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ISSUE

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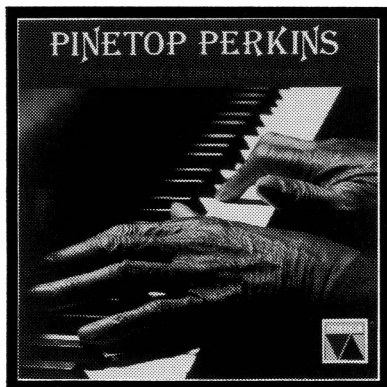
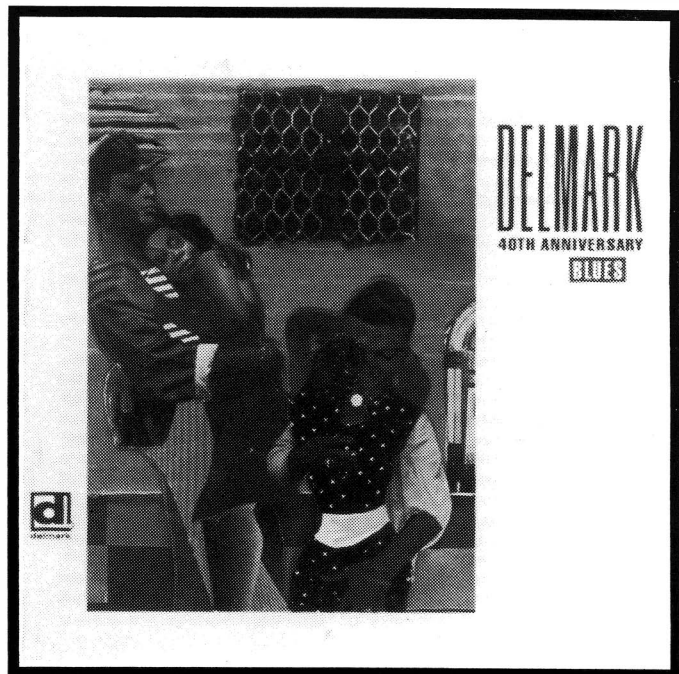


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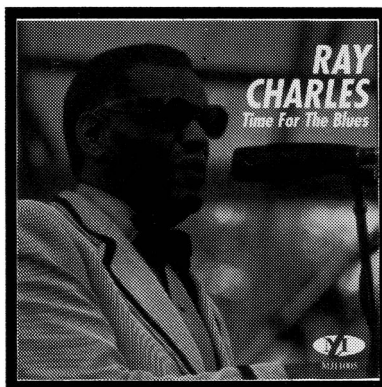
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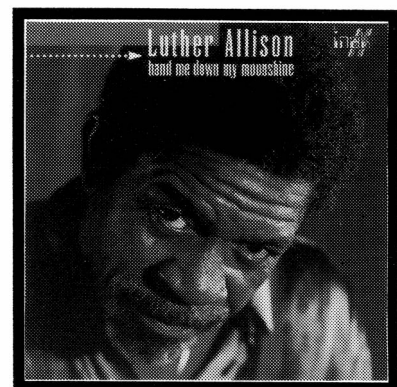
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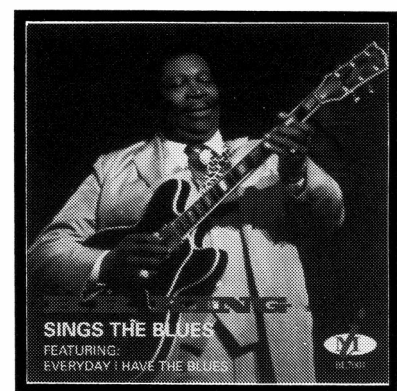
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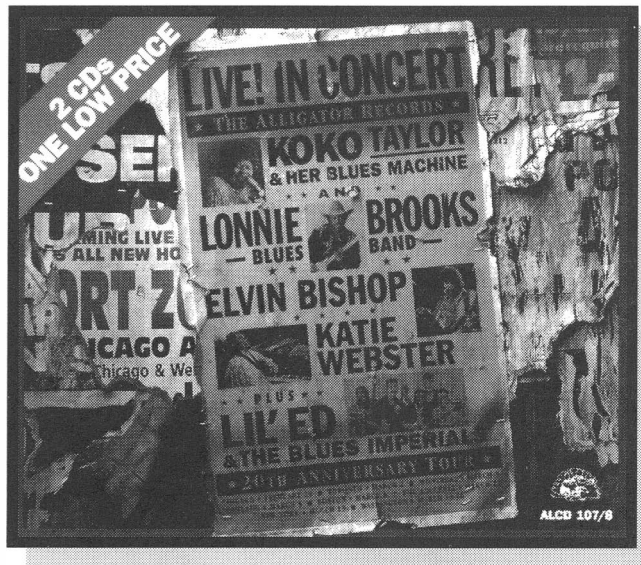
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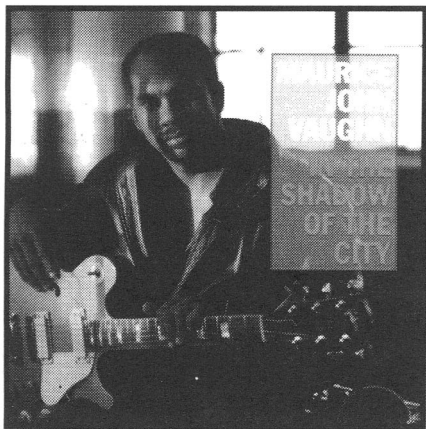


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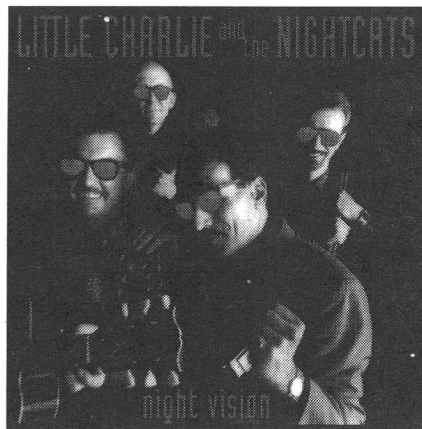
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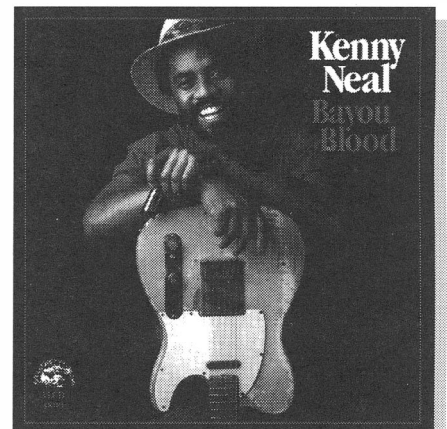
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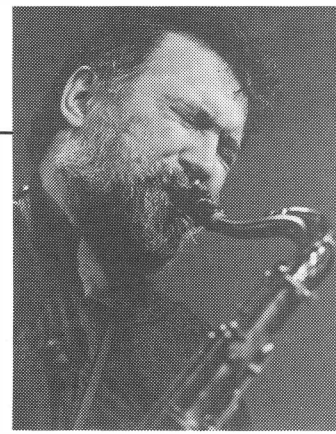
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By Tex Wyndham

COVER PHOTOGRAPH OF EVAN PARKER BY LAURENCE M. SVIRCHEV

ERRATA - ISSUE 249. The cover photograph of DIEDRE MURRAY was flopped by the printer.



EVAN PARKER

AN INTENSITY OF PURPOSE

INTERVIEWED DURING NEW MUSIC ACROSS AMERICA VANCOUVER IN OCTOBER 1992, HE WAS PLAYING WITH THE 17 MEMBER LONDON JAZZ COMPOSERS ORCHESTRA AND HIS OWN TRIO. HIS SPEECH IS SLOW AND ERUDITE, THE THOUGHTS FLOWING WITH CONSIDERED DELIBERATENESS. A QUESTION OR COMMENT IS MET WITH STOICAL ANALYSIS BRACED BY A SOBER UNDERSTANDING OF THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL REALITIES IMPROVISING MUSICIANS LIVE WITH. HE PROVIDED A FASCINATING INSIGHT INTO THE HISTORY AND ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENTS OF FREELY IMPROVISED MUSIC. DEPENDING ON THE PERCEIVER, HIS THOUGHTS MAY BE SEEN AS NORMAL, OR AS CONTROVERSIAL, AS HIS MUSIC.



WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES IN MUSICAL STYLES THAT YOU FIND BETWEEN ENGLAND, THE UNITED STATES & CANADA?

The scene doesn't divide in geographical ways. There are kindred spirits all over the world. The scene breaks down into different attitudes and different degrees of flexibility across cliques. Some people are very at home in any number of cliques; some are really at home in only one or two of them. I would say that obviously I align myself with the Cecil Taylor approach or the Anthony Braxton approach, the George Lewis approach. For me they are the most interesting players in North America. They are the major figures the way

I see it. They come to Europe and I see them a lot. I never know where I'm going to run into them. They all lived in Europe for various periods, Paris, Amsterdam, Berlin. I knew them all before they moved to Europe. Dave Holland introduced me to Anthony Braxton a long time ago; through Anthony I met George. I got to play with Cecil as a consequence of his coming to Europe. I don't think it would have happened if he hadn't been living in Berlin for that period. There are many more Canadian and American musicians with the same kind of outlook.

INTERVIEW BY LAURENCE M. SVIRCHEV

PHOTOGRAPHY BY BILL SMITH

Just to complicate things, one of my oldest friends and colleagues is Kenny Wheeler, who is a Canadian. If you start trying to break it down in terms of geography and nationalisms, it gets very complicated. Those terminologies get used a bit too loosely at times: European this, Black that. It can present a false idea of having explained something, when you haven't explained anything at all. You've just added a label. By the same token there are plenty of so-called European improvisers or English free jazz musicians who I would not feel any great affinity with. We just simply happen to fall into the same category, given that system of categorisation. All over the world, there are musicians actively involved in the same kind of attitude that I am. Part of the reward is the chance to meet with them and play with them.

The sound of the individual transcends the idiom somehow, so I'm usually interested in people who are very recognizable. I don't have a huge affection for what you might call classical modern jazz. I do listen to the classical music, the music of its time when it was recorded, when it was pushing music forward. I'm a little less at ease with the kind of revivalist approach to modern jazz. I'm interested in seeing what happens, as it happens, and allowing what happens to happen as it happens.

There is some element of philosophical contradiction involved there. If on the one hand, someone has this personal quality of an individual voice, it is almost certainly because they have a method and approach with certain characteristics which endure from context to context.

You hear George Lewis play with Barry Guy, you hear George Lewis play with Richard Teitelbaum, you know that it's George Lewis. You hear Barry Guy play with Paul Rutherford, you hear Barry Guy play with Barre Phillips, you know it's Barry Guy. All these people have the ability on the one hand to be open, to be spontaneous in ad hoc unrehearsed situations.

They have a language which is coherent, that is, you know who the participants are. At the same time, their language is flexible enough that they can make sense of playing with each other. They can come up with an appropriate music making methodology. I like people who can do that, people who can do it in a convincing way, who have an intensity of purpose.

WOULD YOU TALK ABOUT WORKING WITH SUCH A LARGE IMPROVISING GROUP AS THE LONDON JAZZ COMPOSERS ORCHESTRA?

Every once in a while what I think London needs is a weekly improvising orchestra situation. The problem is that to make sense of a proposition like that, some of the key people would only be able to be there one time out of four. There would be no continuity. It is a reasonable assumption to say that there would be no easy funding to ensure that people would be there. The arts are a low priority for this administration. The larger the group the harder the problems of

making a clear statement. That's why I put emphasis on rehearsal opportunities. Larger groups would need to develop an understanding.

To go to the next levels would be to have 40 players freely improvising. It could be done in London with high level playing. Each one of those 40 people would have no problem finding a substitute. There are a huge number of players in London now, the best ones with the Orchestra. But there are also a hell of a lot of slightly younger players, not very well known outside of London, maybe just starting to do a few gigs in Holland and other friendly places for English guys to get a break.

IF YOU COULD PUT 40 PEOPLE TOGETHER, WHAT WOULD YOU DO MUSICALLY?

The whole point is not to say anything! The only way to make sense of it, if its purpose was to be to investigate totally open playing, would be to play, tape, and then discuss, with or without reference to the tape. The activity somehow would generate its own ongoing sense of purpose. But this is in a sense abstract and theoretical. It's not the next thing I'm going to do when I get home to London.

For the moment I'm only interested in the smaller things, mainly because of economic realities. I'm known for doing certain things in solo and trio, and that is what I'm usually offered work for. In an ideal situation someone would say, "Evan, you've been muttering on about this for a long time: here's salary for a year, so get on with it." But that is not the way it works. Whatever reputation I've got over the years, all it means is that it is easier to find the next job. It doesn't seem to lead on to semi-sinecurial situations where you get paid for having an opinion.

There are two aspects to the lack of jobs: first, there is an embarrassing imbalance of English improvisers going to other European countries and earning money by comparison with improvisers from other European countries coming to England to earn money.

It is very much more difficult for them to visit us than for us to go to their countries. At the same time there is a hopeless under-funding for what is happening locally. English musicians don't find money in England. That probably explains why they are so desperate to work in other countries. There's not enough work to go around at home by any standards, even survival standards. The only way to do this work full time is to travel as much as possible, especially to European countries which have higher standards of living, higher standards of culture, and are not too expensive to get to.

The patterns are all fairly easily explained in economic terms and I can't see things changing. It's not just musicians that are having a hard time in England or Britain. Millions of well qualified don't have jobs. The country is in a very strange state. Perhaps we shouldn't talk

EVAN PARKER OCTOBER 1992

too much about politics. There is an important change in people's understanding of the impact that political decisions can make on their daily lives or are having on their daily lives. It seems almost thoughtless to talk about the state of music when there are so many other things to worry about, *but what could be more important to a musician than music?*

So I find myself in a quandary trying to express my feelings about what is going on. One has to be a little wary of chauvinism and national sentiment, but objectively, *objectively*, it's fairly clear that the English scene is one of the main inputs into the global discourse on free improvisation.

