at the high water mark of both small *group and big band jazz.*

For You For Me Forevermore / **Artie Shaw and His Orchestra with Strings, Featuring Mel Torme and the Mel-tones** (MVCD-50, from 1945-46) are arguable the best Artie Shaw recordings in existence. Because of his incredible talent, Shaw was forever experimenting, and this endeavour with 21 year old vocal phenomenon Mel Torme paid off. Everyone involved is in absolute top form, and the Mel-tones' tight vocal harmonies sound fresh even today.

Marx was never afraid to record new and different talent, often to the distaste of his associates. He recalls an absurd episode when "Eddie Ellinger and Irving Felt, who bought an interest in Musicraft but knew nothing about music, came into the studio while Sarah Vaughan was recording *You're Blase*. Eddie said to me, 'Albert, after this number, would you come in the back? We want to talk to you.' So, after the number was over, I walked to the back and they said, 'Oh, that girl is a great singer. She's wonderful.' I said, 'I sure know that.' They said, 'But we'd like you to go out there and tell her that she doesn't sound like anybody we'd like to hear; she should try to change her way of singing so it sounds more like Dinah Shore.' I lost my temper and told both of them to leave the studio and never come back while I was recording. They never came back." ***Tenderly*** / **Sarah Vaughan** (MVSCD-57, from 1946-47) includes *You're Blase,* along with twelve additional vocal cuts recorded with combo leaders George Treadwell, Freddie Webster, Sam Musiker, and Teddy Wilson.

Prior to signing Vaughan as a solo, Marx had the opportunity to record her with tenor saxophonist Georgie Auld, one of a handful of swing players who successfully stretched his imaginative solos to include the influence of the modernists. With Sarah Vaughan's obvious link to the bop style, Auld's orchestra turned out to be an appropriate backdrop. ***In The Middle*** / **George Auld and His Orchestra with Sarah Vaughan** (MVSCD-56, from 1945-46) contains both Guild and Musicraft material (the Guild sides featured the trumpet of Dizzy Gillespie). It is a credit to Albert Marx that he had the foresight to continue recording Vaughan, for at the time, the female vocal market belonged to Ella Fitzgerald and a select few. At first, Vaughan's new concept did not sell well.

As Teddy Wilson epitomized the swing pianists, ***Isn't It Romantic*** / **Teddy Wilson** (MVSCD-58, from 1944-47) gives prime examples of his smooth, fluid style with various ensembles featuring Buck Clayton, Charlie Shavers, Don Byas,and lovely vocals by Kay Penton (*As Time Goes By, These*

Foolish Things, Something I Dreamed Last Night), who went on to sing with bop pianist/ composer Tadd Dameron.

It was the fulfilment of a dream for Albert Marx when Duke Ellington left RCA to join him at Musicraft. ***Happy-Go-Lucky Local* / Duke Ellington and His Famous Orchestra** (MVSCD-52, from 1946) contains excellent sides which never received the appropriate attention or praise. Ellington's previously released Blanton/ Webster Band sides (on RCA) were definitely a hard act to follow. But a serious listening to *The Beautiful Indians* or *Blue Skies (Trumpet No End)*, included in this package, reveals the total musicianship one comes to expect from the Ellington Band. "Duke never had charts," Marx remembers. "The whole thing, it sounded like charts, but he'd tell them what he wanted. He'd tell them a few times, and they'd get it."

Musicraft came to an end in 1948 when Ellinger and Felt, the same two men with whom Marx had the encounter in the recording studio, decided to open a record pressing plant in Ossining, New York. At the same time, they also purchased another plant on the West Coast. "The plant in Ossining cost five million dollars and never pressed a single record," recalls Marx. "The West Coast plant pressed nothing but disasters, which were all returned. The sad thing is, the records were all selling very well. After I got into Musicraft, the stock went from two dollars a share to fourteen dollars a share. Then when all of this happened, it went down to twenty-five cents. This is what busted Musicraft; it went bankrupt."

Following this endeavour, Marx moved from New York to Los Angeles, where he and his wife continue to make their home. "I moved out here in '47," states Marx. "I was here for about a year, then I went back and got my clothes." It is in Los Angeles that Marx began his Discovery label, recording artists such as the Red Norvo (with Tal Farlow and Charles Mingus), Art Pepper, Hampton Hawes, Georgie Auld, and Dizzy Gillespie (with strings).

Not content with just one label, Marx started Trend Records in 1954. The early Trend roster included The Dave Pell Octet, Claude Thornhill, the Hi Los, and Ernie Andrews (backed by Benny Carter's Orchestra).

The 1950s proved to be a very rough period for the distribution of records (a problem which still exists today) so Discovery was sold and Trend was forced into inactivity. "My timing was wrong," Marx told Leonard Feather in a 1982 interview. "Trend was operating at a time when it was difficult to get distributors to pay."

Next, Marx worked as an independent producer, producing sessions for CBS, ABC, Epic, and others, keeping his hand in the business, and maintaining those vital contacts which would prove invaluable when he reactivated Discovery and Trend in 1976. With his own labels, Marx takes extreme pleasure in releasing recordings of relatively unknown players as well as established musicians. In a recent interview, pianist/composer Horace Silver sums up the appreciativeness of the musicians: "Of the independent record companies, I don't know of anybody who has given more people breaks (in terms of giving them their start) than Albert Marx. Most producers will only record somebody who is known. Albert's a very important person."

Marx quickly shows his pride when he speaks about the artists he is currently recording. "I think I've got the best piano players in the country now on our label. We have Mike Wofford, Cedar Walton, Alan Broadbent, and Milcho Leviev. We have one New Yorker: Barbara Carroll."

Perhaps the best gauge of a jazz musician's ability lies with his treatment of the standard tune. Imagination and invention are the key ingredients to success when performing material which has already had countless interpretations in a variety of contexts. ***Lush Life* / The Cedar Walton Trio Plays The Music Of Billy Strayhorn** (DSCD-955), ***Mike Wofford Trio and Quartet Plays The Music of Jerome Kern - Vol. 1, 2 and 3*** (DSCD-5000 1/2), and **Easter *Parade* / Milcho Leviev Trio Plays The Music Of Irving Berlin** (TRCD-553) are exemplary, and show these three pianists rising to the challenge with highly individualistic treatments of some of the most superb songwriting in American history. All three CDs stand up to repeated listening as these pianists are capable of throwing the listener better curves than those pitched in the World Series.

***Impromptu* / June Christy with the Lou Levy Sextet** (DSCD-836) is one of several comeback releases Christy made on Discovery, and finds her in some excellent West Coast company (Jack Sheldon, Bob Cooper, Shelly Manne, Frank Rosolino, Bob Daugherty). ***Tha's Delights* / Bill Mays Quintet** (TRCD-532) featuring Ralph Moore on tenor and Tom Harrell on flugelhorn shows the extent of Marx's tastes with state-of-the-art hard bop.

The big bands have always held a special place in Albert Marx's heart, and the **Bob Florence Big Band, *Live at Concerts By The Sea*** (TR-523) is a fine example of the contemporary West Coast scene. **Waltz**

The plight of the independents...

"I don't know how we manage to say in business at all today," states a frustrated Albert Marx. "They buy from you and have the right to return as much as they bought from you. Now, think about it and tell me if you know of any other business like that. Records... Jesus! You ship them records and six months later, all you get are returns. SO, what we're trying very hard to do is get rid of the distributors in the United States. Frankly, I don't care if I sell any more records in the United States. I would like to, but I'm not interested in selling them the way I do now, whereas the dealer's return request is for four or five thousand records at a clip. It kills you! This is not true when I sell to Germany, France, or Italy, or even to Japan and Hong Kong, or any of those places. All of those are final sales.

"That all came about when they decided they wanted to show record sales as being in the millions. I'll never forget when we started Discovery again for the second time in 1976. One day I was at a distributor here and I hear this guy from one of the big record companies saying, 'Well, look. We'd like to ship you another hundred thousand of that number.' The distributor didn't think I could hear him when he said, 'If you let us return a hundred thousand, you can ship us another hundred thousand.' Then, in Billboard, it shows they sold a million copies overnight. To me, anybody who reads those Billboard reports has got to be crazy. We don't care if we're ever listed in Billboard, and we don't subscribe to Billboard. It's a screwed up magazine, and a screwed up way of doing business."

(DSCD-948) is the latest big band effort by Clare Fischer, a composer and arranger who is in the same masterful league as the late Gil Evans. (For exquisite small-group writing, ***Whose Woods Are These* / Clare Fischer With Woodwinds, Featuring Gary Foster** DS-880, is recommended.) ***Early Autumn* / Woody Herman - The Third Herd** (DSCD-944, from 1952-53), most of which was recorded in NYC, features some of the musicians (Don Faberquist, Stu Williamson, Bill Perkins) who went on to become the primary players in the 1950s West Coast scene. ***Jenna* / Gerald Wilson's Orchestra of the 90's** (DSCD-964) is the most recent big band release from a bandleader whose relationship with Marx dates back to the early 1960s. "That's one of my favourites," states Marx. "I think it's fantastic record. Everybody is playing the hell out of it and everybody loves it. It's finally the best thing that Gerald has ever done, by far."

With regard to the AM/PM label, Marx explains, "The AM/PM label is made up of college bands that are happening around the country. We could fill up that label if we wanted, with people who come to us with inferior quality music, but Bill Yeager is very good." ***Shopwork Shuffle* / Los Angeles Jazz Workshop** (AM-16) is typical of the burning multi-styled big bands which Yeager has assembled. "We also just put out a Segovia record (***A Bach Solo Guitar Recital* / Andres Segovia and Phillip Boroff**, MVSCD-100) with Phil Boroff doing half the record, which has gotten great reviews. I'm very much into classical music. I love it."

Despite all that has occurred in his rich past, Marx prefers to discuss future projects, such as who he will soon be recording, and which records will be coming out on CD. Marx still works seven days a week. While many of his 70 year old peers live an existence based on the past, Albert Marx continues to live in the present and is optimistic about the future. "I enjoy music so much that... well, I love it," he attempts to explain. "I just love the music and love what I'm doing." Listening to the music that Albert Marx was responsible for documenting says it all.

For a free MUSICRAFT / DISCOVERY TREND / AM-PM catalog, write: Discovery Records, P.O. Box 48081, Los Angeles, California, 90048

IN PERFORMANCE

Ellington '90
May 17-20
Ottawa, Canada

Late in May, the faithful gathered for the yearly meeting of the Duke Ellington Society, held this time in the nation's capital, Ottawa. Despite most inclement weather, the atmosphere was upbeat inside the prestigious Chateau Laurier. In fact, organizers were proud to say that the turnout for this year's event was the best ever, with some 300 registrations, numerous day tickets sold and large crowds in attendance for each of the three evening concerts.

From Montreal, band leader and local Ellington expert **Andrew Homzy** provided most of the entertainment with his 16 piece repertory ensemble. On the opening night, he led his charges through a razzle dazzle program of lesser known Ellingtonia, divided evenly between instrumentals and features for guest vocalist, **Alice Babbs**, of *Sacred Concerts #2 and #3* fame. Having retired professionally some ten years ago, she nevertheless was in fine voice, ringing clear and beautiful at all tempos. Particularly gracious of her was her gesture of personally thanking each musician after the concert.

The following night was devoted to small group playing with one-time associates **John Lamb, Butch Ballard, Harold Ashby** sharing the stage with organist **Wild Bill Davis** and the distinguished guitarist **Kenny Burrell**. Each of these performers came back for the finale as guest soloists of the Homzy band.

While the crowds were filling the ballroom nightly, the devotees spread out to listen to a number of speakers recounting their favourite tales in the day-

CLARK TERRY (Photograph by Roger Kaysel)

time. Most interesting was the panel of archivists from the Smithsonian in Washington D.C. reporting on their progress in establishing a permanent inventory of the Maestro's memorabilia and his oeuvre in particular. Also noteworthy were the video presentations by collector **Klaus Strateman**. Aside from the made for television version of ***The Drum Is A Woman***, a period piece of dated exotica circa 1957, sequences from the 1966 Côte d'Azur concert were memorable, but not as much as the trio performances of Duke filmed in the courtyard of the famous Fondation Maeght in St-Paul-de-Vence. These can be heard on the Pablo release, ***Duke in the Uncommon Market***.

