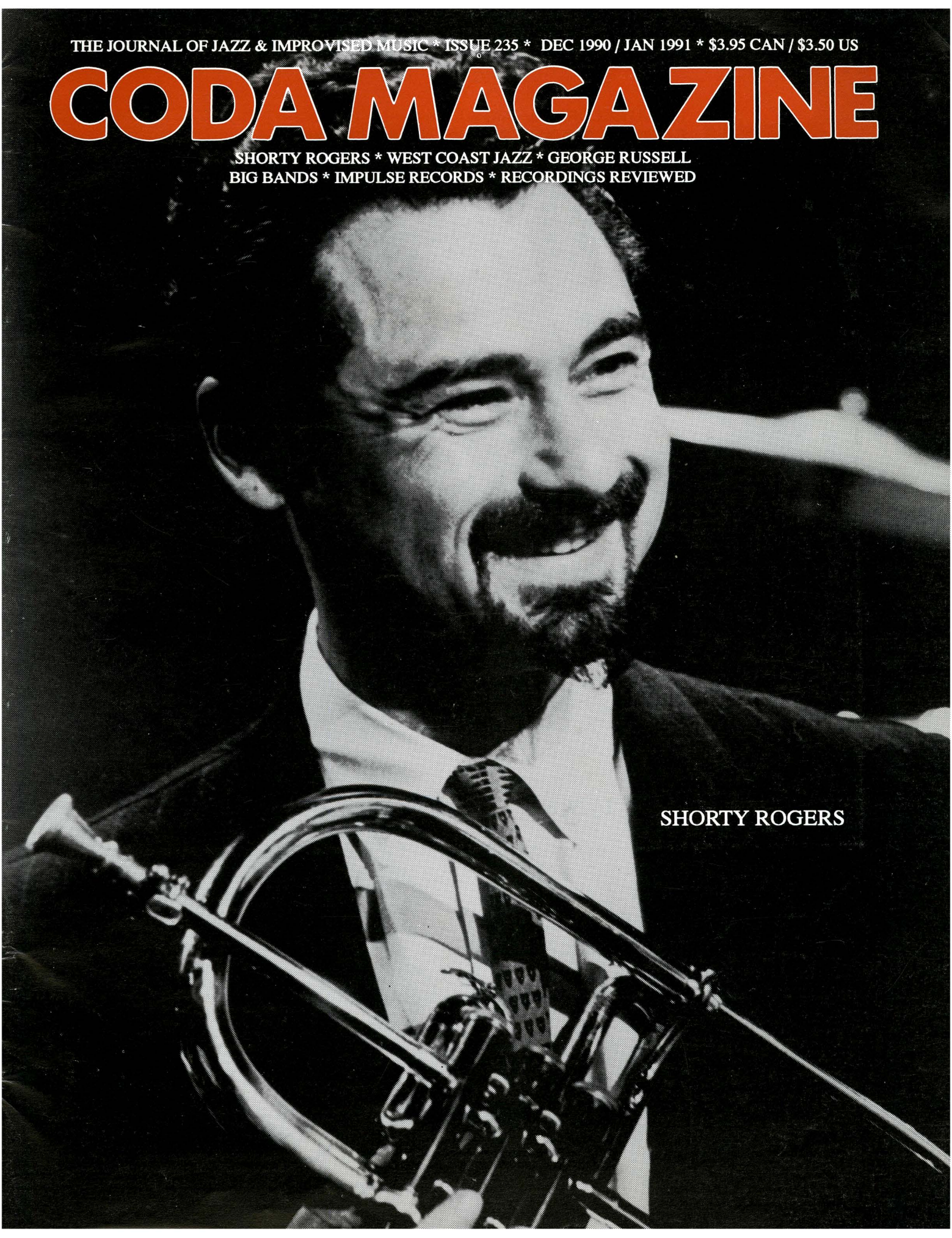
THE JOURNAL OF JAZZ & IMPROVISED MUSIC * ISSUE 235 * DEC 1990 / JAN 1991 * $3.95 CAN / $3.50 US

CODA MAGAZINE

SHORTY ROGERS * WEST COAST JAZZ * GEORGE RUSSELL
BIG BANDS * IMPULSE RECORDS * RECORDINGS REVIEWED



SHORTY ROGERS

CLASSIFIED SMALL ADVERTISEMENTS

This section is for individuals and organisations to advertise non-display items. Cost is 75 cents per word ($15.00 minimum); payment is to be made when copy is submitted. There is a 10% discount on ads run for 6 consecutive issues.

MAGAZINES

W I R E

Britain's jazz and new music magazine.
We stand for excellence in content and design.
Dozens of reviews every month. A valuable companion.
Send for an immediate free sample copy.
You'll like what we do.
Wire, Unit G&H, 115 Cleveland Street,
London W1P 5PN, England.

HotHouse
Writers/Editors/Publishers

533 Brunswick Avenue, Toronto, Ontario
Canada M5R 2Z6 (416) 963-8333

CADENCE MAGAZINE
The American Review of Jazz & Blues
The most complete coverage of the scene
$2.50 Cover Price
1 Year Sub. World Wide $25.00
$37 First Class - $45/$50 Airmail
Cadence Building
Redwood NY 13679-9612
315-287-2852

THE JAZZ REPORT
Canada's New Jazz Magazine
Interviews * Features * Profiles * Record Reviews * Top 30 * Radio Listings !
SUBSCRIBE NOW
Only $12.00/yr (6 issues/yr)
Please send cheque or money order (do not send cash)
The Jazz Report 22 Helena Ave., Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6G 2H2

CODA MAGAZINE
IS AVAILABLE IN MICROFORM
For further information write to
UNIVERSITY MICROFILMS INTERNATIONAL
300 North Zeeb Road, Dept. P.R.
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 USA
30-32 Mortimer Street, Dept. P.R.
London W1N 7RA England
Micromedia Ltd., 158 Pearl St.
Toronto, Ontario M5H 1L3

LIVING BLUES - Journal of the Black American Blues Tradition - Published bi-monthly - $18.00 US per year - Center of the Study of Southern Culture, University of Mississippi, University, MS 38677

RECORDINGS

FREE AUCTION LISTS: My quality jazz auction lists are issued several times yearly and cover 78 rpm, LPs, books & magazines. Drop me a card if you're not already on my mailing list. **WARREN W. HICKS, RECORDS FOR COLLECTORS, Box 178, Georgetown, CT 06829, USA**

RARE JAZZ/VOCAL LPs Sold by Auction. Free lists. Top $ paid for Jazz/Vocal LPs and Jazz Literature. Leon Leavitt, P.O. Box 38395, Los Angeles, CA 90038, USA (818) 352-5087

FREE LISTS of rare jazz lp's at auction. Older jazz literature at auction. Gary Alderman, P.O. Box 9164, Madison, WI 53715 USA

RARE JAZZ RECORDS
(Hard/to/find / Out/of/print)
Thousands of records (including literature) sold by mail auction. (Four per year)
For free lists write to:
FINI JAZZ - P.O. BOX 31
40026 IMOLA (Italy)
If you would like to send a Want List please include your Top Price.
WANTED: Jazz Records collections welcome.

WANTED: Modern Jazz from the 50s & 60s on Blue Note, Debut, Mode, New Jazz, Prestige, Riverside and other labels. Will pay high prices in any quantity for top condition. Wantlist available. Frederick Cohen, 55 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10016 USA

JAZZ on vinyl is Alive and Well! Hear The Original Sound!! All styles, artists, Free lists of 1000s of Hard-to-find LPs. All-Jazz Records, P.O. Box 17428, Tampa FL 33682

AUCTION AND SET PRICED LISTS OF JAZZ LPS. EUROPEAN ISSUES A SPECIALTY.
MOLE JAZZ,
291 PENTONVILLE ROAD,
LONDON W1 9NP, ENGLAND

FREE JAZZ CATALOGUE
LPs, CDs, CASSETTES AND VIDEOS.
Write to: Daybreak Express Records,
P.O. Box 150250 - Dept. C,
Van Brunt Station, Brooklyn NY
11215-0005
THE JAZZ MAIL ORDER SPECIALIST
SINCE 1975

JAZZ ALBUMS
Offered at AUCTION and by SET PRICE.
Broad Selection. Rapid service assured.
FOR FREE CATALOG:
Jim MacDonald, 3226 Trelawny Circle, Mississauga, Ontario L5N 5G5

10,000 "OUT OF PRINT" JAZZ LP RECORDS made in USA. Modern Jazz Big Band, Vocals, Current Catalogue Not Available so Mail "Want List" to: BILL ORENSTEIN, "RECORDINGS, USA", P.O. Box 1665, Studio City, CA 91614 USA (818) 985-3728

BOOKS

OVER 150 JAZZ BOOKS for sale
History, Biographies, Criticism, Periodicals
For list, send name and address to:
May and May, Jazz List
Arundell House, Tisbury
Saliksbury SP3 6QU Great Britain
or fax GB 747 871 425

TORONTO SERVICES

LLOYD GARBER Improvising Guitarist
Teaches privately in Toronto. Latest cassettes- - "Resounds" with Lloyd Garber (gtr), Bill Smith (sop), David Lee (cello) & Herb Bayley (trmb). "Montreal Gig" with Lloyd Garber (gtr), Lisle Ellis (bass), John Heward (drums). ($12 each pp). New book, "Slab of Stone." Seven improvising compositions. ($20 postpaid) Lloyd Garber, Box 7020, Station A, Toronto, Canada M5W 1X7

Howard Rees'
JAZZ WORKSHOPS
at the Music Gallery
7th year! Beginners' Class
Recommended by Barry Harris
536-3220
Special 2 day Barry Harris Clinic Jan 26 & 27

TEAC A3440 - 4 track tape recorder. $600. Phone John Norris. (416) 593-7230

VORTEX RECORDS
2309 Yonge Street, 2nd Floor 483-7437
Used jazz records, CD's and cassettes bought and traded.
Other listening audiences catered to also.

STEVIE RAY and JIMMIE TOGETHER.

"FAMILY STYLE." Featuring the tracks: "Tick Tock," "Good Texan," "Telephone Song" and "D/FW."
Produced by Nile Rodgers.

THE VAUGHAN BROTHERS. TWICE WHAT YOU WOULD EXPECT.
On Epic/Associated Cassettes, Compact Discs and Records.

Management: Mark Proct for Mark 1 Management
Alex Hodges for Strike Force Management

Epic/ASSOCIATED

CODA MAGAZINE

PUBLISHED CONTINUOUSLY SINCE 1958
ISSUE 235/ Published December1st / 1990

JOHN NORRIS (Founder / Publisher)
BILL SMITH (Editor/Art Director/Publisher)

CODA PUBLICATIONS * BOX 87
STATION J * TORONTO * ONTARIO
M4J 4X8 * CANADA

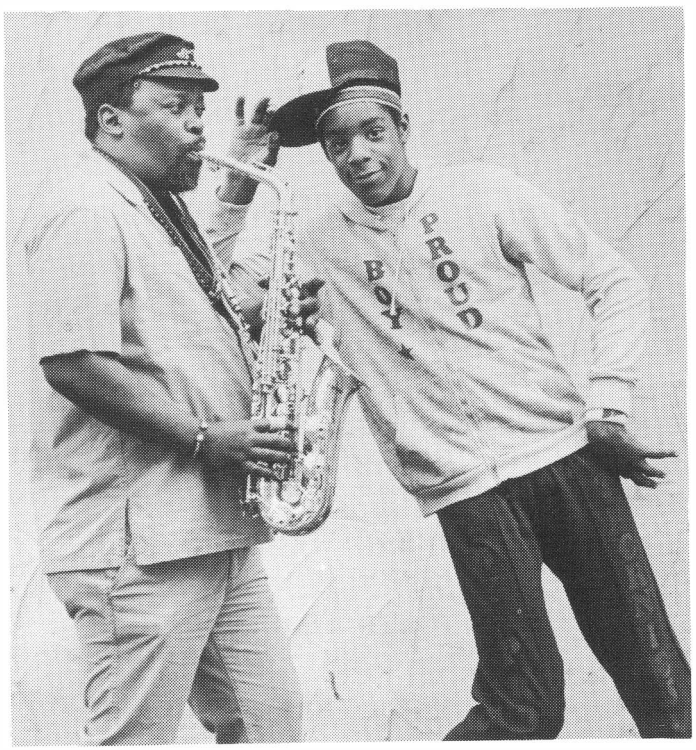
Cover Photograph
SHORTY ROGERS
By Hal Hill

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: Coda publishes six issues per year. Rates for a one-year subscription are as follows:
CANADA $24.00 (First class mail $28.00)
U.S.A. $23.00 (First class mail $26.00) in U.S. funds
ELSEWHERE (except U.K.) $27.00 Cdn. (Air mail rate $36.00 Cdn.)
UNITED KINGDOM: Subscriptions are payable to our U.K. agent, Miss Rae Wittrick, 33 Winton Lodge, Imperial Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex, England. The yearly subscription rate is £12.00 surface, £19.00 air mail. PLEASE ENCLOSE PAYMENT WITH YOUR ORDER. Payment from outside Canada can be made via International Money Order or bank draft. We accept U.S. cheques, but require 50c additional to cover bank charges. We also accept VISA and MASTERCARD BY MAIL (send your card number, expiry date and signature) or BY TELEPHONE (please give your card number, expiry date and address) 24 hours a day – (416)593-7230

CODA MAGAZINE is published six times per year in February, April, June, August, October and December, in CANADA. It is supported by its subscribers and by its advertisers. We also gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the **Canada Council** and the **Ontario Arts Council**. Second class mail registration number R-1134. For availability of current and back issues of **CODA** on microfilm, contact University Microfilms, 200 N. Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106 USA, or Micromedia Ltd., 158 Pearl Street, Toronto, Ontario M5H 1L3 Canada. Indexed in The Canadian Periodical Index and The Music Index. Printed in Canada. Typeset by Hot-House. ISSN 0820-926X

CONTENTS

THE CANADIAN SCENE



Toronto became a major league jazz town this summer when the **Bermuda Onion** and **The Senator** Restaurant jumped into jazz presentation in a big way. Sustaining this kind of endeavour is much more difficult than initiating it and the cracks have already surfaced. Both clubs are now backing away from their heavy duty schedule of jazz acts. The Senator has begun programming a mix of local jazz and popular music performers while The Bermuda Onion has started a blues and R&B series alongside its jazz groups.

The bottom line in all this activity is that a much larger audience base is needed to support this kind of activity at a time when the cost of entertainment is soaring into the stratosphere.

What it has meant is that we have had the opporunity to hear artists who rarely perform here. **Helen Merrill**, Kenny Barron (in a trio setting with Cecil McBee and Victor Lews). **Ahmad Jamal**, Jimmy McGriff and the **Louis Hayes** Quintet were all at the Bermuda Onion and still to come (if they aren't cancelled, as was the fate for **Randy Weston**, who would have been a musical highlight of the season) are Sun Ra, **Pharoah Sanders** and Frank Morgan.

The focus at the Senator has been different. They have run with the heavily touted major label "New Stars" of the bebop revival. The Harper Brothers, **Marlon Jordan**, Christopher Hollyday and **Terence Blanchard** were all in residence but their performances rarely came close to the hype of the advance publicity. It is fascinating that there is a seemingly endless flow of young musicians working within a jazz framework created more than thirty years ago but at this point their use of the jazz language is severely limited. They desperately need the experience of working with the veterans, those who helped shape the music they want to play. The audience who are discovering jazz through these performers also need to hear those musicians who can really create something of themselves rather than merely reshuffling the lines off old Miles Davis, John Coltrane and Sonny Rollins records.

The whole scenario seems to bespeak a jazz scene decidedly out of kilter through the manipulations of the major corporations who now own these young musicians.

The reality is that cities like Toronto have young musicians just as competent as those who passed through and, in some cases, already have more to offer the listener.

Many of these groups are now being heard at George's Spaghetti House on a regular basis while at Café des Copains the pianists being presented are often being heard in what is (for them) a more comfortable working partnership with a bassist. It certainly has given an added dimension to the music offered by **Ronnie Mathews**, Don Friedman, **Mike Wofford**, John Hicks, and **Junior Mance. Don Thompson, Dave Young, Paul Novotny** and **Kieran Overs** are the bassists who brought their experience and imagination to the meeting point with these varied and gifted pianists.

Both **Abdullah Ibrahim** and **Cecil Taylor** presented their unique piano conception at The Senator in a concert environment while **Jay McShann** was back at the Café bringing joy and good feelings to audiences with **his** unique way of interpreting the jazz message.

In September Toronto's film festival unleashed its annual array of cinematic marvels from around the world. The **Quincy Jones** documentary generated all the media glory but two other music films, both created by Toronto residents, are of more than passing interest to the jazz community. **Brothers In Music** is a 25 minute documentary about saxophonist **Jim Heineman** and pianist **John T. Davis** who have been making music together for many years. Their long time gig at The Rex created the kind of following which is rarely found these days. The film is a warm portrayal of these two like minded people. Another showing of this film took place November 3 at the Euclid Theatre along with a 60

HELEN MERRILL (Photograph by Gerard Futrick)
DUDU PUKWANA & JUNIOR CARTER (Photograph by Val Wilmer)

AN UPDATE COMPILED BY JOHN NORRIS

minute documentary about Mary Lou Williams titled **Music On My Mind**. The films were followed by a performance by Heineman and Davis.

Also shown during the film festival was Jacques Hoender's documentary **Musicians In Exile**. This is a moving portrayal of musicians from Chile, Cuba and South Africa who are unable, for moral and political reasons, to return home. Performance footage is mixed with interviews filmed within the social contexts of daily lives in the cities where they now reside. All the participants aritculate their dilemma with clarity and you quickly sense the sadness and frustration within them. The four segments focus on **Hugh Masekela**, the eight member Chilean group **Quilapayun**, percussionist **Daniel Ponce** and saxophonist **Paquito D'Rivera** from Cuba and South African drummer **Julian Bahula**, who is seen working in London with other South African expatriates (including **Dudu Pukwana** and **Jonas Gwangwa**). Unlike those who choose to emigrate and are free to return home these people have no chance to do this. They have had to build new lives in environments far removed from their own and where, basically, they would prefer not to be. Even D'Rivera, who wanted to go to New York to pursue a career as a jazz musician, states that not being able to return home is like waking up every morning with a knife stuck in your heart.

Musicians In Exile is a sensitive portrayal of artists caught in a dilemma not of their making which has had a profound effect upon the way in which they perceive and articulate their creativity.

Marian McPartland was in Toronto for a few days in August to record with **Bernie Senensky, Oliver Jones** and **Jon Ballantyne** for future programs in her "Piano Jazz" series heard in the US on National Public Radio. These will also be aired by the CBC on their "Easy Street" program. Hopefully this will lead to more of McPartland's "Piano Jazz" being heard in Canada.

Jon Ballantyne was given a brief showcase on the CBC's Adrienne Clarkson Presents program on August 1. Ontario Television screened the National Film Board documentary **Oliver Jones In Africa**. Dave Young and Archie Alleyne are also seen in the film.

CBC radio began a six part documentary about **Norman Granz** and **JATP** on October 7. The series was conceived by David Tarnow and is a mix of music and interviews with Granz, Oscar Peterson (who hosts the series), Dizzy Gillespie, Ray Brown, Herb Ellis, Lee young, Red Callender, Les Paul and Jack McVea.

Herman Leonard's photographs were on display in July at Toronto's Jane Corkin Gallery before moving on to various US locations. . .Guitarist **Lloyd Garber** is now performing the last Sunday of each month at Natalie's House, a performance space located at 752 Queen Street West. Trombonist Herb Bayley and bassist Marcel Williams are performing with Garber. . .The **U of T Jazz Ensemble** (under the direction of Phil Nimmons) was heard December 8 at the Edward Johnson Building.

The **Kawartha Jazz Society** began its 1990/91 concert series September 23 with a performance by the **Jane Bunnett** Quintet. **Dave McMurdo's** Jazz Orchestra was heard October 28 and **Ed Bickert / Don Thompson** were presented November 18. Jon Ballantyne's Quartet are scheduled to appear January 27. Information about the society and its concerts is available from Larry Fine, 1003 Afton Road, Peterborough, Ontario K9J 8K3.

Montreal's **Rising Sun** has found a new location at 5380 Boul. St. Laurent and reopened at the end of August. Blues artists **Buddy Guy** and **Taj Mahal** helped get the new club under way while New Orleans drummer **Tony Bazley** was in residence there for a month as house drummer. Bazley, incidentally, will be working a month in Toronto next April/ May when Zydeco will present music with a New Orleans flavour.

Ranee Lee, whose Justin Time recording is helping focus attention on this exceptional singer, is spending most of December in Europe while a CFCF TV Special taped during this year's Montreal Jazz Festival is also expected to be aired in December.

Pete Magadini, whose showcase recording, **Bones Blues**, has been reissued on CD by Sackville, presented "The History and Styles of Jazz Drumming" October 13 at Claudio's in Old Montreal under the auspices of The Jazz Association of Montreal.

Edmonton's **Yardbird Suite** reopened in September after the summer break with David "Fathead" Newman, Karen Young / Michel Donato, Charlie Austin and Bill Frisell among the featured groups.

Vancouver continues to be the city in Canada with the most vibrant and diversified jazz scene. Over the past few months **Tommy Flanagan,** Betty Carter, Fathead Newman, **Trevor Watts' Moire Music, Marilyn Crispell, Peter Brotzman, David Moss** and **Marcus Roberts** have enlivened a scene which also seems to be expanding for locally based musicians. Jazz is featured at the Alma Street Cafe, Cafe Django, Cafe Bergman and Carnegie's on a regular basis.

Jazz continues to be heard on an ever broadening scale on the radio and Brian Turner informs us that his "The Feeling of Jazz" program is now being heard on Antigonish, Nova Scotia's CFXU-AM on Saturday evenings from 8-11 pm. He notes that St Francis Xavier University has a strong jazz program under ex-Herman trombonist Gene Smith's direction. Bassist Skip Beckwith is artist in residence.

Canada's international profile continues to be enhanced by the increasing flow of recordings by its artists. **Unity**, a cooperative venture of the musicians who produce the recordings, has an ever expanding roster. **Two Sides** (Unity 116) is a quartet outing by saxophonist **Mike Murley** with John McLeod, Brian Dickinson, Jim Vivien and Barry Elmes. . .**Bob Fenton's** group **Fourth Inversion** (Unity 115) is built around his compositions which are interpreted by John McLeod, Mike Murley, Dick Felix and Mike McClelland. . .**Hugh Fraser's** larger group **VEJI** (Vancouver Ensemble of Jazz Improvisation) also has a new recording on Unity 114 while **Time Warp's** latest effort was recorded live at George's Spaghetti House and features Kevin Turcotte's trumpet and Mike Murley's saxophone (Unity 118).

Justin Time has released its third volume of recordings by **Karen Young** and **Michel Donato** (8418) as well as a new recording by guitarist **Brian**

WINNIPEG NEWS BY RANDAL McILROY

Hughes titled **Between Dusk. . .and Dreaming** (Just 36-2). Repackaged on CD are **Oliver Jones'** earlier recordings **Live at Biddles** and **Requestfully Yours**. Soon to be released on Justin Time is Jones' latest: **Northern Summit,** featuring the pianist with Herb Ellis and Red Mitchell. Also due soon is **Fraser MacPherson's** second recording with Oliver Gannon, Steve Wallace and John Summer. It's called **Encore**. Fom **Victo** comes a new CD featuring the music of **André Duchesne L' ou 'L** (Victo CD-010) while in January they will release **Roscoe Mitchell's Song In The Wind. . .Jazz Co. Records** has released on CD/ cassette a new recording featuring saxophonist/singer **Johnny Scott** and pianist **Geoff Lapp**. **Contrasts** also features trumpeter Ron Dilaurio, bassist George Mitchell and Dave Laing on drums. . .**Sackville** released **Hagood Hardy's** first jazz recording in many years. The vibraphonist is showcased on **Morocco** (2018) along with saxophonist Michael Stuart, trombonist Terry Lukiwsky, guitarist Marc Crawford, pianist Gary Williamson, bassist Richard Homme and drummer Barry Elmes. Also new from Sackville is **Swingmatism** featuring **Jay McShann** in a trio setting with Don Thompson and Archie Alleyne. . . Denon Canada is now distributing the CBC's Jazz Image label.