It relates a little back to the turbulent 60s. Although Paris at that time was more turbulent, there was less interest in free improvisation with one or two honourable exceptions. There didn't start to be a French improvisation scene in France until the 60's were well over.

But in London? There were certain key individuals one would have to cite as organizing forces. The main one was drummer John Stevens. Everybody at one stage or another was encouraged to take their interest in free improvisation more seriously by John. The nature of his role has changed in the intervening 20 years, but he is still there doing some very interesting things at the moment.

I was younger than John Stevens and older than Barry Guy. There was already a first wave of players playing with John, some of whom stayed more in the modern jazz clique in the longer term. Their affinities were more with extended modern jazz rather than free playing. In the very early bands, Trevor Watts was there before me, Paul Rutherford was there before me, Kenny Wheeler was there. The bass players included Jeff Clyne. I don't just want to string names, but there was a first generation of spontaneous players before I was there.

I was introduced by mutual friends in the arts who said "Meet one another." And I found immediate acceptance, certainly from John, and maybe a little more reluctantly from Paul and Trevor and so on.

You're not welcomed with open arms just because you want to be welcomed, you have to bring something as well. It took a little while for it to be clear what I was bringing. From that period onwards I was fairly active in shaping various initiatives after John Stevens' original Little Theatre Club initiative.

I helped set up the Musician's Cooperative, a support group helping each other set up concerts, and also set up a record label. The aspiration was that it would document that group of players, but it became more narrowly focused on the activities of the people who owned the record company. Then the London Musicians Collective, which was a kind of successor organization to the Musicians Cooperative after it had done its job and fallen apart, launched a small collective of people with more second generation players who had less of a jazz background.

It is reasonably accurate to say that most of the Musicians Cooperative

people were hearing that strange music and not necessarily thinking that it had much to do with jazz. They could then relate to it in terms of their own background. I could think of somebody like Phil Wachsmann, technically a second generation player who has been around so long now that it's absurd. He comes from a classical background and was attracted to free music that had little to do with its origins in more conventional jazz.

Another quite helpful contribution was that I was on various Art Council committees and could speak up for the music until the Thatcher kind of era arrived. They abandoned the jazz sub-committee, dropped it to save money. I don't know what the state of things is now. All the talk is of where can you get business sponsorship and all this nonsense. But there was a period when things weren't quite so grim as they are now and I was able to make one or two suggestions.

The best organized scene from any point of view is the Dutch scene. Partly because by nature they can find a consensus that doesn't cost anybody any individuality. It's a remarkable characteristic they have. Willem Breuker's Band is very different from Misha Mengelberg's Instant Composers Pool (ICP). Maarten Altena's band is different too. The whole challenge for Dutch musicians in this scene is to find something no one else has thought of rather than to be part of some consensual language which is evolving. They do it in a much more confrontational way. But yet when it comes to the cultural, administrative side of things, they can come up with very quick agreement about how things should be done which are lasting. They set up the BIM and SHIM, initials which stand for things like Organization of Improvising Musicians, Foundation for Improvisation in Holland. Everything was set up in a very official way and has been maintained in a lasting way. It was different in England, where things were given grudgingly, and only after pressure.

Secondly, although English musicians find it easy to agree on the bandstand, they find it very difficult to agree on theoretical procedures off the bandstand. So our consensus is on the music, whereas it is often not in the Dutch scene. There have been so many attempts on the part of the English jazz community to organize ourselves as musicians, and none of them produced any great effects and none of them last very long. There is another initiative that is happening, maybe more from the classic modern jazz side of things. But it's almost like we know what will happen; it's not that we don't wish them well, but we've seen this so many times. Without a change of government at least, the story won't be any different.

COULD YOU TALK ABOUT YOUR DEVELOPMENT ON THE HORN?

Usually the initial stages for any musician are about sounding sufficiently like what other people are doing to be accepted into the community. It's a strange thing that on the one hand, the longer term requires that you actually have a different sound than other people, but the short term requirement is that you sound like somebody else for a bit. It's a classical pattern. I tried hard to sound like modal Coltrane. I wasn't too bad at that. I was trying to do it when a lot of people hadn't realized Coltrane had shifted his position very much.

AN INTENSITY OF PURPOSE

I was trying to do things that people weren't sure of whether they were positive moves in Coltrane's music. I guess I'm talking about 1961. I was about 18. I wasn't technically or perhaps emotionally equipped to do what I was trying to do. It was an inherently uninteresting thing that I was trying to do from everybody else's point of view except my own since there was already someone else in the world doing it a thousand times better.

But you have to go through these kinds of things. Listening to Ornette Coleman, Eric Dolphy, Pharoah Sanders' ESP recording. I was listening, checking things, and then at a certain point you make a breakthrough. There's a feeble little voice inside you that says 'Hey, this is me! This what I sound like, let me out!'

I suppose on the one hand there's a part of you that is reluctant to do that because your whole acceptance is based on the fact that you sound a bit like Archie Shepp or whoever. Then suddenly there's this other compulsion inside that pushes you another way.

On the one hand you're scared; on the other hand you know it's the only real way forward. Gradually the voice that is fighting to be heard is responded to by another player. I was very fortunate to be with people like John Stevens, Derek Bailey, Dave Holland, Kenny Wheeler. These people gave me very positive feedback. I suppose each one of those people in his own kind of way was trying the same sort of things and gradually finding a voice of his own. It's great to be in a context where people are pulling one another along.

Then, at a certain point, I think maybe my sense of what my own music was about became more clear. I think the essence of the solo music, which is what I'm best known for, is coming out with a combination of all those techniques I learned in isolation. The music becomes more dense and complex. The unique potential of solo performance is that all the acoustic space is yours. Then the challenge is to fill it, in as orchestral a way as possible.

You need a good basis in physical strength and technique before some relatively subtle things have meaning. You might read something a few times and can't make

sense of it, but gradually over the years as you accumulate experience and technical strength, the kinds of problems you might work on have more refined and subtle meaning. In the heat of the moment a lot of the stuff you work on and practice is forgotten or takes second role. The impulse to express something through playing becomes more important than the technical procedure. But the more solid the technical understanding is, then the better the basis for expression is. A lot of the most interesting parts of playing the saxophone are actually invisible. All the really interesting things go on inside with the tongue, the changes of the cavity, positions and shape of the jaw controlling the sound, articulations, and over-tones. What you see may be a kind of body language reinforcing the phrasing intentions. It's like a set of resources that is there. If those resources are not there, the expression is limited by their absence.

There is some relationship between practice and performance, but I don't know what it is. It's obvious that if you go out and stay on the road too long and don't get enough formal practice a certain kind of deterioration sets in, even if you are playing every day. On the other hand, if you sit at home and practice every day, another kind of deterioration takes place. So the ideal is some kind of balance between the kind of physical and mental condition you get from practising and the kind of physical and mental conditioning you get from playing. You always seem to be on one side or another of the happy medium. If you are aware of that, you can take corrective action. □





MINIATURES IN A JEWEL BOX

SOME YEARS AGO, WRITER BARRY TEPPERMAN LIKENED THE ART OF SOLO IMPROVISED MUSIC TO THAT OF A TIGHT ROPE WALKER. A TRUE ENOUGH ANALOGY IN TERMS OF DARING. IN THOSE DAYS THERE WERE JUST A FEW MUSICIANS THAT HAD DEVELOPED THIS SPECIALIZED CONCEPT.

guage. On December 6th, 1983 he recorded *Composition 113* (Sound Aspects CD 003) using the soprano saxophone with a voice pitched one octave higher than the alto, and a completely different palette of tonality.

As with his earlier work, *Composition 113* is set in a formal structure. A story in which six characters aboard a train attempt to convince, with different versions of truth, Ojuwain (the

believer). The principle character tendencies are humour, acceptance, strength, dependability, courage and belief. And this is all very well. Six studies. But what of the result?

Hearing it simply as a six part suite is enough of an experience, for they can be thought of as pieces based in a separated, but ongoing collection of songs each representing one of the characters aboard the train. The songline that runs through each piece, and indeed supplies information to the following section, gives the impression of a number of elements being continually rearranged in a variety of tempos, dynamics and techniques, that in the end hold together as *Composition 113*.

This is Braxton at a high moment of his life, where his powerful lyricism and original sense of swing take you on a delightful journey. It is midnight and raining at a small train station in Northern Africa and finally the old locomotive has arrived.

Roberto Ottaviano, one of Italy's more interesting saxophonists, England's John Butcher, Switzerland's Urs Leimgruber and Chicagoan Hal Russell, have all utilised the technique of multi-tracking, with amazingly different results.

Ottaviano's *Otto* (Splasc(H) 340-2), presents fifteen compositions varying in length from 1:40 to 5:25. The titles of the pieces all begin with PER, and the three that caught my fancy were *Pervious*, *Perky* and *Peremptory*.

Although there are some solo pieces, it is the multi-tracked material that is of more obvious consequence. Playing only the soprano saxophone, in various overdubbed multiples, creates an interesting challenge. For although he has musical companions, they are all himself. But then, who could understand this music more clearly.

Once again the music is in song form, with quite clear melodies and improvisations being integrated into arranged compositions. All of them have a ghost of Steve Lacy musical logic about them. Also there is a certain European charm in the overall feeling, a feeling of a slightly naughty small boys choir.

In comparison John Butcher is quite rude, and displays a more diverse soundscape, playing tenor and soprano saxophones, on *Thirteen Friendly Numbers* (Acta 6). Nine pieces are solo, three quartets and one piece six sopranos.

A number of saxophonists, Evan Parker being the most prominent, have extended the language of the saxophone past the traditional method of playing. In American jazz, although the music has developed parallel to the changing artistic, social and economic climates, the completeness of it still remains as the history

Although Coleman Hawkins, among others, had recorded a solo composition, it was not until the latter half of the 1960's, when the Chicagoans Malachai Favors, Lester Bowie and Roscoe Mitchell released recordings that included specific solo pieces, that we got the first glimpse of an evolving form. The release of Anthony Braxton's solo alto saxophone, two record set, *For Alto* (Delmark), in 1968, not only stunned the jazz world, but also set a precedent.

Over the ensuing years there have been a number of creative players, not always saxophonists, who have walked the wire, including Albert Mangelsdorff, Joseph Jarman, Steve Lacy, Evan Parker, Leo Smith, Gunter Christmann, Julius Hemphill, George Lewis, Oliver Lake, James Newton and Paul Rutherford. A most impressive list.

For the earlier solo recordings, Anthony Braxton had used only the alto saxophone on which to develop his new lan-

THE ART OF SOLO SAXOPHONE REVIEWED BY BILL SMITH

from which it developed. Although the European players have grown out of these jazz traditions, there have evolved, especially in Britain, Germany and Holland, very personalized musics that are not anymore to do with the standard song form or the blues. Instead, what has developed are melodic improvised soundscapes. An investigation into the hidden voices contained within the horn.

Butcher's nine solo pieces are examples of this concept, and could be described as a series of enlarged improvised techniques. Take for example the idea of blowing split notes, causing them to intrude upon each other's boundaries, or popping and farting exuberant energy into bellow. Indeed a difficult art to come to terms with. Such a private idea. So perhaps, it is only for saxophone players wanting new information, or those whose needs for sound adventure exceed the norm.

As with Ottaviano the multi-tracked pieces are the more interesting. Although for a quite different reason. In this case, what sometimes, in solo pieces, gave the impression of being sound effects, when layered give wondrous arrays of at one time beautiful, birdlike chaos, another the frightening accumulated overtones that interfere with the back of the ear, or clustered circular breathed cathedral terror. Mister Hawkins has nothing to do with this.

Nor to do with the music of **Urs Leimgruber** on *Leimgruber* (Unit Records UTR CD 4050).

I had been less than impressed, a few years back at the Vancouver Festival, by his playing in duet with the wonderful percussionist Fritz Hauser. He was obviously convinced of his concept, but I had some difficulty in grasping what the point of it all was.

This recording presents him solo and multi-layered, playing the soprano, tenor and bass saxophones, and although hearing him in this format clarifies his intention, the music still presents many questions. Perhaps that is its purpose. Perhaps the feeling of an audible exercise book of alternative and conventional techniques, strung together in an interesting way, is the point of it all.

There are fourteen compositions which could be described as etudes, although each piece does, for the most part, contain numerous technical elements. Some quite common, and sounding often like something you may have heard before. For example Evan Parker's multi-note circular breathing adventures, which are quite in evidence throughout this recording.

Nowhere in particular, the lover of the popular song form would say, but even so, there comes after some patience, an ongoing feeling that these elements are unravelling in a quite natural, if somewhat secretive manner.

Pas De Deux - Two sopranos, who are at the very least jousting, maybe there is even some argument involved. Certainly not polite.

Sopralogie - A somewhat annoyed bird, trapped inside of one, escapes. First let's clear out our lungs and try, after such a confining experience, to sing. Find the melody, and when it's clear, we can introduce our brothers tenor and bass.

Erinnyen - Multi-tracked, the tenor played outside without the mouthpieces by the sound of it. Just briefly spooky, a crypt perhaps or at least the calling of someone lost.

Hula Hop Zwei - The whole trio; soprano, tenor and bass, quite suddenly sprightly, bouncing along in accord, but then another goddam fight starts. Fortunately the treble clef eventually rests on top, guiding it all back to its original whole trio conclusion.

Infernal - Blow two as straight as the other. Infernal What? You decide, it's much too personal to share.

Finally the music of Hal Russell - *Hal's Bells* (ECM 1484), which does not quite fit this solo saxophone concept. But then, Hal never did attempt to fit into anything, but rather honed from a lifetime of experience playing with musicians as diverse in style as Mildred Bailey, Benny Goodman, Miles and Trane, an original voice that after more than forty years has come to rest with this recording.