Out of this three day get together, one can learn a lot, but there is one unescapable fact here; it is, above all else, a collection of nostalgia fans sharing anecdotes while a small contingent of younger people, too young to have ever seen the Duke in person, listens on in dutiful respect. And this makes one wonder, what will happen when these people who knew the Duke will disappear too: how will this Society maintain its relevance in times to come? Duke Ellington's heritage is one to be admired, for sure, but shouldn't his creative spirit call us to go beyond the letter (or the note in this case) of his great and many musical accomplishments, just as he did with his predecessors and contemporaries as well?

- Marc Chénard

Jazz On Main - Two Views

Benjamin Franklin V - Once again in late May, Columbia, South Carolina was the bebop capital of the world as musicians and listeners converged on the fourth annual **Jazz on Main**. And once again, no one was disappointed.

Stanley Turrentine began the week-long festivities with a concert at the South Carolina Memorial Park, followed on successive days by the local musician Tony Torre at the Motor Supply restaurant, **Bill Watrous** with a local quartet at The Mousetrap Club, and Dave Zoller at the Columbia Museum of Art. Because of previous commitments, I attended none of these sessions.

But no matter how good they might have been, they served primarily as a prelude to the wonderful bop weekend of 25-27 May. On both the 25th and 26th, two groups of musicians performed, one each night at the Hellenic Center and the other at the Town House. Not only did they create substantial music, but when not playing the musicians mingled freely and genially with the audience and generally created an environment in which the listeners developed personal familiarity with the artists; the patrons therefore associated even more intimately than before with the music these men (plus the pianist Bee Gee Adair) played. The entire experience might best be described as being intimate, by which I do not mean to imply subdued.

As always, the main event, featuring over twenty musicians, occurred on blocked-off Main Street in front of the Elite Epicurean restaurant, which catered the event. (Its proprietor, Veron Melonas, is the guiding force behind the festival.) And also this year as last, the

over-five-hour main event was completed despite a few rain drops before the music began and a storm that approached just as the final number was concluding. Mother Nature loves bop.

Melonas always plans the musical marathon as a true, old-fashioned jam session, and that is precisely what it was this year. Someone, often **Red Rodney**, called a tune, and the musicians then on stage began blowing. There were no parts to be learned; no one had sheet music. **Nat Adderley**, for example, started a blues, others joined in, and fifteen minutes later the group had finished a new piece that Adderley then named *Epicurean Blues*. And so it went nonstop from five pm until after ten, when the evening concluded with *One O'clock Jump* performed by **all** the musicians.

Those participating on the 27th were Rodney, Adderley, **Clark Terry**, and **Johnny Helms,** trumpet; **Bill Watrous** and **Urbie Green**, trombone; **Arnie Lawrence, Lew Tabackin, Nick Brignola, Chris Potter,** and **Roger Pemberton**, saxes; **Johnny Frigo**, violin; **Bucky** and **John Pizzarelli**, guitar; **Derek Smith** and **Ross Tompkins**, piano; **Bill Crow** and **Brian Torff**, bass; **Terry Clarke** and **Ed Soph**, drums. Unlike last year, when the unbilled young local phenom Potter stole the show, this year the musical level was so consistently high that no one stood out clearly above the others. (Because Potter returned as a well-known member of Rodney's working group, his excellent playing was more or less taken for granted, although he remains a local hero.) Somewhat disappointingly, though, the performance that generated the greatest positive response was Terry's Armstrong-inspired Hello Dolly. I had thought the listeners somewhat more sophisticated than their frenzied applause to this engaging but ordinary show-biz performance revealed them as being.

During the course of the festival I talked with several veterans (not musicians) of the jazz festival circuit who had come from great distances. They said unanimously that **Jazz on Main**, and specifically the finale at the Elite Epicurean, is the best deal, all things considered, among the festivals they have attended. For a $100 ticket, the patron receives not only hours of music by substantial instrumentalists, but also an endless supply of elegant cuisine (lobster Newburg, shrimp, and the like), in addition to delicious desserts (including fantastic baklava) and an open bar.

While devotees of dixieland or avant garde improvised music would not find this festival to their liking, in late May boppers attending **Jazz on Main** find heaven on earth in the unlikely venue of Columbia, South Carolina.

. . .

Bill McLarney - Clark Terry walked into the Hellenic Center and asked "Who's in my rhythm section?" which gives you some idea of the informality of the sessions. As it happens, Terry drew more seasoned accompanists (pianist Ross Tompkins, bassist Brian Torff and drummer Terry Clarke) than his fellow brass man Nat Adderley, who was supported by Bee Gee Adair (piano); Jim Ferguson (bass) and Ted Linder (drums). This may partially explain why Terry's two sets compelled attention from the first bar of the opening *Blues Walk*, while the Adderley group, notwithstanding Ms. Adair's firm and incisive comping and the added weight of one of the world's most adept trombonists, Urbie Green, in the front line, did not always sustain interest. Tenor man Lew Tabackin and alto and soprano saxophonist Arnie Lawrence floated in and out of both groups.

Tabackin set a high standard with the first solo of the evening, on *Now's The Time* (in an Adderley-led opening set), and his passionate reassessment of the "big sound" was a continuing highlight of the festival. Reviewers have made much of Tabackin's debt to Sonny Rollins (Doxy kept popping up on this occasion) and Ben Webster, but the manner of his playing has neither the detached wit of Rollins nor the laid-back swagger of the mature Webster. Rather, his is the magisterial passion of Coleman Hawkins, and one of his peaks was a ravishing code on Hawk's old feature, *My Ideal*.

A whole front line with Tabackin's no let-up intensity might have been a bit much, but he had a foil in Lawrence, the festival's prankster. His solos started and stopped in odd places and featured muttered asides and Dolphyesque bleats not expected in the boppish environment of Main Street. On *Mack the Knife*, he opened his solo with a reworking of *Third Man Theme* indignantly directed at a speaker he had bumped coming on stage. Lawrence's "outside" forays often served to set up his "inside" passages, which ran the gamut of moods from serene to gutbucket. Even if he sometimes played himself out on a limb (shades of Lionel Hampton!) or if not all his conspiracies against convention found support from the other players, everything he played was interesting. The man **improvises**.

Further variety was provided by the subtle Tompkins. His solos were superficially conventional, maybe even a little too tidy, more often than not with a block chord climax. Yet there were usually fascinating unexpected harmonic insights. One of Tompkins' finest moments came on *Evil Blues*. After a humorous Terry vocal and a gruff, bristling Tabackin solo, the only path open to a pianist would have seemed to be all-out, mood-sustaining swing. But in his first phrase, Tompkins took the music down to pianissimo, and created a new and completely unanticipated twilit mood, hushing an audience which moments before had shouted its appreciation of Tabackin's outburst.

Then there was Clark Terry. From his burning opening flugelhorn solo on *Blues Walk* it was clear that Terry at 70 is still laying it down for other brass players to pick up. His repeated reshaping of the title phrase on *Makin' Whoopee* was a particular delight. But Terry's contributions to the evening was much more than horn playing. On the most obvious level, there were his vocals, including a couple of choruses of Clark Terry - Terry Clarke vocalese drums - percussion drums exchange on *Owl*. When he wasn't playing or singing, Terry was encouraging his colleagues or indulging in creative riff-setting. *Mack the Knife* even found Terry and Tabackin riffing "all day, all night, Mary Ann" behind a Lawrence solo.

Most of all, there was that intangible quality called leadership. Charlie Parker said it: "Music is your life, your wisdom. If you haven't lived it, it won't come out of your horn." The veriest square could perceive that Clark Terry is a man who has lived well, and it came out, through his own horn and five other instruments.

IN WHOSE TRADITION

Urs Bluchlinger
Don't call back/we let you know
Unit Records UTR 4027
Zurich, Switzerland 1987

the Recedents
Barbecue Dance
NATO 907
France 1986

the Ferals
Ruff
Leo LR 138
London 1986

Neighbours
with A. Braxton
GNM vol. 3
Austria 1984

Oxley/Wachsman
the Glider and the Grinder
Bead 25
London 1987

Position Alpha
Credo
Dragon DRLP 134
Sweden 1986

Derek Bailey
Notes
Incus 48
London 1985

Derek Bailey
In whose tradition
Emanem 3404
Australia 1988

The Ferals, a collective project involving **Phil Minton, Alan Tomlinson, Roger Turner,** and **Hugh Davies** is the most outward reflection of a tradition that was first represented (in a similar manner) by the **Music Improvisation Company** and the ensembles led by **Alexander Schlippenbach, Peter Brotzmann,** and **Irene Schweizer** in the mid-sixties. The efforts of so many individuals toward the establishment of a new music tradition make the pinpointing of "the first..." a senseless quarrel as the music was being simultaneously generated in several points of the globe. As far as the musicians mentioned here, **F.M.P.'s** catalogue alludes to the first free German jazz record as being ***Heartplants*** by **Gunter Hampel** with **Schlippenbach, Manfred Schoof,** and others produced by MPS in 1965. For an indication of how that root has blossomed, examine the Ferals ***Ruff***. Sounds cluster like bees, jolt, and reel along through this recording, making up in lunatic energy for what it ignores in conventional song structure or compositional techniques. A most dangerous recording, this one would be, for the new music novice. The nature of these improvisations (taken from live dates in the United Kingdom) is so unrestrained that the non-initiated listener would be quite likely to be cast adrift within the turbulence of the Ferals' performance. British voice artist/trumpeter **Phil Minton** excels in this release, notably for dexterity and the ability to change character at a moment's notice amid a chaotic ensemble setting, proving that the extent of his remarkable vocal abilities have yet to be captured on disc. **Turner,** an unpredictable yet bracing percussionist, is under-recorded on this release, making it hard to judge his contribution relative to a drummer's standard, though when he cuts through, he is certainly on the mark. ***Ruff*** is audio-documentary in the real sense that it reveals half the story of a quirky improvisers' ensemble on a particular occasion. **Leo Records** has the best interests of the new audience in mind when presenting ***Ruff***, although it does not, in this instance, make for immediately accessible listening, partly due to the mercurial nature of the music itself and latterly due to the technical limitations confronting in capturing it. This record should be recommended in this light, particularly if one is familiar with the performers, though it

DEREK BAILEY (Photograph by Bill Smith)

should be approached with caution.

The most radical companion in its approach to non-composed works to be considered alongside the Ferals' ***Ruff*** would be this latest trio recording of **Lol Coxhill**, the **Recedents'** ***Barbecue Dance***. It is a partly electronic/partly acoustic music that makes extensive use of sound treatments, courtesy of current studio technology. **Lol Coxhill's** work here is some of his most far-reaching, bridging extended blowing techniques with electronic manipulation that is reminiscent of New York City hip-hop music; fragments of sound are jarringly set in juxtaposition, creating the sound crafts' answer to the montage technique in film. Coxhill and his partners in this trio play/employ/manipulate a bewildering array of instruments in a wilfully disorganized fashion, delighting the listener with unexplained noises/music/sound events. The work of slide guitarist **Mike Rowe** alongside Coxhill's skittering soprano saxophone brings to mind the English saxophonist's earlier association with guitarist **Fred Frith**, purveying a music that has always seemed a cheery sort of gallows humour, lending itself well to the bleak-humoured effect of Coxhill's spoken-word efforts here. This kind of *musique concrete* sound theatre has become a prominent component in the more radical of the new composer/improviser's works. The use of sound for its own sake is central to the Recedents' organization, an orientation that dissolves this music's allegiance to "jazz" and its orthodoxy by instead solidifying the music's links to sound poetry's rhythms and the experimental concepts of **John Cage** and **Harry Partch**, in particular the latter in his composition *Barstow*, where lyrics are adapted from roadside graffiti in California. Percussionist **Roger Turner's** innovative work on ***Barbecue Dance*** underlies the tracks with bubbling patterns that flow from his hands, thankfully captured on this **NATO** release. Another notable feature of the **Recedents** work is their use of silence. Multiple layers of seemingly-unrelated musics are punctuated by silence and aural "ghosting" effects, tumbling into bayou-slide guitars and Coxhill's own frog-dancing saxophone amid a clatter of percussion. A fanciful and bewildering release from 1986.