WINNIPEG

Our short summers make programming before July and after August a dodgy business. Consequently, Winnipeg in summer is teeming with knees up, from fringe theatre to ethnocultural celebrations. This past summer jazz had more than a look-in, too.

Jazz Winnipeg Festival - Word of Mouth offered six consecutive nights of formal concerts (on most nights with two piggybacked for different times in the same venue), a spread of lunchtime gigs, after-hours sessions and a jazz film festival. Capacity houses were the rule at the five main halls, which should put the idea of "minority music" in perspective.

The festival's subtitle denotes the emphasis on voice, a discipline served by Jon Hendricks, David Blamires Group, Andy Bey, **Holly Cole** Trio, **Ranee Lee**, and the vocal duos of **Karen Young-Michel Donato** and Ken Silden-Amy Elizah. Instrumentally, we had Jon Faddis, Bobby Hutcherson and David "Fathead" Newman as fellow headliners, and a mobile squad of this city's own players in a much more than supporting role. Faced with such a panoply, even Premier Gary Filmon took time off from the summer's first crisis to take in a night, though hopes of our man taking the stage for a chorus of Meech Lake Blues were for nought.

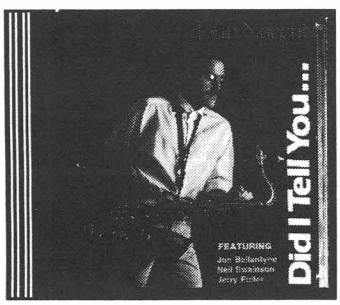
Winnipeggers had a different adventure earlier in the year through Jazz Quebec, a three-night event held at the West End Cultural Centre. Unlike Word of Mouth, this was a bonanza for the left fielders. It could be argued, indeed, that **Tuyo**'s cracklingly theatrical scores for home-made, Harry Partch-like percussives, and **Wondeur Brass**'s abrasive and almost scandalously humourous altered rock had little to do with jazz as we know it, but it would be a dull argument. Between them, **Les Granules** used jazz as just one component of their mixmaster approach to improvisation. **René Lussier** (guitar, etc.) and **Jean Derome** (alto, flute, synthesizer, etc.) appear to have taken to heart Lol Coxhill's maxim that free music means the freedom to play every kind of music. In this instance, that meant C&W, bird calls, old records and more adjectives than space allows.

An interesting example of improvisation in a larger group came six months later at the same venue, when veteran vocal high-diver **Paul Dutton** led a floating band of up to 11 students through two sets of spontaneity and discovery. Not all of it worked (nor should it, one supposes) but as a taster for the local Artists-Run Audio Distribution it was tantalizing.

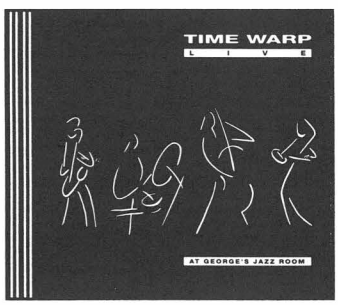
Winnipeg's branch of the Yuk Yuk's Komedy Kabaret chain introduced a five-week Wednesday stint by the **Kerry Kluner Jazz Lab Big Band** with a concert featuring **Bill Watrous** with a mellow 'bone. It was a steamer, with the critic's already-dropping jaw brushing the carpet during Seven Comes Eleven. Watrous's arrangement of the Charlie Christian tune opened with a stunning a capella feat that showed Albert Mangelsdorff isn't the only one who can play chords on the big horn.

This isn't to say that every local jazz flame this year had to be sparked by a visitor's touch. The Winnipeg Art Gallery's annual summer Jazz on the Rooftop series was a fine advertisement for some of our own riches, notably **Papa Mambo** and his **Gringos**, a band that plays Latinized jazz for the dancers and listeners alike, and the young tenorist/composer **Bill Prouten**, who has lungs and ideas at his bidding. - *Randal McIlroy*

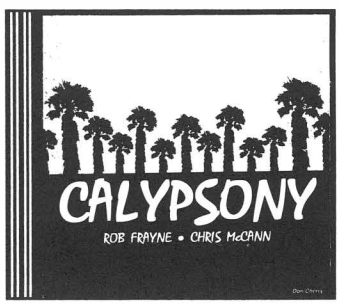
UNCOMPROMISED CONTEMPORARY JAZZ



DID I TELL YOU...
John Nugent
UTY 119

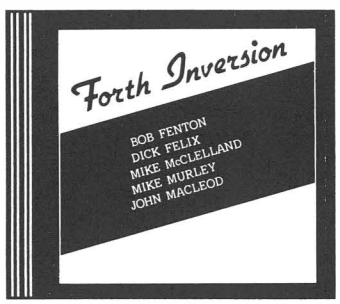


TIME WARP LIVE
Time Warp
UTY 118

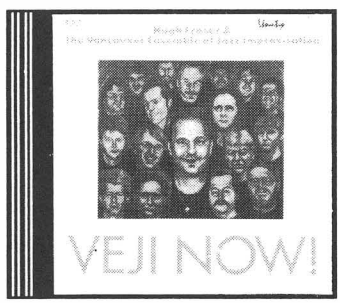


CALYPSONY
Rob Frayne & Chris McCann
UTY 117

TWO SIDES
Mike Murley
UTY 116



FORTH INVERSION
Forth Inversion
UTY 115



VEJI NOW!
Hugh Fraser & VEJI
UTY 114

ALSO AVAILABLE:

UTY 113 *THE RELEASE* — Roy Patterson
UTY 112 *FUN AND GAMES* — Bernie Senensky
UTY 111 *TRINITY* — Jeff Johnston
UTY 110 *DEPTH OF FIELD* — Robin Shier
UTY 109 *BOTH FEET* — Alex Dean
UTY 108 *SOLO PIANO* — George McFetridge
UTY 107 *THE BLESSING* — Michael Stuart
UTY 106 *2ND FLOOR PLEASE* — Barry Romberg Group
UTY 105 *HANDS ON* — Vikrama
UTY 104 *FRIDAY THE 14TH* — Bernie Senensky
UTY 103 *OCTOBER 13TH* — Brian Dickinson
UTY 102 *THE CURSE* — Mike Murley
UTY 101 *RUIN* — John MacLeod

Unity

20 OZARK CRES., TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA M4K 1T5
(416) 461-3879

LOOKING BACK ON IMPULSE!

John Coltrane, *Om*, MCA
Archie Shepp, *Fire Music*, MCA 39121
Charlie Haden, *Liberation Music Orchestra*, MCA 39125
Charles Mingus, *Mingus Mingus Mingus Mingus Mingus*, MCA 39119
Sam Rivers, *Streams*, MCA 39120
Pharaoh Sanders, *Karma*, MCA 39122
Gato Barbieri, *Chapter One: Latin America*, MCA 39124
Albert Ayler, *Greenwich Village*, MCA 39123

The exclamation mark was important, and appropriate. It was Impulse!--the name and the punctuation conjuring up all the innovation and possibilities of American jazz in the sixties. The music released during Impulse!'s heyday fulfilled that promise and justified the label's slogan: The New Wave of Jazz. Together with a handful of other US labels, notably Blue Note, Impulse! managed to channel the ambitious and at times anarchic creative energy of the period's greatest innovators into albums that worked.

That was no small challenge, given music whose sprawling scope eluded compression into vinyl grooves. But Impulse!'s greatest triumph may have been its own very survival. Launched by ABC Records in 1960, it endured in its first incarnation - it was revived in the 1980s - for fifteen years. That's some feat in the world of jazz labels created by major record companies. Subsidiaries from A&M Horizon to Arista-Novus to CBS Portrait have been launched in a fanfare of proclaimed enthusiasm for "America's greatest musical form." The gung-ho attitude usually lasts until the first few quarterly statements are in and the parent company discovers the modest returns that accrue to even relatively successful jazz labels. Lacking the labour of love commitment that keeps independents at it despite tenuous financial rewards, the major closes its jazz division with sighs, regrets and some haste.

Impulse! not only bucked that tide, they bucked it during a period when jazz was even less saleable than usual to a mass market. Now undanceable and no longer the teenager's music of choice, it was swept into the avant-garde current of the early sixties and was further fired by the anger of the civil rights and black activist movements. It all made for an exceedingly vital period for jazz as an art form, and a depressingly lean one for jazz as a business.

Still, Impulse!'s attempt to make non-commercial music economically viable, was aided considerably by the presence of **John Coltrane**, who provided the label with both a creative linchpin and a commercial raison d'être. Coltrane brought his reflective modalism to the fledging label and stuck with Impulse!, as they did with him, throughout his evolution toward increasing musical freedom. ***Om*** comes from that astonishingly prolific year of 1965, when Coltrane recorded nine albums on Impulse!, from ***The John Coltrane Quartet Plays*** in February to ***Meditations*** in November.

Coltrane recorded almost continuously, leading to objections from some Impulse! executives that far more material was accumulating than could be released immediately. Absent from the complainers, though, was producer Bob Thiele, Impulse!'s house producer almost from the start (Creed Taylor produced the first six label sessions). Thiele encouraged Coltrane's productivity by allowing him to record whenever he wished, leading to frequent all-night sessions after club dates.

Coltrane's flight into freedom had, of course, sparked a backlash from some critics and longtime listeners. ***Om***, among his freest excursions, was recorded less than two months after ***Downbeat*** had called Coltrane's "tuneless, 45-minute set" at the magazine's Chicago jazz festival "a bomb with most of ... the attendees." Nat Hentoff's liner notes are a defensive attempt to lure back those who'd left the 'Trane:

"Let the music come in with no pre-set definitions ... emotions are the way into this music rather than intellectual diagrams or quick categorical guidelines by which you have evaluated jazz of the past."

A quarter century later, ***Om*** still sounds a remarkably coherent work: no mean feat, given the augmentation of the Coltrane /

Tyner / Garrison / Jones quartet with a second bassist, Donald Garrett, and by flutist Joe Brazil and tenorist Pharoah Sanders. Its 28 minutes of music are bracketed by Coltrane reading selected verses from the Bhagavad Vita, the Hindu work Coltrane was then immersed in. But Hindu and Sufi thought may not have been the only catalyst for ***Om***'s mysticism; JC Thomas asserts in ***Chasin' The Trane*** that it may be Coltrane's "acid-trip album," Coltrane and Garrett having taken LSD during work on the project.

The special relationship between Coltrane and Thiele extended to the artist informally, and forcefully, assisting the producer in his efforts as A&R Director for Impulse!. In a 1968 ***Coda*** interview, Thiele estimated that Coltrane suggested four hundred musicians to Thiele as worthy of recording.

Indeed, most of the enduring figures who came to Impulse! in the sixties were there at least in part on Coltrane's recommendation. Always supportive and admiring of **Albert Ayler**, Coltrane was in the audience for the 1966 Village Vanguard recording that yielded one side of ***Albert Ayler in Greenwich Village***, Ayler's last Impulse! album before descending into the depressing R&B-jazz fusion styles that marked his final years. *Truth Is Marching In* is vintage '60s gutbucket playing, with a jubilant theme reminiscent of New Orleans marching bands that resurfaces between furious group improvisations. The mood is continued into *Our Prayer*, written by Ayler's trumpeter brother Donald.

The other side, recorded four months later, has a more European flavour, with Ayler switching to alto from tenor, Donald Ayler absent and violinist Michel Sampson and second bassist Henry Grimes replaced by cellist Joel Friedman and bassist Alan Silva. *For John Coltrane*, recorded a few months before Coltrane's death, has the string players swooping around Ayler's meditative and tonally restrained alto lines.

Some revisionist thinking has it that this period found **Pharoah Sanders** doing nothing more than trying to "out-Ayler Albert Ayler," as Clive Davis put it earlier this year in the ***Times of London***. Yet that sells short the appeal of Sanders' melodic modalism. The two-part *The Creator Has A Master Plan*, which all but fills ***Karma***, is classic late-sixties Sanders; a rolling modal vehicle heavy on African percussion that provides a showcase for Sanders' searing yet melodic tenor playing and the gurgling scat singing of Leon Thomas. ***Karma*** (produced by Thiele under the auspices of Flying Dutchman Productions, his own company formed after leaving Impulse!) was both less groundbreaking and more accessible than much of the Impulse! catalogue of the time.

ALBERT AYLER (Photograph by Ton van Wageningen)

Our backward glances of Impulse! are of music poised on the cutting edge, rejecting tradition or at least turning it on its head. Several albums in this selection are reminders that the '60s innovators were as apt to pay homage to jazz's founding fathers as are today's young turks. When **Charles Mingus** signed on with Impulse! in 1963 for a brief, stormy stay, his Ellington idolatry was at its peak. Culled in part from the same sessions that produced *The Black Saint and the Sinner Lady*, ***Mingus, Mingus, Mingus*** is one of the bassist's most overt homages to the Duke. A tender *Mood Indigo* is marked by gorgeously evocative bass playing that demonstrates Mingus' ability to combine rhythmic propulsion with unerring melodic sense. Richly orchestrated Mingus originals, including *Celia*, are also deeply imbued with the Ellington influence. As well, there is subdued homage in *Theme For Lester Young (Goodbye Pork Pie Hat)*, heard here for the first time. Only rousers like *11BS* and *Better Git Hit In Yo' Soul* harken back to the rollicking semi-anarchy of the Mingus Jazz Workshops of the '50s.

Even **Archie Shepp** belies the incendiary title of ***Fire Music*** for a gentle reading of *Prelude to a Kiss*, evoking lyrical richness from a front line that includes Ted Curson and Marion Brown. Shepp's reading of *The Girl From Ipanema* is less respectful; Shepp adds a tag to the familiar melody that allows him to explore its minor 7th character in ways Jobim never would. More characteristic yet of Shepp is *Malcolm, Malcolm, Semper Malcolm*, a reflection on the death of Malcolm X that begins with a brooding recitation and ends with mournful cries from Shepp's tenor with atmospheric backing from David Izenzon's bass and the ricocheting tom-tom bursts of drummer J.C. Moses.

Shepp's stay at Impulse! was short, too, his departure hastened by Thiele's eventual refusal to work with the tempestuous tenorist. Valerie Wilmer writes that Thiele also locked horns with **Charlie Haden** over the recording of ***The Liberation Music Orchestra***. When released in 1970, the recording's only production credit was for Haden himself. Yet the album avoids the pitfalls of self-production. A classic melange of jazz, Spanish folk song and passionate political belief, the LMO's debut possesses not a whit of self-indulgence. Haden's idea of paying tribute to the music and commitment

of the Spanish Civil War rebels was a decision from the heart, a product of his deep-rooted liberalism. The readings of the Civil War anthems, arranged by Carla Bley, remain fresh and moving. Even *Circus '68 '69*, inspired by the melee on the floor of the 1968 Democratic Convention, has gathered little moss over the years. Haden and Bley split the ensemble into two to emulate the cacophony that ensued when the convention band played *Happy Days are Here Again* in an attempt to drown out the singing of protesters. The album ends with a moving version of *We Shall Overcome*, the song the miscreants sang that summer afternoon.

With its blend of latin and North American influences, the Liberation Music Orchestra's debut was a well-timed project for its tenor soloist, **Gato Barbieri**. The Argentinean had spent the 60s immersed in new music and was just entering a period of reaching back to his South American roots. The search peaked with a series of four latin-jazz efforts on Impulse!, of which ***Chapter One: Latin America*** was the first and perhaps most successful. This is fusion as tasteful and adept as that of the LMO. Barbieri's latin blood makes seamless the grafting of his gravelly, lyrical tenor improvisations onto musical beds of spirited accompaniment from such exotica as charango (a small, 10-string guitar), bandoneon (the button accordion mastered by Astor Piazzola) and indian flutes and harp. Barbieri's original compositions strike a masterful balance between the harmonic and rhythmic requirements of jazz and the melting pot of Argentinean and Brazilian musics his sidemen brought to the session. If such deft cross-culturalism seems old hat in the context of today's World Music explosion, it was anything but when ***Chapter One*** was created in 1973.

Presiding over production of the album, recorded in Buenos Aires and Rio De Janeiro, was Ed Michel, who had moved from engineering to production following Thiele's departure from Impulse! by the early 70s. The album shows Michel as comfortable with riding jazz's "New Wave" as was Thiele. **Sam River's *Streams*** is an example of how the label's values didn't soften as it entered the 70s (the decade, lest we forget, that was soon to yield much inexecrable fusion-jazz).

Streams was the first recording to capture in its entirety the unbroken and eddying experience of a Sam Rivers live performance (and there have been few if any other such recordings since, come to think of it). For all their adventurousness, Rivers' sets of this period possessed a variety and an internal logic that made them uncommonly approachable. Recorded at Montreux with bassist Cecil McBee and drummer Norman Connors, ***Streams*** begins its 50-odd minutes of uninterrupted improvisation with a barrage of tenor playing that soon turns more reflective and quizzical. Rivers gets off some wonderfully fluid boppy lines before turning to flute. Few flautists can match Rivers, particularly as a free improviser, and "the flute section" of ***Streams*** incorporates every tonal colour in the instrument's palette.

Flute runs interspersed with Rivers' wordless vocalizing are the bridges to a flowing piano section that precedes Rivers' final display of multi-instrumental mastery, a perfectly controlled soprano exploration that closes the set.

Deleted soon after its initial release and represented only by excerpts on compilation records, the re-issued ***Streams*** demonstrates the value of ambitious re-release programs. While Michel's state-of-the-art sound (in "stereo / quadraphonic," remember that!) on the album probably required little cleaning up, other Impulse! re-releases have undoubtedly benefitted considerably from Greg Fulginiti's digital remastering of the original masters (most of which, it should be said, were exceptionally good recordings for their time).

Those responsible for the packaging of this ongoing series might take a tip from Fulginiti's success in modernizing past work without altering its essential character. The use of the original cover art and fine liner notes is probably nostalgic to some, and is undoubtedly cost-effective for MCA, but it might have been valuable to replace or at least accompany the hip 60s prose with contemporary appraisals of the recordings. What, I wonder, does Nat Hentoff, who wrote almost all of the notes for Impulse! during these halcyon days, think now of the music he helped to describe to an expectant and often quizzical jazz public? The fact that these recordings remain, a generation or so later, in demand makes the question all the more fascinating.

CODA DEADLINES

FEBRUARY / MARCH
Issue 236
Deadline - December 14

APRIL / MAY
Issue 237
Deadline - February 16

JUNE / JULY
Issue 238
Deadline - April 13

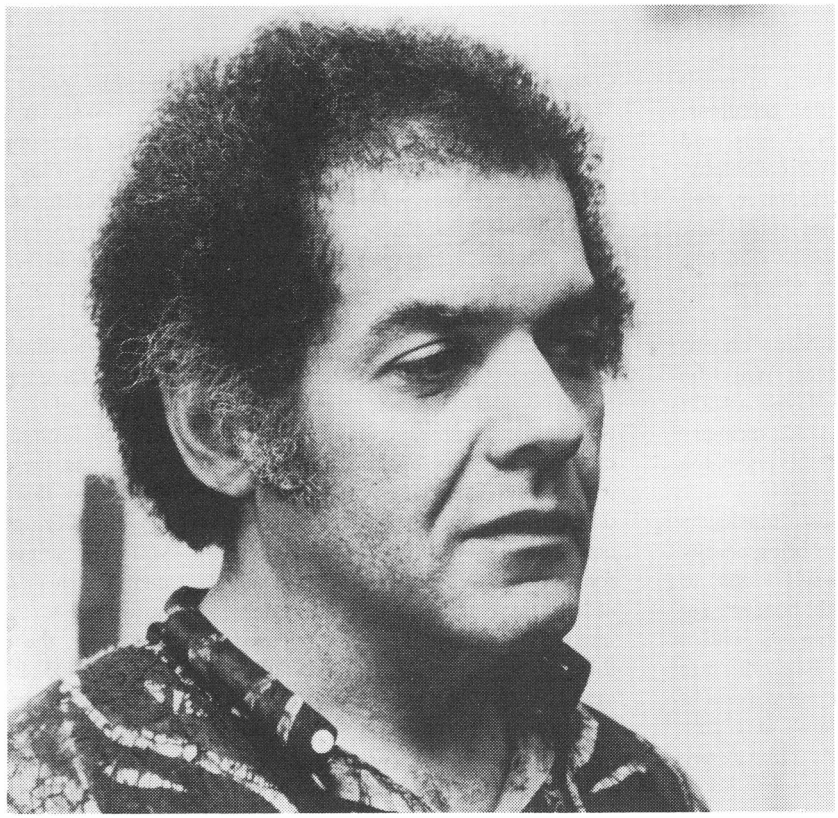
AUGUST / SEPTEMBER
Issue 239
Deadline - June 15

OCTOBER / NOVEMBER
Issue 240
Deadline - August 17

DECEMBER / JANUARY
Issue 241
Deadline - October 12
Also for the Coda Writers Choice

These deadlines are for writers and advertising copy.

GEORGE RUSSELL



Philadelphia - Hours before the concert here is to begin, and at least 45 minutes before the sound check is to start, a few members of George Russell's Living Time Orchestra are moving about the stage at the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg Theatre, preparing for the performance. For this performance, there will be much to set up and much to check. A drum machine stands next to Russell's conductor's stand. Two keyboards, one a traditional organ and the other a band of modern synthesizers, are set up on opposite sides of the stage. An extensive array of percussion instruments (including automobile wheel rims, a marimba and exotic sets of suspended bells and cymbals) dominate one corner, while a more traditional drum kit is at roughly centre stage. A set of risers where the horn and reed players will stand forms a gradual semi-circle in background. It's clear, even this early on, that this is not your usual big band, or rather, in the usual sense big bands have come to be thought of.

In this early bustle of musicians and stage hands, George Russell's entrance to the stage is all but unnoticed. He exchanges some greetings with the members of his 14-piece unit who will play on this night, including percussionist Pat Hollenbeck, drummer Steve Johns and electric bassist Bill Urmson, who are among several musicians on stage. After some conversation, Russell walked to the spot on the stage where he will conduct this evening's concert. As he did, Hollenbeck, Urmson and Johns began working on a passage from Russell's extended work, *The African Game*. The passage is from *Event VIII, The Mega-Minimalist Age*, and it involves some degree of interplay between Hollenbeck's marimba, Johns' drums and Urmson's bass. They began to play the short passage once, then again, as they discussed which notes to emphasize in the passage, and the passage's overall timing. As they talked, Russell leaned against a nearby grand piano and observed the exchange, clearly enjoying the debate, but clearly not wanting to become involved in it. When the three reached a consensus as to where the emphasis should go, Russell neither agreed nor disagreed. It was a small but remarkable exchange made remarkably by the quiet presence of Russell, who clearly wanted the musicians to work the passage out for themselves, in line with their own particular interpretations of the piece.

The exchange, or rather, the non-exchange between Russell and the musicians illustrated Russell's approach as a composer and leader of The Living Time Orchestra, considered one of the premiere big bands working today. Where other big bands rely on the presence of a big name soloist, or the consistent presentation of a well-thumbed repertoire for their image, Russell remains steadfast to his overriding philosophical consideration: ***The Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organization for Improvisation***, which was first published in 1953, although the basic tenets were surely in place at least five years earlier, when Russell composed Cubana Be / Cubana Bop for Dizzy Gillespie, one of the first pieces that combined jazz and Latin rhythms. When Russell won the MacArthur Foundation's Fellowship last year, the foundation called the Lydian Concept one of the first major theoretical contributions by a jazz musician. "The concept," as Russell refers to it in conversation, is as much an intuitive process as a system of organizing music. At the risk of oversimplifying the theory, the concept is based on the cycle of fifths. In Lydian terms, the notes in the key of C would be C,G,D,A,E,B, and F Sharp. In ways, Russell's approach is a modal approach to composition and improvisation, rather than an approach based primarily on traditional chord changes. Miles Davis is credited with using the modal approach first, but it was Russell who took the idea and applied it systematically. Russell likes to credit Davis with planting the seed in his head to begin to investigate the concept. Once, Davis reportedly said to Russell that he wanted to learn all the changes. With that thought, Russell set about to indeed learn all the changes. Presently, Russell is at work on a book, ***The Science of Tonal Gravity***, which carries the Lydian concept to its logical conclusions.