Although not the complete truth, in my mind Hal was a saxophone player, and on seven of the ten compositions, all originals save *Carolina Moon* and *Moon Of Manakoora*, he plays either tenor or soprano. This however is not the focus of his brilliance, for unlike the preceding multi-tracked music reviewed, he also utilises the instruments on which he started his career. Drums and vibraphone. Add to this the trumpet, bass marimba, a variety of bells, a Peking Opera gong, and even a tambourine, permutate them in various combinations, and what you've got is a rather amazing one man band.

To describe his music would be to talk of the man, his philosophies, his experiences, his passion to play. In the liner notes it says: "Wears suit and tie onstage and sings through a huge cardboard megaphone. Looks like Charles Ives and sounds like Albert Ayler". And this is fine, a fond enough description, although not a memory.

I've been playing this recording shuffle/repeat, for some while now. Just love this band. Two tenors mixing it with the drums. At one moment the MJQ lost in a Chinese Theatre. Two musettes being a ducklike courting ritual. The vibraphone and marimba's brittle disregarded wine bottle boinks contrasting nicely. Quite an adventure really.

Oh Dear! - the memory of him has come upon me, a little sad, although with a smile flickering, his spirit here in this room. For me this is just wonderful music, and although you might not have known him, you could and should.

CRAIG HANDY

SPLIT SECOND TIMING

AN INTERVIEW WITH JAMES ROZZI

Yet another Blakey alumnus bursts onto the scene with his first recording as a leader, begging the proverbial question, "Does this one have something new to offer?" Sounds jaded, but when considering the of-late overdone genre of the self-contained school from whence these graduates have emerged, and the sheer quantity of Blakeyites out there recording, the freshness of the message becomes an issue.

Tenor (sometimes alto) saxophonist Craig Handy was with Blakey in 1989, a long while back when considering the water that since has passed under his bridge: lengthy stints with the Mingus Dynasty, Abdullah Ibrahim, and Roy Haynes; recordings with the same, plus Sumi Toonooka, Betty Carter, Stephen Scott, Kirk Lightsey, and many others.

SPLIT SECOND TIMING (Arabesque Jazz AJ0101), with pianist Ed Simon, bassist Ray Drummond, drummer Ralph Peterson, and trombonist Robin Eubanks (two tunes only) is an exceptional first date as a leader, highly recommended. With a sound and style steeped in the marvellous history of the jazz tenor, Handy is a player with an obvious reverence for the past. He proves beyond doubt that development of a unique voice remains possible within the realm of tried and true harmonic structures.

Born, as he says, "in the early 1960s," one can only surmise that Handy has turned 30 and isn't particularly digging the self-imposed stigma. But such misgivings are inappropriate; his years have succeeded in producing one of the most complete voices on the tenor to arrive in a long while.

James Rozzi-When you were 12 years old, you made the switch from alto to tenor after hearing Dexter Gordon play. With your being a native of Oakland, did you have an added affinity for Gordon because of his West Coast roots?

Craig Handy-No, not at all. Dexter was an expatriate for a number of years. When he finally came back, he came to New York in '76, which was the *Homecoming* album. I had only been playing saxophone for a short while by that time. I associated him with the people he had recorded with. He was international to me. He lived over there, recorded all over the place, and had been all over the world.

James Rozzi-You mentioned your having attended Berkeley High School, which is known to have a fine music program. What was their approach to jazz education?

Craig Handy-We had a guy named Phil Hardymon who was our director at Berkeley High. He was also the band director at schools feeding into Berkeley High, and a couple of elementary school programs. So, he was single-handedly turning out people of the calibre of [pianist] Benny Green; Benny and I were classmates...along with Peter Apfelbaum, and Rodney Franklin, who did the pop thing. Phil really had a tremendous influence and impact on all of us. I didn't get there until the ninth grade, but for people like Peter and Benny who had been there for years, they had this immense musical vocabulary that I just sort of fell in under.

He had everybody listening to Duke Ellington at a very young age. You know, that band is like a prototype for any kind of jazz music you want to play. It was like, well, you start here: Coleman Hawkins, Harry Carney, Paul Gonsalves, and Johnny Hodges. So, if you were a



WHAT I DON'T LIKE IS WHEN PEOPLE COME OUT ON THE BANDSTAND EMULATING PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN THERE BEFORE, TO THE POINT OF BEING COPY CATS.

saxophone player, you had that reed section. At one point or another, Duke had all the best musicians. On trumpet, you could go down the list. On trombone, you could go down the list. And then, since the program at Berkeley High was mainly focused around the big band, he taught us how to listen, which is really why the band is so good and had such a tremendous amount of success at the festivals we performed at. We produced a very uniform, cohesive, balanced sound. A lot of bands have people with great chops, bands that can play fast, high, and loud, but we had such a musical band because everybody was listening. Every room we'd go into, we approached it like professional musicians.

James Rozzi-Did Hardyman stress the extreme individuality of each player's sound in the Ellington band? If so, it must have given you a real appreciation for the uniqueness of an individual's sound.

Craig Handy-That more than any other single aspect is the reason that all the guys I mentioned before are out there being successful musicians today. He did indeed teach us all to look for and to cultivate our personal sounds because that is your trademark. In Duke's band, even though everybody's sound is recognizable and very different, the way they blended together and listened to each other gave the band such a unique sound. Phil stressed tone.

James Rozzi-How did you eventually get into soloing? Did he work with you on chord changes at all?

Craig Handy-Actually, he didn't really push that on us. He would always tell us to listen to everybody who was noted to have some sort of historical input into the music. After Duke's band, all of the other people we listened to in a progressive fashion and were all somehow influenced by Duke or had been touched by his music somehow.

James Rozzi-So you were fortunate enough to start by listening to the jazz of an era from which you could progress chronologically instead of starting with the harder players and working backward from there.

Craig Handy-That's right. It wasn't until I had absorbed Duke that Bird started to make sense to me, and I was able to hear the form he was playing over and how he was altering that form and altering the changes.

James Rozzi-How about your stay at North Texas State? You were there on a Charlie Parker scholarship, yet opted to major in psychology.

Craig Handy-Right, I didn't take any music courses there, just played in the band. I felt their approach to be too academic. But I was playing small groups with guys from the [One O'clock] band, and I was playing gigs in Dallas with another big band called the Dallas Jazz Orchestra. Mainly, what I did was form a band with a trumpet player named David Weiss who was from New York, originally. Everyone sort of unofficially dubbed us the Art Blakey Junior Band because we took off

four or five records worth of material from Art's band and arranged it for quintet and sextet...like Freddie, Wayne...or Freddie, Wayne, and Curtis did. I stayed in Texas for a total of four years, but went to school for only two or two and a half years.

James Rozzi-Did transcribing all that music enhance your current compositional abilities?

Craig Handy-Yeah, it helped. Even more than that was my listening to and transcribing Horace Silver tunes. That sound was more in my head than Art's sound. I guess it just goes farther back. When I was a kid, I was listening simultaneously to P-funk and D-funk, some James Brown, and funk-type bands out of the James Brown tradition...the Meters. Horace Silver was in my collection as well. I didn't start listening to the Blakey stuff until later. My father was big on the big bands, so I listened to a lot of stuff around the house. My father has a lot of jazz too. It's funny; prior to my arrival at North Texas, I thought jazz was something that was played in the '50s and '60s, and then after that period, you either became a studio musician, or a pop musician, or an R&B musician. I thought that Joe Henderson was the last of a dying breed, like the last Rhodes scholar of some rare, dying language. I thought, well this guy's great, but they're not going to respect me playing jazz music and making a living at it. I'm just going to come along and add my two cents to it but people aren't going to pay to hear me play. Plus there was no real scene around the Bay area. Most people ended up playing some form of electric music. Acoustic music is what I've always been in love with. The funk stuff is in me, but there's no real difference between James Brown's music and the type of thing played by Elvin Jones. It's all wholesome. There's something very alive and musical about it. I look at Christian McBride and say, there's a cat who can play all the funk grooves on acoustic bass and make them believable, and then turn around and swing harder than ninety percent of the veterans out here. He just has an understanding of the way music works. There's no difference. Music is music. If you're a good musician, you should be able to play all of it. It's like Joe Henderson. When he played *Power to the People* with Jack DeJohnette breaking up the rhythms into kind of a funk vein, Joe still played the same stuff that he plays while playing straight ahead. There are so many ways to slice it and dice it. It's just that the path of least resistance is usually taken to get the lowest common denominator of listener to buy the product. Jazz music is so difficult and it's so challenging, and the rewards are beautiful, but it takes so long to get to. Like Miles said, it took him 20 years to learn how to play; you can't expect someone to understand it in five minutes.

James Rozzi-When you came to New York, did things happen quickly for you?

Craig Handy-I wouldn't say so, but most people tell me yes. I had met a lot of New York musicians at Caravan of Dreams, a big club in Fort Worth, Texas. I became friends with Ralph Moore and Brian Lynch, Steve Turre, a lot of people. I didn't sit in with them; I don't think I was up to it yet. A few times we brought people up from Fort Worth to

Denton, where the school was, and we'd organize jam sessions. My first gigs in New York were with street bands, then Ralph got me my first two real big gigs: one being Roy Haynes, and the other being Mingus Dynasty.

With Mingus Dynasty I've done two records; with Roy we've done two records. One didn't come out but the latest one just came out in France. Hopefully, it will be out in the States soon. It's killing. It's burnin'. The title is, *When It Haynes, It Roars*. Then Winard Harper recommended me to

Abdullah Ibrahim. I played with him for about four years, with the Dynasty for about six or seven, and with Roy for about six or seven. I've done a bunch of other stuff in between.

John Hicks, he put me in a lot of different situations. I worked with him in the Dynasty. The rhythm section was John Hicks, Ray Drummond, and Victor Lewis. That band worked for about three years before it started to disintegrate into other forms. That was one of the great New York rhythm sections. The front line was myself, George Adams, and Jack Walrath. You know, when George was strong, George would do what I call, bat clean up. The solos would go back and forth between rhythm section and horns, and then George would play. By the time George got finished with a tune, it was like...on 10 or 11 already, whether it was a ballad or an uptempo thing. He'd play so much music with so much energy. Each tune would last about 20 minutes. Then Victor would take a solo, then we'd go get the towels and wipe the blood off the stage. But that band...there was so much learning. Between Mingus' writing, Jack's arranging...the musicianship...those cats are such great musicians that every time you step on the bandstand, get your butt kicked every night. And especially John, who, by example, laid down.... I never thought of how to put it into words. It's just something I've learned over the years. Like, this is the way it goes....

He would talk about some stuff if I asked him, changes or tunes, but...the way he set it up and set me up to play. John would say, "Check this guy out." He'd be talking about me. "Check this guy out because he really pays attention." So, I knew that I was improving. It was a great apprenticeship. It is a great, continuing apprenticeship.



Roy was like that with me too. When I first started playing with Roy, I could hardly ever find [beat] one because he was playing so much drums. He told the band to keep the solos short or people will go to sleep after a while, that it's just not interesting unless you're constructing something in a completely original fashion.

James Rozzi-Did you find that not feeling [beat] one so strongly freed you up so that you were able to take a line over the top of everything, stretch a phrase?

Craig Handy-Oh sure. Yeah. He was definitely great for that. He took it away from being a real traditional type of thing. He was always on the edge. He has a way of playing that puts a lot of momentum into the beat. All you have to do is get up on top of it to really feel how it works. Then once you get up on top, you can't just rest there. You have to balance. It's like surfing in a way.

With Elvin Jones, it was easy. You could do anything with Elvin. His thing is more laid back and in a groove, and you could sort of go into a 'Trane bag almost unconsciously because it felt so comfortable. Roy is very crisp; he's on top more. Roy's got such a special way of playing that, now that I understand it, now that the whole band understands it, when we go hit, it's extremely powerful. People say the band as a whole sounds incredible. We've got Dave Kakowski on piano, Ed Howard on bass, Roy, and myself. Now, with Abdullah, the main thing I learned was the importance of thematic improvisation, thematic progression. Like the way Sonny Rollins plays, take a motif or rhythm or something, and invert, reverse, keep playing it all night. In the thematic improvisational approach, you can play all night and

CRAIG HANDY • SPLIT SECOND TIMING

they'll still be interested in what you're playing. Roy taught me the value of succinctness: getting in and getting out and saying it all inside of a couple of choruses. Both of them taught me two different things. Combine the two, and the audience will be sitting on the edge of their seats all night long.

James Rozzi-How do you feel about the whole Young Lions label and their fascination with the hard bop genre? Do you feel the term "Young Lions" has taken on a derogatory stigma?

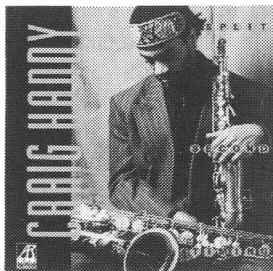
Craig Handy-Well, for one thing, George Wein, et al, those type of people who are putting packages together for Europe, are putting young guys in. Put this young guy in this package with this group of people. Send them here and call it this, that, and the other. It's fashionable; it's a catchy label. It's a way for the record companies to capitalize on the youth thing that's so big now. See, there wasn't much happening in the '70s and '80s besides different forms of electric music. In terms of acoustic music, it seems there was a generation or two that kind of got skipped there. People like Billy Harper and Jon Faddis got overlooked. So now, it's sort of the over 40 thing, and the "Young Lions" thing. Everybody in between is getting lost. There's a danger of the people in the middle getting lost in the shuffle. There needs to be a catch phrase for every single group if they're going to continue doing that, or at least more awareness of people like Ralph Moore and Robin Eubanks, people who have been out there and got at least ten years experience behind them. They're really coming into their own, not just musically, but as people. Their complete character is being defined. I don't think most people start to understand who they are until they get into their 30s or 40s. It's easier for younger people to fall into the pitfall of, "Yeah, I'm the shit!" And for the record companies to encourage that kind of behaviour can be kind of dangerous. It's just a marketing tool to sell more records.

James Rozzi-How about all the flack they've taken for their interest in "neo-classical jazz" or "neo-bop," or whatever the critics are calling it?