Urs Bluchlinger's quartet is featured in a much more conventional setting on the release, ***Don't call back, We let you know***, recorded with guests in a concert documented by the Zurich-based **Unit** records. The methods of organization here are strongly reminiscent of the harmolodic stance initiated by **Ornette Coleman**, using unison and harmony in unexpected ways to reach what are ultimately pleasing yet (unlike Coleman's music) inconclusive ends. The music strays from the overall approach favoured by other European free players toward rapid development of an idea which is then discarded to make way for the next idea or figure, preferring instead a mode of organization that draws upon a more rhythm-and-blues styled music based in a notated method. Bluchlinger's work is too organized in its approach to tonal ensemble writing to fall back on "jump-cut" scenarios, working instead into the more disjointed areas by means of notated figures that sit uneasily together, then soloing over it. His alto and soprano work runs in circles throughout the record, finding its most pleasing dance partner in the guitar work of **Heing Geisser**, who proves an economical, pliable soloist.

Albert Ayler's pioneering saxophone has become influential in the vocabulary of many players, and for the Swedish woodwind quartet **Position Alpha**, Albert's soaring line and harmonic integrity has provided a model for their own flights. ***Credo***, a live 1986 concert recording, presents the quartet in Buenos Aires with a program of two original compositions and two unusual selections from the jazz repertoire, Monk's *Friday the 13th* and Ayler's *Spirits Rejoice*. The quartet's multi-reed line-up runs against the grain of these latter compositions though, with the sheer weightiness of the sound texture obscuring the inherent simplicity that is a hallmark of both Monk's and Ayler's writing. Enthusiasm is perhaps to blame for the extended workout given these themes, pushing the direction of the music unfairly into a multiphonics display several times throughout the disc that is greeted by ovations from the audience. Since the individual solos of each member remain unidentified, what the listener is left with is a document of saxophone and woodwind ensemble playing punctuated too often by plainly "our" use of effects. What seems to have been exciting in concert sadly does not translate in the recorded medium, though this illustrates an important point concerning the new music's presentation.

As the music's vitality is drawn from the interaction of the individuals in the performance, the human dimension of unit co-operation and humility (both toward unit members and toward the audience) takes on a greater meaning. The conventional role-playing that has sometimes surfaced in the "jazz" ensemble, with the assumption of creativity being measured by difficult technical work, has largely been superseded by the evolved personal statement in the new music. This may not be used as an excuse for not having technical background solidified. If anything, it is a challenge to the creative musician to use sound language (in all its forms) in a manner that transcends the vocabulary itself (i.e., Lester Young). With this as given, the creative musician develops a music that is entirely their own expression: they play themselves, not a blueprint from a textbook source

The gifted composer-saxophonist **Anthony Braxton** is an effective foil for the Austrian trio **Neighbours** on a long-delayed release of material written mostly by the unit's drummer, **John Preininger**. While this disc is not particularly adventurous in the spirit of some **F.M.P.** releases, there is evocative playing all around. The ensemble moves through several moods with some spiky piano from **Dieter Glawischnig** on the leadoff track, Lines. **Glawischnig's** piano also is pleasing on the sound/silences piece, *Meditations*, a composition the ensemble play with a slow gracefulness. Fans of ECM music would do well to investigate this record though it will come as a disappointment to those who seek a better view of Braxton who remains pretty much a guest on this release. His reed playing on ***Neighbours*** is concise and energetic but adds little to the discography that his followers would not already know (refer instead to the **Leo** release ***London Quartet 1985***). The pleasure instead is the discovery of the trio itself with bassist **Ewald Oberleitner** who play with plenty of fire and creative determination. Recorded in 1980, the version that has only now been released was mixed in 1984, which speaks volumes about the difficulties inherent in issuing independent recordings of creative music. The music that sees the light of day usually only surfaces through the largesse of both arts councils and indi-

vidual patrons, owing to the costs of production printing, and distribution. Thanks to the Bavarian government arts council for their financial endorsement of this music. The struggle that touches all composers who seek to record original creative music is a relentless one since there are so many deserving artists and only so much money to go around. This struggle is intensified in the case of the radical free music exploration found on the recently released ***the Glider and the Grinder***, a quartet that comprises **Tony Oxley, Wolfgang Fuchs, Hugh Metcalfe,** and **Phillip Wachsman**. This is a sort of music that is increasingly gathering listeners drawn to its chaotic riot of lines and sound sources, a deceptive angle of this music as it is really a forum for high-speed instantaneous composition and not the least bit random as some critics might be inclined to dismiss it. Beautiful, abrupt clusters of sound appear in this work, with fragments becoming visible then disappearing suddenly. All members of the ensemble except Fuchs are involved in electronic alterations of their instruments' sound, making for a greater sonic palette. As previously mentioned, the music here echoes the commitment of music artists in Europe to fully expand and develop sound experiments into an area casual listeners may be uncomfortable with but remains a rich untested territory. Take a deep breath, then listen!

What better way to end this discussion of sound exploration than to focus on the work of the English master musician, **Derek Bailey,** a gentleman whose name is not widely known outside creative music circles but whose continuing influence is felt by two generations of musicians. Few are as idiosyncratic in their approach to music as Mr. Bailey, who has over the period of the last twenty years, created a body of works that are unsurpassed in creative risk-taking and represents a completely individual, personal music system. Two new releases (one from the Australian **Emanem** label and one from **Incus**) further testify to his stature as one of the truly innovative modernists. The **Emanem** release draws upon home recordings that the artist made as part of a correspondence with his Australian friends over the years since 1971. Bailey improvises on a variety of self-generated themes with a frightening clarity of articulation, meanwhile contributing a very funny monologue on, among other things, the aging process, the British elections that returned Mrs. Thatcher to power, and his next-door neighbours. Sound quality is good and Bailey's comments are very illuminating on the issue of forward-thinking in the face of massive political ennui. The **Incus** release recorded some years later (1985) documents the process of Bailey's music system as it becomes further refined. For those unfamiliar with his work, this is solo guitar music as has seldom been heard before. Bailey executes lines that arc and dive, switching octaves within a phrase delivered lightning fast, with chiming dissonant clusters and harmonics that hang in the air like metal shards off a broken building. He continues to develop his music in a manner that is far removed from the mainstream of the guitar tradition, turning out recording after recording of forceful and highly unorthodox work. By all means, hear him on ***Notes*** or any of this other recordings (i.e., **Incus** maintains an extensive catalogue of Bailey solo and in **Company**, his ever-changing improvising orchestra). No home should be without one.

JAZZ ON VIDEO

One of the main bonuses of the VCR revolution is that it is now quite easy to acquire jazz films. Not everything from the past is available (I'd love to get hold of ***Jazz on a Summer's Day***) and little can be done about all of the missed opportunities and general neglect of jazz by American filmmakers (do not look too hard for clips of Jelly Roll Morton, Chu Berry, Fats Navarro or Booker Little) but at least today's generation of jazz players are much better documented.

Lester Young almost missed being filmed altogether. Other than the ten-minute classic short, ***Jammin' the Blues***, and a few seconds of silent footage of Prez playing with the Basie orchestra in the late 1930s, all that exists is his one-chorus solos during *Fine and Mellow* with Billie Holiday on the 1957 TV show, ***The Sound of Jazz***. But despite the lack of film, **Bruce Fredricksen** has put together a rather complete hour and fifty-minute documentary on Lester Young's life that he calls ***Song of the Spirit***.

LESTER YOUNG

By using interviews, voiceover narration, rare stills and period footage, Fredricksen managed to stitch together a fairly comprehensive biography of the great tenorman. **John Lewis** starts off the film by pointing out where Lester Young's last home used to stand, and then, while the Kansas City Seven is heard playing *Way Down Yonder in New Orleans*, one sees some clips of New Orleans circa 1917. A bit of recreation (with a young actor playing **little Lester**) helps to fill in the childhood years. Lester's daughter, **Beverly Young**, talks about the Young family band, **Buster Smith** remembers when Prez joined the **Original Blue Devils** and Lester himself is heard talking about his love for Frankie Trumbauer's playing on *Singin' the Blues*. **Count Basie** reminisces about Kansas City and **John Hammond** recalls how he gave Fletcher Henderson the money to get Lester Young for his band, five times what Prez was making with Basie.

Andy Kirk, Buck Clayton, Roy Eldridge, Red Callendar and an ancient looking **Jo Jones** all discuss the Prez they knew with Buck maintaining that Young left Basie due to not wanting to record on Friday the 13th; Beverly Young says it was because of a lingering depression caused by Herschel Evans' death. **Norman Granz** reveals that he wanted to record the music for ***Jammin' the Blues*** live on film but the studio insisted on prerecording. Young's daughter, Granz and Jo Jones discuss Prez's harrowing army experience and two actors read from the transcription of Young's testimony during his court martial; it's quite chilling to hear. Jo Jones sums up Prez's treatment in the Army by saying, *"I've cried on many a night thinking about what they did to him."*

Jazz historians tend to unfairly dismiss Young's post-war years, as if his playing had declined to the point of being irrelevant; personally I prefer his later recordings. ***Song of the Spirit*** does not shortchange Lester in this fashion. Buck Clayton talks about the 1946 JATP tour that teamed Prez and Coleman Hawkins as a *"heavenly prizefight."* **Dizzy Gillespie** discusses Young's eating and drinking habits and **Connie Kay**, who often worked with Lester, admits, *"At first I couldn't understand a thing he was saying."* **Jon Hendricks** and **Al Grey** remember seeing Prez play in his last year, **Dan Morgenstern** tells of how Billie Holiday wanted to sing at Young's funeral but couldn't because she'd lost her cabaret card (even though the funeral was in a church) and then John Lewis returns to sum up the film.

The closing credits turn out to be false ending for after 20 seconds of darkness, **Harry "Sweets" Edison** suddenly appears on screen to talk about recording ***Jammin' the Blues*** and then the ten-minute short is shown in its entirety (without unnecessary narration). Even though it is obvious that the music does not fit the fingering (Edison admitted that they had difficulty remembering their recorded solos), the camerawork is superb (if a bit artsy) and the music (the sensual blues *Midnight Symphony, On the Sunny Side of the Street* and an uptempo blues) is timeless. Edison, **Illinois Jaquet** and **Marie Bryant** (who sings *Sunny Side*) co-star with Prez. ***Song of the Spirit***, which is certainly the definitive Lester Young biography, is available by mail order (Box 444, Willernie, Minn 55095 USA)

Proscenium Entertainment (Box 909, Hightstown, New Jersey 08520) has released several films of live performances only previously shown on European television. Of these, ***The Paris Reunion Band*** (57 minutes) is of greatest interest to jazz listeners. Formed in 1984 as a tribute to the many American musicians who lived in Paris during 1956-65, the Paris Reunion Band has undergone some personnel changes but the 1988 edition featured on this film is particularly strong: Trumpeters **Woody Shaw** and **Nat Adderley**, trombonist **Curtis Fuller, Joe Henderson** on tenor, **Nathan Davis** (the musical director) doubling on tenor and soprano, pianist **Walter Bishop, Jr.** (who was filling in for Kenny Drew), bassist **Jimmy Woods** and drummer **Idris Muhammad**. Naturally this film is most significant for the presence of Woody Shaw, who looks surprisingly healthy less than a year before his tragic death.

The octet performs six selections with **Nat Adderley** doing the m.c. work. Filmed at the Theaterhaus in Stuttgart, West Germany in the summer of 1988, each of the horns gets a little space on Kenny Drew's *Tune Down* but Idris Muhammad's colourful display of percussive technique takes the honours. For *Work Song*, composer Nat

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A SURVEY BY SCOTT YAROW

Adderley, Nathan Davis (on soprano) and Bishop are featured while the medium-tempo blues, *The Man From Potter's Crossing*, has bassist Woods, Bishop and the contrasting tenors of Henderson and Davis in the forefront and *Old Folks* is a showcase for Curtis Fuller whose sound is overly echoey and muffled by the microphone. Shaw (who does not smile once on this film), Henderson and Bishop share *Hot Licks*. For the closer, Nat Adderley introduces its composer Woody Shaw as "one of the great great innovators of modern jazz." Shaw's *Sweet Love of Mine* has solo space for Woody, Henderson, Fuller and Muhammad. The camerawork throughout this film is alert and logical but, in all frankness, few fireworks occur during this hour-long set. It was just another gig for these excellent players. Still, it gives one a now-sadly rare opportunity to see Woody Shaw again.