Russell, now 66, began his career as a drummer. By 1945, he was working in Benny Carter's band when he suffered a bout with tuberculosis, forcing Russell to turn down, among other opportunities, a chance to play with Charlie Parker. While recovering in a Bronx, NY hospital, Russell began working on his Lydian concept. Once he recovered, he switched to piano, which became his primary instrument. He

continued to write and perform in small groupings, which Russell called smalltets, until the middle 1960s. His sextets and workshop recordings included Eric Dolphy, Art Farmer, Bill Evans, Milt Hinton as well as (at the time) lesser known musicians, such as Steve Swallow, the bassist who was first recorded on Russell's Ezz-thetics album for Riverside in 1962.

Eventually, Russell moved on to concentrate on larger ensembles. While he plays piano on occasion (he played a short section for the concert here), his primary instrument these days is The Living Time Orchestra.

Russell still prefers to use musicians who are not stars, but who can bring energy and electricity, favourite Russell terms, to his music. For the Philadelphia concert, for example, Russell employed players with a range of stylistic foundations. Few other big bands would have had as different players as the fiery altoist, Dave Mann, and first trumpeter Mike Piepman, with his sweet, full sound. Mann and Piepman are Jekyll and Hyde as far as their sounds and approach, but they coexisted well under Russell's leadership.

The following is taken from a conversation with George Russell done before the Philadelphia appearance of The Living Time Orchestra.

Coda: You've been working recently with larger groups, mostly The Living Time Orchestra, rather than the smaller, workshop groups.

Russell: Well, smaller groups? I haven't used a smaller group since '65. [Laughs.] That's a little more than a few years. My priority is not in working every night, being on the road. My priority is presenting the most energetic, innovative level of music that I can possibly conjure up, and presenting it in a form that suits my particular philosophy at the moment, and actually, my life-long philosophy, which is the Lydian Chromatic Concept. So, the big band is the best format. My decisions are based on the music, not economics.

What's the origin of the name, Living Time Orchestra?

Bill [Evans] commissioned me in 1972 to do a work that he proposed to record, and which he did record for Columbia Records. The work was "Living Time" and I found that a suitable name for an orchestra.

Your last two U.S. releases were on Blue Note Records and they were live recordings. I know you've done other live recordings, but the question arises as to whether you think live recordings are the best way to present your music on record?

Not at all. It is just it is a living time, and the records are music-business controlled and that means the element of finance, the element of backing, all the business elements emerge and have to be considered. I don't think there is any record company that is willing to foot the bill for a studio recording for a big band, at least my band. I've been extremely lucky. My latest album [to be released this fall on Label Bleu] is studio-quality, but it was recorded at [London's] Ronnie Scott's.

Was that *So What*?

[Small laugh] No, it is a double compact disc, ***The London Concert, Volumes I and II.***

The reason I suggested *So What* is that I was surprised to discover it was a live album. The sound is fantastic.

That's because I've been lucky enough to find good engineers. The American engineer John Nagy. He's a virtuoso.

Has your application of The Lydian Concept changed over the years?

That has not changed at all. In other words, I still regard The Lydian Concept as my law and the law for my musical thinking. I'm still law-abiding, even more so.

From a layperson's point of view, I sense the Lydian concept is a perfect marriage between composition and improvisation. I'd like to hear your response to that.

I hate music that sounds like it is really written, even when I know it is written, that I know the composer has written every note. I like it to sound that the performers are more than robots.

In your book on the Lydian Chromatic System, you mentioned an analogy about the Mississippi River as a tune and Coleman Hawkins, John Coltrane, Ornette Coleman navigating the river in different ways. How did this analogy come about?

Well, it was an intuitive feeling that they intuitively sensed gravity at work. They were indeed almost like physicists and sensed the pull of gravity of either a chord or that tonal centre in which several chords might resolve, or the gravity of the overall event or trip or composition, and [they] adjusted to that gravity.

You have explained elsewhere your ideas on vertical form, tracing it back to the African drummer, who establishes a tonic centre and the other drummers layer above and below that tonic centre. At the risk of oversimplifying a bunch of things, why do you think so many early jazz players, and so many African-American jazz players, used horizontal forms, rather than vertical forms?

For the same reason they were subjected to slavery, I think. The drums were forbidden in the slave communities. The Westerners weren't so abtuse that they, probably intuitively, too, saw that the drums were a method of speaking and communicating.

You have mentioned before that you like younger players interpreting your work. Is that how you explain the differences between the 1961 recording of ***Ezz-thetic*** on Riverside and the 1982 recording of the same composition on Soul Note?

The various generations coming along. If the energy is there in the first place, the energy reacts with them and their own particular generational conditioning and struggles and postures that they bring and with that energy, [and the] bring something new to it.

I'd like to follow up that question and draw on your experience as a teacher. You've said elsewhere that your students are more conservative than they were in your days as a younger player. Does that necessarily mean the new students are less open to new ideas, including the ideas found in your Lydian Chromatic Concept?

Well, there are some [students] who are open and some who are not. It has to do with the general perception of the marketplace and the restrictions imposed by the marketplace. I think the marketplace is far more conservative today than it ever has

been. Conservative is a very nice word for what is actually happening. I'd say complete, absolute control of the aesthetic is a better way to put it. So, nothing can grow. I think it is an interaction with that condition, or reaction to that condition.

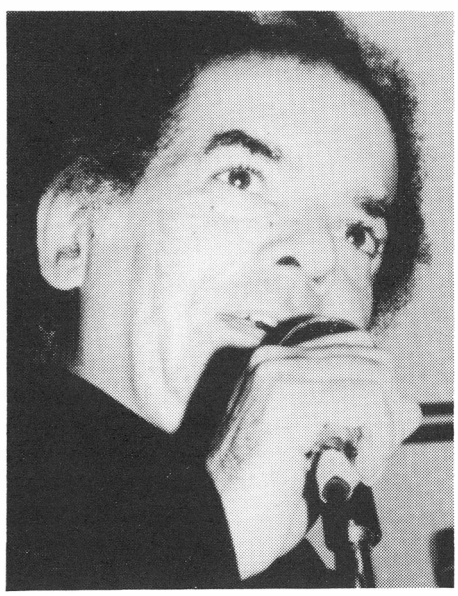
I think there is a general unkind attitude about innovation, particularly in this country (America). I mean real innovation, not gimmicky innovation.

It wasn't my aim to become really well-known. [Laughs.] Had it happened, it would have simply been as a coincidence of what I was truly striving for. What I was truly striving for, well, was to leave something that might be beneficial to humanity, something that although it was, I'm sure, already in existence, and already created, it needed someone to persist at it, to uncover it and reveal it. I think we live in an already created universe, so I don't think there is anything new. But, it takes people who have a determination and a dedication to give us knowledge that we're not aware of. That is my aim. I must say that in certain parts of the world, the parts of the world where I'm most active in terms of performing, and that is in Europe, I'm known in Europe.

You've said previously that The Lydian Concept is more an intuitive one.

I don't think theoreticians bring emotional faculties into their theories. I think that has resulted in some incredible, intellectual monstrosities. Music, a music theory, should in no way not include emotion as well as the intellect, as well as the spirit. Intuition, I regard as an intelligence that includes all of these aspects: the mind, the left brain, the emotions, the right brain, the heart and the sum total of the intelligence of the human being. To me, that is intuition. That's all the human being ever thought, felt, experienced and transcended. But, I have to say I think that word is sadly misunderstood [here in the United States] because of what it means here. It is largely because of those singularly minded intellectuals [that] intuition is regarded as some inferior kind of intelligence. It is regarded as next to ignorance, when actually the opposite is true.

It is all part of the Western psyche, the kind of horizontal, Western male psyche. It is a kind of deadly ethnocentrism. Only white men can think. Eldridge Cleaver touched on it in his book, ***Soul On Ice***, where the white men were the brains and all the others were the brawn. [The Lydian] concept, I'm really proud to say, comes from intuition. That doesn't mean it is mindless.



You recently wrote a piece for Relâche, the Philadelphia contemporary music ensemble. Did you take a different approach?

Their instrumentation imposed a limitation, but within that limitation, I just wrote a piece. I didn't write a piece that was tailored for a modern chamber group. I just wrote music.

One of the impressions I got from listening to *So What* is that it has a very modern sound. Several cuts on the album have a distinctive rock beat. I'm curious if you were consciously trying to update big band sound without watering it down?

I would never water-down anything. And, I've never not had a bass line, for as long as I can remember. I've always had bass lines in my music. *Stratusphunk* is a bass line. *All About Rosie* had a bass line. Back in 1957, a lot of the pieces on the [RCA] Victor workshop album had the bass doing something besides thump thump thumping all the way through. But, I have written pieces, like *Ezz-thetic*, when the bass is to be just a metronomic, time-type instrument. But I've always had bass players who could play that way and make the bass line come alive. One can't ignore the rhythm of one's time and rock, to the extent that it co-opted and drew from black influences and black church music and black field hollers, set the rhythm of our day and time. I enjoy writing that. I'm dedicated to writing parts for bass players, to give them a very fundamentally innovative way in the music.

Have you had a chance to listen to the Charles Mingus piece, *Epitaph*. The mainstream press is saying this is an example of extended form that actually works, as opposed to the alleged failures of extended form in jazz.

Well, Ellington has done a number of extended works. I've only done extended works since 1957. Again, it is a very peculiar way of looking at things. It goes back to the reluctance to admit that black minds can conceptualize. The seat of conceptualization is not in the intellectual brain. It is not there at all. The intellectual brain only weighs and compares. You don't get the Lydian Chromatic Concept with only the intellectual brain. In order to conceptualize, you need something more than the brain that weighs and compares. You need a mind that can summarize the whole being. crystalize it into an intent and an aim, and a vertical aim. The intellectual mind hasn't the faintest idea what the vertical mind is up to. It is an idiot way of seeing life and it is time for it to stop. It really is. If there is one thing I hope is that the Lydian Chromatic Concept will be a monument built on the death of this really very narrow way of perceiving life, people and reality.

Photograph by Jerry Moresi

Festival Internationale de Musique Actuelle de Victoriaville
October 4-8 1990

This writer's first trip to Vic'ville, the festival trail's Oz and Twin Peaks (the hectic no sleep/grab-food-fast schedule ensures a coffee and donuts diet) confirmed FIMAV is all it's cracked up to be, not least because the term **musique actuelle** is a sieve: the music booked was too broad to fit even any category, catch-alls like "new music" or its French equivalent included. A Jazz Association of Montreal critics' conference in Old Montreal the day after left us scribes at a loss for a definition of the term and spectators wondering why we strove for one. Answer: because we were asked.

Some of what FIMAV offered was jazz, some of it was European-tradition notated music, some of it was non-idiomatic free improvisation, some of it was ethnic music (or an ersatz version, in the case of Germany's third-world instrument-dabbler **Stephan Micus**). Very little of it was awful, the major exception being Robert Fripp's fascistic League of Crafty Guitarists, a small army of plectrists forbidden to show any enthusiasm or individuality in their deportment, playing music that suppressed same. They got the biggest crowd of any show and kept the fest out of the red. (Combined attendance at two dozen concerts was about 4500; Fripp drew 750.)

Electronic samplers and French narratives were big this year. (France's **Jean-Jacques Birge, Bernard Vitet** and **François Gorge** backing **Daniel Laloux's** dramatic readings of fables by Dino Buzzati, like radio dramas in which the sound effects and musical stings run away with the show; Quebec's poet/singer/performance artist **Genevieve Letarte** avec syndrummer; performance troupe Bruit TTV.) Water and calliope won the most-sampled-sounds sweepstakes.

The best sampler sets were the ones where equipment crashed, forcing the players to wing it, which would have been a daunting prospect to at least a couple of the acts just listed. New York's **Shelley Hirsch** and **David Weinstein** (she easily the most versatile, quick-thinking and amusing singer in the new music, he one of the Apple's smartest sample hounds) were knee-deep into their well-plotted set when David's microchippery overheated, leaving Shelley to improvise, all to the good after three sample sets more impressive logistically than musically. Hirsch wove through her sung laments about their on-stage crisis fragments of *Don't Explain* (getting Billiesh [Abbeyish?] on the bridge), Patsy Cline's *Crazy* and the Buffalo Springfield's *For What It's Worth* ["Something's happening here/What it is ain't exactly clear/There's a man with a gun over there/And he wants to give me a popsicle"). It was a cautionary set, an essay on the danger of staking all on high tech, but Hirsch's tour de force turned it into a triumph.

Commiserating with Weinstein in a short chat the next day, I presumed to suggest that to ward off future disasters he keep some bargain basement sampler in reserve (Casio SK-1s were selling for $29 in New York recently). Ironically, **Lol Coxhill's** trustly SK-1 failed to connect with the house PA during the Recedents' set (with Lol's fellow high-foreheads **Roger Turner**, percussion, and **Mike Cooper**, slide and tabletop guitars, more cheap electronics). Like Hirsch, Coxhill made malfunction part of the act, loudly packing up his low-tech gear in a briefcase before taking up his curved soprano in earnest. For 20 years Coxhill has been one of the world's great (if largely unacknowledged) soprano stylists and one of the most lyrical of free players, with the slipperiest glisses this side of Johnny Hodges. (Playing one soulful tune, he sounded like a miniaturized Hank Crawford.) But his soprano is only one element in a mix that takes in happy noisemaking, Turner's rattling metal, Cooper's Hawaiian, Delta-blues and karate-chop guitar moves, and Lol's surreal vaudeville verbals. (He incorporated a fractured, one-man version of the '30s radio play *Murder in the Air* into the set, and squeezed *The Christmas Song*, sung in his dour sleepy high baritone, and a soprano *Do You Know What It Means To Miss New Orleans* into **that**.) No set at FIMAV was

LEROY JENKINS

quite as anarchic or funny or risky; none was more completely spontaneous, and therefore **new**. It was my sentimental favourite.

Walking around a small theatre, trombonist **George Lewis** improvised stuff that, via radio, interacted with projected video mixed live by **Don Ritter**, who hails from Alberta but lives in Montreal. His images suggested a cross between Stan Brakhage's densely woven avant-garde films and Terry Gilliam's whimsical collage-cartoons for **Monty Python**. It was fun if ultimately redundant.

In the best of the high-tech sets, **Jon Rose** spent at least as much time playing keyboard as violin with the quartet Slawterhaus (**Johannes Bauer** on trombone, **Dietmar Diesner** on soprano and treated alto saxes and **Peter Hollinger** on drums). The Recedents apply noise elements in pointillistic drips; Rose smears them on in thick layers. By rejecting bland pre-set synth sounds in search of weirder waveforms, Rose made his electronics breathe and kept the music hopping. More than any other set, this one demonstrated the futility of trying to draw distinctions between "free jazz" and "improvised music," as if anything was to be gained by separating them, as if rejecting the swing and blues feeling that inform all jazz could be perceived as an advantage. This set didn't swing, but Hollinger frequently gave it a foot-tapping black-music backbeat. Further, the music had it all over the tired old No Wave, because the players listened closely to one another, like all good conscientious free players, instead of scratching out anarchi-noise like New York punks. (On the noise punk scene, SLAN [**John Zorn**, double-neck guitarist **Elliot Sharp** and Blind Idiot God's drummer **Ted Epstein**, sometimes plus vocalist **Yamatsuke Eye**] served up a hardcore noise barrage which under other circumstances might have seemed juvenile, but following Fripp was most welcome entertainment. Zorn was featured on alto, screaming vocals, saliva and vomit.)

Slawterhaus's was one of two festival sets tentatively scheduled for release on the fest's own Victo label; the other was by **Marilyn Crispell's** new quintet. Basically it's bassist **Reggie Workman's** quartet (with **Oliver Lake** and **Gerry Hemingway**) plus **Peter Buettner**. The blend between Buettner's tenor and Lake's alto was immediate and satisfying (their sounds have equal heft) but what was perhaps most remarkable about the band was its sonic resemblance to Cecil Taylor's 1969 quintet with Sam Rivers. As an ex-student of Taylor, Crispell usually does an admirable job of not aping his sound, while remaining influenced by his compositional methods. Here the resemblance was strong, but the music was so powerful you'd be a blockhead to mind.

Henry Threadgill was still fine tuning his new septet Very, Very Circus at the time of their appearance; I'd heard them in looser shape a week before in Philadelphia. In the intervening week, its two tubists (**Marcus Rojas, Edwin Rodriguez**) had synced up so the bottom end wasn't nearly so muddy, though the band's sound is decidedly dark. VVC also includes **Masujaa**, electric guitar, **Curtis Fowlkes**, trombone, and **Gene Lake**, drums. Its other first-call guitarist is Brandon Ross, who had another commitment' his sub was **Jerome Harris**, who gave the band a different (and to these ears, superior) character. Ross's approach is all about sustain; Harris, like Masujaa, is more concerned with the other end of a note, the attack. Together, the percussive Harris and Masujaa give the band an Afropop flavour: John Philip Sousa marching through juju land. Commentators have noted the relationship between Threadgill and Jelly Roll Morton before; this band's march rhythms, intricate structures and Caribbean tinges hammer the analogy home. In this context, Threadgill's piercing, staccato saxophone lines recalled Sousa's lead cornet virtuoso Herbert L. Clarke.

Alto and sopranoist **Trevor Watts' Moire Drum Orchestra** merges two groups: his own trio with drummer **Liam Genockey** and electric bassist **Colin Gibson**, and **Nana Tsiboe's** four-man Ghanian percussion and vocal choir (with **Jojo, Nana Appiah** and **Patate**). But the balance of power in this hugely entertaining (and danceable) set wasn't the usual exploitative / simplistic / lame white-star-plus-ethnics mix. Watts' trio was grafted onto the Africans' group, not the other way around; Gibson's deep riffs filled the log-drum function. (The band splits the profits evenly, by the way.) On soprano, Watts mostly stuck to Islamic modes; on alto, he still shows the imprint of Ornette's lines, but his sound has taken on a hearty, tenory body, letting him move out from under Coleman's shadow.

Less satisfying as a cross-cultural meeting was the duo of **Henry Kaiser** on electric guitar and **Jin Hi Kim** on Korean stringed instruments and hourglass drum, who played past rather than with each other, which is exactly what some people liked about it and exactly what left me cold. Its best moments came when Kaiser duetted with himself, playing MIDI-replica-piano lines and recognizably guitary stuff in unison, or in quick-moving call-and-response.

Henry's **garage band actuelle** quartet set didn't do it for me either, save for a version of the Grateful Dead's *Blues for Allah*, with Crispell guesting on piano, compromising her own concept not a bit, and doing a fine duet with drummer **Mark McQuade-Crawford**, and their encore cover of Capt. Beefheart's only guitar-hero number, *Alice in Blunderland*. The New York quintet Curlew's late night set showed off as usual Tom Cora's prodigious cello chops and **Davey Williams'** slide-and-whammy-bar spirals, but a longtime fan could spot two new trends. One is the growth of electric bassist **Ann Rupel**, who's progressed from rote funkster to a flexible full partner; the other is the simplification of their new material, which turns away from the corkscrew lyricism of their old stuff in favour of more streamlined bluesy tunes. Not that it was unsatisfying; Curlew could turn out to be the Booker T. and the MGs of the 90s.

While we're speaking of guitarists, Montreal's **Tim Brady** played the blandest set of the fest, a weak, rhythmically limp guitar-and-tape number followed by a Reich-derived minimal piece for his quintet Bradyworks, which sorely lacked Reich's own third-world-inspired percussive drive. For a midnight show, Toronto trombonist **Tom Walsh** brought in a septet with three guitarists (among them **Bern Nix**) that aimed for harmolodic freedom but was weighted down

by a posturing funk bassist. Dug Walsh's bigtoned Rod Levitt trombone though. I'm told they got into some Ellingtonian voicings after 1 a.m., but I'd split in need of sleep. Next year, perhaps, Vic'ville will be treated to Nix's own trio, which has been heard more often in Europe than in North America.

In duet at the big, beautiful Church of St. Victor, **Leroy Jenkins** and Oliver Lake spun out lines which danced around each other in acoustic and musical space. They took advantage of the warm but not overbearing cathedral echo in ways Fripp's clone regiment could not. They were obviously well-rehearsed and listening hard; Jenkins these days hews close to conventional notions of string technique, playing in tune by Euro-standards. (His one viola feature, which made one wish he'd play the larger axe more, sounded like a Bach arrangement of Red River Valley.) He sounded as good as I've ever heard him. Also at the church, the duo of **Paul Bley** and Montreal tenorist **Yannick Rieu** failed to get off the ground, though they'd played together before, mostly due to Rieu's neo-Klemmer long and even scalar lines.

The church was also a fitting venue for the astounding **Arditti Quartet**, whose tackling of fiendishly hard material (Ligeti, Duilleux etc.) makes Kronos's repertoire sound like Louis Louis by comparison. (Gerry Hemingway: "The Ligeti [Quartet #2] was swinging so hard I couldn't believe it.") FIMAV's other "classical" set was by the flute and piano duo of **Lise Daoust** and **Louise Bessette**. Most of their set was outside the scope of this magazine, but one should mention that Daoust played a flute and tape piece, Zone Grise, by guitarist **actuelle** René Lussier. It trotted out some conventional **musique concrete** juxtapositions, but also featured flute lines cannily doubling the contours of recorded speech, and a smart courtesy paid to the performer: flute lines on tape gave Daoust time to turn pages of the score without interrupting the music's flow.

Like all the best festivals, Victoriaville grinds the auditor down with a surfeit of pleasures, so you welcome the occasional dull set; it gives you a chance to pull back and absorb the good stuff. As a first-timer, I was struck by how hard the French-speaking locals try to understand the utterances of hapless monolingual Anglophones, and by how smoothly the shows at three locations scattered around town come off. The thuggish behaviour of a couple of security guards toward an accredited photographer at one show only highlighted how congenial the atmosphere usually is. (As one vet of three festivals observed, it was the first time he was aware the festival had security guards.) The grueling pace aside, FIMAV is decidedly listener friendly.

Still, paying customer Patrick O'Brien rightly lamented the lack of opportunities for players hanging around for a few days to jam informally. It'd be good to have some late-night open sessions scheduled, as they are by a couple of venues in Chicago during its Jazz Festival, perhaps with the participating musicians splitting a share of the door. If **musique actuelle** is (is it?) supposed to be new aesthetic with its own identity, then tossing a few of its farflung proponents together to hear what happens can only help it develop. - *Kevin Whitehead*

Chicago Jazz Festival
August 30-September 2, 1990

Commonly known as the "Windy City", Chicago is swept by more gusts than those that blow in from Lake Michigan. Every summer, for instance, a wave of outdoor musical happenings sweep through the City's core, be it world musics, blues and, to cap things off, jazz. This year marked the twelfth edition of the Chicago Jazz Festival, a four day event held around Grant Park, right in view of the lake. With much pride, the organizers state that theirs is the biggest **free** jazz (not to be confused here with **free jazz**) festival in the World; while many others can stake a similar claim (in fact some do present more free outdoor shows), the one in Chicago is unique because **all shows** are presented free of charge.

Spread over three days and four nights, the fest offers a wide span of jazz styles with an obvious preference given to acts with a greater potential mass appeal, though not completely excluding some more adventurous musical fare. Basically, all of the action is split between two stages, a smaller one for the afternoon shows at the end of the street adjoining the park, where the evening shows were presented on a much larger stage.

According to tradition, there is on the night before its opening, the habitual pub crawl whereby all fans can make the rounds of some of the many jazz clubs in town, catching a set before moving on to the next one via a handy shuttle service. A late arrival in town allowed this reviewer to catch part of a set only at the Bulls on the North side where trumpeter **Guy Fricano** lead a cooking hard bop sextet with some gutsy tenor

playing by **Ed Petersen**.