Craig Handy-Well, that's not really fair. You've got to have time to work through it. You can't do it all in your living room. You've got to do it on the bandstand. What I don't like is when people come out on the bandstand emulating people who have been there before, to the point of being copy cats. That's not an end in itself. They're out there. But a lot of the players aren't doing that: Roy Hargrove, Christian McBride, Stephen Scott, Justin Robinson.... They're some of my favourite younger players. They're very mature people and have very solid tools to work with. They're very clear thinkers. Some of the criticism the younger players receive is not fair. They didn't ask to be put in that position. They just did what they did and people said, "Oh, you're young enough, and you look good enough, and you can play well enough." Boom! There you go. You're on your way.

James Rozzi-How difficult is it, with all that's gone on before, to come up with something that's your own?

Craig Handy-I don't think it's difficult to come up with something that's your own as long as you don't fall into that trap of copying somebody. You have to be open enough to realize how you're feeling in the first place, which is what I was talking about earlier: maturity. This music teaches you to be open to your emotions and be in the moment. When people hear me, they say, "Yeah. I can hear this influence and that influence, but you don't really sound like them." Certainly, I'll be studying what's known as classical jazz all my life, even though I may be doing different things. But it should continue to be performed. I'll always appreciate Clifford Jordan, and Tina Brooks, and Gene Ammons, and Von Freeman. But my intent is to sound like myself. It's a distillation of all my influences. □



CRAIG HANDY • *SPLIT SECOND TIMING* • ARABESQUE RECORDINGS AJ 0101 Recorded New York June 1991 • Reviewed by Paul Baker.

Saxophonist Craig Handy is young enough that he doesn't yet appear in major jazz reference works. If you're not familiar with him, Handy is a native of Oakland, California, and has played with Art Blakey, Wynton Marsalis, Roy Haynes, Randy Brecker, Abdullah Ibrahim, and the Mingus Dynasty. He has recorded with John Hicks, Billy Eckstine, Elvin Jones, Kirk Lightsey, and Betty Carter.

Judging from *Split Second Timing*, Handy's influences seem to include Sonny Rollins (*Hardcore*), Dexter Gordon (*Slippin'* and *Voyage*) and Ben Webster and Coleman Hawkins (*You're Blase*). Although generally an "inside" player,

Handy does use overblowing for emotional emphasis (*Split Second Timing* and *Ms. Thang*). This fairly conservative album takes its cue from hard bop, not surprising because Handy played with the Jazz Messengers; *Voyage* attests to this experience strongly.

In an interesting reworking of *In a Sentimental Mood*, Handy and trombonist Robin Eubanks play a duet, each taking turns at improvising melodic and supporting lines. A bright spot of originality is *Ms. Thang*, a sparkling calypso number with some Horace Silver-inspired piano. (This tune is not related to Count Basie's 1939 rhythm-changes tune *Miss Thing*.)

Drummer Ralph Peterson may be the most creative and interesting support player, boiling with ideas and playing the unexpected. Pianist Ed Simon, by contrast, seems merely competent, thinking and playing at a rather intermediate level, and sometimes seeming to lose concentration in mid-phrase. Although the band can play a swinging backbeat groove (*Slippin'*) the soloing is sometimes undistinguished.

A SAXOPHONE BUFFET

IT'S NOT OFTEN THAT I HAVE SUCH AN APPETIZING ARRAY OF CD'S TO CHOOSE FROM, SPREAD OUT BEFORE ME AND UNITED BY A SPECIAL INGREDIENT - THE SAXOPHONE. THIS IS A VERITABLE LASER DELIGHT! A DIGITAL DELICACY! AN AUDIOPHILE'S FEAST.

For openers, Pharoah Sanders' *Welcome To Love* (Timeless 358) offers a lovely blend of sweet and sour. With more than a tip of the hat to Coltrane, he fashions lush renditions of many of those numbers so memorably recorded by Trane in the early 60's: *You Don't Know What Love Is*, *Nancy*, *I Want To Talk About You*, to name a few. Undaunted by the passage of time (Sanders is fifty here), he continues to pursue that same romantic dialect, edged with occasional tartness, playing beautiful ballads on soprano and tenor with majesty and reverence, supported sensitively by the trio of William Henderson (piano), Stafford James (bass) and Eccleston Wainwright (drums).



The two **Stan Getz** CD's bridge a time gap of slightly over twenty years. The first, *Stan Getz Plus* (Jazz Unlimited 2002)(Vol.2) is a quartet session recorded in Copenhagen (1960) with Swedish pianist Jan Johansson, Danish drummer William Schiopffe and American bassist Daniel Jordan; the second, *Spring is Here* (Concord 4500) was recorded live at the Keystone Korner (1981) with Lou Levy (piano), Monty Budwig (bass) and Victor Lewis (drums). Despite the disparity of time and locale, the identifiably Getz tone and style endure - always rhythmically inventive, melodically provocative, swingingly relaxed. The former album, a much sought after collector's item for many years, is a welcome release. Accompaniment throughout is superb, and the à la carte menu of ballads and bounce (*Just A Child*, *Land's End*, *Born To Be Blue*) makes this a must

for Getz and saxophone fans alike. The more recent disc presents relatively standard fare (*Old Devil Moon*, *Sweet Lorraine*, *Easy Living*) with a slightly mellower Getz perhaps. It is equally appealing, however. Produced by Carl Jefferson and Stan's son, Steve, it serves as a fitting tribute to one of the distinctive saxophone players of our time. (It was released only in 1991). I highly recommend both.

Two Concord discs recorded on two consecutive days (September 17th and 18th, 1991) speak for the popularity of tenorman **Scott Hamilton**. *Groovin' High* (Concord 4509) places him in an exciting context, sharing the limelight with Ken Peplowski (on tenor, not clarinet here) and Spike Robinson (ostensibly a British player and senior member of this triumvirate). Add a rhythm section of Howard

Alden (guitar), Gerry Wiggins (piano), Dave Stone (bass) and Jake Hanna (drums), stir in some rousing tunes (*Blues Up & Down*, *Shine*, *The Goof And I*), sprinkle a ballad or three (*What's New?*, *Body And Soul*), and the result is a concoction that rides easily on the musical palette. For day two *Race Point* (Concord 4492), recycle Wiggins on piano (He's marvelous on both!), add Alden on occasion, replace Stone and Hanna with Andy Simpkins and Jeff Hamilton respectively, omit Robinson/Peplowski, and the resulting brew (including *Groove Yard*, *Alone Together*, *Limehouse Blues*) is replete with fresh tunes, talent and titillation. Hamilton is gifted, prolific and pleasing, with an eagerness to try his talents in any musical direction and seldom upstaged in the process. Here are two CD's worthy of your investment.

REVIEWS BY JOHN SUTHERLAND

A reissue (I have the 1976 Zim lp), the 1961 **Al Cohn-Zoot Sims** quintet album *Either Way* (Evidence 22007) is long on entertainment value but short on playing time (c 35 minutes) unfortunately, a sort of réchauffé, if you like. However, if you're a fan of this combo, this probably will matter little. The rapport between the Lester Young-influenced tenormen is magic, especially on the more upbeat tempos of *P-Town, I'm Tellin' Ya'*, and *The Thing*. Yet, they can also provide a tantalizing tandem backdrop to vocalist Cecil "Kid Hafey" Collier on *I Like It Like That, Sweet Lorraine* and *Nagasaki*, or tenderly render a closely-knit ballad arrangement of *Autumn Leaves* as well. Mose Allison, Bill Crow and Gus Johnson unobtrusively though adeptly provide the rhythm for all of this.

Another Evidence CD, *Left Alone '86* (Evidence 22006), affords the listener a somewhat too infrequent opportunity to catch altoist **Jackie McLean** in a small group format. Recorded originally in Tokyo, this now released American CD features the pairing of two long-time friends, McLean and pianist **Mal Waldron**, with two California-based musicians, bassist Herbie Lewis and drummer Eddie Moore, subtly integrated into the mix. The album title harkens back to the 1959 hard-to-find Bethlehem Waldron trio outing with a single cut (*Left Alone*) adding McLean to that roster. The current CD presents a well-stocked buffet of tunes, from the hauntingly beautiful *Left Alone* (2 takes) or *All Alone* (a Waldron solo), to the Billie Holiday associations of *God Bless The Child, Lover Man* and *Good Morning Heartache*, to the deliciously zingy servings of *All Of Me, Super Okra Blues* and *Minor Pulsation* (The lid is off for all the players here). The entire spread is a winner. Highly recommended.

Formerly a featured soloist for the big bands of Buddy Morrow, Buddy Rich and Benny Goodman (among others), reedman **Dick Johnson** has been on the jazz scene since the 50's. This CD, a reissue of a 1979 lp for the Concord label, *Dick Johnson Plays* (Concord 4107), is a hardy bouillabaisse of standards (*Donna Lee, When The World Was Young, Get Out Of Town*) and originals (*Kelly Blue, Kelly Green*) with a few Ellingtonia tossed in for good measure (*Star-crossed Lovers, In A Senti-*

mental Mood). The rhythm section of Dave McKenna, Bob Maize and Jake Hanna spice up the proceedings tastefully. A gifted musician, multi-instrumentalist Johnson deserves more widespread recognition than he has hitherto received. Recordings such as these should help.

Two CD hors d'oeuvres that I was given to sample turned out to be true appetizers indeed. **Jim Snidero's Storm Rising** (Ken 006) featuring the altoist in the company of Mulgrew Miller (piano), Peter Washington (bass) and Jeff Hirshfield (drums) is a tasty treat of six originals and two tested ingredients, Sam Rivers' *Beatrice* and Wayne Shorter's *Virgo*. Originally out of the North Texas State Lab Band (c 1980), he has proven his durability with the likes of Jack McDuff and Toshiko Akiyoshi. This, his fourth album as a leader, with its blend of ballad artistry (*Takin' It Easy, Reluctance*) and meaty powerhouse numbers (*Fast Lane, Breakaway*), was a fresh and pleasurable experience for me. Not to be outdone was **Michael Hashim's A Blue Streak** (Stash 546), garnished with the trio of Mike Le Donne (organ), Peter Bernstein (bass) and Kenny Washington (drums). Hashim states in the liner notes that he wished to "bring in some different colours, flavours, and personal twists and ideas" to this session. Statements such as this are often specious at best. This is not. The proof is in the pudding, as the saying goes. From the rousing opening original, *Smoke-down*, to a wildly innovative *Melancholy Baby*, a silk-smooth *Never Let Me Go*, to a jaunty *The Next Time You See Me*, Hashim examines all avenues of musical exploration. Le Donne's Hammond B-3, by the way, is a delightful surprise throughout. This is another offering that I might sadly have overlooked had it not been dropped on my plate, so to speak.

The last CD, *I'm Old Fashioned* (Stash 545), I have retained deliberately for this moment, in anticipation of what it would be...a rare old Malmsey, rich and mellow, suitable as a satisfying end to a meal or a day. I was not disappointed. I last saw **Harold Ashby** at the 1987 Berne Jazz Festival, making wonderful music in some pretty high profile company, stepping out now and then to show the younger players how it could be done, mixing chorus for chorus with the best of them. There

are too few Harold Ashby recordings (I have an lp from 1959, though several have been issued in Europe since), so that this venture by the seasoned veteran of the tenor saxophone



is a luxury not to be missed. Support from such reliable musicians as Richard Wyands, Aaron Bell and Connie Kay is a bonus. Ellington once described him as "soul-saturated", and that about says it all. There are two originals (*Dash* and *Forever*) added to the warm glow of eight standards, presented in an unmistakably à la Harold Ashby manner. A must for saxophiles.

Well, I don't know about you, but I'm going back for seconds. □

John Sutherland has been a Coda Reviewer for more than ten years, a collector of jazz recordings since the mid-40's, and a co-host on Toronto radio station CKLN-FM's *Three Or Four Shades Of Blue* each month for the past five years.

APPLE SOURCE

NEW YORK NOTES BY KEVIN WHITEHEAD

FIRST THING, OLD BUSINESS. Re: my Victoriaville review in issue 247, festival organizer Michel Levasseur called to protest my remark "By his own admission, Levasseur is no great fan of jazz-style improvisation..." an incorrect assertion based on drawing a general conclusion from a particular remark he made to me in a passing conversation. That's sloppy journalism two ways, but wait, it gets worse. I then give the impression "jazz-style improvisation" equals "improvising," generalizing still more, and constructing a straw-man argument in which I defend a discipline which needs no defending around M. Levasseur. FIMAV's commitment to improvised music speaks for itself.

So the review's thesis is in tatters. The particulars stand. In festival reviews and columns like this, the thematic unity writers strive for to keep readers' interest is often illusory—not so much shaving the truth as emphasizing certain aspects of a performance to the exclusion of others. But that's rarely true to the experience of seeing/hearing a lot of live jazz, where you may zero in on something different every set. In New York, where the venues alone can seem like they're on separate planets, inspiring varied reactions.

Venuewise, no place is swankier than the Cafe Carlyle on Park Avenue (not too far) uptown, where gents must wear ties and the MJQ ended a three-week stand January 23. Mickey Roker subbed for ailing drummer Connie Kay. Without detectable irony, Milt Jackson announced two tunes as "Bess, You Are My Woman Now" and "I Love You, Porgy." At these prices, you get corrected grammar, and patrons hang on every dear note. The night I was there, it was uncommonly quiet; some of the Village clubs get loud as high-school cafeterias. The MJQ sounded like a polished pearl. Percy Heath played without amplification (but grunted profusely, not just when soloing); Jackson played plenty of blues, all one could ask for (and Roker's played with Bags enough to know how to feed him right). John Lewis played piano as economically as ever, but with a harder attack than I remember—almost as if his sound and Jackson's have grown more similar over four decades. Lewis rarely took his eyes off the vibist's malletboard.

Jazz critics are too fond of boxing

metaphors, but pianist Don Grolnick's January Sweet Basil gig (ending the 24th) was unmistakably an exhibition bout, pairing this year's tenor champ (besides Joe Henderson), Joe Lovano, with young contender Joshua Redman. They sparred without drawing blood. Joshua's got power and reach, but for now Lovano's got the darting moves—though he sounds better roaming the ring with Paul Motian than backed into a corner by Grolnick's more conventional charts. Joshua wasn't raised by papa Dewey, but has played with him a lot, and his booting tone is more resonant, emotionally and timbrally, than that of most young pups. Hotdogging and quoting a lot, he came off less as young Trane than young Johnny Griffin. In truth, they were the whole show. Grolnick tends to run through all his good ideas long before a solo ends. He, bassist Peter Washington and drummer Bill Stewart are a competent rhythm section. The gig's nature was contrived, but it made for entertaining spectacle.