The other four films covered in this survey are available through Rhapsody Films, Inc. (P.O. Box 179, New York, NY 10074), whose large catalog includes many gems. ***Jazz is Our Religion*** (50 minutes) can be dispensed with quickly. Put together by **John Jeremy** in 1972 and utilizing the photographs of **Val Wilmer**, there is virtually no live action in this oddity. While unidentified (although occasionally recognizable) voices talk about topics relevant to jazz (categorization, problems due to the music's limited appeal, racial issues, record companies, lack of royalties, etc.), one sees Wilmer's photos flash by in time to the music. It is as if one were reading a picture book. Poet **Ted Joans'** recitation of some of his jazz poems is the audio highpoint (he never appears on camera) but visually very little happens (other than Sunny Murray shown fishing with his children!). The speakers include **Rashied Ali, Blakey, Dizzy, Johnny Griffin, Blue Mitchell, Jon Hendricks, Bill Evans, Jimmy Garrison** and **Jo Jones** among others, but they are not identified until the closing credits, making it nearly impossible to connect their names with their comments. Griffin, **Dizzy Reece, Lol Coxhill** and **Alan Shorter** play a bit on the soundtrack but their solos do little to help this film.

Much more valuable is ***Earl Hines & Coleman Hawkins*** (28 minutes). Shot in black and white in 1965, this performance film starts off with Earl Hines playing a furious solo version of *But Not For Me*. As the pianist begins *It's A Pity To Say Goodnight*, he is joined by bassist **George Tucker** (who would die later in the year) and drummer **Oliver Jackson**. The music cooks and the setting is quite informal (with plenty of shots of other cameramen just as on ***The Sound of Jazz***). Earl sings *I'm A Little Brown Bird Looking For A Bluebird* with charm and then whips through an uptempo *Fine and Dandy*. The camerawork really gets out of control during this piece, constantly moving around the stage and detracting from the brilliant music.

In the liner notes of ***Earl Hines & Coleman Hawkins***, John S. Wilson describes the film's *"somewhat saddening glimpse of Coleman Hawkins going into his decline."* It is true that Hawkins looks much frailer than in ***After Hours*** (filmed 4 years earlier), but his solo on *Just One More Chance* is quite dramatic and after playing a riff melody over the *Crazy Rhythm* chord changes, Hawkins takes at least 10 choruses, never running out of ideas or steam. Hines looks quite delighted at Hawk's playing during what would be the tenor great's last good year, and the camerawork is very respectful. Despite the darkness of parts of this film, ***Earl Hines & Coleman Hawkins*** is highly recommended.

A Brother With Perfect Timing (90 minutes), a film by **Chris Austin**, is not a strict biography of its subject (pianist-composer **Abdullah Ibrahim**), but is accurately described as "a portrait of an artist in exile." The focus shifts constantly between scenes of South African life, a performance by Ibrahim's septet Ekapa at Sweet Basil's and Abdullah's storytelling (filmed in his New York apartment). Quite often Ibrahim explains the origin of one of his songs or rhythms and demonstrates the piece on his piano; this is directly followed by Ekapa performing an orchestral version of the same composition.

The camerawork and editing in this 1986 film is excellent but I often wished the interviewer had asked the pianist for more biographical information. No mention is made of Ibrahim's wife (singer Sathima Bea Benjamin), Duke Ellington or of the difficulties involved in resettling in America. Also, this portrait drags a bit in spots and could have been cut by a half-hour without losing any of its integrity. Abdullah Ibrahim's quiet dignity, hopes for the future and determination are all qualities that are

expressed in his unique music. Whether telling about the horrors of South Africans being forcibly relocated, discussing the folk rhythms in his music or telling a joke, Abdullah Ibrahim in ***A Brother With Perfect Timing*** comes across as an admirable and dignified religious man with a strong mission in life.

Next to ***Earl Hines & Coleman Hawkins***, I enjoyed ***Talmage Farlow*** (58 minutes) the most. This 1981 film tells the story of a master guitarist who, rather than living in New York City and burning himself out, lives happily in a scenic rural area working part of the time as a sign painter. Farlow's musical goal is simple: "I'm not looking to be a star. I'd just like to be a participant in making some good music." **George Benson** talks warmly and with some awe about how Tal Farlow is both a monster musician and a humble man and states, "It never enters your mind to try to cut Tal Farlow, forget it!"Pictures and music (the Red Norvo trio's version of Move) blend together perfectly in a wordless segment that sums up Farlow's career. Through stills, album jackets and press clippings, the excitement of Tal's life in the 1950s is recreated up to Farlow's sudden "disappearance." Headlines ask *"Whatever happened to Tal Farlow?,"* *"Turning away from fame?,"* and *"Won't You Come Home, Tal Farlow?"* before one sees the New England town that Farlow "retired" to and immediately understands why he prefers this more relaxed lifestyle. **Art D'Lugoff** of the Village Gate talks regretfully about how Farlow hasn't played clubs in years. *"I know he's been having a wonderful time fishing but I think his fans oughta demand he come out of hiding and play that guitar."* During the latter half of that statement, Farlow is shown fishing!

Tal, a modest yet very friendly man (who always grins when he plays) states several times in this film that he had never stopped playing guitar, just that he is not fascinated by travelling and that the critics seem to have lost track of him. He tells about his love of signpainting and then proceeds to create a new sign, one that looks wonderful at its completion.

During this time period, Farlow accepted an offer to play at the Public Theater in New York. The musical highpoint of the film is when Tal, pianist **Tommy Flanagan** and bassist **Red Mitchell** play a complete unedited version of *Fascinatin' Rhythm* in a highrise apartment suite; the mutual love and respect that these musicians have for each other is obvious. Another memorable section has the late guitarist **Lenny Breau** (who died in 1984) telling Farlow how when he first heard his records he was completely mystified by the elder guitarist's voicings. The two of them are then seen in a club playing a duet version of *I Hear A Rhapsody*.

The last part of ***Talmage Farlow*** has the Farlow-Flanagan-Mitchell trio appearing before an appreciative crowd at the Public Theater playing *Jordu*, *Flamingo* and the last chorus of *Fascinatin' Rhythm*. As the closing credits roll, Tal is greeted by friends and signs autographs. **Lorenzo De Stefano,** who produced, directed and edited this labour of love, did a superb job of capturing the essence of Talmage Farlow, both as a guitarist and as a human being. ■

IT WASN'T ALL VELVET

One thing that makes Torme one of the master jazz-inflected singers of our time, besides the lustrous platinum pipes with which nature's endowed him and the unerringly graceful phrasing he's developed over a lifetime in the business, is the seriousness with which he treats his craft. I try to catch him whenever he comes to New York, and I've never seen him merely walk through a performance or appear somewhat disinterested in even a single song (as I have on occasion, for example, seen even so magnificent a singer as Sarah Vaughan appear).

Doesn't he ever get tired, I asked him during his last visit to New York, of singing a song he's done for decades like *Blue Moon*?

"Yeah, some nights I do," he answered candidly. "Some nights I think, it's very tough to concentrate on this, to infuse it with freshness, you know, so the people say, 'Jesus, it's like he's singing it for the...'. Now I'll tell you that's something that I really admire about Sinatra. I mean when Sinatra was particularly at his peak, and that's not too long ago, he always sang every song, to me, like it was the first time he ever sang it.

"You know what I do a lot? If I'm doing a tune that I've done for a long time, I say, 'Well the tune has got a lot of value and I'd like to keep it in the act,' so I'll sit at the piano, and now I'll find new changes, and maybe even add something. I was doing *Mountain Greenery*, for instance, for a long time, with the verse, chorus, and then a rubato second verse, you know, 'Simple cooking means much more than French cuisines, I've...,' and then go into *Mountain Greenery* again, do the long tag. And then I discovered that I wanted to do the little recitative in the middle. So I re-recorded it with, 'When the world was young, our father Adam with sin would grapple, so we're entitled...' and that's an addition to *Mountain Greenery*. And I'd sing it and I could literally see people say, 'What's that? He's never done that before?' That's the way you can try to keep these damned things fresh. You know? It's not easy. It really isn't easy, honest to God, I mean, to do this again and again."

But there are also perils, he added, in simply dropping a song from your repertoire because you've done it a lot. "In my standard concert framework, I used to leave *The Christmas Song* out, and many times, I can't tell you, people got militant about it! I'd say, 'Jesus, it's July, what do you want to hear?' 'We came here to hear you sing that song, that's it.' So I used to make a speech: 'Ladies and gentlemen, I've got to apologize. I can't leave this out because I'm going to get static about it. So let's get it out of the way.' If you leave some songs out, people walk out and say, 'Jeez, I drove all the way in from Connecticut to hear you sing whatever.'

"Last night the audience was so wild that some woman yelled. 'Sing *Mountain Greenery*. I haven't done *Mountain Greenery* for years, OK? I don't do requests, you know. But the audience was so affectionate, they stood up, they were wonderful. I thought, 'Christ, it's raining out, where the hell are we going anyway?' So I did it. But think of how many times I have sung *Mountain Greenery* or *Blue Moon*, you know.

"I never ever, if things are on my mind, if I've got problems, at the worst time of my divorces, I never ever sang a song by rote. And I can tell you point blank, I can name some singers for you that would stun you, major, important, good singers, who say, 'Well, you know, I've sung it so many goddam times, it comes out of my mouth, and I'm thinking, How the hell did I miss that birdie on the 4th hole today?' I can't do that, I just can't do that. If I did that, I really would forget the words, they wouldn't come out."

Torme also expressed some amazement that he continues to be, year after year, a surefire draw in New York. He noted, "You think, maybe you've worn your welcome

Photograph by Barry Thomson

MEL TORME BY CHIP DEFFAA

out in the joint. But I'm telling you, the business this time has been monumental. I'm so thrilled, you know." He was particularly pleased, because he'd been appearing in New York this time with Dek-Tette, doing Marty Paich's arrangements. The charts are great but they've got subtlety and sophistication, and there was no way of knowing in advance just how they'd go over with a mass audience.

He acknowledged frankly that trying to work with the Dek-Tette at the Monterey Jazz Festival had been a mistake in judgment on his part, as Leonard Feather had written in ***The Los Angeles Times***. The crowd there simply wasn't in tune with the subtleties of Paich's work. They were drinking, they were boisterous; they wanted music that was louder, simpler, more obvious. They were much more enthusiastic for Torme when he sang there with the Basie Band, batting out familiar older material. But a performance that doesn't quite click is a rarity for Torme, who for the past decade has been getting reviews saying he's a better singer now than in his youth.

Torme has never limited his activities just to singing, however. He loves to write, both prose and music. What's he been working on lately?

"I'm writing a book called, ***Traps, The Drum Wonder, The Authorized Biography of Buddy Rich***, you know, authorized by Buddy. I hope it's going to do him justice, I hope it's going to be a good book. We'll see," Torme said. Rich's estate will share in whatever profits the book makes.

Rich had been a good friend of Torme's They had both been in the business since they were little children. Rich had been a drummer who occasionally sang in his performances. Torme is a singer who occasionally plays drums in his performances. Torme has a reputation for being congenial, well-mannered, civil at all costs. Rich could be loud, abrasive, and temperamental. Is the book going to be honest, or merely a flattering portrait by a friend?

Torme responded: "The day before Buddy died, I spent three and a half hours with him, and probably the most pointed question I asked him was: 'Hey, B, what do you want this to be? Do you want this to be a puff piece telling the world what an absolutely wonderful man you are?'

"He said, 'Hey man, you tell it exactly like it is.' And he used the phrase, 'warts and all.' He said, 'Just be accurate.' So, I'm really working hard at accuracy. I'm really trying like hell to make sure that whatever I write hopefully nobody can question it and say, 'Ah, Torme has got his facts all wrong.' I hope I'm accomplishing it. If you could come up to my suite, you would see a table just jammed with interview tapes. We started working on this book in '75. We used to go up to Central Park and talk. This book is the toughest I've ever had to write. But nobody can ever say, 'Oh, Buddy never said that.' 'Oh, really? Come here and listen.' Because I've got it there, on tape."