As the festival was only supposed to kick off at 6 pm, the following afternoon was devoted to a bit of sightseeing (and record shopping, of course). By the appointed time, though, people were filing in to catch the opening act. On the large stage of the Petrillo bandshell strode pianist and vocalist **Freddy Cole** bedecked in a white tuxedo. As the late Nat's brother, he paid tribute by singing many an. . . unforgettable tune. (There's one right there!) Musically, one could say that it was entertaining at best. After some honest mainstream outings by the Chicago Coalition of pianist **Marcin Januszkiewicz** and some typical latinisms by **Sunsounds** (a band whose name was certainly in keeping with the ideal weather that persisted from start to finish), it was then time for some "Good Time Music" courtesy of **Jimmie and Jeannie Cheatham**. Together with their jaunty septet, they kept up the happy spirits of the audiences with some rollicking jazzy-blues with a shade of R&B thrown in. Blues was not far away, either, when Funk-Meister **Miles Davis** rounded off the first evening. His own playing was most articulate, though his solos were rather concise timewise, but his sidemen dug in for longer outings, in particular electric bassist Foley and altoist Kenny Garrett who heated up the audience with overwraught soul licks.

Day two opened at noon on the street stage. My own home roots had the better of me as I just wanted to check out pianist **Oliver Jones**' performance (not by obligation mind you, rather by curiosity of seeing the audience's response). Marred by sound problems (and an electric bassist who seemed out of place), the performance was, well, sympathetically received. Nevertheless, a return invitation was seemingly extended for next year, at least for the main stage.

The first of the more interesting wrinkles in the program came about at the beginning of the second evening. While the crowd was entering the seating area, the cognoscenti, however, had already taken their places to hear **Paul Smoker's** trio play some of the more exploratory music heard there. Sharing the bill with his regular drummer **Phil Haynes** and a new bassman (**Drew Gress**), Smoker brought a wide array of sounds out of his horn, weaving in and out the spontaneous conversations of his partners. A music of much detail, it may not have been the best suited for an outdoor setting with an audience moving round and about. In marked stylistic contrast, the Champaign Connection with guest vocalist Rachael Lee blew a lot of swingingly effervescent bubbles with much pleasant froth on the top. With equally good-natured savvy, the **Big Band** of one time-trumpeter now full time composer-arranger **Buck Clayton** conjured up some shades of Basie, an easy crowd pleaser for sure. Yet another twist was offered this time by trombonist extraordinaire **Albert Mangelsdorff**, the first of two European bands scheduled for the fest. After an operation and lengthy stay in hospital earlier in the year, he appeared to be in pretty good shape, multiphonics and all. In fact, he even allowed himself a lengthy a capella intro to one piece, which was lavishly applauded, and rightly so. Behind him were his current accompanists, bassists Dieter Ilg and drummer Wolfgang Haffner, two young pros more proficient than distinctive in their work, as well as pianist **Wolfgang Dauner**, a long time sparring partner. Speaking of pianists, it was up to **McCoy Tyner** to ice the evening, this time at the helm of his 14 piece big band. As is the case of such well-staffed ensembles, solo room is restricted and spread out between the players, though trombonist **Frank Lacy**, tenor saxist **Ricky Ford** and **Howard Johnson** (who completed the sax section on tuba) made the most of their opportunities.

Like most well planned events, this festival kept the best in store for the last two days. By noon the next day, the heat was on, at least weatherwise, while the music was slowly brought to a boil by night fall. Opening things was the trio of veteran pianist Ed Petan with an unusual front line of two bass trumpets played by Ryan Shultz and that one-time sideman of Woody Herman's, the now almost forgotten Cy Touff. Somewhat frail looking, the latter played cautiously, stepping aside after his brief solos so that his front line partner and the pianist would pick up the largest share of the solo duties. Having missed the next set, Chicago's own One Family band with trombonist George Lewis as a last minute addition (darn!), I was back by the time **Bud Shank** was fronting a local rhythm section. While the guest was ready to hit his full stride, an unfortunate feedback on the bass amp forced a momentary stop in the show; once the bug was settled, the leader just took off from where he left off as though nothing happened, clearly a mark of a consummate pro.

From Japan to Chicago, such is the itinerary of guitarist Akio Sasajima, who opened the evening with a set of rather conventional originals, adding a light hint of fusion in his mix with an added keyboard player in his seven piece ensemble. Then came the trio of singer **Shirley Horn**, tickling some tasty ivories as well, who was joined by D.C.'s tenor legend, **Buck Hill**, whose presence added an extra lilt to the proceedings. As far as contrasts go, no more evident was that than in the following act featuring the Gambian-born Kora player Foday Musa Suso and his Mandigo Griot Society. Not only was the contrast a matter of styles but of volume too, as it juxtaposed African melodies to heavily amplified rock-like dynamics, as evidenced by its predominantly electrified instrumentation. Even those involved in the organization seemed bewildered by the sound level, saying that it was by far the loudest show ever presented there. Last, but certainly not least, was the eagerly awaited double bill, a tribute to the bassist Charles Mingus. Over the stage hung a large portrait of the master, whose presence was felt throughout these two major events. The first part brought the now well-known Mingus Dynasty front and centre. Of all concerts presented, this one was definitely of the "Lift the bandstand" variety. Within their 45 minute set, they really dug in, playing but three pieces, in which every one added his crafty statement, pianist **John Hicks** and the twin saxmen **John Handy** and **George Adams** stoking the flames and billowing a lot of smoke at the same time. These musicians as well as the remaining four (Jack Walrath, Sam Burtis, Rufus Reid and Victor Lewis) returned for the magnum opus ***Epitaph***.

Rediscovered and restored after years, this compositional monument of over two hours has been travelling in the States since its New York premiere in 1989. On stage, a 31-piece orchestra under the direction of **Gunther Schuller** performed an abridged version of the suite (11 rather than the 19 total parts). Overall, the work is reflective of its creator, both in its strokes of orchestral genius as in its unfocused passages, the latter more frequent in the first half (as contained on the first of the now released two CD set on CBS). Still, its scope is breathtaking and credit must also be given to its discoverer, **Andrew Homzy**, to have patiently and painstakingly restored this long forgotten score, which Mingus himself prophetically described as "something written for my tombstone."

Three down and one to go now, and for the closing afternoon three more shows rounded off that part of the schedule. Bop was the fare at both ends, first with Chicago's pianist Gene Esposito's band Gennaro winding up with the return of saxophonist Buck Hill grooving along with the trio of pianist Stu Katz. In between, though, was the appearance of **Hal Russell's NRG** ensemble, a group that is about as off-the-wall as one can ever get. Playing reeds, trumpet, vibes or drums according to his whims, the bespectacled 64-year-old leader shares the scene with four musicians, young enough to be his sons. Sudden outbursts of free improvisation collide with new-wave-like dynamics, with sudden humorous twists, of which pieces like *Mices In My Closet* or *Hall The Weenie* were most indicative. Indulging no doubt in his own shtick, Russell came across as having a lot of fun on stage, certainly not taking himself too seriously--or would that be his music?

Early evening stops featured an all star band of the city's High Schools, then **Oscar Brown Jr.'s** hip compendium of bop and soul vocals. Following that was the other European participant, drummer Bengt Berger's Chapter Seven. Hailing from Sweden, this octet features a most interesting lineup of three saxes, trombone with double drums and basses. A bit of world beat, a touch of Ornette's harmolodics, but a more standard approach to individual soloing give this band a swingingly creative groove. Back to the mainstream with **Shorty Rogers Giants**, including Westcoast stalwarts **Lanny Morgan, Bill Perkins, Pete Jolly** and Bud Shank as special guest. A swinging reunion it was, albeit not an overly memorable one. Much awaited then was the return of a now heralded hometown son, pianist and composer **Muhal Richard Abrams**, fronting his own big band on this occasion. Like many a groundbreaking figure, he too seems to have chosen a much more mainstream path of late, as his charges executed, with one sound-type piece as exception, a number of quite straight-ahead charts, one being a blues dedicated to Thad Jones, another with a rap vocal by the band. Winding up things on a swinging vein was pianist Horace Silver's latest quintet, playing four numbers only, including old standbys like *Tokyo Blues* and (dare we even say) Song for my Father. Retreads, maybe, but they allowed his young frontline of **Michael Phillip Mossman** and **Ralph Bowen** to exercise their chops in their area of specialty.

Out of these well-filled days and nights, one certainly feels uplifted by the spirit and relaxed atmosphere everywhere. Lest we forget, the many new acquaintances made and to be renewed at some later date. In such a context, jazz seems more alive than ever and when given such an opportunity, people come and sample a wide array of genres, from the crowd pleaser to the "more heady stuff," so to speak. However, as nothing is perfect, one should note that this most congenial setting may impede at times the appreciation of the music, especially for some groups (like Chapter Seven) which display a wide range of dynamics and link pieces in an extended fashion. Though insiders tell me this year's problems with amplification were exceptional, some shows were hindered by uneven sound balances (or feedbacks in some cases). Interestingly, I noted that some spectators were listening to the simultaneous broadcast on National Public Radio. But then again, nothing is more difficult than to have good sound outdoors, and I have certainly heard worse. One last regret, though, and that is not being able to check out more of the action in the clubs. May be next year. . . For its size, this event has an ideal length, enough to get one's fill without, however, overdosing. Surely, a Labor Day weekend visit to Chicago is worth the many musical winds blowing along that Magnificent Mile, right in full view of beautiful Lake Michigan.- *Marc Chénard*

Conneaut Lake Jazz Party
Pennsylvania
August 26-26, 1990

The rural setting of Conneaut Lake, Pennsylvania has, for the ninth consecutive year, hosted a quality weekend of mainstream jazz,

The piano work of **Keith Ingham** and **Dave McKenna** provided one of the weekend's most interesting and enjoyable dimensions. As one would expect, both worked comfortably in various ensembles, but their solo spots demonstrated significant differences. Ingham has studied and mastered a host of styles/ varieties of stride, the idiosyncratic rhythms of Earl Hines, traditional boogie-woogie. His solo spots were a series of stylistic demonstrations performed with unerring technical purity.

McKenna, by contrast, launched each solo segment with his own walking (or scampering) left-handed bass style. Once established, he wove through it other stylistic bits and snatches. One always hears a little stride from Dave McKenna, an occasional tinkle of Basie, some Ellington chording here and there, but all subordinated to his own distinctive approach.

Marty Grosz also performed memorably. A regular at many jazz festivals around the country, Grosz possesses a talent that is more easily enjoyed than described. He is a good but not exceptional guitarist and has obvious limitations as a vocalist. But few audiences tire of him because he contributes an entire personality, not just a musical talent. With a wide Dizzy Dean-like smile, a satirical Will Rogers wit, and a Fats Waller singing style, he plunked and scatted his way through numbers like *All God's Chillun Got Rhythm* and *The Skeleton in the Closet*. More than any performer since Fats Waller, Grosz discovers and projects the fun in a song without

diminishing its musical value.

When watching Marty Grosz, however, it is tempting to think of him as a humorist first and musician second, but the impression is misleading. The ensemble led by Grosz at Conneaut Lake (which featured a rhythm section of Ingham, **Bob Haggart** and **Hal Smith** with the horns of **Peter Ecklund, Bobby Gordon** and **Bob Havens**), excelled in its ensemble work, which was largely the result of Grosz's deftly contrived arrangements.

Contrasting with the memorable ensemble work of Marty Grosz's group was the solo work in **Dick Meldonian's** (with a rhythm section of McKenna, **Bill Crow, Ronnie Bedford** and the horns of Meldonian, **Joe Wilder** and **Dan Barrett**). This group deviated significantly from the Condon style notable in so many of the ensembles and constructed lengthy, swing oriented solos against rapid, driving rhythms. Though Meldonian's tenor sax has never sounded better, the attention grabber in this group was **Gray Sargent**, a young guitarist whose technical prowess and stylistic versatility made him easily the most important new contribution to Conneaut Lake jazz.

Unrecorded vocalist **Nancy Nelson** should not be overlooked. Though her voice is not distinctive nor her stylistic capacities extensive, her repertoire is carefully chosen to highlight her central strength: sensitive lyric interpretations. Nelson's selections featured underworked gems like Gershwin's *Sweet and Low Down*, Ethel Waters' *Guess Who's In Town*, and (an unlikely choice) Carmen Lombardo's *A Sailboat in the Moonlight and You*. Nelson possesses the ability to take a Lee Wylie, Bessie Smith, Ethel Waters, or Billie Holiday song, do it well, and yet not allow her rendition to be unduly influenced by theirs. Her nicest moment came when, on Saturday evening, she was reunited with clarinetist **Bobby Gordon**, with whom she worked a number of years ago. Gordon's sensitive solos and Nelson's original treatments of ballads, like *When a Woman Loves a Man*, made their Saturday night set memorable.

The entire weekend represented an interesting generational mix of artists. The younger breed was displayed most strikingly when Dave McKenna used the last few minutes of his Saturday night solo spot to feature Gray Sargent on a brisk *Look for the Silver Lining* (which they have recently recorded), and a lengthy *Blues in G*. The old was most nostalgically featured by Bob Haggart (being joined by drummer Hal Smith) in a re-creation of his *Big Noise from Winnetka*. And yet the most musically interesting generational mix occurred in a Saturday morning set with trombonists Dan Barrett and Bob Havens. The stylistic variations so obvious among the two pianists did not exist here. Havens and Barrett displayed much the same kind of technique and approached their material similarly, with solos emphasizing the rhythmic and melodic as opposed to the dissonant and technical.

The finale, *There'll Be Some Changes Made*, featuring all the horns in a riot of rapid improvisation, ended the weekend entertainingly, though the success of this weekend encourages one to hope that there won't be too many changes made for next year. - *Phillip D. Atteberry*

PORTRAIT OF SHORTY

A few years ago I was playing a gig in San Jose, California and a friend of mine came up who I hadn't seen for years. A fellow named John Hirschorn. He was a guitar player in the Bronx. In New York City when I was a kid, and we played in a lot of kids' bands, and he said, "do you remember I'm the one who named you Shorty." I said no I did not, but John said, "we were having a rehearsal, and it was time to start, and everyone was yelling for you and you didn't respond, and I yelled OK Shorty, and you turned around, and that was it. It stuck since then, and that's the story."

I was living in the Bronx and started playing in kids' bands when I was in high school, and believe it or not I'm still in contact with a lot of those guys, in fact some of us are working together, and one of the kids from the Bronx who I met when he was fourteen years old and I still see and still am working with, in fact there's a chart we're going to do on the Tonight Show on November 11th, he's the young kid named Stan Getz.

I've known him all these years you know, through the Woody Herman Band.

In 1943 I was drafted into the Army and I was down in Newport News, Virginia, in the 379th Army Service Forces Band there, and the band was made up mostly of New York guys and we were still kids then. I was eighteen, and a few of the guys were in their early twenties and had been on some of the name bands of that time and had been out in California, especially a bass player named Arnold Fishkin and he had been with Les Brown.

I'd been with Will Bradley and Red Norvo, just before going into the Army. But here we are in this army band with a lot of down time, you know, sitting around talking, and the guys who had been to California just kept raving about it and this created a curiosity in my heart, and then when I did get here that was it. I liked it and stayed.

When I got here, I came out here with Woody's band in 1946, and i'd just been married for less than a year and there was no work at all for a guy like me. It was kinda insane, you know as far as a career or financial aspect of it was concerned. I quit the band in order to stay in California, and all of a sudden I realized when I finally got a phone (it was hard to get a phone in those days) that I couldn't call anyone. I didn't know anyone. I had two bass players living in my house to help share expenses, Arnold Fishkin was one and Joe Mondragon was the other. So I could call them. I just would yell down the hall. But there was no work for us at all. I was playing some Bar Mitzvahs, weddings and whatever came up, and as the months went by, we were all on unemployment, then some of us went with Butch Stone's band, and finally started to get a few gigs that way.

Coming out of the Army I was lucky enough to join the great Woody Herman band and then my time in California, and because I couldn't find work, went back with Woody in 1947. That was the four brothers band, and that went on until the end of 1949 and in January of 1950 Stan Kenton was organizing the Innovations Orchestra, you remember the one with strings? So I joined that band and from there I went into the lighthouse at Hermosa Beach around May 1951 I think.

It was one of my most fruitful times with writing, and probably one of the most important times for my writing career as far as getting the chance to do things and getting them heard by people and being the lucky guy I was to have people enjoy what I was trying to do.

Hal Hill: Yes, material that was both melodic and complex at the same time. I remember the first time I heard Shorty Rogers it was things like *Round Robin* and *Jolly Rogers* that made me say, "Who wrote these charts?" Especially for an orchestra of that size.

It was a big chore, but also a lot of fun. There is no more rewarding feeling than putting all those notes on paper hearing it played live, an incredible feeling I assure you.

Which did you like best at that time, the playing, Shorty, or the writing?

It was 50/50. My writing was an extension of my playing and vice versa I felt. For me to feel complete as a musician, I needed the double fulfilment. It was a lot of hard work, but then I'm a little wacky, so there.

JIMMY GIUFFRE & SHORTY ROGERS (Photograph by William Claxton)

SHORTY ROGERS INTERVIEWED BY HAL HILL

When I was at the Lighthouse with Howard Rumsey, this was the jazz place in L.A., there were other jazz clubs too, but the Lighthouse caught everyone's attention and kind of gave a good feeling of bringing jazz to the forefront again. It was a long drive from Hollywood or L.A. to get there but there were packed houses every night and this attracted a lot of people in the film industry, including a lot of the musicians from the industry, too. One gentleman who came to listen to us a lot was Leith Stevens. And as we were working, Howard Rumsey would announce that this tune was written by Shorty Rogers, or this tune was written by Jimmy Giuffre, and this plugging of our names paid off. Leith Stevens at one point asked me to sit at his table, and during the conversation said he was working on a picture and there were a few jazz arrangements and would I be interested in doing them, so I said,"sure." There was a picture called **The Glass Wall**, so I did the charts and they were accepted.

There were maybe six or seven films in between **The Glass Wall** and **The Wild One**, and each picture I would get more to do, and this all culminated in **The Wild One**, which was a very important picture at that time. And I think even today it's important because it was historically the first major picture where jazz was used in scoring so extensively. That and another picture I worked on later with Elmer Bernstein, **The Man with the Golden Arm**, are turning points in the use of jazz in films.

It was a great thing. I was arranger for these two wonderful composers, but for the music to come alive and get the sound that was needed meant that we would bring in Bud Shank, and Milt Bernhart and Shelly Manne and all those jazz guys, and I was getting my little toe into the world of film, all the players were too.

I think from that time on it was albums by the dozen from you and the giants and the big band. I think it was you who brought about a phrase at that time, too: "The Cool School". The Cool West Coast School as opposed to the hard driving bop from the east coast, kinda cool versus hot.

There was a difference in sound, but also a similarity in sound also on certain things, especially the up tempo things, that could have quite easily have come out of New York. But we, people like Shelly Manne and Jimmy Giuffre, came out of the same mold, especially with our love for the great Count Basie Band.

It became our musical heritage. It was our musical heritage, and a lot of people didn't realize that especially the Basie small groups, the Kansas City Seven and groups like that, was probably the birth of the West Coast jazz sound. We never sat down and said, "Ok, guys, here's what we're gonna do, we're gonna make a West Coast jazz sound." We went in and we played, the bottom line, the top line, and the whole object of what we were trying to do was very childish, because we were just having fun.

Well, it was a happy and pretty kind of music, but at the same time there was still a lot of funkiness there, too, maybe not as deep down and dirty as an Art Blakey or any of those hard bop bands on the east coast, but there was a tremendous amount of freedom that you guys had, complexity, happiness, and joy and that seemed to give us the impression of that sun-drenched West Coast.

Can I jump ahead a little, Shorty, to the Mosaic sessions that are being reviewed in this edition of CODA. Those sessions stem from probably the most halcyon days of your recording career, with some really marvelous people like Bud Shank, Hampton Hawes, Gene Englund, Art Pepper and Bob Enevoldson, John Graas, Herb Geller, Bill Holman and others. They are all great innovators in their own right. Each individual we have mentioned, There have been leaders in a sense, and great writers in many instances too. That must have been quite a challenge too, to keep all this great talent together whether in the giants or the big band, for you, and to have it work the way it did too.

Not really, Hal, because it had the feeling of a family. We all had fun working together, and looked forward to the next time we got together. It was something we all got involved in and believed in and really did enjoy doing.

One time when I was living in Burbank, two houses away from ours lived Jimmy Giuffre. We were studying composition with the same teacher together, so a one hour lesson became a two hour lesson. The cute story that came out of that was when Giuffre wrote Four Brothers, he was unable to get to the rehearsal on the day that Woody Herman had scheduled to run the tune through, so he put the chart in my hand and said, "bring it into the rehearsal," so my claim to fame was I took the Four Brothers to its initial rehearsal.

So yes, we were all really close, like we were playing a club, we would finish at two in the morning and there was always a restaurant where we would all meet and mix with other guys from other bands, so it became very much a family.

Shorty Rogers today, what is he doing in the 90s?

Different things, concerts with my "Giants" group, which consists of usually four horns in the front line plus bass, drums and piano. I've ben working with Bill Perkins, Bob Cooper, sometimes Bud Shank and if Bud can't make it, I use Lanny Morgan. The piano is Pete Jolly, Chuck Berghoffer on bass and Sherman Ferguson or Jeff Hamilton on drums.

Well, with some exceptions there it is almost like a reunion band, isn't it?

Yeah, it's [chuckle] the same bunch of guys.

I saw a video of yours that was made during a tour of Japan and you had Bob Cooper, Shelly Manne, Bud Shank, Pete Jolly amongst the members, and that was quite exciting, I assure you. So you work with this new band now. Do you do much touring?

I'm not as active as before. I do a gig here and there, but I am arranging still, just did an arrangement for Stan Getz which he is going to use on the Johnny Carson Show on November 11th, I believe. Actually I transcribed it from Stan's latest album, and I'm working on an album of my own for Herb Alpert, so I'm still pushing that pencil around. If I don't have a gig I'm practising and spending some time on the boat.

THE COMPLETE ATLANTIC AND EMI JAZZ RECORDINGS OF SHORTY ROGERS: MOSAIC MR6-125

Shorty Rogers was one of my earliest jazz heroes. In my first listening days and the beginning of my record collection, albums by Rogers played a significant part

and I don't think it's simple nostalgia that over the years I have returned to listen to these recordings, mainly from the fifties. And now Mosaic has brought them out in a boxed set of six albums, all small groups covering a period of some five years. Most of this material I have been listening to for something like thirty-odd years so this gathering gives me an opportunity to reassess the contribution of Shorty Rogers, both in itself and in its manifestation as a sampling of the so-called West Coast sound.

I have never really understood the denigration of West Coast music. Certainly some of it was pretentious, certainly some of it was bland to the point of soft-centredness, but surely it's an exaggeration to lump most of it under the label of the pseudo-classical influence as James Lincoln Collier tends to do in ***The Making of Jazz***. Even worse, perhaps, is the persistence of the idea of West Coast jazz as symptomatic of Californian excesses, fashionable image-making music based in the sun-baked, laid-back Californian life, devoid of real guts, edginess, tension, depth. Surprisingly, Gary Giddins is still insisting on that image: his recent liner notes for the set of Art Pepper Galaxy CDs dismisses the West Coast sound as "the cool posturings of those improvising beach boys who tried to recreate California jazz as fun in the midnight sun." Of course he uses the playing of Art Pepper as an exception. And the altoist is illustrative, even in his early playing, of the discrepancy between the critical view and the actual music-making, for the West Coast always had some uncompromising and inventive jazzmen. Besides Pepper, there were, among others, Shelley Manne, Jimmy Giuffre, Hampton Hawes, the Candoli brothers, Pete Jolly, all players who cannot be dismissed as bland, unadventurous and effetely cool players. And of course there is Shorty Rogers who used all these players off and on in these small group recordings of the 50s. Also bringing in the Basie-ite Sweets Edison with his brash swagger, some of which rubs off into Rogers' own playing, thought it is tempered by the slightly withdrawn, lyrically musing side of early Miles Davis. Edison fits into the Rogers musical atmosphere because Rogers adopted the Basie reliance of right-tempo swing.