Joshua was at the Vanguard with his own quartet (Kevin Hays, piano; Chris McBride, bass; a fine newcomer, Brian Blade, on drums). Opening night, March 30, he paid liberal compliments to the major label just releasing his debut CD, but neglected to plug Dewey's two nights a few blocks away the same week. Odd, considering Joshua got his first exposure playing with headliner Dewey on several of his Vanguard stands. (Last time Joshua was at the Vanguard, in August, he played part of the week with Ornette associates Haden, Higgins and Metheny—a gig on which he sounded rather better than this

time out; no sign of Dewey then either.) At Visiones April 2, Dewey Redman sounded just okay, appearing with one of those low-pressure rhythm sections he's come to prefer: drummer Leroy Williams, bassist Cameron Brown, and a new face, Ottawa pianist D.D. Jackson. The boss played only tenor the set I heard, mostly ballads, and sang *Mr. Sandman*, a subtle joke perhaps. Watching Redman's film and pere two days apart suggested a boxing-movie analogy: the last reel of *Fat City*.

On his wondrous (unreissued) talking record for Riverside, Coleman Hawkins said about New York, "This place makes all musicians sound funny when they come around." Cleveland's splendid tenorist Ernie Krivda blew east to play the Blue Note March 8th, with his sextet. Krivda, who lived here in the '70s, has prodigious chops and drive, clean intonation and articulation, and burly timbre. The way he tightens and loosens his time makes a nice change from New York style, where we keep close tabs on the beat. And yet, playing over drums alone on one tune, Krivda's stair-stepping, upward modulations were obviously designed to build big tension but came off kinda corny. However if he'd stayed here he probably wouldn't have developed the elastic phrasing that made him sound fresh.

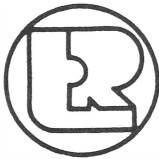
Roulette's spring series contained several fine shows, including the debut of Denman Maroney's composition *Two Times* (March 19 & 20) for Mark Dresser's quintet Force Green, with the composer playing sampled prepared piano sounds, and of multireedist Ned Rothen-

berg's nine-piece Power Lines Ensemble (April 2 & 3). His compositions were based on his usual odd meter vamps and long rhythmic cycles. Nonetheless Ned absorbed, probably unconsciously, some traits of the (white) Brooklyn scene he's never been associated with, even though he lives in the midst of it: there were moments of alto sax sailing over rich horn voicings that sounded lifted from Tim Berne, and some of the band's spirited interaction recalled *New & Used*, no surprise with Mark Feldman on violin and Dave Douglas on trumpet and baritone horn.

Pianist Matthew Shipp played Roulette with bassist William Parker and drummer Whit Dickey, March 26. Shipp has some formidable strengths—for one thing, he spends far more time exploring the piano's lowest register than most players, getting a clangorous thunder as he pummels the keys looking like a two-armed octopus. He gets compared to Cecil Taylor like all dissonant pianists—he himself cites Bud—but this style more closely resembles Lionel Hampton's two-fingered keyboard work. Yet there are times when Shipp churns chords endlessly, achieving stasis rather than momentum. He's better when he keeps his lines and harmonies moving—which is why he sounded better on a David S. Ware gig last fall with the same rhythm players than he did here. Shipp's own tunes don't play to his strengths.

And what exactly, has this to do with the MJQ, the Redmans and Ernie Krivda? Not much, except that it all happened on the same watch. □





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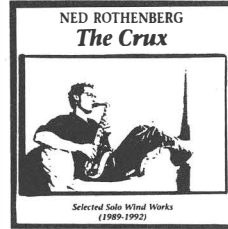
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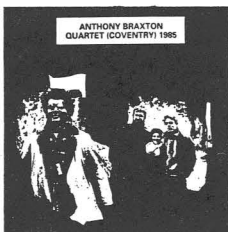
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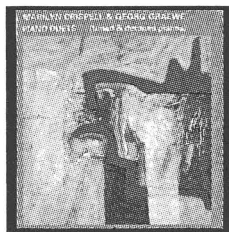
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 Aiyb Dieng, and more); look for Orb remixes of "Mantra"!



JAZZ VIDEO



THERE HAVE BEEN SO MANY JAZZ FILMS RELEASED ON VIDEO during the past two years that it is easy to forget just how little documentation there is of jazz performances during 1915-1980. The history of jazz on film has been largely haphazard and accidental; fortunately this situation has improved immensely during the past decade although it is too late for many early musicians.

The Shelly Manne Quartet and *Less McCann Trio* (28 minutes apiece) both offer mini-sets from the glory days of Shelly's Manne-Hole in Los Angeles. Neither of these films include dates but these performances are probably from the late 60s. This particular Shelly Manne group featured the late drummer, tenor-saxophonist Bob Cooper, pianist Hampton Hawes and bassist Ray Brown playing three songs. *Blues In The Basement* has strong solos from Coop and Hawes, short spots from the same pair on a ballad version of *Stella By Starlight* and room for all four musicians on a fine rendition of *Milestones*. The sound is a bit cloudy throughout this tape but since it chronicles the much missed Shelly Manne and Hampton Hawes, not to mention the

legendary club, *The Shelly Manne Quartet* is worth acquiring.

Less McCann Trio finds pianist McCann, bassist Jimmy Rowser and drummer Donald Dean in top form on the funky vamp *Right On*, a soulful *Sunny*, the vocal ballad *With These Hands* and a classic version of McCann's biggest hit *Compared To What*. An important transition figure between Horace Silver and Ramsey Lewis, Les McCann is heard here at his absolute prime, making the most out of simple devices and consistently swinging hard. It can be argued that McCann has not developed much (if at all) during the past 20 years but that does not lower the significance and the general enjoyment of this excellent film. *Les McCann Trio*

has much better sound quality than the Shelly Manne tape and is highly recommended.

Anything For Jazz (25 minutes, 1979) is a wandering, poorly organized and ultimately disappointing look at the brilliant pianist-educator Jaki Byard. Although there are glimpses of Byard at the piano, there are no complete performances and few hints of his remarkable versatility. Brief verbal appearances by bassist Ron Carter and pianist Bill Evans find these two musicians simply making comments about how underrated Byard is. Jaki is seen talking to students, leading his Apollo Stompers and playing excerpts from pieces (none of which are identified). Some erratic home movies are also shown but it is never obvious who we are looking at. Jaki Byard, a unique pianist who should be coaxed into recording a history of jazz album (few other musicians have such mastery over so many different styles) deserved much better than this well-intentioned mess.

Passing It On (23 minutes, 1984) is much better. By sticking to a few basic themes in the life of pianist Barry Harris, this documentary is able to present a clear portrait of an artist. Harris calls himself "an inveterate bebopper" and says "I consider bebop the beginning and end of music so far." In this simple little film by David Chan and Kenneth Freundlich, the clips are brief but meaningful. Barry Harris is seen teaching at the Jazz Cultural Theatre (which he founded), reminiscing a bit about playing with Lester Young and Charlie Parker, taking classical piano lessons and rehearsing with a group; Pepper Adams and Red Rodney make cameo appearances. At the close, Barry Harris plays *Epitaphy* and

Ruby My Dear on stage with his trio. Throughout *Passing It On*, Barry Harris' warm personality, his sense of humour and his serious mission in life (keeping bebop alive) are emphasized.

Sippie (23 minutes, 1982) is a portrayal of the last surviving classic blues singer, Sippie Wallace, and could easily have been twice as long. Sippie, 83 at the time, talks about the early days (her 1920s recordings are heard in the background), including about how seeing Ma Rainey perform gave her the idea to sing blues and how she was originally afraid to sing in public. "Now I ain't scared at all" she states proudly. "The more people I can sing before, the more I can open my big mouth." Wallace is also seen composing a new blues and sings several numbers (including *Adam and Eve Had the Blues* and her biggest hit *I'm a Mighty Tight Woman*) before a live audience with the backing of pianist Jim Dapogny and the Turk Murphy band. "All the blues that I sing are blues that I have lived; I have had experience. I can write the blues because I write about myself." Although it leaves quite a few questions unanswered (such as Wallace's activities between 1930-80), this fine film by Roberta Grossman and Michelle Paymar is an obvious act of love and helps preserve the legacy of this great blues singer who died in 1986.

All of these videos are available from *Rhapsody Films*, P.O. Box 179, New York, NY 10014.

Back in the 1970s Dick Hyman recorded a remarkable album for Chiaroscuro on which he interpreted Thad Jones' *A Child Is Born* in the style of eleven pianists, in addition to himself. Bill Dobbins, on the two-part *Evolution of Solo*

UPDATE

A COLUMN BY SCOTT YANOW

Jazz Piano (50 minutes apiece, 1989) used the same premise. Utilizing an original theme of his based on *All Of Me* (which he re-named *All Of You* in tribute to the pianists), Dobbins takes one through the history of jazz, talking a bit about each of the pianists before interpreting the song as they might have.

Part 1: Traditional Styles features Dobbins doing a superb job of bringing to life the styles of Scott Joplin (for whom he added some extra themes to fit the ragtime format), Jelly Roll Morton, James P. Johnson, Willie "the Lion" Smith (capturing his impressionism), Earl Hines (recreating Hines' crazy risktaking), Fats Waller, Teddy Wilson, Duke Ellington (in the 60s), Art Tatum, Meade Lux Lewis, Pete Johnson and Jimmy Yancey. Only Count Basie and Albert Ammons are missing.

For **Part 2: Modern Styles**, Bill Dobbins explores the approaches of Thelonious Monk (rightfully stating that "the relationship of Monk to bebop is curiously similar to that of Ellington to swing"), Bud Powell, Oscar Peterson, Errol Garner (during which a bit of Hines slips in!), Lennie Tristano, Bill Evans, Clare Fischer (a surprising choice), Jimmy Rowles, Cecil Taylor (coming close although using more space than C.T. might have), Chick Corea, Keith Jarrett and Richie Beirach. The biggest omissions are Horace Silver, Herbie Hancock and especially McCoy Tyner.

Throughout these fascinating tapes, Bill Dobbins is both articulate and concise, summing up each pianist's style verbally and musically in a way that should interest both musicians and laymen. *The Evolution of Solo Jazz Piano* is well worth searching for.

Produced by a German company, these tapes are available through Caris Music Services, Rd.7, Box 7621G, Stroudsburg, PA 18360

Jackie McLean's Triloka album *Dynasty* (recorded November 5, 1988) was one of the most exciting jazz releases of 1990 and it is great that this high-powered session can now be seen in addition to being heard. Altoist McLean, along with his son Rene (on tenor, soprano, flute and alto), pianist Hotep Idris Galeta, bassist Nat Reeves and drummer Carl Allen, were all quite inspired during this often-intense session. *Dynasty* (56 minutes), contains the same program as the CD except for the omission of two Rene McLean compositions, *Zimbabwe* and *Multi-Woman*. The camerawork is occasionally a little shaky but does not detract from the fiery music. After a fast blues, *Bird Lives*, the quintet performs Rene McLean's Cotranish waltz, *Dance Little Mandisso* before Jackie plays a classic version of his signature tune *A House Is Not A Home*. The other selections (*Five*, *J. Mac's Dynasty*, *Knot The Blues*, *Third World Express* and *King Tut's Strut*) show that Jackie McLean is still very much in his prime, playing without wasting a single note or striking a false emotion. Rene has developed quite a bit during the past 20 years, still hinting at Coltrane a little on tenor but sounding surprisingly original on alto (particularly during *J. Mac's Dynasty*). With the assistance of the dynamic rhythm section, *Dynasty* is full of memorable performances as the musicians go for broke.

Video available from Triloka, 7033 Sunset Blvd., Suite 310, Hollywood, CA 90028.

Woody Herman and the Famous Alumni Orchestra (42 minutes) and *Woody Herman & The Ultimate Herd* (54 minutes) are both quite valuable if a bit low budget. The former tape celebrates Herman's 50th anniversary as a bandleader as he heads an all-star group (which includes tenorman Bob Cooper, trombonist Buster Cooper and pianist Nat Pierce among others) for a June 21, 1986 concert at San Diego's Wild Animal Park (!). Overall the orchestra sounds excellent on the nostalgic butswinging program: *Blue Flame*, *The Good Earth*, *Woodchopper's Ball*, *Four Brothers*, *Early Autumn*, *Not Really The Blues*, *Sonny Boy* (featuring a rare late-period vocal by Herman), *The Preacher*. Short clips between some of the songs briefly outline Herman's beginnings and include short comments by Benny Carter, Rosemary Clooney and actor Hal Linden. In one slightly chilling spot (considering how he was hounded by the Internal Revenue Service to the end of his life for taxes), after Les Brown says a few words Herman comments "The difference between Les and I is simply this: He can afford to not play!" This historic film is filled out by Woody Herman at a slightly later Hollywood Bowl concert (playing *Blowing Up A Storm* and *Blue Flame*) and finally, back at the San Diego concert, Herman is seen playing *As Time Goes By* over the closing credits.

The Ultimate Herd showcases what would be the Last Herd during a cruise on the S.S. Norway the week of October 12-18, 1986. Participating as part of a floating jazz festival, Herman had visibly aged during the previous few months and admits during a panel discussion, "All of my bands have always been young; it's just

that the coach got very old." The music once again revisits Herman's past: *Blue Flame*, *Four Brothers*, *Woodchoppers' Ball*, *Caldonia*, *What's New*, *Early Autumn*; Herman really has to struggle to sing *Caldonia* at the rather rapid tempo. Several guest artists add to this tape's value. Joe Williams duets with Herman on *I've Got News For You*, Cab Calloway performs an exuberant *Minnie The Moocher* and, best of all, tenor saxophonist Al Cohn sits in for an excellent rendition of *Body And Soul*. This film concludes with a postscript, telling viewers that Woody Herman had to stop playing less than five months later and that on the night of his death, his orchestra was gigging somewhere in the midwest (as he would have wanted). Pete Smith, who narrates both of these films, has done a great service by preserving these last great moments in the unique career of Woody Herman, displaying the importance (to anyone still unaware) of filming jazz greats while they are still with us for future audiences. □

These tapes can be ordered at Rendezvous, P.O. Box 4605, San Clemente, CA 92672.