One minor mystery that has long puzzled die-hard Rich aficionados is why, in one scene in the film ***Ship Ahoy***, Rich appears to be breaking up during a romantic Tommy Dorsey trombone solo. Torme asked Rich about that: "He said, 'We pre-recorded the music, and then had to lip-synch to it for the cameras. But during the filming, the guys played all the wrong notes, purposely. If you could have heard what these guys, including Tommy, were playing they were breaking me up, I couldn't help it." Torme promises the book will be filled with goodies like that. He shared more, but we don't want to spoil the book.

Torme will not make any special effort to hustle the book, he added: "I did book tours on all three of my books that have been published so far. And I'm really kind of sick of that. I'm not going to get on airplanes and take 10 days out of my schedule to do a book tour this time. First of all, it cost me a ton of money, it really did, this last book tour cost me about $180,000 in bookings, just for the 10 days, because of what I lose in concerts and stuff."

Was Torme pleased with the way his last book, his autobiography, ***It Wasn't All Velvet***, turned out?

"Oh, absolutely, and it's coming out in paper. **Zebra** is publishing it. The hardcover edition came out in October 1988. It got around very well. I was disappointed in some of the typos in the book. On page 39, believe me I know this very well, I talk about Buddy and the first time I met Buddy... and it says in the book, I didn't meet Bobby until..Bobby!? So I went back to my original manuscript. Did I do this? Absolutely not. It said, 'Buddy.' Some jerk wrote 'Bobby' in. It bothers me because I like to do things as close to perfectly as I possibly can."

Any albums he'd like to make? Among several ideas he mentioned: He'd like to record one with his current trio, including pianist John Campbell, drummer Donny Osborne, and bassist Jay Leonhart. "We've never made an album together. And it's time, it really is, because this trio is working like a well-oiled machine now, they're just doing brilliantly. I've written a lot of charts for the trio that have never seen the light of day on record that I think would be quite nice."

The album, he said, would be for Concord records. He has a good relationship with Concord president Carl Jefferson, he added. Is he under an exclusive contract, I wondered? "The deal is actually a handshake. I don't have any contract with him.

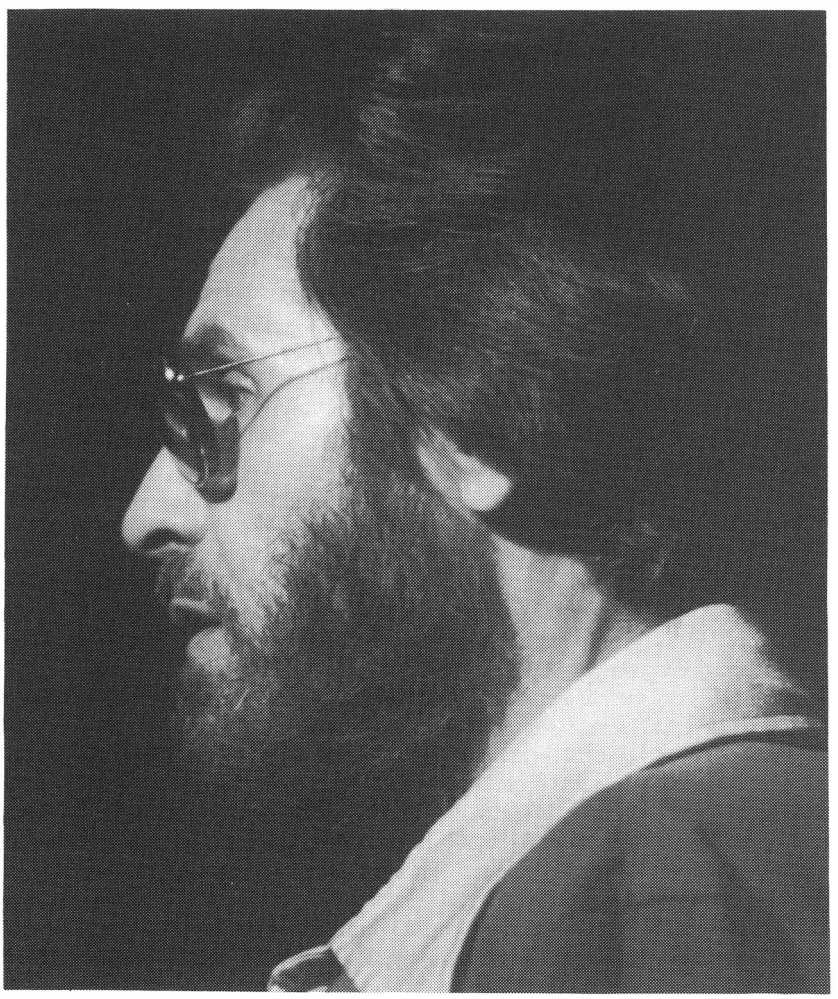
"Carl Jefferson's been damned good to me, and I like the records I've made with him, and I'm proud of them. So when anybody else starts asking me if I'd like to make an album, as a few people have in the last several months, I call him first. And he sort of guards me jealously: 'Well, Jesus, I'd really rather you didn't.' So I don't. I really don't need more product out now. I've got a lot of product out."

There is one album he's long dreamed of making, and still would give almost anything to do, if it could ever be arranged. "It's always on my mind to record with Ella [Fitzgerald], but that will probably never come to pass, because of Norman [Granz]," who manages Fitzgerald. He recalled hearing Fitzgerald singing not too long ago. "She sang *Honeysuckle Rose* and knocked me on my ass. She's wonderful. She sounded great, better than ever. And that's hopeful for me, too, I'm thinking 'Well, if she can do it, maybe I can hang in there,' you know." He's heartened by reviews that have suggested that he's currently, in his 60s, singing better than ever before in his career. He hopes, and trusts, that in 10 years from now, he'll still be singing creditably.

But there's no way of knowing what the next 10 years will bring. Or even the next day, he added. "Heck, life is a crapshoot. Last night I went out to get some milk, I saw a guy get killed [in a car accident in front of Torme's New York hotel]. I called my wife and told her. There was this long pause and she said, 'My God... you really never know. One minute you're walking in the street, next minute you're dead.' I said, 'Well, that's life, Allie, I guess we all have to face it.'" ■

IN MEMORIAM - BILL EVANS

It was during the Korean "conflict." I was 19 and had joined the Navy to avoid the draft. The year: Fall 1951. The place, the Navy School of Music, Washington, DC, where, after boot camp, I was to undergo six months of music classes designed primarily to train me for Special Services in a Unit Band. This meant learning marching band routines, concert band repertoire, as well as playing in various dance band settings. I even had a theory class and private piano lessons.



One day as I was hurrying to my theory class, I heard this marvellous piano playing coming from a rehearsal studio usually set aside for big bands. I stopped cold in my tracks and peered through the small glass window in the door. A young male, wearing horn-rimmed spectacles, with a face one associates with university librarians, was seated at a 6-foot grand, wailing! Time stood still. My jaw dropped to the floor. I was hearing jazz piano as I had never heard it before. I could discern Teddy Wilson, Milt Buckner, James P. Johnson, George Shearing and, of course, the reigning innovators at that point in time, Lennie and Bud, in this young man's playing. But he was not imitating those styles note for note. He had absorbed them, "ingested" them, into his whole being. The right-hand lines he was improvising were fresh, lyrical and imbued with a joyous, swinging quality unlike anything I had heard before, even from the above-named, acknowledged masters! The technique, voicings and harmonic sense were all intact. I was a witness to the playing of the next major pianist/innovator whose genius, to this day, has yet to be fully appreciated. His name? Bill Evans. Needless to say, I never got to my theory class that day. And as a reprimand, I received a "Captain's Mast," which meant confinement to the base for two weeks. It was well worth it.

Before I could muster up enough courage to introduce myself to Bill, I would be content to peer through the small window in the door of the practice rooms, listening to him practise, jam, and sight-read the classics. On one of these occasions I was amazed to seem him sightreading the orchestral score of Stravinsky's ***Rite of Spring*** at the piano. At other times, I would hear him jamming with a bass player, improvising on the same tune for two hours, but transposing it to all 12 keys! One evening I even saw him sitting in the corner of the large concert band rehearsal hall, composing and writing harmony exercises, while around him fifty guys were practising their horns! Then in this same hall, during the regular rehearsal period, I saw him playing flute with the concert band.

Finally, I decided not to procrastinate any longer. I would prepare two tunes to play for Bill. I chose *Fine and Dandy* and *How High The Moon*. I woodshedded for three weeks. My confidence was soaring. So one afternoon when he was exiting the concert band rehearsal with flute in hand, I said, "Bill, do you have a few minutes? I'd like you to listen to me play two tunes and comment on my talent for improvisation." Without any hesitation he replied, "Sure." We found an unoccupied practice room and went in. After I played, his only comment was, "You're moving in the right direction, don't stop!" I said, "Thank you," and with that he left the room. Implicit in his comment was the power of his understanding of all music, and his awesome intellect. I became inspired in a religious sense. It was as if he were telling me that nobody can teach creativity and that nobody will ever be able to explain what happens when the mind and heart unite during the creative act of the artist. He was telling me to trust the spirit of the moment and to practice "as if" I were playing. Bill didn't believe in mimicry, i.e. copying solos note for note. He knew that as one focused on the spirit of the music, then the means, the technique, the craft would reveal themselves eventually. Bill Evans had everything: craft and genius. But for Bill, genius meant hard work and nothing more. What a lesson! I shall never forget it. I still feel the power of his words. I can hear them ringing in my heart every morning as I sit at the piano to play. You are remembered, Bill Evans, and I miss you - *Jack Reilly*

Photograph by Bill Smith

AROUND THE WORLD

USA

Longevity has never been a notable feature of jazz music. Styles come and go with great rapidity while the life span of its practitioners is often severely shortened. It is heart-warming, therefore, to salute the milestones reached by trumpeter **Doc Cheatham** and bassist **Milt Hinton**. Their careers intertwined with the Cab Calloway Orchestra while neither of them functioned exclusively as touring jazz musicians until well into their seventies.

Doc Cheatham celebrated his 85th birthday on June 13 and there were appropriate festivities at his regular Sunday gig at Sweet Basil. Earlier, he had been honoured by the American Federation of Jazz Societies during their annual meeting in March. Doc is also making a special appearance at this year's IAJRC Convention in Cleveland at the end of July.

Milt Hinton turned 80 on June 23 and a special concert in his honour took place in New York at Town Hall. Many of the world's bassists were scheduled to be there and on this occasion they were all happy to contribute to the festivities. Milt, himself, keeps moving - touring, teaching and recording in a variety of situations. Long may this continue for both these exceptional gentlemen of jazz.

The birth of jazz, itself, was celebrated this June. An arbitrary determination that this music was a hundred years old triggered events in many countries following the lead of many American jazz societies. This century of jazz was also showcased in a joint exhibition at the Newark Public Library and the John Cotton Dana Library on the Newark Campus of Rutgers University. Three live concerts with groups led by Chris White, Leo Johnson and Andy Bey augmented the visual and aural artifacts.

The annual opportunity to keep abreast of jazz industry activity in the United States rolls around this November when ***Jazz Times*** hosts its eighth convention at the Fairmont Hotel in New Orleans from November 28 to December 1. Convention details are available from Jazz Times, 8055 13th Street, Suite 312, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-4803.

Receipt of a press release announcing a new and improved design concept for the packaging of CDs comes at a time when increasing pressure is being applied for the elimination of this costly and environmentally wasteful concept. Both long boxes and blisterpacks were never used in Europe and have now been eliminated in Canada.

Permanent, reusable display cases similar in concept to those used for cassettes are already in use in both Canada and the U.S. in major stores who choose not to change their self-service systems. The one time cost of the containers is a small price to pay for the elimination of the unwanted card and plastic wrappers.

An update of activities in New York City by *Coda* correspondent Kevin Whitehead.