A good way into the real elements of Rogers' version of West Coast jazz is the earliest and first album in this Mosaic collection. Recorded in 1951 and originally released under the title of **Modern Sounds**, all but one, compositions by Rogers and Giuffre, this is music aimed straight at the listener direct, unflagging swing, jaunty soloing, especially from Art Pepper and Hampton Hawes. The tunes are catchy and engaging, all the soloing is energetic and relaxed. Giuffre is already emerging as an original soloist on tenor and baritone with an individual sound on both instruments, and Rogers' trumpet, staying principally in mid-range, escapes for the most part from his Miles mode by sounding brassier and happier. In fact, these pieces are decidedly happy, the only exception being Pepper's heartfelt rendition of *Over The Rainbow*, floating over Rogers' muted colorations.

Of course, this group, with its inclusion of tuba and French horn, is a fairly obvious take-off of the famous **Birth Of The Cool** album recorded two years earlier, but the music here to my ears is decidedly "hotter", swinging finely over the splashy drumming and slick punctuations of Shelley Manne and the powerfully percussive comping of pianist Hampton Hawes. Maybe the scoring is what became the West Coast permutations of the close harmonies, the mellow lyricism of a cool style which certainly could lend itself to a weakened sugary sound but here it has a crispness, a joyful, even youthful simplicity that captures the spirit of sheer enjoyment the musicians seem to have as they romp through the tunes.

That spirited mood is very much a part of Rogers' personality as it comes through in most of these cuts even though his trumpet and flugelhorn playing, while often in an open, strutting way, is still tinged by hints of melancholy, especially when he and Giuffre in his chalumeau moments on clarinet play off each other as they do in quintet settings on three of these albums. And yet Rogers, as he often revealed in his big band arrangements, is very much taken with a high-powered attack in the brass section with a rhythm section keeping the beat moving forward. In these quintet recordings only rarely does the music sink to the merely competent, or into yearningly sweet moods, for it's kept on the right track by Manne's effortless drumming that combines its cymbal strokes, sizzling like Jo Jones, with his modern conceptions out of Kenny Clarke. And there's the hard-hitting drive of Pete Jolly's piano (sometimes it's the gentler Lou Levy) and in most cases the steady, springy bass of Curtis Counce. Giuffre also turns in some hard, almost honking baritone sax playing.

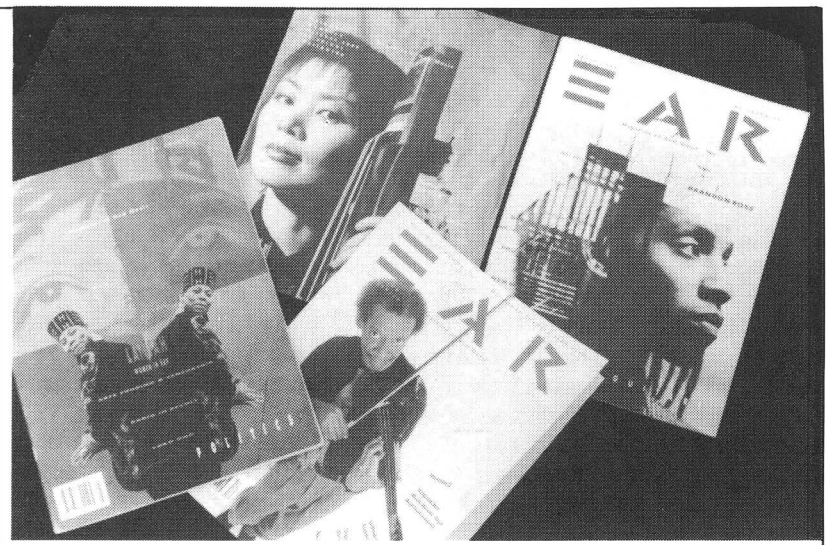
Some of the Rogers' hallmarks of big band writing seep into the sessions featuring five trumpets: with Rogers, there are the Candoli brothers, Edison and Don Fagerquist. These trumpets articulate the notes with a clean bite and are sufficiently individualistic in their solos to avoid any cliches critics usually hear in West Coast jazz.

One other side features a return to that earlier **Birth Of The Cool** sound as it again includes French horn and tuba. But it's an altogether heftier sound, elaborated by Rogers' broad flugelhorn tones and the burry valve trombone of Bob Eneveldson (now there's an under-appreciated player).

And finally, in an album that in a way closes the circle of these five years in Rogers' career, the last group in this set illustrates Rogers' commitment to straightahead swing; Herb Geller's sure-fingered alto repeats the Pepper ambience and Bud Shank's bass sax underpins the ensembles, echoing the way Rogers was to develop his big band writing in the immediate future.

This Mosaic collection shows the range of Rogers' music: his way with a broad spectrum of orchestral colours even with the smaller resources of a small group sound, his understanding in the quintet recordings of how to play soft against loud, how to relax inside the music, how to avoid a too sweet lyricism by tightening into brashness, his sheer enjoyment in music-making. His own trumpet and flugelhorn playing is always interesting, dramatic, though often in an understated manner. But over long period of listening, his commitment to the mid-range makes his playing somewhat limited. There's enough variety in his conceptions of small group jazz in this box to indicate that Shorty Rogers' music was, and still is, a constant pleasure to listen to. He is a searcher for interesting and swinging sounds, a real contributor to a cool jazz that more often than not, breaks out of that atmosphere it has been condemned to by many critics into a happy and broadbased, swaggering music.

5 FREE CDs A YEAR



Ear Magazine and Absolut Vodka present the Absolut CD, a new music compilation included in subscribers' copies of Ear. Select issues include a full-length CD of recordings—often rare or unreleased material—by artists featured in the issue:

NOV '90 — NEW MUSIC CANADA
DEC-JAN '91 — JAPANESE PERSPECTIVE
MARCH '91 — IMPROVISATION/COMPOSITION
MAY '91 — THE NEW EUROPE
JULY/AUG '91 — THE NEW WORLD MUSIC

BACK ISSUES INCLUDE: ANTHONY BRAXTON, JOHN ZORN, THE RESIDENTS, HENRY THREADGILL, KRONOS QUARTET, QUEEN LATIFAH, CHRISTIAN MARCLAY, LEROY JENKINS, ELLIOTT SHARP, LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO, ARTO LINDSAY, JOHN ADAMS, LAURIE ANDERSON, BILL FRISELL, DIAMANDA GALAS, DEREK BAILEY, MAX ROACH, SONIC YOUTH, STEVE REICH, MUHAL RICHARD ABRAMS AND JOHN CAGE

EAR
MAGAZINE OF NEW MUSIC

Lifetime subscription $100

Annual subscription $20 (Individuals, US, Canada, & Mexico)

$40 (Foreign & Institutions)

A special certificate will be issued to lifetime subscribers. Available in U.S., Canada, and Mexico. Offer good through January 31, 1991.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

_____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

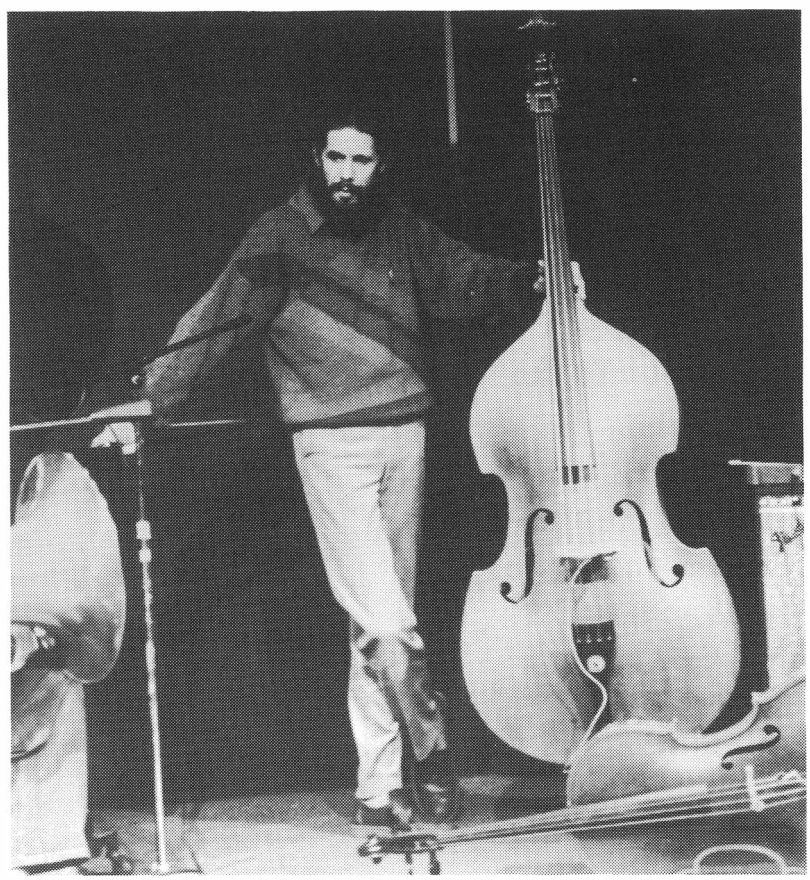
Send this form with your check or money order (US $ only) to EAR, Inc. 131 Varick Street #905, New York, NY 10013-1323 212 • 807 • 7944

ISSN: 0893 9500

THE BIG BANDS ARE BACK

The big sound meets the tiny medium. This array of modern big bands finds the performance medium large on the strength, with individuality and unanimity in complementary proportions. The compact disc format is ideal, too, not only for the sound quality, which is never less than good, and often excellent, but also for the extended capacity, an especial blessing for the pieces too long to fit completely on one LP side.

In the wake of the outsize adventures of Han Bennink, Willem Breuker and other equally vivid countrymen, outsiders tend to expect at least a jolt of cut-up calamity from Holland's innovators. **Guus Janssen and his Orchestra** do not disappoint in that (dis)respect, nor in others.



The eight tracks in ***Dancing Series*** **(Geestgronden 1; 63'50")** are named for various dances, from *Pogo I* and *II* (remember punk?) to *Passepied* (a 16th Century Breton step). *Come Dancing* this isn't, however, and in virtually every track the tempo is anything but strict. Pianist / composer Janssen is fond of pulling out the carpet from under the second-guessers.

Cut live at the 1988 Meervaart Amsterdam NOS Jazz Festival, ***Dancing Series*** makes full use of a flexible 11-piece band that includes viola (Maurice Horsthuis) and 'cello (Ernst Reyseger). Most of the tracks bracket series of sudden changes, and with the tracks flowing into each other this is non-stop dancing as James Lasat never knew it.

Hip Hop, for example, bears only titular relevance to funk's younger sibling. The opening spiky pizzicato strings quickly give way to Herb Robertson's high trumpet ziggurats. Soon, it's almost rock and roll, but the medium is cooled by Janssen's wedges of formal piano. *Pogo I* and *II* hop between the cathouse and the conservatory, musically speaking, with sombre movements for piano and strings sundered by bright shards of brass and forearm sweeps of the keyboard. It's wild, but from the way chaos snaps back smartly into form, the integrity of Janssen's game plan is never in doubt.

There's a taste of Carla Bley's informed mischief throughout (coincidentally, Janssen's Orchestra includes Bley hornist, Vincent Chancey), and a more direct nod to Mingus in the quarreling, bluesy horns of *Jojo Jive*. Like those leaders, Janssen makes the best of the mid-size form, exploring the colour range to make the band sound larger, but keeping the flexibility and concision of a smaller group. And like both, Janssen is in a class of one.

The **J.C. Tans Orchestra** hails from the Lowlands too, but the humour of ***Around the World*** **(BVHaast CD 8905; 49'37")** is the friendly, welcoming kind. The tenorist and his nine fellows play a lively and robust music, swinging hard or soft in original tunes within the tradition but with an ear to adventure. Come to that, the Bley reference arises here, too, this time in the way exploration is made enticing, not daunting.

There are some sly surprises. A relatively straight reading of *Mood Indigo* starts from way out in left field with a racing feature for the leader's agile tenor. The penultimate, title track swings the blues with a startlingly rockish but apt guitar solo from Piet de Vries, which is no set up at all for the closing *Finale*, a Monkish rumination probed by bassist Wilbert de Joode.

As **J.C. Tans and Rockets**, the band released three previous sets on BVHaast. I'd like to hear all of them.

Trombonist **Willem van Manen** is a contemporary and sometimes collaborator with Bennink, et al. More recently he's busy as leader and composer for **Contraband**, whose 1988 recording, ***Live at the Bimhuis*** **(BVHaast CD 8906; 65'59")** is the pick of this pack.

In action since 1985, **Contraband** is a crucible for established and younger bands. The band plays two months out of every year. This set, taped by NOS-radio, catches it at flashpoint.

Van Manen's writing promotes modern big-band music at its richest, marrying the collective weight (14 pieces, in the traditional array) with individual ambition. He opens plenty of room for the soloists, especially in the 23-minute *Contra-Suite*, but always knows when to pull back on the reins, thinning or thickening the detail.

It's daring, but it works. Cued by Hein Offermans's shivering bass, **T. Twee** looms dramatically, then ebbs and flows around shorter, anchoring events: a knotty a capella

ALAN SILVA (Photograph by Gerard Futrick)

COMPACT DISCS REVIEWED BY RANDAL McILROY

horn chart, a coruscating alto solo from Rutger van Otterloo, a clarinet feature for Theo Jorgensmann.

Contra-Suite opens in march time, then scatters in the rich polyphony of saxes. Over these clouds, altoist Paul van Kemenade triumphs, holds the stage alone for a moment, then, after playing the riff from Dizzy Gillespie's *Be-Bop* (a smirk at jazz tradition? a nod to an earlier pioneer?) lights a great fire behind the band.

Providence also starts with a march, with the reeds rising over trumpets and trombones, then elbows into Mingus territory with aggressive Jimmy Knepperish trombones and boozy saxes. The dizzying cat-and-mouse cycles for the horns in *Nimm die U-Bahn* also recall the gone master.

Invest with confidence.

Legion are the American jazzers who find a warmer welcome overseas. Composer / arranger **Bill Holman**, the pen behind the charts for Stan Kenton, Zoot Sims, Gerry Mulligan and others, is some kind of hero in Norway's big band scene. With ***The Norwegian Big Band Meets Bill Holman*** **(Taurus TRCD 826; 48'27")** the debt for inspiration is repaid handsomely, in a vibrant recording that puts this splendid big band in your face, metaphorically speaking.

Chief recording engineer Marten Hermansen deserves special credit for capturing the depth and dimensionality of the big band. The opening *And Thad Ain't Bad* has all the punch and swing of a big band at its booting best, and Hermansen's recording frames the terraced organization of brass, reeds / woodwinds and rhythm.

The program (six Holman originals, plus Jimmy van Heusen's *All the Way)* is an unsurprising but satisfying journey through terrain of varying climate. *Be-Bop Love Song* is an especial charmer, bearing elegance with backbone, and featuring a rare solo from Holman, who found time among all his other duties to blow a full-bodied tenor solo. In the sexy lope of *A Separate Walking*, John Bergli takes the honours with his gliding baritone.

The imagination of Holman's arranging is at its most fertile in *Sometime*, a big blues (with some wild guitar from Steinar Larsen) put through a bracing double-time change near the end. That's typical of the way Holman and the band keep cozy nostalgia at bay.

Feelin' Good, Yeah **(Sovereign CD SOV-503; 41'14")** by **The Lew Anderson Big Band** didn't do anything for me. The Iowan altoist's arrangements and Ruby Fisher's tunes pack plenty of brightness and commercial appeal, but little depth. Too often, this big band is skating on the surface when it should be cutting the ice.

Could it be that Anderson's formidable resumé in radio and TV writing taught him to be wary of musical danger? Certainly, caution prevails. *Down Booties* threatens to kick some life, but pulls back quickly, and not even Aaron Sachs's promising baritone solo can change that. The stray stabs of quotational humour (*Ta-Ra-Ra-Boom-De-Aye* in *Down Booties, Deck the Halls* and *Blues in the Night* in *Hot Spot*) promote nothing. Nor does it help that Ray Kennedy, an adept player, is saddled with such a tinny-sounding synthesizer / electric piano set-up, all the more surprising for a studio date.

Is it possible for a big band for forego orchestral hierarchy for freedom, and still have control? Hell, yes!, affirms the **Celestial Communication Orchestra** in ***My Country*** **(Leo CD LR 302; 64' 48")**.

In 1971, conductor / composer / violinist **Alan Silva** persuaded 19 individualists, including Steve Lacy, Anthony Braxton, Jerome Cooper and Kent Carter, to blend in an amoebic orchestra, to play a score that was more like a tailor's chalk marks, only sketching the shape and the cut. With so much freedom in such a large group (eight reeds, three bassists, two drummers, etc.), this could have been one pile-up after another. It isn't, because everyone was listening as hard as they played.

Consequently, while ***My Country*** is often the wildest bobsled run you could imagine, all furious acceleration and sudden curves, Silva never loses the map or the wheel. Hold on to your seat.

Such a trip demands a running commentary, a major task in this instance. For starters, we get the brass galloping out of the gate after the opening hesitation with little instruments. A metallic soprano (Lacy?) cuts through the whistles, tambourines and warring horns, followed by the alto (the soloists are not listed). Presently, François Tusque's dizzying, calliope-like organ comes to the fore. A clarion trumpet announces a tangle of simultaneous wind soli. The wild ride starts again, pausing for cooling breaks from the basses, and, later, the violin. . .

Ah, but this isn't a music about keeping score, though it plays to one at unexpected moments. Silva's music is as random and ordered as life itself. And like life, once you get accustomed to the tumult, it makes sense.

Coming from a studio recording last spring in Switzerland, the **London Jazz Composers' Orchestra** achieves a similar victory in ***Harmos*** **(Intakt CD 013: 43'48")**.

Here, too, the line between composition and free blowing is virtually invisible (and, arguably, irrelevant). Bassist / director **Barry Guy's** 44-minute piece is a flexible, exciting work in the tradition (ha!) of Keith Tippett's massive productions, ***Septober Energy*** and ***Windows***, great, glooming themes embodying the full strength of this 17-piece orchestra while encouraging a multitude of cells of individual and small-group activity. The effect recalls Yeats's line about "a terrible beauty," though the noble reverie of Charlie Haden's *Song for Che* is at least as valuable a reference. And like Tippett, Guy directs a large chunk of Britain's forward-thinking musicians. In this session, that means Trevor Watts, Marc Charig, Howard Riley, Evan Parker, Paul Rutherford. ..

This is a music of surprises more than shock. Events happen unpredictably, but consonantly: the rise of a triumphant march, a stretch of straight blues moved by Riley's piano, the moments of anger and alarm. Listen for the tangle of Charig's cornet and Phil Wachsmann's violin and electronics. Listen for the trio debate among trumpeter Jon Corbett, baritonist Paul Dunmall and drummer Paul Lytton. Listen for Watts's alto, both a blowtorch and a guiding light. Listen.

BVHaast Records, Prinseneiland 99, 1013 LN Amsterdam
Geestgronden (distributed by BVHaast)
Leo Records, 35 Cascade Avenue, London N10 3PT, England
Sovereign Records, Aloft Music Enterprises, Inc., 1697 Broadway, New York, NY 10019
Taurus Records, Box 13, Bryn 0611, Oslo 6, Norway

AROUND THE WORLD

USA

Since the 1960s **New Music Distribution** has been the principal marketing outlet for hundreds of recordings which were on the outer limits of commercial marketability. Despite many dissatisfied clients (normal with record company/distributor relationships), NMDS had survived for many years through its unique funding support and a steady flow of new material and a very extended payment schedule to its clients. A combination of events (reduced funding, bad debts, the CD revolution, which caused massive lp returns from stores) has forced NMDS to suspend its operations and let go its staff while trying to restructure its operation and raise the funds to pay off its sizable deficit.

NMDS' withdrawal will have a greater impact on musics other than jazz for many of the labels who used to use NMDS have long since moved on to North Country Distributors, which has become the most dependable and successful outlet for alternative music within the jazz spectrum.

The City of Kansas City, Mo. is raising $20 million through a sales tax bond program to finance **The International Hall of Fame** and other developments in the historic 18th and Vine area. Subsequent to that announcement was the appointment of **Nathan Davis** and **Donald Byrd** as dean and associate dean of faculty for the Parker-Gillespie International Institute of the Jazz Masters, one of the educational components of the International Hall of Fame.

Duplitonics is a US company who has developed a system which they claim will enhance the quality of prerecorded cassettes to the level of CDs and DAT cassettes while keeping consumer dollars inside the country. Their process "replaces the master tape, currently used to reproduce cassettes, with a high tech computer storing and retrieving music from memory. Album length cassettes are reproduced in 20 seconds. The sound exceeds any other method, even real time reproduction." You can obtain more information from Duplitronics at 160 Albert Drive, Wheeling, IL 60090.

The Timeless All Stars, the Art Farmer Quintet and the **Nat Adderley** Sextet were in residence at New York's **Sweet Basil** in November. This club, incidentally, along with many other components of the jazz and popular music infrastructure of the US is now controlled by Japanese interests.

The Music of Hank Mobley was showcased at the Weill Recital Hall on October 29. It was the first of a series of concerts co-sponsored by Second Floor Music to showcase the compositions of prominent jazz composers. **Clifford Jordan**, Don Sickler, **Curtis Fuller**, Cedar Walton and Billy Higgins were among the participating musicians.

Peter Leitch was at Birdland October 16 with Harvey Swartz and Marvin "Smitty" Smith. . .Brazilian saxophonist **Ivo Perelman's** New York debut was at the Knitting Factory October 16. . .The Walter Thompson Big Band was also heard at the Knitting Factory on November 12. . .Trombonist **Craig Harris** showcased his newest composition *F Stops* at Roulette on November 2 and 3.

Musicologist/author **Bill Cole** who recently resigned from his teaching post at Dartmouth College, was heard there in performance with the Barbary Coast Jazz Ensemble on November 3. ..The Tri-State Jazz Society presents traditional jazz on a regular basis at the Travelodge, Mt Laurel, NJ. . .**Paquito D'Rivera** will be guest artist at the Rochester area Penfield School District's 21st annual fund raiser February 1/2. . .The Washington, DC chapter of the Duke Ellington Society saluted jazz broadcaster Felix Grant October 19 in recognition of his 45 years of continuous jazz broadcasting. . . The illinois Benedictine College Jazz Studies program in Lisle, IL got under way this November and continues through next April with each program focusing on a specific instrument. . .**Olatunji** headlines a "New Year's Rhythm Intensive" workshop festival December 29/January 6 at Miami's Cameo Theatre. . .**John LaPorta** is teaching jazz improvisation classes this winter for musicians under a program sponsored by the Jazz Club of Sarasota.

Willard Jenkins sent us this report on recent Washington, DC activity.

Fall '90 was a particularly fertile period for live jazz in the nation's capital. With promising new venues like Trumpets, an uncharacteristically beautiful jazz club in the Dupont Circle area, old standbys Blues Alley, and One Step Down, District Curators' annual season, and things heating up at various auditoriums and arts centres, the District and even surrounding Virginia and Maryland were treated to a near embarrassment of riches.

Blues Alley's fall highlights included the **Geri Allen** Trio, and the auspicious trio of **Metheny-Haynes-Holland.** Allen has been working recently with bassist **Dwayne Dolphin** and drummer **Cecil Brooks III** to achieve the cohesive sense of simpatico few non-regular trios can achieve. Allen lately has honed the Monk-ian side of her influences to great advantage. Case in point was a solo piece she dedicated to another of her

ART FARMER (Photograph by Peter Danson)

COMPILED BY JOHN NORRIS

influences, the late D.C. pianist-educator John Malachi.

While some continue to put Pat Metheny down for his regular band, there is little denying the man's continued thirst for exploring other corners of his interest, cases in point being the **Song X** session and tour with Ornette, and his work with folks like Billy Higgins, Charlie Haden, and Dewey Redman. Metheny's latest foray onto challenging turf resulted from a jam session with the great Roy Haynes and the British bulwark of the bass, Dave Holland. The jam became a Geffen label recording and fortunately Pat felt compelled to tour this ear-opening trio.