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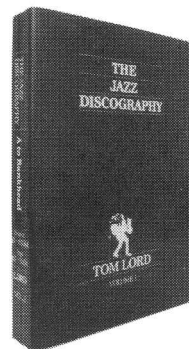


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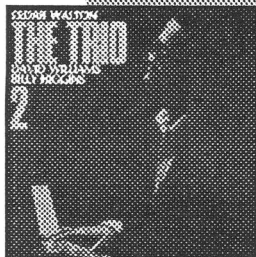


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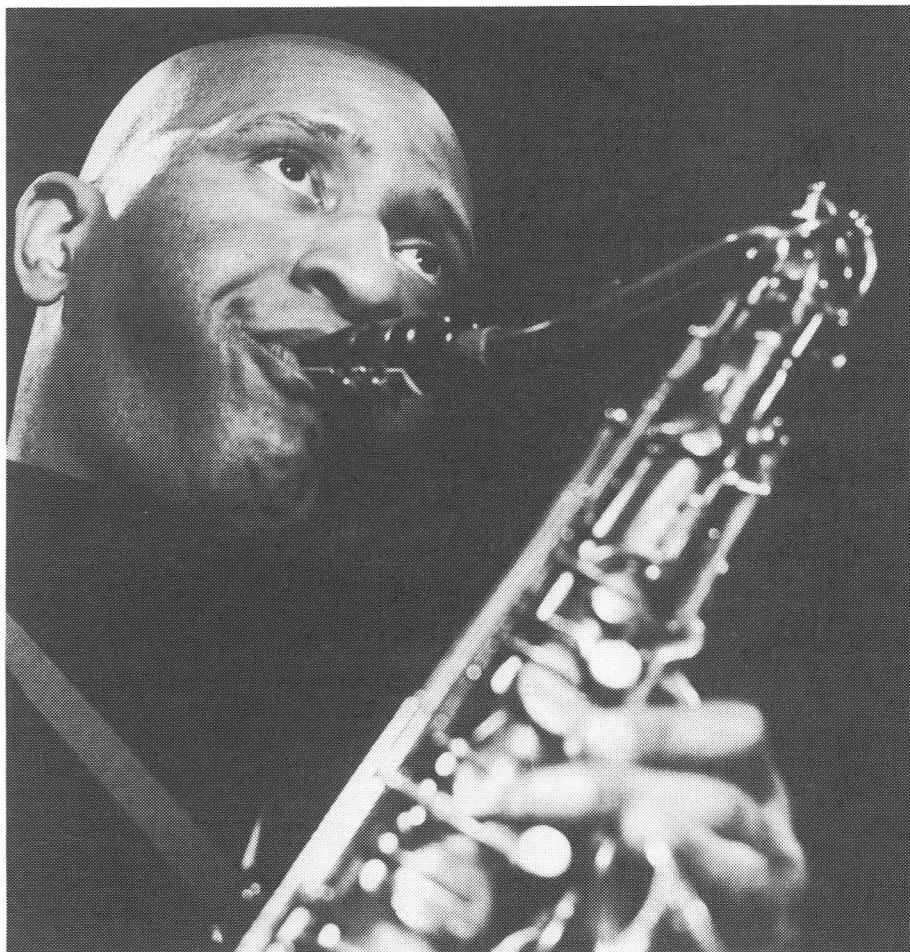
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INSIDE OUT SAXOPHONE MUSIC



SONNY ROLLINS • Photograph by Bill Smith

SONNY ROLLINS • *ON THE OUTSIDE* • Bluebird/BMG 2496-2-RB

On the Outside, which pairs Sonny Rollins' mighty 1963 RCA album *Our Man in Jazz* with three relatively contemporary tracks from the Rollins/Clark Terry/Gary Burton sampler *3 in Jazz* for the same label, is a tough jab-and-weave affair with a misleading title. In terms of the jazz mainstream Rollins was often on the outside, trading early adulation for long nights of solo practice and the artistic meditation we tend to expect only from older sages. In terms of the music, however, the towering tenorist was very much on the inside, agitating against the architecture of the songs, making space while respecting the design.

The *Our Man* tracks are epics of exploration — eight minutes of *Dearly Beloved*, 15 of *Doxy*, 25 of *Oleo*. Rollins is in marvellous form for the long haul, his imperial power shaped, if not exactly tempered, by his fascination with the musical details. Bassist Bob Crenshaw and drummer Billy Higgins have the wit and stamina to pace the leader, but Don Cherry plays a bit part. Never the most powerful trumpeter by any stretch of the breath, Cherry plumps for tart and occasionally trenchant commentary.

The three shorter tracks, with Henry Grimes replacing Crenshaw, virtually stop before they start, though the cheeky fake endings of *There Will Never Be Another You* are amusing.

REVIEWS BY RANDAL McILROY

JOE LOVANO WIND ENSEMBLE

WORLDS • Harmonia Mundi

Label Bleu LBLC 6524

JOE LOVANO • *LANDMARKS*

Blue Note CDP 796108 2

These compact discs present two sides of the perennial talent-deserving-wider-recognition Joe Lovano. Doubtless more will reveal themselves.

On *Worlds*, a French title distributed in Canada by Scandinavian Record Import, Lovano compares favourably to Steve Lacy, Franz Koglmann and Maarten Altena in his blurring of the borders between jazz and that other new music. The thrilling soprano vocalist Judi Silverman provides the art-song link — in spirit though not in voice she recalls Irene Aebi's vocal presence in Lacy's ensemble — though she's also an agile scatter; listen to the way she insinuates herself between Gary Valente's bittersweet trombone and Bill Frisell's horn-like guitar in the title track. Lovano's charts for this septet encompass tightly knit themes and solo springboards with equal alacrity. His tenor fans the hottest fires, but the soprano dance over Paul Motian's drums in *Round Dance* is one to cherish. (Scandinavian Record Import, 638 The Kingsway, Peterborough, Ontario K9J 7L8).

Landmarks works its surprise element into a more conventional jazz context, though *Here and Now's* mix of stutter-guitar riffs (John Abercrombie) and pugnacious drums (Bill Stewart) and Ken Werner's hilariously mock-rhapsodic piano cascades in *I Love Music* make categories redundant. Even the initially straightforward swing of *Landmarks Along the Way* is jewelled with little details that mark Lovano not only as a valuable saxophonist but as an involving composer as well.

SONNY ROLLINS • JOE LOVANO • NICK BRIGNOLA • BOBBY WATSON

NICK BRIGNOLA • *WHAT IT TAKES*

Reservoir Music RSR CD117

Great art should transcend technical achievement. The latest set by multi-reedist Nick Brignola and his quintet (Randy Brecker on trumpet, pianist Kenny Barron, bassist Rufus Reid and drummer Dick Berk) goes past dazzle to tickle and warm the soul, and along the way you may just happen to notice that Brignola is an astoundingly multi-faceted player with an uncommonly wide range of hearing.

In common with only a few instrumental switch-hitters (primarily Roscoe Mitchell, Anthony Braxton and John Surman), Brignola treats each horn as an individual voice. On baritone he hears low, drawing in charcoal around the melody of *In A Sentimental Mood* but staying lithe for the audacious acceleration of the gorgeous *Star Eyes*. With soprano he hears high as an oboe, harmonizing with Brecker in the theme of *Asia* to create a new third voice. *The Sweetwater Strut* is his one turn on alto, and here he's bright and wiry. Oh, and he also plays clarinet richly in *Au Privave*.

Yet the chops, great though they are from all concerned, follow the music. *What it Takes* is the sound of maturity without ossification, an adventure in the mainstream.



JOHN HICKS QUARTET FEATURING BOBBY WATSON

NAIMA'S LOVE SONG • DIW DIW-823

Like the Nick Brignola disc, this set by pianist John Hicks, altoist Bobby Watson, bassist Curtis Lundy and drummer Victor Lewis promotes feel and group empathy over solo pyrotechnics, and likewise is a glorious thing.

That isn't to say self-effacement rules. Watson indeed is in especially perky form, leaping into several of his solos with an eager yelp. The four fall on *Pent-Up House* like a pack of hounds, though in this case they're whippets. The performance of Lundy's elementary *My Dear Watson* is litheness defined. In Watson's *Someday Soon* and the Mal Waldron favourite *Star Eyes* they play the blues with Ellingtonian elegance, with the former punctuated cannily by Lewis' melodic drumming. *Naima's Love Song* itself was written by Hicks, who plays as beautifully as he composes.

The Japanese disc boasts a wonderfully warm and clear sound, too; domo arigato to engineer Ryusake Sase.

CHRISTOPHER HOLLYDAY • *THE NATURAL MOMENT*

Novus/BMG 3118-2-N

What put altoist Christopher Hollyday leaps ahead of the usual young lions is toughness. He's hard, and there's an increasingly heady brew of pith and vinegar in his playing that tastes closer to Ornette than Hollyday's mentor, Jackie McLean. It's hard to believe Hollyday was only 21 when he cut this one at Rudy van Gelder's studio; so it's not surprising he's chafing against the presumption that he's one more sombre custodian of the hard bop tradition.

The mix rubs best at full throttle, with the quartet's take of Walter Davis Jr.'s *Scorpio Rising* roaring past the green light. Correspondingly, they idle impatiently on the few ballads, the version of Cole Porter's *Every Time We Say Goodbye* sitting as comfortably as a contractual obligation. No matter, since the hard stuff is so bracing, and Hollyday's band (pianist Brad Mehldau, bassist John Webster and drummer Ron Savage) is well, hard. Now let's have a live album.

ANTONIO HART • *FOR THE FIRST TIME*

Novus/BMG 3120-2-N

Antonio Hart is Novus' other young altoist on the move. The 22-year-old's first set on his own away from labelmate Roy Hargrove's band — the boss plays trumpet on one track, and bassist Christian McBride is along too — is a relatively predictable journey through hardish bop and standard ballads, but Hart plays with liveliness and an alert kind of assurance, and earns continued surveillance.

Hart's not afraid to tangle with a challenge. His own tune *Self Evaluation* finds him digging hard with the spunky drummer Thomas Williams, while pianist Mulgrew Miller intervenes with a dark, sly solo. *KYH* co-opts a reggae beat for acoustic instruments, though there's a sexy and inarguably jazz twining of Hart's alto and Bill Pierce's tenor that's more uptown than Trenchtown.

His dry take on the ballads doesn't always succeed. *Embraceable You* sounds callow rather than cool. Perhaps he simply hasn't lived long enough to seize

ANTONIO HART • JERRY BERGONZI

the subtext, emotionally speaking. But the lazy *Bewitched* is appealing in an enervated way.

BOB SHEPPARD • TELL TALE SIGNS • Windham Hill Jazz WD 0129

California's Windham Hill label remains the foremost New Age home, but the new jazz wing is impressing as a serious thing, contributing a little more crunch to the granola you might say. The company is looking upmarket with Bob Sheppard's *Tell Tale Signs*, but the saxophonist isn't hemmed in by the commercial considerations.

Holding mainly to tenor, Sheppard is a player of grace and buoyancy, with the tenor blues of *A.J.* and the poise of *How Deep is the Ocean* framing his thoughtful side quite handsomely. He finds as much warmth in the soprano for the title track, cosseted by John Beasley's piano and Billy Child's synthesizer filigrees.

Although nothing qualifies as a sop for radio programmers, producer Walter Becker (late of Steely Dan, and back at the boards with Dan engineer Roger Nichols) has polished the tracks a little, with touches of synths, electric guitar and occasional double-tracking of Sheppard's horns. Snappier tunes like *Once Removed* and *Point of View* (both Sheppard originals) don't hurt either. Still, Sheppard proves there are ways for an able horn to reach the wider constituency without doing a Kenny G. Promising.

JERRY BERGONZI

LINEAGE • Red RR 123237 2 CD

STANDARD GONZ • Blue Note CDP796256 2

Like fellow American Joe Lovano, Jerry Bergonzi is a tenorist finally getting his due after years at the grindstone. In different ways, these two releases show a player with great lungs and also great wits to match. The man has things to say.

Lineage, an Italian release available in Canada through Distribution Fusion III, is a live date cut in 1989 in Bergonzi's home town of Boston with Mulgrew Miller, bassist Dave Santoro and the astute Adam Nussbaum at the traps. It's a blowing session, with the five tracks averaging 12 minutes each, but everybody's listening. His tenor is dark and robust in the Joe Henderson stormer *Inner Urge*, contemplative à la Coltrane in the mid-tempo original *Jones*, feeling and dignified in *Everything Happens to Me*, which concludes on a graceful solo tenor coda. Mulgrew's wry pianisms are a bonus. (Distribution Fusion III, 5455 rue Pare, Suite 101, Montreal, Quebec, H4P 1P7).

Standard Gonz, cut the following year with the underrated Joey Calderazzo replacing Miller, is arresting for its off-kilter, arguably sardonic approach to perennials such as *If I Were a Bell*, *Come Rain or Come Shine* and *Night and Day*. Changing tempi and substituting minor keys for majors opens new perspective into the standards, but what persists is the rum-dark resonance of Bergonzi's tenor. In the original works *McCoy* and *Jab* he strikes the core of the blues without overplaying, a rare achievement these days. □

RANDAL McILROY writes a weekly column on jazz for the *Winnipeg Free Press*, and a monthly column on jazz and new music for *Uptown*.