Apple Source

The brilliantly programmed first set at the World Music Institute's strings concert (Symphony Space, June 8) made sweeping connections, Poland's **Mieczyslaw Litwinski** (hurdy-gurdy, harmonium, kazoo) played and sang ornate, droning songs that sounded more Mideastern than East European; bassist **Mike Richmond** jammed modally with Arab oud virtuoso **Simon Shaheen**. Then came bassist **Fred Hopkins'** and cellist **Deidre Murray**'s quartet (with **Brandon Ross**'s subliminal, post-Frisell guitar and **Newman Baker** on drums), and you could hear the Mideastern roots in the exquisite blend of often droney strings, and even in guest singer **Andy Bey**'s soulful testifying. This is a terrific and wonderfully accessible band, which stretches from heartfelt ballads to uncompromised free play to groove jams that make them sound like a black Grateful Dead. Fred Hopkins (Air-era intonation problems solidly behind him) continues to grow dramatically as a player.

The Amsterdam String Trio played at Rockefeller Center's posh Netherlands Club on April 10. The trio (violist **Maurice Horsthuis**, cellist **Ernst Reijseger**, deep-toned bassist **Ernst Glerum**) have been accused of being dry and academic; this evening they acted like raucous, silly improvisers. The strings have a nicely seasoned blend; they get some beautiful effects, as when all three play in unison, getting three distinct timbres. Horsthuis writes them some delicately pretty chamber pieces, but the trio are apt to drift deliberately out of tune, or whack their strings rhythmically, or slide into a parody of Appalachian mountain music. They can play most anything straight; typically Dutch -- they can't or won't do it for long.

One week later, Town Hall hosted the **Rova Saxophone Quartet** in a program featuring works by outside composers, including Steve Lacy and Henry Threadgill. Two pieces stood out. Fred Frith's *Long On Logic* is a generously abundant suite of endearing episodesl, including: a stuttering one-note riff; a beautifully harmonized klezmer melody; an English folk ditty recalling the first modern reed choir, England's **S.O.S.**; summer-bandshell chords disrupted by Jon Raskin's berserk falsetto bari. The night's magnum opus was a one-hour (abridged) version of Alvin Curran's *Electric Rags II*, for quartet, interactive electronics and disruptive musique-concrète effects provided by the composer backstage, including snippets of Spike Jones and excerpts from an episode of ***The Honeymooners*** (a tv show which, rather like the piece itself, featured a well-seasoned quartet with a noisy laugh track). Its elements included typically Rovoid stuff (vamps, fat staccato chords, dense swarming), as well as bonk and squeak synthesis, deafening drones, MIDI distortion of live sax sounds, and general sensory overload.

The next afternoon at Roulette, Rova read through two new pices: *Did You Hear Something?* by John Devine of Mineeapolis's IMP ORK, in which entrances and exist were notated, but not pitches or dynamics; and Joseph Jarman's 1989 *Quartet for Saxophones*. Raskin rightly called it a lyric suite, with its sublime chords, and recombinant pairs of saxes playing against one another and passing parts back and forth. *"It's based on a modulating whole-tone scale,"* Jarman explained, *"because I'm old-fashioned."*

Marc Edwards, who calls himself "the forgotten Cecil Taylor drummer" (he's on 1974's ***Dark to Themselves***), is back on the scene after a 10-year absence. He surfaced twice this spring, playing some old-fashioned "new music" (aka free jazz). In duet with post-Ayler tenorist / altoist / trumpeter **Daniel Carter** (Chase Manhattan Bar and Grill, the afternoon of April 14), he laid bare his

marching-band roots, through his choice of rhythms and by performing one solo while strolling around his kit, beating the bass drum with a stick. But he's also one of the more explicitly African-influenced jazz drummers, setting up long clear cross-rhythmic patterns.

Edwards shone even more as part of multireedist **David Ware**'s quintet, May 20 at the Knitting Factory. Ware (on tenor, stritch, saxello and flute) played a little below his current standard; guest trumpeter **Bill Dixon** as always left me wondering what all the fuss is about, certainly not his tone (thin) or execution (spotty). A boldly original conception would more than compensate; if he has one, I confess I don't hear it. But the rhythm section (Edwards, bassist **William Parker** and **Matthew Shipp**) threatened to levitate the bandstand, swelling up from behind with ferocious power to wash the front line away. Shipp, a percussive pianist not overly beholden to Cecil Taylor (he claims Bud Powell and Fats Waller as major inspirations), has great imagination, sensitivity and drive. But he's yet to attract the attention he merits. Which goes to show that just 'cause sterling musicians are rarely discovered outside New York doesn't mean they get discovered here either.

That Edwards/Carter duo had appeared on the same bill with drummer (and Saturday-matinee series organizer) **Tom Bruno**, in trio with Parker and altoist **Jemeel Moondoc**. Bruno's fun to watch; he moves like an octopus underwater: each limb undulates independently, but his motion's never rushed or forced, always sensitive to dynamics; his freely polyrhythmic drumming's a steady, percolating flow, Jemeel's dramatic register leaps, string shapes and bassoony lower register were consistently ear-catching.

Betty Carter recorded live at the Bottom Line on May 25 and '6. The first of the weekend's four sets was a little ragged, but left little doubt the music would shape up in time. Upping the risk factor, she'd invited guests **Freddie Hubbard** and tenorist **Craig Handy** to join her latest crack trio (pianist **Marc Cary**, bassist **Dwayne Burno**, drummer **Gregory Hutchinson**). She introduced a stunningly spare arrangement of *When It's Sleepy Time Down South*, for voice, bass and trumpet. Burno (a splendid walker) wobbled a little on the chordal doublestops, and Freddie hit a conspicuous clam in the middle of a quiet chorus, but the 4 am feel was genuinely haunting. By several reports, the last set the next night was a stunner. (Oddly enough, **Jon Faddis**, opening for Carter, played two other Armstrong classics: *West End Blues* and *Struttin' with Some Barbecue*.)

The following weekend, tenorist **Ricky Ford** recorded live for Candid uptown at Birdland, backed by **Jaki Byard, Milt Hinton** and **Ben Riley**. From the top of Friday's first set, his swaggering *Ben's Den*, for Mr. Webster, the gracefully matured onetime wunderkind Ford was charge up: passionate, bluesy, full of ideas. Riley stuck with him like glue, but the capable Byard and Hinton obviously hadn't studied the charts. They foundered on the tricky progressions Ford wrote for the date, not that you'd blame them for getting lost on one fiendish tune whose time signature seemed to hover between six and seven. And you had to admire Ford for not opting for easy tunes. The recording will tell if the band worked out the kinks by Saturday night.

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Both **Phil Woods** and **Art Farmer** led quintets at Sweet Basil in July. They were followed by the **Tommy Flanagan** Trio and an all star group assembled by bassist **Richard Davis**... The Music and Poetry series at the Harlem Creative Collective (Shadowed Image Studio, 501 West 145th Street) continued in June and July with **Henry Threadgill, Hamiett Bluiett, Fred Hopkins & Billy Bang** among the participating musicians... **Elliott Sharp, Butch Morris** and Moto Yoshizawa were at the Knitting Factory May 22... the debut performance of the New York Improvisers Group was held at The Greenwich House of Music on May 25... Michele Henricks was at Birdland May 25/26 with David Leonhart and Friends (Marvin "Smitty" smith, Philip Harper, Peter Washington)... **Tom Guralnick** and **Wadada Leo Smith** gave solo performances at In House (474 Greenwich Street) June 1... **William Hooker**'s Mind World Quartet was at The Knitting Factory June 25... **Craig Harris** & Tailgater's Tales were at Roulette June 29/30... **Gunter Hampel**'s Galaxy Dream Band was at the Knitting Factory July 9th.

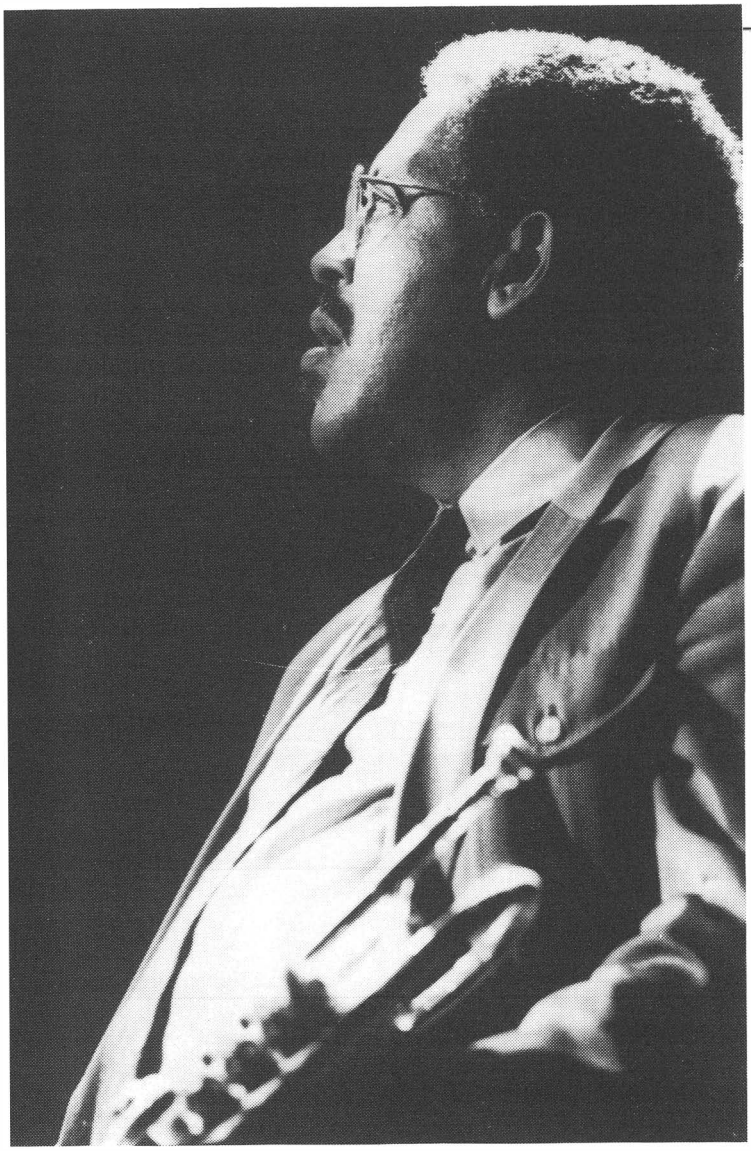
Composer **Jack Reilly** reports on the events which led to the cancellation of the International Performance Camp which was to be held at Hamilton College and was to feature daily seminars on and evening recitals of the music of Bill Evans.

The music department of Hamilton College decided that "Jazz People" were not to be trusted with the facilities, especially the new performance hall. They even took the matter up with the president of the college. The director of the summer programs who was in charge of administering the camp for my group was enraged by the myopia and elitism on the part of the music faculty and refused to give in to their pressures. She told me to go ahead with my plans.

At first, I reluctantly agreed for the students' sake, not to mention the months of preparation on my part and my commitment to Bill's legacy. Then I recalled all the b.s., politics, jealousies and separatist thinking I used to put up with at other universities and institutions of "higher" learning where I taught and chaired jazz studies departments (New England Conservatory, Mannes College of Music, Emporia State, The New School for Social Research ... to name a few).

My Irish temper was aroused. Was I going to let them tell me, indirectly, that the legacy Bill Evans left to the world was not good enough for their new hall? And was I going to tell sincere people around the globe who were coming to the camp (an Israeli student of mine, a cassette student from Indiana, plus auditors from all parts of the US), that they could do research on Bill Evans but could not perform his music in Hamilton College's new performance hall?

I then realized that nothing has changed. Classical musicians who teach in colleges and universities have OCHLOPHOBIA! They fear crowds!! They're threatened by the brilliance, enthusiasm and genuine, life-long thirst for knowledge a genius like Bill Evans had. Are they afraid they might be invaded by hundreds of budding Bill Evanses who might want to study at their college? They'd have to reply, "Bill who?"