The tour evidences the value of regular work. While the recording holds its own rewards, caught live the trio truly connected. They avoided the cliched jam session routine of everyone soloing on every tune. It was also obvious Haynes is the centrifugal force of this trio; as Holland remarked prior to taking the stand, "It's such a treat working with Mr. Haynes."

Through *I'll Take Romance, How Insensitive* (a great illustration of Haynes impeccable dynamic range, soft touch sans brushes), and Ornette's memorable *Law Years* (with Pat on guitar synth), this resourceful trio dealt numerous rewards. Pat resorted to acoustic guitar for a heartfelt *Farmer's Trust*, and dug deep into the synth for an encore of Gerald Wilson's *Viva Tirado*.

Each September the Congressional Black Caucus annual Legislative Weekend features a jazz evening, opening with an issues forum panel session, and concluding with a performance, all free and open to the public. The focus this year was on women in jazz in general and a salute to Sarah Vaughan in particular. Panelists included: Nancy Wilson, Abbey Lincoln, Carmen Bradford, Melba Joyce, D.C. pianist Kim Jordan, Cassandra Wilson, Bobbi Humphrey, Sandra Trim-Da Costa of CBS Records, Michelle Taylor of Polygram Records, producer Helen Keane, presenter Cobi Narita, and D.C. jazz radio station WDCU station manager Edith Smith.

Performers included a stirring *My Funny Valentine*, delivered by **Carmen Bradford**, and inspired mini-sets by both Wilson women, Lincoln, Shirley Horn, D.C. vocalist Ronnie Wells, an all-too-brief Vaughan medley by Billey Taylor, and a tasteless bit of fusoid flotsam by tireless self-promoter flutist Bobbi Humphrey.

Two nights later Cassandra Wilson and trio sold-out D.C. Space as part two of District Curators' 90-91 series, dubbed Multi-Kulti in conjunction with Don Cherry's latest A&M release and his series closing concert. Wilson was preceded by trumpeter **Ahmed Abdullah's** Solomonic Sextet, with **Fred Hopkins** on bass, **Billy Bang** on violin, **Charles Moffett** on drums, the brilliant **Carlos Ward** on alto sax, and **Masujaa** on guitar, each of whom easily exceeds the leader's blowing ability. This did not, however, diminish the power of the ensemble, which was at its best when combining uncanny Caribbean elements in the mix.

Wilson was simply sublime, radiant and displaying a true joy for her artistic output and that of her trio, whose most notable member is Detroit-bred pianist **Rod Williams.** Combining equal parts M-Base and standards (of the Body & Soul variety), Ms. Wilson remains the most promising young jazz vocalist in an admittedly limited field of entrants.

Part three of District Curator's series was their annual contribution to the free, outdoor American Discoveries Festival, which focuses on a major U.S. city each October, this year Philadelphia. Representing Philly sounds was tenor man **Odean Pope's** bristling trio, bagpipe purveyor **Rufus Harley** and ensemble, harmelodic grad **Jamaaladeen Tacuma's** power trio, and **Sun Ra's** ever-visionary Arkestra.

District Curators also brought Sacred Drums to a sold-out Duke Ellington School auditorium. The evening of multi-cultural drum traditions opened with a statement from Max Roach introducing Mother Africa's direct representative, Babatunde Olatunji, was was joined on shekere by Milton Cardona. Olatunji gave way to Native American drummer-dancer Benito Concha, whose uncanny hoop dance was amazing. Next up was Japanese Taiko Dojo with Sachi Tanaka for a segment vivid in its sheer physicality.

Max and El Rey, Tito Puente, effectively dueted, with Roach exclusively on sock cymbal. Then it was Cuban Daniel Ponce on latin congas, soon joined by a horn section, bassist and pianist directed by latin-jazz pioneer Mario Bauza. As if that wasn't enough, they all came out for a grand finale on Take The A-Train.

The tenor sax tradition was amply represented by **Branford Marsalis,** and to a lesser extent by Michael Brecker. Branford's (performing at GWU's Lissner Auditorium) quartet was minus a traveling Kenny Kirkland, prompting a few "I want my money back" catcalls from the audience. Fears were quickly allayed by a trio set which found bassist Bob Hurst, and most especially drummer Tain Watts amply filling any perceived void. Branford then introduced guest trumpeter Terence Blanchard, and although Marsalis chuckled that their material for the ***Mo' Better***

Blues soundtrack was a bit on the simplistic side, the quartet proceeded to put an admirable blister on those tunes. The keynotes were struck during a haunting version of Ornette's *Lonely Woman*.

Michael Brecker, on the other hand, has become entirely too infatuated by his electronic wind instrument, at the expense of his considerable tenor chops. Pianist Joey Calderazzo remains a fresh voice in an otherwise ho-hum quartet, whose newest member, bassist Jay Anderson, plays acoustic but in the cello range, prompting one to wonder why he doesn't just play fender bass and give the band **some** measure of bottom. ■

Singer **Diane Schuur** was the headliner at a November 10 concert in the Grand 1894 Opera House, Galveston, TX. . .The University of North Texas Jazz Repertory Ensemble recreated the music of many notable early jazz orchestras October 25 including a performance of **James P. Johnson's** *Yamekraw* . . .The Creative Opportunity Orchestra is once again being presented in a subscription concert series in Austin, TX this winter. The concerts conclude with a season closer June 2 at the Laguna Gloria Museum Amphitheatre and original concer presentations.

BLUES

Koko Taylor is the subject of an upcoming PBS-TV documentary which is scheduled for airing in February. She also has a cameo appearance in David Lynch's new film, ***Wild At Heart***.. .Alligator Records is issuing new recordings by **The Mellow Fellows** and **Lucky Peterson**. . .Delmark has re-issued **Junior Wells'** ***Hoodoo Man Blues*** and **Magic Sam's** ***West Side Soul*** on CD. . .England's Sequel Records has issued retro-spective CD issues of 1940s recordings by **Smiley Lewis, Amos Milburn** and **Charles Brown**. Da Capo Press has reissued in paperback Willie Dixon's ***I Am The Blues***, Helen Oakley Dance's ***Stormy Monday: The T-Bone Walker Story*** and ***Blues: An Anthology***, W.C. Handy's 1926 collection of classic blues songs.

SPIKE ROBINSON

Tenor saxophonist Spike Robinson has enjoyed a much higher profile as a musician in Europe than in the US. While on tour there in late 1989 he became gravely ill. Writer Peter Vacher caught up with Robinson when he was "back from the brink" and sends us this report.

Up until five or so years ago, the fine tenor-saxophonist Spike Robinson was a test engineer with Honeywell in Colorado, only playing state-based engagements on the weekend. His jazz career really took wing in 1984 with the release of an excellent recording on the Discovery label which reunited him with the late pianist Vic Feldman (with whom he had recorded in London when stationed there with the US Navy in 1949-51). Since then his recordings have multiplied and Spike is now in demand across two continents. Writer Gene Lees called him "a highly lyrical player of the mainstream bebop persuasion" and he's been compared (correctly) to Zoot Sims, Al Cohn, Brew Moore and Stan Getz. He's unashamedly a fully-affiliated member of the Lester Young school and very nearly the last of that particular persuasion to remain active.

Spike looks just like everybody's favourite uncle. He smiles easily, the laugh lines marking his face as he leans forward to talk. In a crowded club or backstage, he'll greet the casual bystander or visitor with the same confiding warmth that he allots to his friends. It's hard to imagine anyone more genial or less like the stereotypical hard-bitten jazz musician. Spike's openness of personality and genuine appreciation for the efforts of his musical companions stamp him as a generous man, intent on communicating his enjoyment of the jazz life. Not surprisingly, he has acquired supporters wherever his hectic performance schedule has taken him. It was this "extended family" that was shocked to the core when the news of Spike's near-fatal illness became known.

While on tour in France in late 1989, Spike was taken ill, suffering from an "unbearable headache". He was admitted to hospital in Bordeaux near to collapse and in a bewildering blur of diagnosis and deterioration, placed in intensive care. His condition was defined as meningitis, an affliction so serious that many sufferers simply fail to recover or at best are permanently disabled. Their personalities undergo change and physical capacities are often sadly reduced even after the progress of the illness has been checked. A wretched outlook for any artist.

Susan May, Spike's London-based agent, stayed by his bedside throughout this hospitalization, taking time out to rush back to England to arrange for his transfer to hospital in that country. By December 20th, Spike was just about fit enough to fly to England by private plane, and to be admitted to a private medical centre to the east of London. He told me that it was only then that he fully understood the seriousness of his position. "First time I had a doctor that could speak English," he jokes now. More alarms were to come when Spike underwent a relapse on New Year's Day, his chances described then as "touch and go."

Gradually, and with Susan's very steady support, Spike started to pull through, even though doctors gave him a mere 40% chance of recovery. He was able to take the guest of honour's chair at a big London gathering of musicians and fans, a week on from his 60th birthday. Scarcely able to walk, Spike said a word or two of thanks, greeted friends, obviously loving the jazz tributes being paid to him. Although he was bullish about resuming work, there were many present who had their doubts. After all, he looked so frail.

Well, the good news is that Spike is back, taking each day as it comes, no doubt, but definitely on the mend and playing beautifully once again. He left hospital in February and continued his recuperation at Susan's house, eating home-made meals and generally rebuilding his physical well-being and confidence.

He's taking gigs once more and it's especially pleasing to report that his tenor sound is again coming good in a rather miraculous way. I took a recent opportunity to check out his situation, first cornering him for a brief chat.

"Playing is coming back fine," he said in that warm, fireside voice of his. "I feel very comfortable with it now. Each time, it's easier. I feel great, better than I've felt in thirty years. I'm living a healthier life, eating regularly, you know that sort of thing. It's all health now," he laughed, the familiar,

creased-face smile breaking through. As to after effects, he says that his left leg is dragging a little by "I'm working a lot at walking, keeping my balance, no big strain." And the horn? "I'm practising every day and feeling happier about it. I'm adding a few new tunes too. As you know, I like to play a variety of tunes, to kick in a couple of new things now and then, makes it more fun for the group, and for me in particular," he emphasized.

I've talked to Spike before about his careful choices of material. Spike invariably refers to these selections as "pretty old tunes." Does he go out of his way to find unusual themes? "I like to stay away from warhorses. Every year I look at the tunes I've used over the past two to three years and change things around. I try to learn two new tunes a week, that's as long as I can keep away from the phone," he laughed.

My chance to monitor both Spike's return to form and his propensity for a "pretty tune" came recently when I listened to him play two taxing sets at The Rose & Crown, a jazz pub in Kings Langley, a small town north-west of London, where Spike has appeared regularly on earlier British tours. Prompted by an excellent rhythm section, notable for the piano work of the young Scot, Dave Newton, and sat on a high stool, Spike moved through a series of rewarding tenor ballads and originals. Try these for size: *Only A Rose, Summer Set*, the Zoot Sims piece, *El Pato*, a latin thing, *They Say That Falling In Love Is Wonderful, You're Blase* and Ron Carter's *Last Resort*. Each was caressed or propelled according to Spike's mood, the tenor lines extending irresistably, harmonically subtle but always pleasing in their Getzian resolutions and smooth swing feeling. On this showing, his playing is a touch more reflective than it was but there's not bitter edge or harshness and nothing to suggest the near-despair of the past few months.

He has a clutch of classy recordings newly out. Aside from Volume One of his quintet session with Sweets Edison on Capri (well-received critically), there's his date on ODM with Frenchman Claude Tissendier's fine band, Saxomania (their last collaborator was Benny Carter) amd a splendid CD on Hep, the Edinburgh-based label, which teams Spike with Ireland's greatest living jazzman, guitarist Louis Stewart and pianist Newton (with guest shots by Polish expatriate trumpeter Janusz Carmello). "Pretty" tunes abound on these too.

Spike knows that he owes a lot to all those who worked to save his life. He says: "That was a corker last year. I'd like to get back to see the people who helped me." He returned to the States in late May to play the 4-day Santa Fe Jazz Party, alongside Buddy Tate, another star tenorist who's been through some health setbacks recently.

I asked Spike if he had a word of cheer for his many fans. Aside from thanking them for their messages and encouragement, he said, "Tell them I'll be joining that dance troup pretty soon. I'm the one that does the somersaults."

Given Spike's gift for running rings around the medical jeremiahs, I'm sure his somersaults will be a sight to see. Welcome back, Spike!

THE CARIBBEAN

Joe Pass, Bireli Lagrene and **Al di Meola** were the jazz community's representatives at the 9th Guitar World Crossroads Festival held November 29 to

December 9 in Martinique.

ELSEWHERE

Scholarships are becoming another way in which jazz musicians are being supported financially. Pianist **Lars Jansson** was the recipient of this year's Jan Johansson scholarship in Sweden. . .**Bob Rockwell** was awarded the first annual Danish Palae's Jazz Prize, which is underwritten by the Copenhagen jazz bar and meeting place of the same name.

The 1991 International Conference of African American Music and Literature takes place at Liege State University from October 24-26 when the theme will be the relative positions of religious and secular music in African American traditions. Previous conferences examined Mississippi Blues Traditions and Cajun & Zydeco Music in Louisiana. Books were published of the lectures presented at both conferences. More information is available from Prof. Robert Sacre, Université de Liege, 117 Chaussée de Liege Tongres, B-4000 Liege (Rocourt), Belgium.

Leo Records is producing a series of 5 hours of new music from the USSR for telecast on England's Channel 4... **Jazz Mecca 1990** was a new Dutch jazz festival which took place in Maastricht from November 2-4 with an international lineup. . .The Hague's **Delta Jazz** concerts at the end of October focused on the talents of musicians from the newly united European comunity of artists. Musicians from England, Germany, Holland, Italy, USSR, Huntary and Czechoslovakia were featured. . . Jazz in der Aula and **Jazz in Willisau** combined their efforts for a concert presentation of the **Vienna Art Orchestra** October 13 in Baden, Switzerland. A showing of the Thelonious Monk movie, ***Straight No Chaser*** took place earlier the same day. . .Headliners at the annual Willisau Jazz Festival (August 30 to September 2) were **Anthony Braxton**, David Murray, Anthony Davis and the World Saxophone quartet.

FMP Productions presented three concerts in Berlin with Cecil Taylor in September followed by two concerts showcasing the talents of a broad cross section of "free" players. The 1990 Total Music Meeting was held between October 31 and November 4. . .The Nuremberg International Jazz Festival was held October 24-28.

The **Jazz Institute Darmstadt** is now a reality. It is the largest public archive of its kind in Europe and has been open to the public since September 1. The foundation of its collection is material donated in 1983 by well-known critic and jazz researcher, Joachim Berendt. The institute is directed by Dr. Wolfram Knauer and is located at Kasinostrabe 3, D-6100 Darmstadt, Germany.

LITERATURE

M.C. Chapman (17 North Road Avenue, Brentwood, Essex CM14 4XQ, England) is compiling a discography of **George Van Eps** and any assistance he can be given will be appreciated.

"Go Latin" is the theme of the new **Illu-Jazz Calendar** for 1991. The lavish production this year focuses on musicians of Latin extraction and is available from the publishers at a cost of $69.00 postpaid. Write to Illuverlag, Thomas Bartsch & Muller, Unterer Gaisberg 1, 7535 Koenigsbach-Stein 2, Germany. . . New books from Greenwood Press include ***Black Music in the Harlem Renaissance***, a collection of essays edited by Samuel A. Floyd Jr., and **Jazz Performers: An Annotated Bibliography of Biographical Materials** by Gary Carner. . .G.K. Hall & Co are planning a substantial Jazz Discography Series and the first two should be available in 1991. . .***From Blues To Bop*** is a collection of jazz fiction edited by Richard N. Albert and published by Louisiana State University Press. . . Now out in paperback from Oxford University Press are ***Meet Me At Jim & Andy's*** by Gene Lees and Whitney Balliett's ***American Singers***. Reissued in cloth is Alec Wilder's seminal ***American Popular Song***. . .Scarcrow Press' newest book is ***Reminiscin' In Tempo: The Life and Times of a Hustler*** by **Teddy Reid** and Edward M. Berger.

PETER BROTZMANN (Photograph by Bill Smith)

VIDEO

Straight No Chaser, the film documentary about Thelonious Monk, is now available on a Warner Video. Earlier jazz videos from Warner are now retailing at a sensible price. Included in that series are **Round Midnight, Bird** and **Pete Keilly's Blues**. . . **John Hammond: From Bessie Smith to Bruce Springsteen** was first seen this summer on PBS. It is now available as a video from CBS Music Products. . . View Video released in August a 30 minute video of **Dizzy Gillespie** called ***A Night In Tunisia*** as well as ***The Moscow Jazz Quintet: The Jazznost Tour. Jazz On A Summer's Day*** is now available on video and is available through Rhapsody Films.

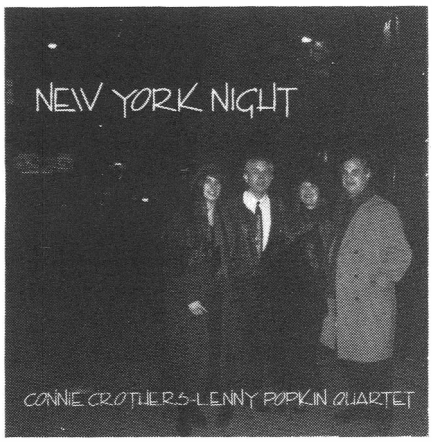
RECORDINGS

FMP (Lubecker Strasser 19, D-1000 Berlin 21, Germany) and **Bvaast** (99 Prinseneiland, 1013 LN Amsterdam) are the leading companies documenting the activities of Europe's contemporary performers and catalogs are available from them both. FMP's most recent release on CD is a 1968 **Peter Brontzmann** Octet recording, ***Machine Gun***.

Sonet plans to repackage on CD many of its 1970s recordings of American jazz greats. These include Al Cohn/Zoot Sims, **Ruby Braff**, Lee Konitz, **Red Rodney**, Howard McGhee / Illinois Jacquet and **Buddy Tate / Jay McShann**.

Bainbridge is releasing the classic Time recordings of **Booker Little, Kenny Dorham** and Max Roach on CD. . .Biograph is expanding its CD catalog with a **Fats Waller** collection of piano rolls called **Low Down Papa**. . . DA is the marketing arm for Black Lion / Candid recordings. The new material is appearing on Candid and includes **John Hicks** and **Kenny Barron** at two pianos. ***Rhythm-a-ning*** stems from a September 1989 concert in New York. ***Blue Head*** by the **Fathead Newman** Quintet with Clifford Jordan comes from the same event. New CD reissues from Black Lion include **Earl Hines'** ***Tour de Force***, volume 3 of the **Thelonious Monk** recordings and the **Nat Cole** ***Anatomy Of A Jazz Session***. . . Delmark has new jazz

CONNIE CROTHERS-LENNY POPKIN QUARTET



NEW ARTISTS presents

NEW YORK NIGHT

CONNIE CROTHERS. PIANO
LENNY POPKIN. TENOR SAXOPHONE
CAROL TRISTANO. DRUMS
CAMERON BROWN. BASS

Recorded at the Blue Note, New York City, December 4, 1989

Available from: North Country Distribution/Cadence Building Redwood, New York 13679 (315) 287-2852 NA 1008CD

recordings available by Chicagoans **Mike Smith** and **Edward Petersen**. They've also reissued on CD the Transition date by **Yusef Lateef** and **Donald Byrd**. . . Denon has released a newly recorded showcase for **Jon Hendricks** and Friends. . . The **Mingus Dynasty** band (with Randy Brecker, George Adams, Roland Hanna, Richard Davis and Kenny washington) has a live recordings from the Village Vanguard avilable on Storyville. . . ***Opening Night*** is the title of **Roy Meriwether's** new CD on Gemini Records. . . ***You Ought To Think About Me*** is **Jimmy McGrieff's** new recording on Headfirst Records. . . The 7 CD / 10 LP set of Dean Benedetti recordings of **Charlie Parker** is finally becoming available from Mosaic Records. They are also working on The complete Roulette recordings of **Count Basie** and the complete Capitol recordings of the **Nat King Cole Trio**. These projects should be ready in 1991. Mosaic is at 35 Melrose Place, Stamford, CT 06902. . . Musicmasters new releases include big band dates by **Louis Bellson** and **Mel Lewis** and a collaboration between the alto saxophones of **Benny Carter** and **Phil Woods** . . . Newly issued on Stash are ***Lotus Blossom - the Billy Strayhorn Project*** by the **Michael Hashim** Quartet and a new recording by **The String Trio of New York** . . . Strata East is back in action and their first release is volume one of ***Charles Toliver: Live In Berlin,*** a newly recorded performance. Tolliver plans to issue the earlier catalog on CD in the near future. . . Telarc has issued its second **André Previn** project. ***Uptown*** features the pianist with **Mundell Lowe** and **Ray Brown**. Also on Telarc is a new live recording of **Oscar Peterson** at New York's Blue Note club with Herb Ellis, Ray Brown and Bobby Durham. . . Triloka has a new recording of **Freddie Redd** recorded live at the Studio Grill with Al McKibbon and Billy Higgins. . . Dr. John, Fathead Newman and Art Blakey collaborated on **Bluesiana Triangle** in March 1990. The session is now available on Wyndham Hill Records.

Both **Sun Ra** and **Don Cherry** have new recordings available on A&M Records. .. **Don Pullen's** second Blue Note trio date is called ***Random Thoughts***. . . BMG Music is releasing CD boxes of **Jelly Roll Morton** and **Sidney Bechet**. The Morton set is complete (with all the alternates) while the Bechet set only contains the "master takes". . . CBS has issued a Bob Thiele production of **Stephane Grappelli** playing solo piano. . . CBS Special Products has reissued on CD **Betty Carter's** ***Social Call,*** recordings made in the 1950s.

Fantasy has issued a 12 CD box containing all the Debut recordings on which **Charles Mingus** performs. Collectors might have been even more impressed if it had been the complete Debut recordings but it is still an awesome document. . . **Groove Master** is **Hank Crawford's** latest Milestone release. Upcoming on Contemporary are new recordings by **John Campbell, carol Sloane** and **Tom Harrell**. New on Landmark is **Mulgrew Miller's** ***From Day To Day,*** a trio date with Robert Hurst and Kenny Washington. Previously unissued concert dates by **Louis Armstrong** (1957 Newport Festival) and **Oscar Peterson** (1986) are now out on Pablo. Slated for CD repackaging are the Ellington Carnegie Hall concerts and the **Art Tatum** Solo Masterpieces.

New from Verve is Abbey Lincoln's ***The World Is Falling Down,*** which features Jackie McLean and Clark Terry, her first US recording in over twenty years.

OBITUARIES

The jazz world continues to be depleted of non-renewable resources: English pianist **Harry South** died March 12. . . New Orleans pianist **Sing Miller** died May 18. . . Swedish trombonist **Eje Thelin** died May 18. . . **Walter Davis Jr.** died June 2 in New York. . . Trombonist **Lou Blackburn** died June 7 in Berlin. . . Saxophonist **Frank Wright** died June 17 in Germany. . . **June Christy** died June 21 in Los Angeles. . . **Dudu Fukwana** died June 30 in London. . . Pianist **Joe Turner** died in Paris July 21. . . Bassist **Chester Zardis** died in New Orleans August 14. . . Drummer **Freddie Kohlman** died in New Orleans September 29. . . **Art Blakey** died October 16 in New York.