JERRY BERGONZI • Photograph by Gerard Futrick



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AROUND THE WORLD

CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER FOR SAXOPHONISTS **P.J. PERRY** AND **JEAN DEROME**. PERRY WON THE JAZZ JUNO AWARD FOR 1992 (A LONG OVERDUE RECOGNITION OF HIS TALENTS) - FOR *MY IDEAL*, HIS RECORDING FOR THE UNITY LABEL. MULGREW MILLER, NEIL SWAINSON AND VICTOR LEWIS COMPLETED THE QUARTET. JEAN DEROME WAS THE RECENT RECIPIENT OF THE FREDDIE STONE AWARD.

CANADA

This issue of Coda will be read in the period covered by the summer jazz festivals. Only sporadic details of artists appearing at these events has surfaced so far.

Toronto's Downtown Jazz Festival has Sonny Rollins, Dr. John and the Keith Jarrett Trio in showcase concert events. The **Harbourfront** concert series at the DuMaurier Theatre has familiar headliners - Abdullah Ibrahim, Randy Weston, Michel Petruccianni, John Scofield Quartet, Gonzalo Rubalcaba and Steve Lacy. Opening artists are Joe Sealy/Paul Novotny, Brian Hughes, Rick Lazar and David Prentice. A festival highlight will be a series of events involving **Kenny Wheeler**. His Quintet with **Sonny Greenwich**, Don Thompson and Joe LaBarbera, will be at the Montreal Jazz Cafe for two nights and there will be a Nathan Phillips Square concert with a big band performance of his original music. Bartok and Coltrane come together in a Harbourfront concert featuring both a jazz and string quartet. T.S.Monk, Danny D'Imperio's Sextet, Dave McKenna, Roy Hargrove and Charlie Haden are among the headliners at leading jazz venues. Artists on the Sackville label such as **Hagood Hardy**, **JMOG**, the **Dave McMurdo** Jazz Orchestra and an all star sextet under **Jim Galloway's** leadership will be at Harbourfront June 26th.

Toronto has a new club, **The Jazz Junction**, which is presenting some of the heavyweight bands from New York. It's a different concept. Concert style seating in the showroom of a piano retailer which boasts an alcohol and smoke free environment. It's out-of-the way location has not deterred enthusiasts from supporting the action. The Message was the opening attraction. Ralph Moore, Donald Harrison, Steve Turre, Brian Lynch, Geoff Keezer and Carl Allen gave a fresh perspective to the Blakey tradition. Since then David Murray/Don Pullen, Frank Morgan, T.S.Monk and McCoy Tyner have all appeared.

Both Dave McMurdo and Jim Galloway squeezed their big bands onto the Montreal Jazz Club's stage for week long engagements. Jay McShann, **Fraser McPherson** and Jake Hanna were featured guests with Galloway's Wee Big Band and the music was recorded for release on Sackville.

The **Glenn Gould Studio** at the CBC's new Toronto headquarters is designed for the acoustic properties of solo performers and string ensembles. Jazz performances on tape sound fine but some adjustments are necessary for in theatre audiences. **JMOG**, the Rick Wilkins/Ed Bickert Quartet, and trios led by Oliver Jones and Gene

DiNovi gave concerts in March for future airing on CBC Radio.

Hugh Fraser's first gig in Toronto with his new band offered a bonus - the distinctive saxophone of England's Ray Warleigh, who is now part of the faculty at Humber College.

Jazz Connection is a new idea for people wishing to make friends. A mix of live and recorded music is planned for the group's meetings. Call (416) 924-4577 for more information.

Toronto's second summer jazz festival takes place July 24-25 at Kew Gardens in the Beaches. Steps Ahead, Robben Ford & Blues Line, and Antonio Hart are among the international attractions. **Francois Bourassa**, Brian Hughes, **Bob Brough**, **Lorraine Desmarais**, Bill King and **Archie Alleyne** are some of the other participants.

You can hear plenty of jazz in Banff in July as the faculty and students of the Banff Centre's jazz program perform in a variety of settings. Some of the faculty will be Robin Eubanks, **Don Thompson**, **Kenny Wheeler**. Keith Copeland, **Pat LaBarbera** and Norma Winstone.



Newly released by the National Film Board is a video version of **Jacques Hollander's** film *Musicians In Exile*.

RECORDINGS

There's an ever broadening representation of Canadian musicians on CD. New from Justin Time is **Diana Krall's** debut release. It's a trio date with John Clayton and Jeff Hamilton. Two further Justin Time lps are now on CD - **Fraser McPherson's** Honey and Spice and **Sonny Greenwich's** Bird Of Paradise...Unity's most recent releases feature pianist **Jeff Johnston's** trio with guest artists **Kenny Wheeler**; Chelsea Bridge - a quartet featuring the voice of **Tena Palmer** and the saxophone of **Rob Frayne**; Experience is a live concert recording in Montreal by **Vikrama**...Another Point Of View is the debut recording for Toronto-based guitarist **Sean Brey** on Counterpoint...**Velvet Glove** launched its self-produced CD Round One at a special performance at Toronto's Montreal Jazz Club. Bassist Rosemary Galloway, saxophonist Jane Fair, trumpeter Stacy Rowles and drummer

COMPILED BY PUBLISHER JOHN NORRIS

Sherrie Maricle are the members of this crossborder quartet...Percussionist **Graham Kirkland** launched his CD Compositional Collage at a special Music Gallery concert on March 24... **Garbo's Hat** featuring Kate Hammett Vaughan, Graham Ord and Paul Blaney have a new CD entitled Face The Music on Word Of Mouth. A feature article on **Kate Hammett Vaughan** will appear in the next issue of Coda...Already out this year on Sackville are new recordings by **Dave McMurdo's** Jazz Orchestra, saxophonist **Art Ellefson** and **JMOG**. Due in June are new CDs from the **Steve Holt Jazz Quartet** (featuring Kevin Turcotte) and the **Harold Mabern/Kieran Overs Duo**.

NOTE: TO BE INCLUDED IN THIS COLUMN, INFORMATION PERTAINING TO LIVE MUSIC & RECORDINGS SHOULD BE SENT TO JOHN NORRIS, P.O. BOX 87, STATION J, TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA, M4J 4X8.

A LETTER

Your review of my publication, *The Jazz Discography*, on page 32 of the March/April edition of Coda, prompts this reply.

As Coda is a Canadian jazz publication your readers should know that *The Jazz Discography* is also a Canadian publication. It is published by my own company called Lord Music Reference Inc., in West Vancouver. I also am a Canadian, something I am very proud of. North Country Distributors are my exclusive world wide distributors only. They are not the publishers, as stated by John Norris in his review.

Mr. Norris states "The early volumes, unfortunately, have perpetuated errors in past works". how about being more specific. A broad comment like this would

have Coda readers believing my work is riddled with errors. It is simply not the case. What errors, what artists? There is not a general discography that's been compiled that does not carry over errors from previous discographical works. Why doesn't Mr. Norris mention that *Jazz Records* (reviewed in the same article) has perpetuated errors from past works? (and believe me there are plenty). *The Jazz Discography* has been extremely well received by the international press and jazz collectors as well. Hopefully, Coda

UNITED STATES

MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS SEEM TO BE PLAYING AN INCREASING ROLE IN THE JAZZ WORLD. AT ONE TIME EVERYONE MET AT A CLUB OR FESTIVAL WHERE THE MUSIC WAS HAPPENING. NOT ONLY HAS THE MUSIC BEEN FORMALISED BUT THOSE WHO SUPPORT IT ARE DOING THE SAME THING.

Ellington 93 is being held in New York City August 11 to 15 at the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza. It will celebrate the 50th anniversary of Ellington's first Carnegie Hall concert. The conference organisers will draw on the city's pool of brilliant musicians to make the evening concerts something special. To receive additional information write **Ellington 93**, P.O. Box 253, NY, NY 10116-0253 or phone 1-800-988-7473.

The **IAJRC Convention** takes place a few days earlier at the Marriott Hotel in Teaneck, NJ. Call Rod Baum at 201-833-4883 (or fax him at 201-833-4874).

Jazz Times magazine is reactivating its annual "The Business of Jazz" Convention at New York's Park Central Hotel October 6 to 9.

On exhibit all summer at **New**

will one day recognize this important Canadian contribution to the jazz world. A good start would be the publishing of this letter.

Sincerely, *Tom Lord*

EDITORSNOTE

Based on the quality of the first volume of Tom Lord's *The Jazz Discography*, I myself have already purchased the next three volumes, and have placed a standing order at North Country for the complete set as they become available. - *Bill Smith*



George Shearing, Joe Williams, Bill Watrous, Bill Berry, Red Holloway and Buddy Montgomery will all be aboard Holland America's *Westerdam* from September 29 to October 4. The cruise begins in Los Angeles and ends in Acapulco.

John Lewis and The Preservation Hall Jazz Band give the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival a jazz flavour this summer. Lewis' solo concert on August 10 marks the beginning of a week of jazz events.

The Great Connecticut Traditional Jazz Festival takes place August 6 to 8. **Dejan's Olympia Brass Band** from New Orleans is one of the headliners at the Sunrise Resort in Moodus.

Lewiston, New York's **Art Park Jazz Festival** takes place over the Labour Day Weekend. On September 3 **Joe Williams, Ahmad Jamal and Phil Woods** will be heard. On Saturday **Stanley Turrentine, Toots Thielemans, Gene Harris, and a trio of Geoff Keezer, Joshua Redman and Christian McBride** will perform.

September 10-12 are the dates for this year's **Delaware Water Gap Celebration of the Arts**...This year's **Monterey Jazz Festival** will be held September 17-19 and will include an All Star tribute to **Dizzy**

CANADIAN • AMERICAN & INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Gillespie...Pianists are invited to participate in the **Jacksonville Jazz Festival's** "Great American Jazz Piano Competition". Call (904)353-7770 for more details.

INTERNATIONAL

Tommy Flanagan was the 1993 **Jazzpar** winner and performed in Denmark at the end of March with **Jesper Lundgaard** and **Lewis Nash**. Already nominated for next year's prize are **Carla Bley**, **Art Farmer**, **Roy Haynes**, **Joe Henderson** and **Putte Wickman**...Saxophonist **Peter Gullin** was awarded the **Golden Disc** by **Orkester Journalen** for making the best Swedish jazz album of 1992.

The 7th annual **Glasgow Jazz Festival** takes place July 1-11. **Tommy Smith** is the festival's **Composer In Residence** this year. Festival headliners include **Oscar Peterson**, **Stephane Grappelli**, **B.B. King**, **The Brecker Brothers**, **John Surman**, **Betty Carter** and **Stan Tracey**.

London's **Palace Theatre** is the venue for **Company Week 93** from July 20-24 with **Derek Bailey**, **Nick Coudry**, **Andy Diagram**, **Martin Klapper**, **Phil Minton**, **Ikue Mori**, **Robyn Shulkovsky** and **Alan Wilkinson**.

Norma Winstone, **Hugh Fraser**, **Jean Toussaint** and **Keith Copeland** will be some of the jazz educators at the University of **Ulster's 2nd International Jazz Summer School** from August 23-27. The university is located at **Jordanstown** which is close to **Belfast**.

Sonny Rollins will headline this summer's **Copenhagen Jazz Festival** with a concert July 9...**Trevor**

Watts' Moire Drum Orchestra toured in **Botswana**, **Lesotho** and **South Africa** in February. At presstime a July tour of the U.S. was in the offing.



LITERATURE

Pee Wee Russell: The Life of a Jazzman is a newly published biography of the clarinetist by **Bob Hilbert** from **Oxford University Press**. A second Hilbert opus is **Pee Wee Speaks: A Discography** which is published by **Scarecrow Press**.

Chicago Jazz: A Cultural History 1904-30 by **William Howland Kenney** also comes from **Oxford** and traces the growth of the city as a major centre of jazz in the 1920s...You can now obtain in paperback from **Oxford - Martin Williams' The Jazz Tradition** and **Royal Stokes' The Jazz Scene**.

Dizzy...John Birks Gillespie In His 75th Year is a pictorial retrospective compiled and edited by photographer **Lee Tanner** and is published by **Pomegranate Books**.

Blues collectors will have use for **The Grove Press Guide to the Blues on CD** by **Frank-John Hadley**.

RECORDINGS

BLUES AND GOSPEL

Alligator's 20th Anniversary Tour Album comes from 1991 concerts with **Koko Taylor**, **Lonnie Brooks**, **Elvin Bishop**, **Katie Webster** and **Lil' Edand** the **Blues Imperials**...**Delmark** has acquired masters recorded by legendary producer **Ralph Bass**. A 1977 **Lonnie Brooks** session will be the first material from the catalogue

to be issued...**Storyville** is busy converting to CD its extensive catalogue. CDs by **Memphis Slim**, **Otis Spann**, **Speckled Red** and **Sonny Boy Williamson** (different material to the **Alligator** repackage of the remaining **Storyville** material). **Canada's Stony Plain Records** has new CDs by harmonica masters **Carey Bell** and **Walter Horton**...**Chicago's Airwax Records** has a new CD collection of contemporary Chicago artists under the title "100% Chicago Style Blues"...**Arhoolie** continues its CD reissue program with excellent packages by **Clifton Chenier** ("Sings The Blues"), **John Jackson** ("Don't Let Your Deal Go Down") and **Robert Shaw** ("The Ma Grinder").

Newly recorded from **Arhoolie** is a CD of **A Capella** gospel music by **San Francisco's Paramount Singers**. The group still interpret the music in the old way. It's a stunning example of this music.

Lake Records has restored to circulation via CD folksinger **Jesse Fuller's 1960s Topic** lp. Additional concert material from the same

period has also been included.

An impressive **Imperial** two CD package pays tribute to the pioneering work of bandleader **Dave Bartholomew** under the title "Spirit of New Orleans".

TRADITIONAL

ArborsRecords is based in Florida and was started to document the music of saxophonist **Rick Fay**. The expanding catalogue incorporates recordings by clarinetist **Bobby Gordon** with harpist **Adele Girard**, trombonist **Dan Barrett** and pianists **Johnny Varro** and **Chuck Folds**. Their catalogue is available from P.O. Box 58059, **Tierra Verde, FL 33715**.

DRG Swing has a never before released 1986 live recording of **Maxine Sullivan** from **Hollywood's Vine Street Bar and Grill**. **Gerry Wiggins**, **Red Callendar** and **Paul Humphrey** are also heard.