Their jaws would drop in disbelief if I told them that I saw and heard Bill sight-read the ***Rite of Spring*** orchestral score in 1952 and then a day later, he demonstrated the styles of Teddy Wilson, Milt Buckner, George Shearing and Bud Powell and he sounded better than the originals. No, he didn't play note-for-note transcriptions. He didn't believe in that. He played "in the Spirit of..." He always told me to listen and try to imitate the Spirit of the music.

Bill was one of the greatest musicians to be born in America. He nurtured his art, jazz improvisation, here, on US soil. How dare I go ahead and dignify, deify, the soil of Hamilton College with the music and spirit of Bill Evans. I refused to hold the Performance Camp on the campus of Hamilton College. Let's just say it's been postponed until I find the right place!

God Bless America, Freddy.

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Joanne Brackeen was the headline opening artist at this year's Boston Globe Festival. The June 18 event at Jordan Hall showcased the pianist performing her own music with a quartet, the NEC Jazz Band and the Really Eclectic String Quartet in a concert presented jointly by Studio Red Top and The New England Conservatory of Music... The "Jazz Expansions" presentation of **Vinny Golia**, Mark Harvey and Walter Thompson was reported in issue #231 of **Coda**. The Jacob's Pillow concert in Lee, MA is now set for the afternoon of August 26. **Lester Bowie**'s Brass Fantasy will be heard on the evening of the same day.

Ray Charles was at Art Park (Lewiston, NY) on June 20 and was followed the next night by the **Jack DeJohnette / Herbie Hancock / Dave Holland / Pat Metheny** Superband in one of the first concerts which is taking the group to many festivals in North America and Europe this summer... **Multi-Jazz Dimensions** performed at Buffalo's Shooters Waterfront Cafe for Sunday brunches June 24, July 8 and 22... There was also a four night presentation of some of Buffalo's "far reaching improvisational groups" at the Hallwall's Art Center June 12-15. Taking part were Greg Millar and Friends, Greg Piontek and New Moon, The MC Band featuring Mike Colquhoun and John Bacon Jr.

City Folks' opening concert this fall at the Dayton art Institute is **A Tribute to Duke Ellington** on September 15 featuring **Harold Ashby, Norris Turney** and **Britt Woodman**. On October 12 the **Frank Morgan** Quartet will be featured followed by the **Slide Hampton / Michael Weiss** Quartet on November 10... The Cakewalkin' Jass Band celebrated 32 years of residency at Toledo's Tony Packo's Cafe on July 3.

The **Minnesota Jazz Party** takes place August 24-26 at the Marriott Hotel City Center in Minneapolis. Corporate sponsorship by 3M's Scotch Video & Audio Products will greatly benefit the financial load carried by the event's organizers. The "mainstream" jazz event will showcase 20 musicians, most of whom are prominent on the jazz party circuit. They include Ralph Sutton, Gus Johnson, Clark Terry, Warren Vache, Flip Phillips, Carl Fontana, Norris Turney, Bob Wilber and Nick Brignola. More information and tickets are available by calling Pat Skaja at (612) 781-2977.

The U.T. Longhorn Festival was held April 20-21 in Austin, Texas with **Carla Bley / Steve Swallow** and **Slide Hampton** the special guests of the Creative Opportunity Orchestra. The orchestra also presented its music June 17 at the Laguna Gloria Amphitheatre.

Lawrence Lebo and her Little Big Band were heard in concert June 23 at Long Beach's The Amphitheatre... The **Buddy Collette** Jazz Orchestra was heard in concert at the South Bay Center for the Arts on May 19... Catalina's presented the **Bobby Bradford** Mo'tet June 13 and the Bud Shank Quartet June 14-17... The **Glenn Horiuchi** Quintet gave a performance June 16 at the Los Angeles Japan America Theatre.

The **Rova Saxophone Quartet** will be in residence at Southern Exposure (401 Alabama Street, San Francisco) September 6 to 23. The performances coincide with the gallery's presentation of Howard Martin's visual / sound installation "Occupancy"... Jazz Camp 90 was a week long outdoor jazz retreat under the direction of Pete Escovedo in Aptos, near Santa Cruz.

FESTIVALS

Joe Morello is one of the headline attractions for Modern Drummer's Festival weekend '90 to be held September 8-9 at Montclair State College in

BOBBY BRADFORD (Photograph by Peter Danson)

Montclair, NJ... Oscar Peterson, Dizzy Gillespie, Stanley Turrentine, Joe Williams and Michel Petrucciani are among the artists signed to this year's Monterey Jazz Festival to be held September 21-23... The SS Norway's eighth **Floating Festival of Jazz** is dedicated to **Lionel Hampton** and the **Village Vanguard**. The one week sailings being October 20 and 27. The all star lineups include the Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra, the Jimmy and Jeannie Cheatham Sweet Baby Blues Band, the Illinois Jaquet Big Band and manh individual artists.

ON THE ROAD

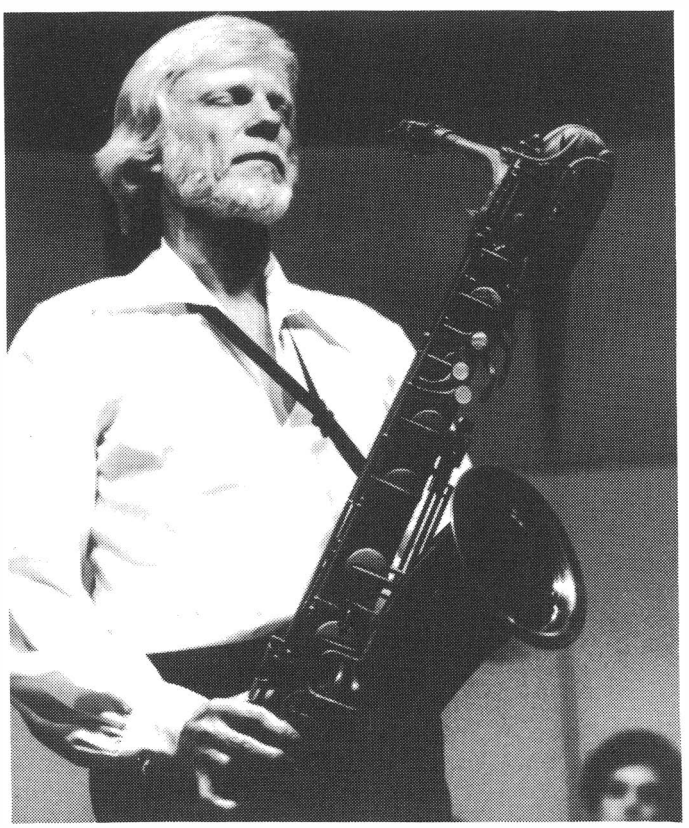
Bobby Watson's Horizon gave a series of one nights in the midwest in June with dates in Chicago, St Louis, Wichita, Kansas City and Omaha... The **Phil Woods** Quintet visited the West Coast in July for appearances at Catalina's in Los Angeles, the Kuumbwa Jazz Center in Santa Cruz, Kimball's in San Francisco and the Bud Shank Jazz Workshops in Port Townsend.

EUROPE

The fifteenth **International Jazz Festival** was held in **Bern**, Switzerland from May 8 to 14. A presentation to festival organizer Hans Zurgrugg by John Glasel, president of New York's Musicians Union Local 802, acknowledged the ongoing commitment to the music by the festival.

It was ironic, therefore, that the music which built this festival into a major event is being eroded by the same commercial forces which have elminated Montreux from consideration as a worthwhile showcase for jazz music. The fusion of jazz elements with rock-oriented music grows apace at the very time when jazz is reshaping its own destiny with a new generation of brilliant practitioners covering all styles of the music.

The festival eclipsed its own levels of presentation with a brilliant "Gala" finale with the bands of **Wynton Marsalis** and **Gerry Mulligan**. This was an evening of stunning artistry by two contrasting groups who collectively represented a fertile cross section of the music's traditions. The Marsalis segment (nearly two hours long) was an eloquent invocation of the music's many possibilities. The current band, augmented with the trombone of Wycliffe Gordon, took full advantage of the tonal possibilities of a four horn frontline. The repertoire still relies on the post Blakey traditions of briefly stated themes and modal harmony but there was greater depth to the improvisations and a looser sense of swing. Perhaps it was the structural contrast which made Wynton's interpretation of *Embraceable You* such a standout, as was his hard-riding blues choruses in the hot ride-out of the concert. Exceptional took, was **Marcus Roberts'** interpretation of Monk's *Trinkle Tinkle* and his solo wlaking blues lines within the band's interpretation of Morton's *Jungle Blues*.



GERRY MULLIGAN (Photograph by Gerard Futrick)

Mulligan was in sparkling form performing his own compositions as well as standards covering many aspects of his long career. His arrangements of the material were neatly coordinated to give considerable prominence to the excellent trio who worked with him. Pianist Bill Charlap, bassist Dean Johnson and drummer Richard De Rosa are further proof that the music is being excellently handled by fresh new voices.

Multi-instrumentalist **James Morrison** is another relative newcomer who has been making waves over the past few years with his extraordinary instrumental virtuosity. His Australian sextet was featured in a program which ranged from a neat Ellingtonian arrangement of Sweet Substitute to wild high note trumpet tirades. The sensitivity of Don Burrows' reed playing caught the ear in a set which was as visually spectacular as it seemed to be lacking in depth.

By the time **Max Roach's** Quartet performed Friday night it was apparent that artistry was in short supply this year. His quartet cleared the air with its brilliantly shaped interpretations of jazz standards and popular vehicles for jazz expression. **Cecil Bridgewater's** trumpet playing embodies the beliefs of Clifford Brown but has been distilled into a unique approach to the expressive textures of the music. His brilliant brass technique is used to stretch the expressiveness of the music rather than being a cudgel to batter the listener into unconsciousness.

Shirley Horn's understated eloquence and her predilection for unusual songs limited her communication with an European audience but she reached many people with her sensitive, finely tuned voice and understated piano voicings.

The festival's beginnings were built around its "Jazz Band Ball" of traditional jazz. It is also a concert which is quickly sold out but this year's audience had to wait until after midnight before hearing the kind of music they have come to expect at this event. A hand-picked band paid tribute to **Wild Bill Davison** (himself an immensely popular figure at Bern in his lifetime) and performed in exemplary fashion. Bob Wilber, Kenny

Davern, Warren Vache, Ed Hubble, Ralph Sutton, Dave Green and Jake Hanna had worked up their repertoire over four nights and they were able to give new life and meaning to the familiar material with which they worked.

Conversely, the Dutch Swing College Band seemed stale and only the fluent expressiveness of trombonist Bert Boeren seemed capable of overcoming their sense of déjà vu.

Arturo Sandoval, Dave Bartholomew, Queen Ida, Lucky Peterson and Etta James kept the festival's cash register ringing without once convincing jazz listeners that their collective musical offerings had any place in this festival. Sandoval would do well in Las Vegas while Dave Bartholomew's band is only worthy of working as a warm-up for night club acts.

One week later, in Baden, Jazz in der Aula presented the kind of concert which comes along infrequently. **Kenny Drew, Oliver Jones** and **John Colianni** were presented in three contrasting sets of piano jazz which demonstrated their virtuosity and individuality. Each pianist performed for an hour in both a solo setting and with bass and drums. Colianni and Jones worked with Reggie Johnson and Ed Thigpen while Kenny Drew used Niels Henning Orsted Pedersen and Alvin Queen. The contrasts between each performer was fascinating to observe and gave each segment a character of its own while the overall stylistic cohesion of the evening offered listening continuity.