THE CRITICS' CHOICE

CANADA

BILL SMITH - TORONTO (EDITOR)

Jane Bunnett & Don Pullen **New York Duets** Music & Arts CD
Rob Brown Trio **Breath Rhythm** Silkheart CD
Django Bates & Powder Room Collapse **Music For The Third Policeman** Ah Um CD
Carmen McRae **Sings Monk** Novus CD
Barre Phillips **Camouflage** Victo CD
Tubby Hayes w. Clarke Terry **The New York Sessions** Columbia CD
Red Richards **Lullaby In Rhythm** Sackville CD
Barry Guy & The London Jazz Composers Orchestra **Harmos** Intakt CD
Cecil Taylor **Conquistador** Blue Note CD
Johann Sebastian Bach (Nathan Milstein) **Sonatas & Partitas For Solo Violin** Deutsche Gramophon

JOHN NORRIS - TORONTO (PUBLISHER)

Johnny Adams **Walkin' On A Tightrope** Rounder
Ray Bryant **All Mine And Yours** Emarcy
Walter Davis Jr. **Scorpio Rising** SteepleChase
Duke Ellington **The Brunswick Era Vol. 1/2** Decca
Stan Getz **The Stockholm Concert** Gazell
George Lewis **The Complete Blue Note Recordings** Mosaic
Marian McPartland **plays Benny Carter Songbook** Concord
Ralph Peterson / Geri Allen **Triangular** Blue Note
Marcus Roberts **Deep in the Shed** Novus
T-Bone Walker **The Complete 1940-1954** Mosaic

STEVEN VICKERY - TORONTO

Hans Reichel/Rom Cora **Angel Carver** F.M.P.
René Lussier **Le Trésor d'le langue**
Gerry Hemingway **Tubworks**
Jane Bunnett & Don Pullen **New York Duets** Music & Arts CD
Paul Motian **on Broadway, vol. 1** JMT
Amsterdam String Trio **Wild West** nimbus
Detail (Dyani/Stevens Quartet) **In Time Was** circulasione totale
Quintet Moderne (Wachsmann/Lovens) **Ikkunan Takana** bead
Jimmy Lyons/Andrew Cyrille **Something In Return** soul note
Hugh Fraser Quintet **Pas de Problem** CBC

MARC CHÉNARD - MONTREAL

Aldo Romano/Joe Lovano **Ten Tales** Owl
Klaus König **Times of Devastation Poco à Poco** Enja
Bunky Green **Healing The Pain** Delos
Charles Mingus **Epitaph** Columbia
Anthony Braxton **(8(+3) Tristano Compositions/For Warne Marsh** hatArt
Stan Getz/Helen Merrill **Just Friends** Emarcy
Pino Minafra Quintet **Colori** Splasc(h)
Charles Mingus **Complete Debut Recordings**
Ton-Art **ZU** hatArt

RANDAL MCILROY - WINNIPEG

Ranee Lee **Deep Song** Justin Time
Steve Lacy **Morning Joy** hatArt
Franz Koglmann **Orts der geometrie** (hatArt)
John McLaughlin Trio **Live at Royal Festival Hall** Verve
New York Composers Orchestra **(same)** New World
Dexter Gordon **Steeplechase Radio Sessions (various titles)** Steeplechase
Marcus Roberts **Deep In The Shed** Novus
Branford Marsalis **Crazy People Music** Columbia
Material **Seven Souls** Nation/Virgin
John Zorn **Naked City** Elektra

USA

PETER FRIEDMAN - ROCHESTER, NY

Monty Alexander **The River** Concord Jazz
Nick Brignola **On A Different Level** Reservoir
Stanley Cowell Trio **Sienna** Steeplechase
Stan Getz **Anniversary** Emarcy
Vincent Herring **American Experience** Muskmasters
Dick Hyman **Plays Harold Arlen** Musicmasters
Jackie McLean **Dynasty** Triloka
Ralph Moore **Furthermore** Landmark
John Pizzarelli **My Blue Heaven** Chesky
Larry Williw Trio **Just In Time** Steeplechase

GERARD J. FUTRICK - READING, PA

Jackie McLean **Dynasty** Triloka
Marty Ehrlich **The Traveller's Tale** Enja
Q4 Orchester Project **Lyon's Brood** Creative Works Records
Roy Hargrove **Diamond In The Rough** RCA Novus
Jerry Gonzalez & The Fort Apache Band **Obatala** Enja
The Harper Brothers **Remembrance** Verve
Walter Davis Jr. **Scorpio Rising** Steeplechase
The Satchmo Legacy Band **Salute To Pops Vol. 1** Soul Note
Jimmy Gourley **The Left Bank of New York** Uptown
Buddy Collette Quintet Featuring James Newton **Flute Talk** Soul Note

W. PATRICK HINELY - VIRGINIA

Bob Belden Ensemble **Treasure Island** Sunnyside
Jane Bunnett & Don Pullen **New York Duets** Music & Arts CD
Clarion Fracture Zone **Blue Shift** ABC (Australia)
Steve Dobrogosz & Berit Andersson **The Final Touch** Dragon (Sweden)
Duke Ellington **Solos, Duets & Trios** RCA
George Gruntz Trio **Serious Fun** Enja (Germany)
Marc Johnson **Two By Four** Emarcy (Japan)
Various artists **New Orleans Heritage Jazz 1956-66** Opus
Lew Tabackin Quartet **Desert Lady** Concord
Henri Texier **Colonel Skopje** Label Bleu (France)

KEVIN WHITEHEAD - NEW YORK CITY, NY

Muhal Richard Abrams Orchestra **The Hearings Suite** Black Saint
Maarten Altena Ensemble **Quotl** hat Art
Anthony Braxton **(8(+3) Tristano**

JANE BUNNETT

Compositions/For Warne Marsh hatArt
John Carter **Shadows on a Wall** Gramavision
Vinny Golia Large Ensemble **Pilgrimage to Obscurity** 9 Winds
Shelley Hirsch/David Weinstein **Haiku Lingo** Review
Abbey Lincoln **The World Is Falling Down** Verve
New York Composers Orchestra **Music by Marty Ehrlich, Robin Holcomb, Wayne Horvitz, Doug Wieselman** New World
Art Pepper **The Complete Galaxy Recordings** Galaxy
Randy Weston **Portraits** (3 vol) Verve

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN V - COLUMBIA, SC
Nick Brignola **On A Different Level** Reservoir
Kenny Burrell **Guiding Spirit** Contemporary
Art Farmer/Frank Morgan **Central Avenue Reunion** Contemporary
Terry Gibbs **Bopstacle Course** Xanadu
Vinny Golia **Pilgrimage to Obscurity** 9 Winds
André Jaume/Tavagna **Piazza di Luna** CELP
Karin Krog **Something Borrowed. . . Something New** Meantime
Junior Mance **Special** Sackville
Archie Shepp in Europe, vol. 1 (New York Contemporary 5) Delmark
Fats Waller **The Definitive, vol. 1** Stash

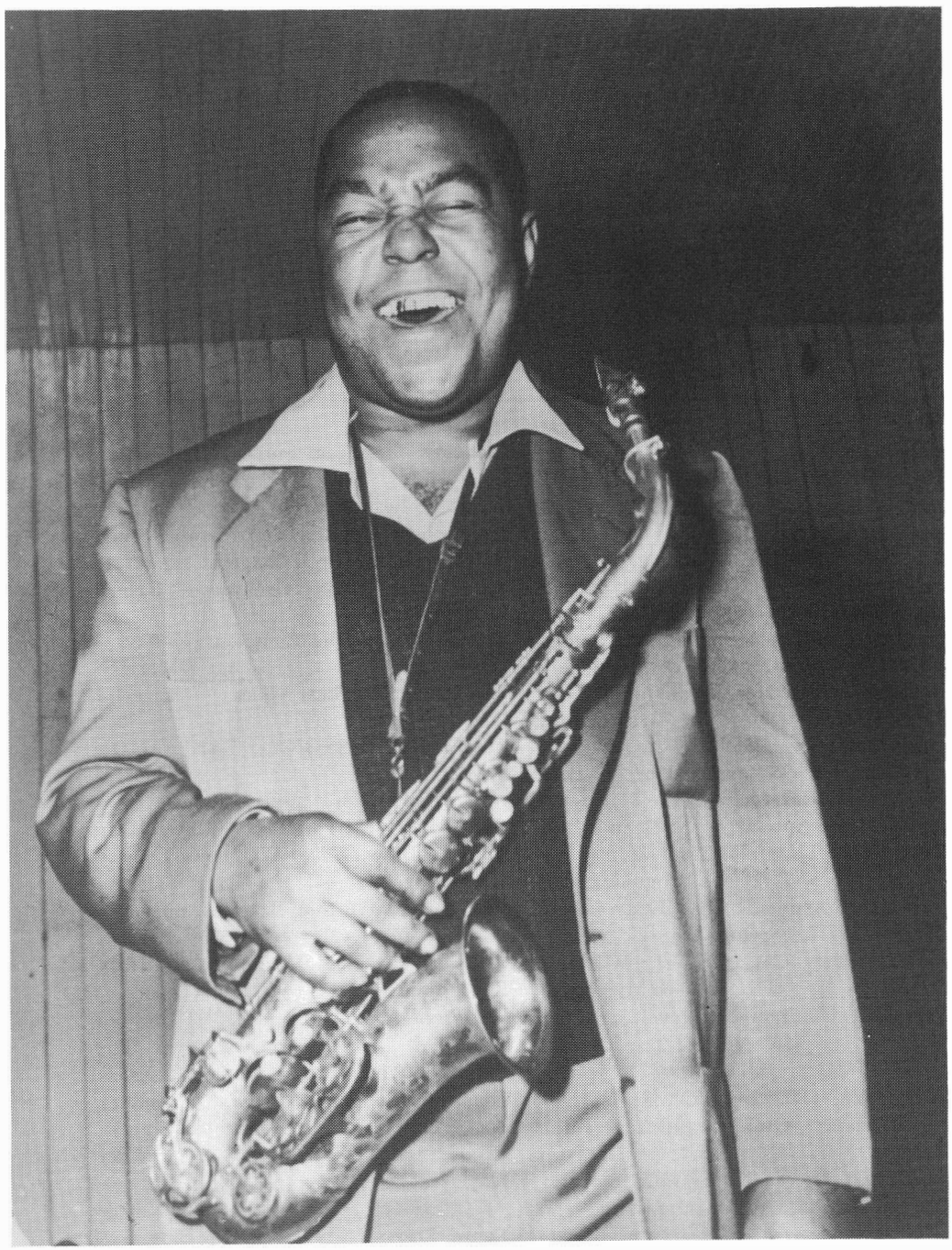
DICK NEELD - MANEMSHA, MA
Howard Alden-Dan Barrett Quintet **Salutes Buck Clayton** Concord
Kenny Davern/Dick Wellstood/Chuck Riggs **Stretchin' Out** Jazzology
Marty Grosz **Swing It!** Jazzology
Eddie Hazell **Pick Yourself Up** Eden
Milt Hinton **Back to Bass-ics** Progressive
Junior Mance **Special** Sackville
Carol Sloane **Love You Madly** Contemporary
Various Artists **The Complete Commodore Recordings, vol. 2** Mosaic
Various Artists **Kings of Harlem Stride** Euphonic
Various Artists **Trumpet Royalty** Vintage Jazz Classics

SCOTT YANOW - LOS ANGELES, CA
Alden/Barrett Quintet **Salutes Buck Clayton** Concord
Chet Baker **The Italian Sessions** Bluebird
Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra **The Groove Shop** Capri
The Jazz Passengers **Implement Yourself** New World
Jackie McLean **Dynasty** Triloka
Pat Metheny **Question and Answer** Geffen
Ralph Peterson Trio **Triangular** Blue Note
Art Tatum **The Complete Group Masterpieces** Pablo
T-Bone Walker **The Complete, 1940-54** Mosaic
Fats Waller **The Last Years** Bluebird

JOSE HOSIASSON - SANTIAGO, CHILE
Nick Brignola **On A Different Level** Reservoir
Clifford Brown **The Complete Emarcy Recordings** Emarcy
Benny Carter **All Star Sax Ensemble** Musicmasters
Bill Evans **The Complete Fantasy Recordings** Fantasy
Hank Jones **Lazy Afternoon** Concord
The Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra **The Definitive Thad Jones** Musicmasters
Frank Morgan **Mood Indigo** Antilles
Art Pepper **The Complete Galaxy Recordings** Galaxy
Marcus Roberts **Deep In The Shed** RCA/Novus
Renée Rosnes Blue Note

THE SUBTERRANEANS ON THE ROAD

This is the first in a series of articles, the intent being to provide an historical framework with which to introduce both the recordings and published writings that document an important era of American jazz. Part one has a time frame of the mid to late 1940s and revolves around California's introduction to bebop. As there is already a vast amount of published work concerning Charlie Parker's fifteen months as a resident of California, part one is based primarily on information from those sources. Part two, which deals with what has come to be known as "West Coast Jazz," will be based on both previously published material and personal interviews with individuals who had a direct bearing on its inception and development.



If Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Milt Jackson, Ray Brown, Al Haig, and Stan Levey had not been typical young musicians, obsessed with their own experiments and an overwhelming desire to cut loose, they wouldn't have taken their axes to the Southside of Chicago to jam and missed their connecting train to Los Angeles that December of 1945. The train ride from New York to L.A. would have lasted its scheduled three days instead of a week, and Parker, having had enough heroin for the trip, would have arrived a much more stable man. But as a result of the delay, this all-star band of bebop arrived to fulfil an eight-week contract at Billy Berg's Hollywood nightclub with an enlightening bit of information that had a bearing on the weeks to come: Charlie Parker was not a casual user of heroin as suspected, but rather, as his severe withdrawal symptoms indicated, a full-fledged addict whose life was very much controlled by its availability.

The New York scene these musicians left behind had been winding down with the end of the war--gigs were becoming harder to come by--and the jazz musicians who worked on 52nd Street had come under constant harassment by the police for suspected drug use. But bebop had become an obsession with musicians and non-musicians alike. In the New York of the mid to late 1940s, a goateed, bereted man carrying a trumpet case did not necessarily signal a musician, but could just as well have been an overzealous fan. With all of these pseudo-hipsters on the loose, amazingly there was one whose fetish rose above the rest: Dean Benedetti. Benedetti, a sax player himself, seldom missed a gig of Parker's. He could always be found operating his portable tape machine, often inside a stall of the men's room, recording only the sounds of Parker's alto (recordings to be released for the first time by Mosaic Records in June of 1990). For Dean Benedetti, no other musician came close to his beloved Bird. So it was no surprise that Benedetti was at the train station when the rebop train arrived on the West Coast, and it was no hardship for him to take Parker to a physician, who, for twenty dollars, ushered Parker out of the door armed with enough morphine to make that night's opening. As the war was winding down and 52nd Street was falling on hard times, a gig on the West Coast seemed to

come at just the right time. Gillespie's state-of-the-art, New York bebop band was about to be heard live for the first time in California.

Gillespie states in his book, ***To Be Or Not To Bop*** (Da Capo Press, 1979), **"I actually took six guys to California instead of five I had contracted for because I knew--them matinees, sometimes [Parker] wouldn't be there and I didn't want the management on my back. . . . Yeah, Charlie Parker was such a great musician that sometimes he'd get lost and wouldn't show up until very, very late."** Tenor saxophonist Lucky Thompson was soon on hand to cover for Parker as well. In the same book, **Stan Levey** relays, **"So the attitude Dizzy had toward Charlie was, well, we have a child here who has a great talent."**

Parker was late for opening night at Billy Berg's. As Dizzy and the band played and stalled for time, Parker was in his dressing room with Benedetti, consuming mass quantities of food and liquor. After a long while, Parker sent Benedetti out to the stage with a message for Dizzy, **"Play Cherokee."** With the band cooking at breakneck speed, Parker made his grand entrance from the back of the room, blowing amazing contours of eighth notes as he crossed the floor to the stage. The crowded room, filled with both the curious and enlightened, many of whom were musicians, was whipped into a frenzy.

As inspirational as opening nights was, the next week's diminishing audience showed California's truer side. **"We hit some grooves on the bandstand at Billy Berg's that I'll always remember,"** states Dizzy in ***To Be Or Not To Bop***, **"but the audience wasn't too hip."** Not helping matters by sharing the same bill were early R&B-type vocalists Slim Gaillard and Harry "the Hipster" Gibson: big West Coast stars who rose to prominence with such hits as *Cement Mixer, Flat Foot Floogie* and *Who Put the Benzedrine In Mrs. Murphy's Ovaltine*. Gaillard's often nonsensical yet witty style can be heard on two excellent anthologies issued by Savoy Records: ***Black California Volume 1 & 2*** (Savoy 2215 & 2242). Featured with Gaillard on *Boogin' at Berg's, Laguna, Dunkin' Bagel (vol.1) and The Jam Man, Slim's Riff, I'm Confessin'* and *Oxydol Highball* (vol. 2) are Dodo Marmarosa, Bam Brown, Zutty Singleton and (possibly) Oscar Bradley. Gaillard's good looks, notorious prowess with women and got-the-world-by the-short-hairs attitude are probably what reportedly led Miles Davis to say, **"There are only two men that I look up to. . . Slim Gaillard and Dizzy Gillespie. Without them I wouldn't be playing."** (from ***The Hip*** by Carr, Dellar and Case/ Faber and Faber Ltd., 1986). Ray Brown is quoted in Dizzy's book as saying that Billy Berg told the band, **"You're gonna have to sing or something,"** and out of that demand came Parker's "vocal" arrangement of *Salt Peanuts*.

Now Dean [Moriarty] approached him, he approached his God: he thought Slim was God; he shuffled and bowed in front of him and asked him to join us.

"Right-orooni," says Slim; he'll join anybody but won't guarantee to be there with you in spirit. Dean got a table, bought drinks, and sat stiffly in front of Slim. Slim dreamed over his head. Every time Slim said, "Orooni," Dean said, "Yes!"

I sat there with these two madmen. Nothing happened. To Slim Gaillard the whole world was one big orooni."

From ***On The Road*** *by Jack Kerouac (Buccaneer, 1975)*

In the audience that first night at Berg's was Ross Russell, a man who would play a major role in Bird's life for the next several years to come. Russell was the white owner of the Tempo Music Shop, established earlier that same year in Hollywood. While being a more knowledgeable listener than the average Californian, Russell had a reputation among the small local bop crowd as a moldy fig. Russell's ex-wife, Indira Smith, remembers that Russell's stay with the merchant marines during the war years was the primary reason for his belated conversion to bebop. **"Ross was shaken--the whole bebop thing had happened and he didn't like that gap in his knowledge. He listened to bop bands and ordered bebop from small labels."** (***JazzTimes*** / January, 1989). Referring to these early Bird records on the Savoy label that were sold in his store, Russell recalls in his book, ***Bird Lives!*** (Quartet Books Limited, 1988): **"It took hundreds of playings of those records to wean me away from classical jazz. The boppers were about to give up on me when the band opened at Berg's I went along and shared a table with several customers. The live performance, along with Charlie's dramatic entrance, convinced me that bop was in the main line of the jazz tradition."**

As Dean Benedetti went to work on Parker's drug source and hooked up with Emery Byrd, alias "Moose the Mooche" (to whom Parker later signed over half of all his Dial royalties), on Central Avenue, Ross Russell went to work on the prospect of recording Parker. So, as the Commodore label grew out of the Commodore Music Shop, Dial Records was the natural offspring of Tempo. Bob Weinstock, founder and producer of Prestige Records in New York, recalls that **"Dial and Savoy were always having contract disputes because Parker was under contract to both companies."** Even though Parker was under contract to Savoy Records, Russell took his chances and organized the first session, which was postponed until the evening following the band's last night at Billy Berg's. The first Dial session of Tuesday, February 5, 1946, organized to include pianist George Handy and Lester Young (who never showed) in addition to Dizzy, Ray Brown, Levey, and guitarist Arvin Garrison, produced only one tune: *Diggin' Diz*, based on the chords to *Lover*. The following Thursday should have concluded the recording activities, but on this evening, both Young **and** Parker were nowhere to be found. **"Thus was missed the chance to record one of the outstanding small bands of jazz,"** admits Russell.

Meanwhile, Norman Granz's Jazz At The Philharmonic concert series, which had its debut in LA at the Philharmonic Auditorium on July 2, 1944, was coming alive again in early 1946. Included on that very first bill were J.J. Johnson, Illinois Jacquet, Lester Young, Nat King Cole, Les Paul, Johnny Miller, Lee Young, Shorty Sherlock and Red Callender. (***JATP, Historic Recordings***, Polygram 833 560-1). Parker and Gillespie both took part in the second JATP concert of January 29, 1946, which was Parker's first featured concert appearance (***JATP, Bird/Pres '46 Concert***, Polygram 833-565-1, and ***Bird: The Complete Charlie Parker On Verve***, Polygram 837 141-2).

On stage with Parker and Gillespie in the all-star lineup of horn players were altoist Willie Smith, tenor player Charlie Ventura and Lester Young, and trumpeter Al Killian. *The Man I Love* (originally issued on 78 rpm in six parts), *Crazy Rhythm* and *Sweet Georgia Brown* find Diz and Bird playing quite passionately, considering the strict four-to-the-bar swing rhythm section. One of Parker's finest recorded solos--truly a must for collectors--can be heard on *Lady Be Good*, recorded on March 25 (the last JATP concert to be held at Philharmonic Auditorium, due to dancing in the aisles). Parker toys with *Lady Be Good*, turning it into an ultra-modern blues. On several other cuts, it's interesting to hear Parker pick up on some of the swing saxophonists' nuances. On *After You've Gone*, from the same March 25 concert, Parker solos immediately following Willie Smith's alto and cops that same greasy feel which is Smith's trademark.

. . . so here he was on the stand, examining them with his eyes as he blew his now-settled-down-late-regulated-design "crazy" notes–the booming drums, the high ceiling. . .to hear Bird. . .the king and founder of the bop generation at least the sound of it in digging his audience digging his eyes, the secret eyes him-watching, as he just pursed his lips and let great lungs and immortal fingers work, his eyes separate and interested and humane, the kindest jazz musician there would be while being and therefore naturally the greatest. . ."

From ***The Subterraneans*** *by Jack Kerouac (Ballantine, 1974)*

Although criticized for commercialization and an obvious lack of organization on the bandstand (there are often catastrophic endings to tunes, with a trumpet screeching the tonic as the rhythmic section seemingly falls out from under him), Granz deserves credit for recording and releasing these JATP concerts. It was not an uncalculated move that he gave bop an added push by placing these modern sounds in the record collections of moldy figs. In a November, 1953, issue of ***Atlantic***, poet and critic Whitney Balliett paid tribute to Norman Granz by pronouncing Granz **"one of jazz's liveliest *aficionados*,"** and recognizing that Granz was the first **"to reproduce [live jazz] on 78 rpm records for public consumption"** with his JATP concerts.

In early February, 1946, with their contract fulfilled, Dizzy's band headed back to New York, but Parker stayed on as he was nowhere to be found when departing time arrived. Bird sold his ticket and went underground for a short while, but was soon working at The Finale club. Located in "Little Tokyo" (whose original residents were in an internment camp), The Finale came to be known as the Minton's of the West because of the incredible sessions being held there. Thus it was that Parker became a regular member of the West Coast scene, a catalyst who attracted the best musicians from both coasts, and raised the level of jazz music in Los Angeles to state-of-the-art. After a short while, Bird showed up at Tempo music, apologized to Russell for his prior escapades, and signed a contract to record with the band of his choosing. After some changes in personnel, Miles Davis (who had arrived in L.A. with the Benny Carter Orchestra), Lucky Thompson, Dodo Marmarosa, Arvin Garrison, Vic McMillan, and Roy Porter entered Radio Recorders Studios in Hollywood on March 28, 1946, for what would later be acknowledged as Bird's most organized Dial date, and the results attest to Bird's healthy state of mind and body. All of the tunes recorded that day have become classics. Masters of *Moose the Mooche, Yardbird Suite, Ornithology* and *Night in Tunisia* were all achieved, along with seven alternate takes. Parker's *Famous Alto Break* from *Night in Tunisia* was committed to acetate and later released as such (the rest of this take was unacceptable). Miles Davis recalls, **". . . Bird pulled himself together and played his ass off"** (from ***Miles, The Autobiography*** with Quincy Troupe, Simon and Schuster, 1989). All takes, including the previously recorded Diggin' Diz are available on ***Charlie Parker On Dial Vol. 1*** (Spotlite 101) and the masters are available on ***Charlie Parker, The Legendary Dial Masters, Vol. 1*** (Stash ST-CD-23). A clear indication of the attention the Dials were receiving is evident by the fact that Davis, Thompson and Marmarosa received ***Down Beat's*** New Star awards for 1946.

One aspect of the record business which began in the bebop era was the superimposing of original melodies over standard chord changes. This allowed the bop musicians a more suitable "head" with which to frame their improvisations and also conveniently allowed the record companies to avoid payment of royalties to the music publishers. There are many examples of this with the Dial sides. For example, *Ornithology* is played over the changes to *How High THe Moon; Moose the Mooche* is based on *I Got Rhythm*. As stated by Savoy A & R man Teddy Reig in an interview with Bob Porter (included in the booklet accompanying ***Charlie Parker: The Complete Savoy Studio Sessions***. Savoy SJL 5500), at times the bop labels were not even that discreet. The tune *Ko Ko* **is** *Cherokee*; the melody is virtually unchanged after the initial introduction. However, in the studio control room during its recording, Savoy owner Herman Lubinsky became anxious when he thought he recognized the tune but couldn't quite place it. Teddy Reig covered up for Bird. As Reig recalls, **". . . Herman is yelling at me, 'What's the name of this,' so I just yelled back at him, 'Ko Ko, K-O-K-O.'"**

With regard to alternate takes, what separated the Dial label from its competition is the fact that Russell had no qualms about pressing these in addition to the master. Bob Weinstock, who admired Russell and considered him his mentor, remembers that Russell **"brought me over to his office after he moved Dial to New York (in the**

DIZZY GILLESPIE (Photograph by Gerard Futrick)

summer of 1947) and dug out second and third takes, which he had on 78-type pressings, believe it or not. That was revolutionary," Weinstock continues, focusing on ethics, **"but Prestige never got into that; I'd erase all the out-takes. I feel strongly about this: musicians shouldn't have inferior product out. I don't dig it, even with Bird. It's not fair to the musicians."** Miles Davis has no kind words in his autobiography when he describes Russell as **"a jive motherfucker who I never did get along with because he was nothing but a leech, who didn't never do nothing but suck off Bird like he was a vampire. . ."**

Dials vs. Savoys / The Parker Sides

Leech or not, Ross Russell recorded some classic Charlie Parker sides, but it's debatable whether the Dials, as a body of work, can stand up to the Savoys (both were recorded during the same era). Russell may have been influenced by Norman Granz's highly popular JATP concerts, and to some bop purists' tastes, the West Coast Dial recordings were a bit too crowded with musicians. The later New York-recorded Dials of October and November, 1947, with Miles Davis, Duke Jordan, Tommy Potter and Max Roach (available on both volumes of ***Charlie Parker, The Legendary Dial Masters,*** *Stash St-CD-23 and ST-CD-25 and* ***Charlie Parker On Dial Vol. 4 & 5,*** *Spotlite 104 & 105) are outstanding, and of the truest consistency of bop. The two-horn quintet is* ***the*** *bop ensemble, and Savoy's Teddy Reig deserves belated kudos for being the first to realize this and record Bird in this setting.* (Note: another primary source for early recorded bop are the Guild and Musicraft sides, available on **Dizzy Gillespie And His Orchestra & Sextets,** Musicraft MVSCD-53).

Parker continued gigging at The Finale and at Billy Berg's Sunday afternoon jam sessions, but his health began to deteriorate as the high cost, unavailability, and poor quality of heroin took their tool. To make matters worse, a letter reached Dial Records announcing Emery Byrd's change of address to San Quentin Prison. When The Finale suddenly closed its doors, Parker went into hiding and attempted quitting cold

turkey, but eventually succumbed instead to alcohol and benzedrine. He was located by trumpeter Howard McGhee and given work at the Hi-De-Ho club, McGhee's regular gig. Although Parker agreed with Russell to re-enter the studio within sixty days of the March 28 session, he never did so until July 29, in very bad physical and mental shape. The musicians on hand were Howard McGhee, Jimmy Bunn, Bob Kesterson and Roy Porter. This is the famous sessions which produced the eerie but beautiful *Lover Man*, an aural testament to the frailty of man. Also to come out of it were arguably unacceptable takes of *Max Making Wax*, *The Gypsy*, and an erratic *Bebop*. There were no alternates, and all are available on both ***Charlie Parker On Dial Vol. 1*** (Spotlite 101) and ***Charlie Parker, The Legendary Dial Masters, Vol. 1*** (Stash ST-CD-23). Parker's well-publicized breakdown in the studio on this date led to a six month stay in Camarillo State Hospital and inspired a popular bit of fiction written by Elliot Grennard, published in the May, 1947 issue of ***Harper's Magazine*** entitled *Sparrow's Last Jump*. According to Russell's ex-wife, Indira Smith (***JazzTimes***, January 1989), "[Bird] **was court-committed to Camarillo [State Hospital], but always accused Ross of putting him there. . . .We visited him every weekend."**

At the approximate time of Parker's entering Camarillo, vocalist Earl Coleman approached Russell about doing a record date. In Ira Gitler's ***Swing To Bop: An Oral History Of The Transition In Jazz In The 1940s*** (Oxford University Press, 1985), Coleman remembers Russell's reply: **"Billy Eckstine could walk in here if he wanted to; I wouldn't record him. Or Sarah Vaughan, because singers don't go with bop."** Coleman had known Bird since their days in Kansas City together, and when he visited Bird in Camarillo, Bird told Coleman (also in ***Swing To Bop***), **"I'm going to do something for you man. I'm going to record you and you're going to make a record that's so big, as long as you live, you'll always be remembered, and even after you're gone." "Finally one day I go home,"** Coleman continues, **"and they say, 'There's some record company been calling you all day. Ross Russell.' I thought, 'Ross Russell? What would he want me for? He don't want no singers.' And then it dawned. I said, 'Bird's home.'"**

The Charlie Parker Quartet, which for this date consisted of Erroll Garner, Red Callender, and Harold 'Doc' West entered the C.P. MacGregor Studios on February 19, 1947, and began by recording two vocals (in six takes) with Earl Coleman. Ross Russell reports in ***Bird Lives!*** that **"Earl Coleman struggled for two hours to complete acceptable takes on two vocals,** *Dark Shadows* **and** *This Is Always*. **I didn't like them, although they were better than I realized. After the last take of** *Dark Shadows*, **Earl was unable to sing another note and retired to the sidelines."** Coleman counters in ***Swing To Bop***, **"I was what? Nineteen or twenty then, you know. Could you imagine me getting tired? I don't get tired when I sing now. The more I sing, the more I can. Everybody knew that was a lie because they had so much time. They did trio sides, and then they did** *Cool Blues* **and** *Bird's Nest*." These were completed in a brisk seven takes, all of which (minus the trios) are on ***Charlie Parker On Dial Vol. 2*** (Spotlite 102). All of the masters are included on ***Charlie Parker, The Legendary Dial Masters, Vol. 1*** (Stash ST-CD-23). Earl Coleman (who was actually twenty-one at the time of the Parker session) is remembered by Bob Weinstock as being in sync with the music of the day: **"The musicians loved Earl Coleman and felt he was akin to their playing."**

. . .she stood in the doorway listening to bop as if for the first time as it poured out, the intentions of the musicians and of the horns and instruments suddenly a mystical unit expressing itself in waves like sinister and again electricity but screaming with palpable aliveness the direct ***word*** *from the vibration, the interchanges of statement, the levels of intimation, the smile in sound. . ."*

From ***The Subterraneans***

The last Dial session prior to both Bird's and Dial's relocation to New York was that of February 26, 1947. Present with Bird were Howard McGhee, Wardell Gray, Dodo Marmarosa, Barney Kessell, Red Callender, and Don Lamond. A total of eleven takes produced acceptable masters (despite Mar-

DEXTER GORDON (Photograph by Bill Smith)

marosa's sudden affinity for swing rather than bop-style piano) of *Relaxin' At Camarillo, Cheers, Carvin' The Bird,* and *Stupendous.* McGhee states in ***Swing To Bop*** that Parker composed relaxin' At Camarillo while in the bath just prior to this session. Again, all masters are included on ***Charlie Parker, The Legendary Dial Masters, Vol. 1*** (Stash ST-CD-23), with all masters and alternates available on ***Charlie Parker On Dial Vol. 3*** (Spotlite 103). **"And [Bird] hated the title Ross attached to one Parker tune--***Relaxin' At Camarillo,***"** says Indira Smith (***JazzTimes,*** January 1989). **"Bird was a very serious man,"** she offered. **"We were in an L.A. elevator, heading up to one of the Dial sessions, when he noticed three musical notes on the necktie of a boy who followed the bands. The first hour, at $1,000 per hour for studio rental, he insisted on fooling with those three notes. No others. The second hour, it all fell together for him. We made a good record. bird played beautifully."**

Bird departed the West Coast for New York on March 25, 1947, but the sounds of modern jazz stayed behind in a legacy of young players touched by the sounds of Charlie Parker. Some of the West Coast musicians (both native and transplant) such as Teddy Edwards, Sonny Criss, Hampton Hawes, Roy Porter, Dexter Gordon, Charles Mingus, Buddy Collette and Wardell Gray had been listening to Bird's records (or heard him on the road) and were already well into the new movement prior to Gillespie's gig at Billy Berg's. Attesting to this fact are early sides recorded by L.A. native Gordon, who spent his apprenticeship with Lionel Hampton: ***Dexter Gordon, Master Takes / The Savoy Recordings with Bud Powell, Fats Navarro & Tadd Dameron*** (SJL 1154) from 1945-47. After three years in Lionel Hampton's band came stints with Louis Armstrong and Billy Eckstine. With Gordon and equally robust Gene Ammons on tenor, the Eckstine band gave birth to a method of soloing which evolved into an incredible commercial success: the chase. The chase consisted of the trading of solos of gradually diminishing length from whole choruses down to two bars or even two beats each. The results are exciting, and it didn't take long for record companies to exploit this new concept. The most famous two-tenor battle of all, *The Chase,* with Dexter Gordon and Wardell Gray, was recorded on the Dial label in June of 1947, and was easily Russell's hottest selling record. Another, *The Duel,* recorded six months later with Gordon and Teddy Edwards had similar commercial results. Both, along with *Mischievous Lady, Lullaby In Rhythm, Iridescence, Chromatic Aberration, Talk Of The Town, Blues Bikini, Ghost Of A Chance,* and *Sweet And Lovely* can be heard on ***Dexter / The Dial Sessions*** (Storyville SLP 814). Many other chase-type recordings were subsequently made, such as the Gene Ammons / Sonny Stitt battle *Blues Up And Down,* included on ***Blues Up And Down, Vol. 1*** (Prestige 7823).

---

*Uproars of music and the tenorman **had it** and everybody knew he had it. Dean was clutching his head in the crowd, and it was a mad crowd. They were all urging that tenorman to hold it and keep it with cries and wild eyes, and he was raising himself from a crouch and going down again with his horn, looping it up in a clear cry above the furor.*

From On The Road

By 1947, many servicemen had made L.A. their home after returning from the Pacific theater. Bebop was in its prime. It could be heard nightly in the clubs on Central Avenue, the scaled down 52nd Street of the West Coast, on Los Angeles' predominantly black east side. There was the Down Beat, Alabam, Lovejoy's Jack's Basket, Memo, Last Word, Plantation Club, Hi-De-Ho, and the Elk's Auditorium, where big bands often played, to name a few. As the big bands, Dixieland, and New Orleans music were previously the most popular jazz ensembles (in ***Swing To Bop,*** Howard McGhee says, "[the older musicians] **thought we were bringin' somethin' there to destroy their kingdom."**), these small clubs on Central Avenue were responsible for the development of West Coast small group modern jazz by way of jam-sessions which lasted well past sunrise. Trumpeter Benny Bailey remembers the camaraderies amongst the bop generation in ***Swing To Bop,*** **"[L.A.] was a big city, but the scene was pretty small. All the musicians knew each other, jazz musicians. And I remember there was very little enmity in those days. Everybody was very friendly 'cause everybody was tryin' to learn the same thing actually. It was very nice."** Dexter Gordon recalled in ***Dexter Gordon: A Musical Biography*** by Stan Britt (Da Capo Press, 1989) that **"the jam-session thing was going on very heavily at that time, at several different clubs. At all the sessions, they would hire a rhythm section, along with, say, a couple of horns. But there would always be about ten horns up on the stage. Various tenors, altos, trumpets, and an occasional trombone. But it seemed that in the wee small hours of the morning--always--there would be only Wardell and myself."**

Terry came out and led me by the hand to Central Avenue, which is the colored main drag of L.A. And what a wild place it is, with chicken shacks barely big enough to house a jukebox, and the jukeboxes blowing nothing

but blues, bop, and jump. . . .The wild humming night of Central Avenue--the night of Hamp's "Central Avenue Breakdown"--howled and boomed along outside.

From On The Road

Wardell Gray was a heavy-weight in his own right. After two years in the Earl Hines band, Gray settled in L.A. in 1945 and became a regular on Central Avenue as well as in the recording studio. Despite the fact that Gray was a true-to-form bop player, his smoother Lester Young-influenced sound and linear approach to improvisation led to gigs with Benny Goodman's small group (1948-49) and with Count Basie (1949, 1950-51). When Gray was in New York in the late 40s, Ross Russell referred him to Bob Weinstock of Prestige. Out of that relationship came such classic recorded solos as those heard on *Twisted* and *Farmer's Market* (***Wardell Gray Memorial, Vol. 1 & 2,*** OJC 050 & 051), both of which have been popularized more by vocalese (Annie Ross, Mark Murphy, Joni Mitchell, etc.) than the original works. Gray's death in Las Vegas in 1955 has been a subject of speculation for some time, but in Stanley Britt's ***Dexter Gordon: A Musical Biography***. Gordon himself states, **"It was from an OD--overdose of heroin. . . .They [dancer Teddy Hale and a friend] got scared. Panicked. . . .And they put him into a car, drove out to the desert and dumped him. In the process--because he was deadweight or something--they cracked his neck. There was no mystery, really."** Gordon also adds, **"He was a beautiful player."**

Trumpeter Howard McGhee, who arrived in California with Coleman Hawkins in 1945, had a tremendous impact on the development of West Coast bebop during his two-year residence. He became a regular member of Norman Granz's Jazz At The Philharmonic entourage (heard on the previously mentioned Polygram JATP sides). His innovative style can be heard to avail on the Charlie Parker Dials and ***Howard McGhee On Dial*** (Spotlite 131, 134). Upon returning to New York, McGhee recorded some outstanding material for Savoy (***Howard McGhee: Maggie, The Savoy Sessions,*** SJL 2219) and as a sideman for Blue Note (***The Fabulous Fats Navarro,*** BST 81532, Vol. 2)

They ate voraciously as Dean, sandwich in hand, stood bowed and jumping before the big phonograph, listening to a wild bop record I had just bough called ***The Hunt,*** *with Dexter Gordon and Wardell Gray blowing their tops before a screaming audience that gave the record a fantastic frenzied volume.*

From On The Road

Few recordings catch the spirit of Central Avenue better than that made at the Elk's Club on the night of July 6, 1947. On hand were Howard McGhee, Trummy Young, Sonny Criss, Dexter Gordon, Wardell Gray, Hampton Hawes, Barney Kessell, Harry Babison, Red Callender, Ken Kennedy and Connie Kay. The majority of this informal jam can be heard on ***The Hunt / Dexter Gordon and Wardell Gray*** (SJL 2222), with more contained on **Dexter Gordon** (SJL 2211), and an additional cut on ***Black California Vol. 2 - Anthology*** (SJL 2242). The latter two-LP set finds trumpeter Al Killian and pianist Russ Freeman added to the session. Discreetly recorded by Ralph Bass during the recording ban, these albums comprise some of the most exciting jazz available, bar none. (The sound is quite good due to remastering by Rudy Van Gelder.) First released on the Bop label, the original series of 78 rpms had one particular soloist blowing per side, and was listed by soloist on the jukeboxes in the black bars.

GREAT JAZZ ON SACKVILLE CDs

Celebrate The Season With Our Best Selling Christmas Record

9 PERFORMANCE **9** SOUND QUALITY

Sackville All Stars: Sackville All Star Christmas Record
Producers: John Norris, Bill Smith
Engineer: Phil Sheridan
Sackville CD 3038-2 (DDD)
Disc time: 48:50

You could really swing into the new year listening to carols played like this. Soprano saxophonist Jim Galloway teams up with bass legend Milt Hinton, drummer Gus Johnson, and pianist Ralph Sutton for a soulful set of straight-ahead jazz improvisations on "Santa Claus Is Coming to Town," "Winter Wonderland," "Go Tell It on the Mountain," and seven others. *All Star Christmas Record* has enough spirit and fine musicianship to cure even the worst case of last-minute-shopping blues. And the pristine sound quality brings this acoustic ensemble to life, giving you the impression that these seasoned artists have actually set up stage in your living room.

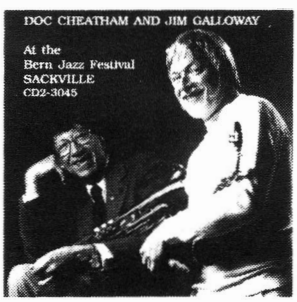
There's virtually no end to the inventive approaches the All Stars take. "We Three Kings" maintains a sense of minor key mystery that seems made for the bluesy licks of Galloway's saxophone. "At the Christmas Ball" swings with a slow burlesque tease of catchy musical phrasing and a rich bass solo from Hinton. Just try and sit still through this tune.

A light, carefree version of "Winter Wonderland" follows, taking you on a jazzy sleigh ride through walking bass lines, witty piano solos, and bright statements from the reed player. Only "Good King Wenceslas" lacks a little luster. The tempo and drum beats are a bit ponderous at the opening, but the effect is hardly worth mentioning once Galloway and Sutton add some choice musical insights.

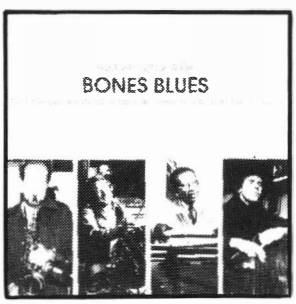
If you're a jazz fan, you could listen to the artistry exhibited on this disc all year long. If you think you don't like jazz, give the *Sackville All Stars Christmas Record* a chance. You may be surprised at the sense of freshness, craftsmanship, and pure enjoyment these players inject into tunes that tend to get a little worn out by December 25. —*Linda Kohanov*

CD REVIEW, DECEMBER 1989

NEW RELEASES



CD2-3045
Doc Cheatham / Jim Galloway
at the Bern Jazz Festival
with Roy Williams, Ian Bargh, Neil Swainson, Terry Clarke

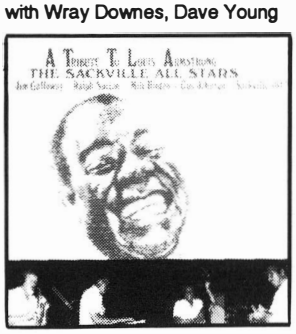


CD2-4004
Pete Magadini / Don Menza
Bones Blues
with Wray Downes, Dave Young

CD2-3046
Jay McShann
Swingmatism
with Don Thompson, Archie Alleyne

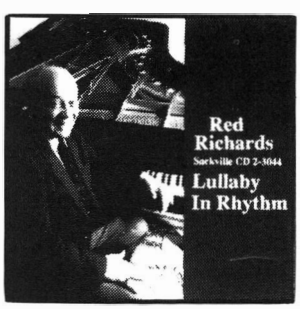
CD2-2018
Hagood Hardy sextet
Morocco
Classic hard bop with vibraphonist Hardy and an all-star Canadian sextet

CD2-3040
Jay McShann
Airmail Special
with Neil Swainson, Terry Clarke



CD2-3042
Sackville All Stars
A Tribute to Louis Armstrong
with Jim Galloway, Milt Hinton, Gus Johnson, Ralph Sutton

CD2-3043
Junior Mance
Junior Mance Special



CD2-3044
Red Richards
Lullaby In Rhythm

All Nine Recordings Are Available On Compact Disc or Cassette.
COMPACT DISC PRICES: Canada $20.00 (Cdn.) Ontario Residents add 8% Sales Tax. USA $16.00 (US). Elsewhere $23.00 (Can.)
CASSETTE PRICES: 1 for $12.00 / 2 for $22.00 / 3 for $30.00 / 4 for $35.00 / 5 for $40.00. Each additional cassette costs $8.00.
All prices include postage. We accept Canadian & US cheques, money orders, bank drafts, VISA & MASTERCARD. (Please provide CARD NAME & NUMBER, EXPIRY DATE and your SIGNATURE.)

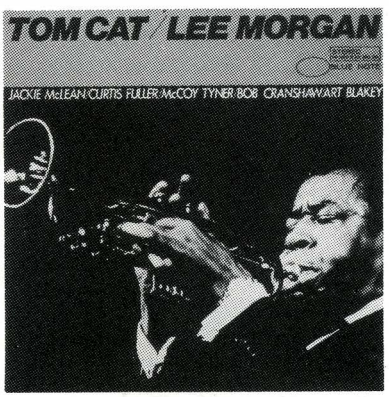
SACKVILLE RECORDINGS * BOX 87 * STATION J * TORONTO * ONTARIO
CANADA * M4J 4X8 * TELEPHONE (416) 593-7230

L'ATELIER GRIGORIAN

THE JAZZ MUSIC SPECIALISTS

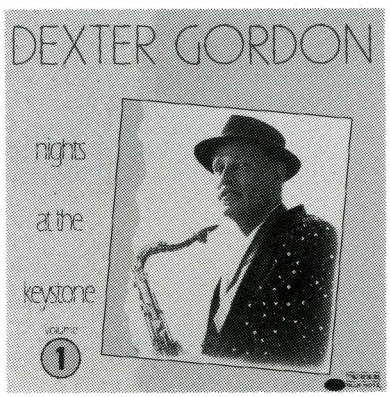
WE CARRY THE COMPLETE LINE OF

ROULETTE * EMI * CAPITOL * PACIFIC AND WORLD PACIFIC

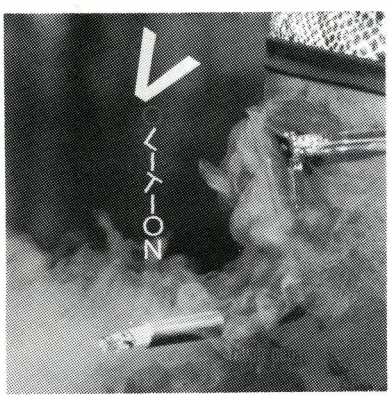


LEE MORGAN
Tom Cat
Blue Note CDP7 84446 2

RENEE ROSNES
For The Moment
Blue Note CDP7 94859 2

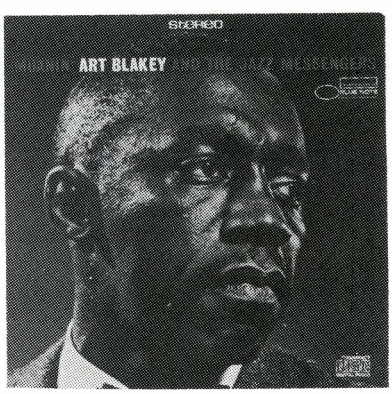


DEXTER GORDON
Nights At The Keystone
Blue Note CDP7 94848



RALPH PETERSON
Volition
Blue Note CDP7 93894 2

BENNY GREEN
Lineage
Blue Note CDP7 93670 2



ART BLAKEY
Moanin'
Blue Note B21H 46516

SEND A SELF-ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE

FOR A COMPLETE THE FINEST IN JAZZ SINCE 1939 BLUE NOTE® **CATALOG**

CONSISTING OF OVER 300 TITLES ORDER BY MAIL OR PHONE

MAIN STORE (TORONTO) L'ATELIER GRIGORIAN 70 YORKVILLE AVENUE, TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA M5R 1B9 PHONE: (416) 922-6477 Fax: (416) 922-4879

(OAKVILLE) L'ATELIER GRIGORIAN 94, GEORGE ST. OAKVILLE, ONTARIO, CANADA L6J 3B7 PHONE: (416) 338 2360

(OTTAWA) L'ATELIER GRIGORIAN 345 DALHOUSE ST., OTTAWA, ONTARIO, CANADA K1N 7G1 PHONE: (613) 232-7715

L'ATELIER GRIGORIAN 10th Anniversary