David Murray is to be awarded the 1991 Jazzpar Prize. This Danish award includes a cash prize and the opportunity to perform in Denmark with **Pierre Dorge** and The New Jungle Orchestra and Danish soloists Jesper Thilo (tenor sax) and Jens Winther (trumpet)... The European summer circuit is full of festivals, many of which are only now sending out their schedules. Already gone are such events as those in Copenhagen (July 6-15); Verona (June 27-29); Europa Jazz Festival in Noci (between Bari and Brindisi, July 12-15); Ravenna (July 25-29); Atina (July 18-21); Terrassa (May 5 - June 3); Montreux (July 6-21); Moers (June 1-4). Still to come is the Jonica event in Italy to be held August 29 to September 1 with the World Saxophone Quartet, Amsterdam String Trio, Paquito D'Rivera and Tim Berne / Herb Robertson and the Viersen Festival in Germany September 21-23 with Barbara Dennerlein, the Rava - Vitos - Humair - D'Andrea Quartet, **Johnny Griffin, Paul Bley, Courtney Pine**, Art Blakey and Chick Corea among the participants... A Jazz Camp was held in Tatabanya, Hungary from August 1-10... Swiss saxophonist / composer Mathias Rissi brought together sixteen of his country's most prominent musicians for a recording project which is now issued on Creative Works as a CD entitled "Lyon's Brood"... **FMP**, who celebrated twenty years of operation in 1989, presented its summer workshop June 27 to July 1 with Dietmar Diesner, **Marilyn Crispell**, Gerry Heminway, **Peter Brotzmann**, Bill Laswell, Irene Schweizer, Joelle Léandre, Michael Moore, William Parker, **Julius Hemphill**, Peter Kowald, Fred Frith and Hans Reichel.

BLUES

Going To Chicago: A Year on the Chicago Blues Scene, is a photography book by Stephen Green with annotation by the musicians themselves. More than 230 photographs cover the contemporary scene in this Woodford Publication (4043 23rd Street, San Francisco, CA 94114)... Becky Beeston (213A Hill Street, Chapel Hill, NC 27514) specialises in portraits of blues musicians. Her hand drawn black and white impressions of the artists are on view and a catalog is available... The University of Illinois is publishing this fall, ***Downhome Blues Lyrics: An Anthology from the Post World War II Era*** by Jeff Todd Tilton as well as ***Chicago Soul*** by Robert Pruter.

Alligator Records has released a new recording by **Koko Taylor** called **Jump for Joy**... the label has also issued a recording by R&B tenorman Noble "Thin Man" Watts.

Brazil's May 1990 Blues Festival in Sao Paulo was headlined by Bo Diddley, Koko Taylor, Kinsey Report, Magic Slim and John Hammond.

ADVERTISING HONESTY

We regret to inform our readers that ***Jazz News International*** seems to have ceased publication. The only notification concerning their fate has been through readers who sent in subscriptions which remain unfulfilled. Their advertisement in **Coda** was on an exchange basis and we had continued to run it without being aware of their difficulties.

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***Swing And A Myth* - A response by Larry Nai**

While the music of Sun Ra occupies a hallowed place in my life, it is nonetheless refreshing to read a serious listener's mixed reactions to a musician who normally draws little but superlatives from the music press. It is in the spirit of lively debate that I felt compelled to comment on Marc Chénard's (superbly written) article, *Swing And A Myth*.

Firstly, I think it anything **but** a misunderstanding to cast Sun Ra as "an important figure of the new thing of the '60s." Much more than the theatrical trappings, the early and mid-60's recordings are some of the most challenging of the era; the most obvious "innovation," if you will, is the extended use of rhythmic space, African / "little" instruments and 20th Century harmony, a good five years before the recorded advant of the AACM. Anyone in doubt should consult, **The Magic City**, recorded in 1960.

As for "selling out to the majors," Marc seems to think that merely **signing** with a major constitutes whoredom, or that "traditionalist" is a dirty word. Selling out, to me, means diluting one's uniqueness into a bland package that will appeal to the widest common denominator. But Ra has always played "the tradition," and his brilliant intervallic concepts, his quirky rhythmic sense, and his comprehensive assimilation of jazz history, are much in evidence on the recent studio albums. And no mention was made of "Dance of the Extra-Terrestrians," as strong a "free" piece as many of his '60s forays, which appears on the recently issued **Hours After**.

I believe the level of the band's playing has by and large suited where Ra has elected go in his music. His own piano is as rich as ever, perhaps more so in its economical wit. I agree that John Gilmore, whose playing has been affected by dental problems, is not as robust a player as he once was, but, as much as his staggering multiphonics workouts, I have always admired his sense of line, of which Marc's word, "laconic," is an accurate de-

scription. This sense of structure is still apparent in his playing. Many music fans fail to see that "the tradition" is not a dormant product of a time now gone, but rather a living, developing art. Cecil Taylor is a direct descendant of Tatum and Garner; Albert Ayler was of the same line as Webseter, Hawkins and Bechet; Braxton is of the same heritage as Konitz and Desmond. Each succeeding generation expands upon the ideas and gifts of the preceding one. That Ra should want to celebrate the repertoire of past decades, not in a rote fashion, but with his own perceptions, should not be held against him.

LITERATURE

Ellington: The Early Years by Mark Tucker will be published in October by the University of Illinois Press who are also publishing a six volume discography of "Ethnic Music on Records" by Dick Spottswood. This book covers the years 1893 - 1942 and deals with non-American music recorded in the United States during that period.

Rhythm and Resistance: Explorations in the Political Uses of Popular Music is a new book by Ray Pratt to be published by Praeger Books (a division of Greenwood Press)... ***Jazz: A People's Music***, Sidney Finkelstein's 1948 sociological view of jazz music, has been reprinted in paperback by International Publishers... **The National Jazz Service Organization** received a substantial grant from the Rockefeller Foundation to assist in the expansion of its in-house NJSO Journal. The second issue of this quarterly publication was released May 1 and copies can be obtained by writing to NJSO, PO Box 50152, Washington, DC 20004-0152.

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AUDIO / VISUAL RECORDINGS

The Urban Video Network didn't waste much time in compiling a collection of four **Sarah Vaughan** videos covering different periods of the great singer's career. The four videos are available as a set or individually from Jazz Home Video Entertainment, PO Box 5207, East Orange, NJ 07017.

A & M Records has issued **Stan Getz'** ***Apasionado*** and Volume 3 of music recorded ***Live at the Knitting Factory***... **Biograph**'s latest digital piano roll release on CD contains the music cut by **Eubie Blake** for QRS. Biograph has also released a compilation CD of material by Leadbelly, Reverend Gary Davis and Dan Smith.

New **Blue Note** recordings by **George Adams, Mose allison** and **McCoy Tyner** are now available and with a second trio recording by **Don Pullen** to follow shortly. Bassist James Genes and drummer Lewis Nash appear with Pullen on this recording... Blue Note has also issued CDs of material never released until the 1970s. **Dexter Gordon's** ***Clubhouse***, Lee Morgan's ***Tom Cat***, Jimmy Smith's ***Cool Blues*** and Wayne Shorter's ***The Soothsayer*** are restored to the catalog along with Bobby Hutcherson's ***Oblique*** and Grant Green's ***Matador***, both issued previously only in Japan.

Trumpeter **Roy Hargrove's** debut BMG / Novus recording is called ***Diamond In The Rough***... Other new Novus releases include Christopher Hollyday's ***On Course*** and **Carmen McRae**'s marvelous collection of vocal interpretations of Thelonious Monk compositions.

Guiding Spirit is the title of Kenny Burrell's new recording for **Contemporary Records**. It was recorded live at the Village Vanguard and features vibist Jay Hoggard... The **Fantasy** group of labels is actively preparing a new slate of recordings which includes McCoy Tyner's collaboration with Stephane Grappelli, a new collection of Django Reinhardt material by Joe Pass which will be issued as **Summer Nights**, sessions with Jimmy Smith, Tom Harrell, Ruth Brown, Carol Sloane, John Campbell and Joshua Breakstone...

Reissue activity by Fantasy includes a CD box set of all the **Tatum Group Masterpieces** and 30 new titles in the OJC program. A 12 disc **Charles Mingus** boxed set entitled ***The Complete Debut Recordings*** is now scheduled for August release... New recordings by Mulgrew Miller and Ralph Moore will be added to the Fantasy-distributed Landmark label this summer.

Musicmasters has released the Louis Bellson ***Jazz Giants*** session recorded in concert in Bern Switzerland in 1989. It features Conte Candoli, Don Menza, Buddy DeFranco and Hank Jones... The third volume of unissued Erroll Garner material has been released on **Emarcy** under the title ***Too Marvelous For Words***.

Stash records is releasing the 1939 Fats Waller transcription titles on CD as well as presenting new recordings by The String Trio of New York.

Triloka Records has moved into the jazz field with a tribute recording to Chet Baker titled ***Some Other Time***. It features the Brecker Brothers, Richie Bierach, John Scofield, George Mraz and Adam Nussbaum. They have also released ***Dynasty***, a collaboration between Jackie and Rene McLean with Hotep Idreis Galeta (piano), Nat Reeves (bass) and Carl Allen (drums)... Pianist Henry Butler's first Windham Hill recording is called ***Orleans Inspiration***.

Australian WEA Records has released a session featuring Bob and Len Barnard with Danny Moss and Brian Lemon... Trumpeter Craig Fraedrich's second CD recording, ***On The Edge***, has been released by Creative Digital Products (PO Box 10731, Arlington, VA 22210)... ***Free Your Mind*** is trombonist Tyrone Jefferson's debut production for Diaspora Connections Records (42 Cornelia Street, Brooklyn, NY 11221)... the 1952 Toronto concert by the Lennie Tristano Quintet is now available on CD from Jazz Records... New Artists (PO Box 549, New York, NY 10018) has issued a CD of ***Duo Dimension*** by Connie Crothers and Richard Tabnik.

OBITUARIES

The jazz world was saddened to learn of the death of **Dexter Gordon** in Philadelphia on April 25. He had been fighting cancer for some time. No one was prepared, however, for the abrupt closure to the life of **Emily Remler**. The guitarist died in Sydney, Australia on May 3 of an apparent heart attack. It was equally shocking to learn of the death of **Chris McGregor** on May 27 after a brief bout with lung cancer. McGregor was a major contributor to the jazz world whose "Brotherhood Of Breath" radically changed the direction of jazz in the 1960s.

Tenor saxophonist **Al Sears** died March 23 in St Albans, NY. He was 80... Trombonist **Louis Nelson** died April 5 in New Orleans following injuries sustained in a car accident... Writer & producer **Dave Dexter** died April 19 in Los Angeles. He was 74.

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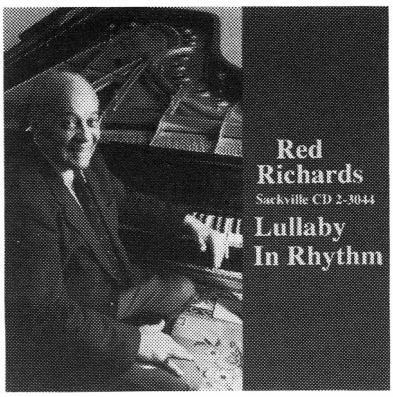
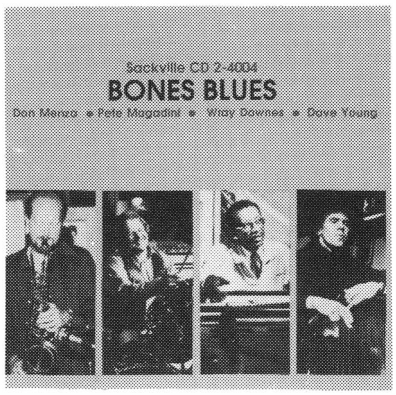


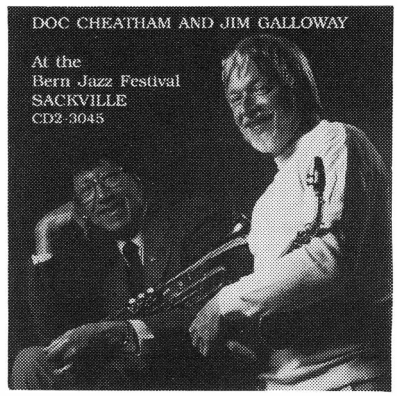
LULLABY IN RHYTHM features the brilliant swing stylings of solo pianist RED RICHARDS, in a program of jazz standards that includes *Some Other Spring, God Bless The Child, Ill Wind* and seven more selections (47:18)

CD2-4004



BONES BLUES presents modern jazz its most inventive, with a quartet consisting of DON MENZA, (Tenor), WRAY DOWNES (Piano), DAVE YOUNG (Bass) and PETE MAGADINI (Drums). Eight selections including *I Remember Clifford, Poor Butterfly* and *Freddie Freeloader* (50:21

CD2-3045



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CD2-3038

CD2-3042

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CD2-3043

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