Spring saw a major release from **George Buck's** family of labels. On **GHB** there are repackages of **Barry Martyn** sessions with **Louis Nelson** and **George Lewis** as well as never before released sessions from **Jazz Crusade** by **Kid Thomas** and **Jimmy Archey**...**Marty Grosz'** latest on **Jazzology** is "Songs I Learned at my Mother's Knee and Other Low Joints"...**Herb Morand 1949** is the most recent **American Music** reissue. Volumes 5 and 6 of **George Lewis' Oxford Series** continues the documentation of those concerts...A 1975 **Claire Austin/Don Ewell** collaboration is only now issued for the first time on **Audiophile**. Incidentally, the legendary 10" **GTJ** session of **Austin and Ewell** with **Kid Ory** is part of an **OJC** CD which combines that date with **Austin's Lee Wiley** styled Contemporary album "When Your Lover Has Gone". You have to read the fine print to

LITERATURE • RECORDINGS • NEW & REISSUED

realise that the CD contains both sessions...Long overdue is a solo piano date from Ross Tompkins. "AKA The Phantom" is the title of his newly recorded **Progressive** CD.

Doc Cheatham is featured on Sammy Rimington's new **Big Easy** CD recorded live at Sweet Basil in April 1992...Cheatham's collaboration with Dick Wellstood for **Parkwood** is now on CD. The same label has also put on CD Art Hodes' Christmas lp with previously unissued Hodes' originals recorded for the label. Parkwood CDs are only available from North Country because they purchased the entire press run.

New on **Stomp Off** is a Keith Ingham/Marty Grosz collaboration. "Donaldson Redux" features the tunes of Walter Donaldson. "Rent Party" featuring Humphrey Lyttleton and Wally Fawkes is a reprise of material recorded by Lyttleton's early band for Parlophone in the 1950s.

Star Line Productions has issued a Peanuts Hucko CD featuring Randy Sandke, Danny Moss, Roy Williams, Lars Estrand, Johnny Varro and Butch Miles from European concert performances.

Storyville Records has issued four CDs of the classic King Jazz material by the Mezzrow-Bechet Quintet. This compilation spreads the various versions of the tunes over different CDs. All the same material is also available in chronological order (with John R.T. Davies mastering) from a new Italian reissue label - **King Jazz**.

A revived **Collectors Classics** label has begun CD issues of the Henry "Red" Allen material (volume one - devoted to the Rhythmakers material - is excellent), Wingy Manone, Jimmie

Noone and Luis Russell. The reissue field has become more and more congested with so many issues of the same material.

NEW ISSUES

Arabesque has begun showcasing jazz artists. Jane Ira Bloom, Ray Drummond and the String Trio of New York are artists featured in their spring release..."Blues Everywhere" is Shirley Scott's new **Candid** release with Arthur Harper and Mickey Roker in support..."Live at the Showcase" is Ahmad Jamal's latest - it's on **Telarc**...Pianist Cecilia Coleman's "Words of Wisdom" is an excellent showcase for the pianist in a trio setting on **LAP** records (distributed through North Country)...Rene Rosnes, Jack DeJohnette, Birelli Legrene and Terumasa Hino have new recordings on **Blue Note**...Joshua Redman's latest (and his first as a leader) is on **Warner Brothers**..."Secret Love" is Vincent Herring's second outing on **Musicmasters**..."Dance of Passion" is an interesting new release from Johnny Griffin on **Antilles**...Marcus Roberts' latest solo recording for **Novus** is "If I Could Be With You". He tackles some of the stride classics with the sparseness of an Art Hodes...New on **K2B2 Records** is "Big Drum" by the Buell Neidlinger Quartet.

Australian multi-instrumentalist James Morrison has a new recording available on Australian **East-West**. He is showcased with pianist Benny Green, bassist Ray Brown and drummer Jeff Hamilton. Worth looking for...An earlier recording from 1984 features Morrison with a big band. "Night in Tunisia" is on Australian **Pickwick**.

REISSUES

The gold plated CD version of Miles Davis' "Kind of Blue" has

finally returned this music to its originally recorded state. **Columbia** has finally admitted that they issued *So What*, *Freddie Freeloader* and *Blue And Green* at the wrong speed. Musicians had often wondered why this music was in such a weird key. This best selling recording has already been issued twice on CD with abysmal sound. However, the long suffering consumer is now being charged a premium for this gold plated CD which sells for twice the price of a normal CD! They don't even add the alternate take of "Flamenco Sketches". You can only buy this as Miles Davis sampler boxed set!

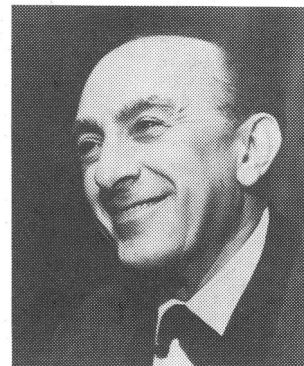
Blue Note has come up with a privately recorded tape of Monk and Coltrane at the Five Spot. They've also issued Charlie Parker location tapes from the HiHat...The Artist House collaboration between Hampton Hawes and Charlie Haden is now on a **Verve** CD. It includes several alternative versions of the tunes...Verve compilations of Stan Getz and Ella Fitzgerald are a reminder to collectors of all the gems still in the vaults. You might also check out "Jelly's Last Jams" - another Verve compilation. It has rare material from Kid Ory, Jack Teagarden, Ralph

Sutton, George Lewis, and Turk Murphy..."The Mambo Kings" digs into the vaults for early Afro-Cuban material from Verve's vaults by Machito, Chico O'Farrill and featuring soloists like Howard McGhee, Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie...Oscar Peterson fans are salivating at the gems now released from the **Polygram** vaults. The six **MPS** "Exclusively For My Friends" series is now a four CD set. It is a monumental portrait of the pianist. An earlier gem - The Stratford Shakespearean Festival lp is now on CD and includes two additional selections - a treatment of Django Reinhardt's "Nuages" and a programmatic suite by Peterson called "Daisy's Dream"...Some obscure recordings of Django Rheinhardt, himself, can be found on volume four of a series on **EPM's Jazz Archives** label. "En Belgique" showcases Reinhardt in a variety of settings in 1942...**OMD** has reissued a collection of 1960 sides by "Les Double Six"...Prominently displayed on the front of the **West Montgomery Fantasy** set is the word "Complete". It turns out that Orrin Keepnews chose to eliminate a couple of items from lps issued at the end of Riverside's existence and replace them with different versions. It's still a spectacular collection. □

TOMMY FLANAGAN • Photograph by Peter Danson
ART HODES • Photographer Unknown

PASSING NOTES

Pianist **GEORGE WALLINGTON** on February 15...Trombonist/arranger **FRED NORMAN** on February 19...**THOMAS A. DORSEY** on January 23...**ART HODES** on March 4...**BILLY ECKSTINE** on March 8...Trumpeter **HAROLD HOWARD** on March 17 on the West Coast (information from Mark Weber)...**BOB CROSBY** on March 10...**CLIFFORD JORDAN** on March 27.



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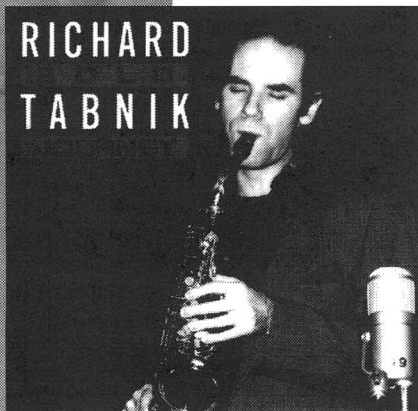
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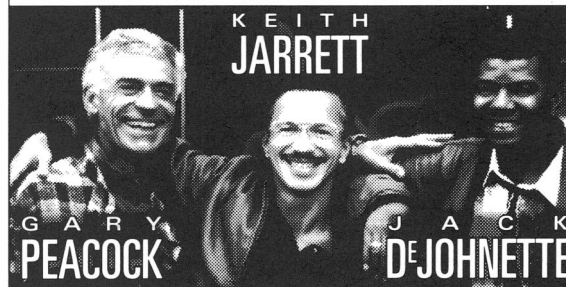
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BILL CLINTON'S SAXOPHONE PLAYING MAKES ME CRINGE. He can barely aspire to the level of a third-rate blues honker living in some backwater town. He'd do well to listen to some guys who can really play. But I suppose he deserves some credit for at least trying to communicate through music.

He'd probably enjoy listening to any of the following recordings. Marty Ehrlich, Steve Lacy, Oliver Lake, David Murray, Joseph Jarman, and Thomas Chapin offer varied playing styles and compositional approaches for study and emulation. Playing along with them are wonderful pianists such as Mal Waldron, David Lahm, and Dave Burrell, and guitarists Spencer Barefield and Anthony Peterson.

While offering their own perspectives on music, and reflecting the new decade we have entered, these musicians still remind us of the great tradition in which we participate, a heritage produced in part by Charles Mingus and Thelonious Monk. Their message speaks in these new and recent recordings.

Monk's presence graces *The Super Quartet/Live at Sweet Basil*. Recorded in 1987, it features compositions by Monk and Mal Waldron. Waldron and Steve Lacy, who co-lead the group, share a collaboration spanning 34 years, having recorded together in

1958 on *Reflections: Steve Lacy plays Thelonious Monk*. And Lacy, don't forget, played in Monk's band in 1960 and 1963. He also co-led a Monk-music group with Roswell Rudd from 1961 to 1964.

With these credentials in his pocket, Lacy sails through Monk's *Evidence* with a joyful improvisation transcending chordal tones and the strictures of a metronomic pulse. Playing the straight man, Waldron plays mostly eighth notes, but also jumping on a single-note motif and wringing it to death. The quartet plays Monk's whimsical *Let's Call This* at a relaxed tempo and Lacy and Waldron seem to enjoy the change of pace.

Waldron and Lacy jab at each other during Waldron's tempestuous *What It Is*. As the band creates a rolling, ship-lost-at-sea feeling, Waldron plows straight ahead, varying neither dynamics nor intensity. Suggesting *Impressions*, his *Snake Out* romps spiritedly. Again pouncing on a motif, he creates tension with a relentless hemiola pattern.

REVIEWS BY PAUL BAKER

MAL WALDRON/STEVE LACY
THE SUPER QUARTET LIVE AT SWEET BASIL
Evidence ECD 22032-2
Recorded New York, August 1987

MARTY EHRLICH
THE WELCOME
Sound Aspects SAS CD 002
Recorded New York, March 1984

MARIO PAVONE
TOULON DAYS
New World/Countercurrents 80420-2
Recorded New York, November 1991

**A. SPENCER BAREFIELD
OLIVER LAKE & ANDREW CYRILLE**
LIVE AT LEVERKUSENER JAZZTAGE
Sound Aspects SAS CD 039
Recorded October 1989

OLIVER LAKE QUARTET
VIRTUAL REALITY (TOTAL ESCAPISM)
Gazell GJCD 4004
Recorded New York, October 1991

**JOSEPH JARMAN & FAMOUDOU
DON MOYE'S MAGIC TRIANGLE**
CALYPSO'S SMILE
AECO Records AECO-008
Recorded Rome, 1984

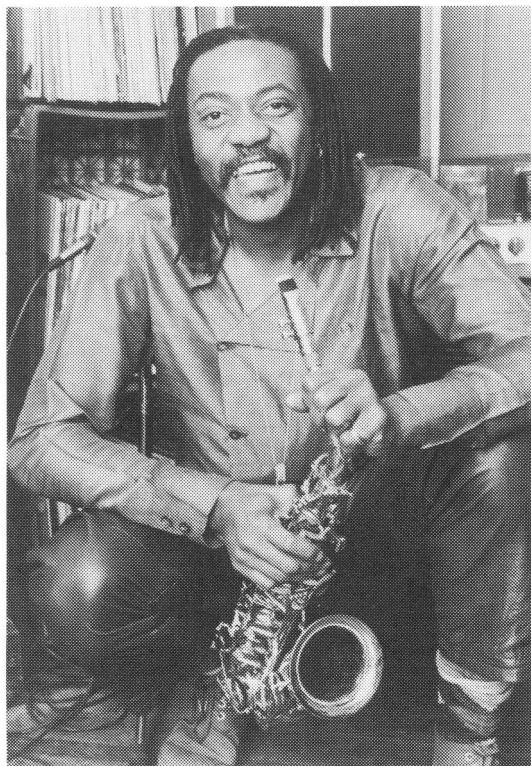
DAVID LAHM QUARTET
MUSCLE MEMORY HOEDOWN
Generation Records GR 203
Recorded New York, August, 1990

DAVE BURRELL & DAVID MURRAY
IN CONCERT
Victo CD 016
Recorded Victoriaville, October 1991

MARTY EHRLICH
PHOTOGRAPH BY GERARD FUTRICK

STEVE LACY • MARTY EHRLICH • OLIVER LAKE

Locking in with bassist Reggie Workman, drummer Eddie Moore owes his snare-intense fury to the great swing drummers. One impressive display of technique involves his splash cymbal work and tomtom/bass drum interchange.



Offering compositions of his own, Marty Ehrlich gathers together music written over several years for *The Welcome*. They represent, he says, a variety of his musical experiences and interests. This is indeed creative, refreshing music, and deserves a showcase more substantial than this brief 39-minute disc.

The simplicity and beauty of jazz interplay occurs many times during *The Welcome*. During *Lament (In Passing)* Ehrlich's flute and Anthony Cox's bass create a bittersweet mood I find most affecting in any music. Ehrlich (bass clarinet) and Cox play complementary melodic lines in *The Welcome*, before Cox's busy bass solo presents a seemingly endless stream of ideas. Pheeroan AkLaff's drum improvisation matches Cox's intensity. Suggesting a tabla/sitar duet, *Dark Woods Bright Sparks* weds Ehrlich's clarinet with AkLaff's

malletted tomtoms. The two pair off again for a free-form abstraction on *Stride*.

Since *The Welcome*, Ehrlich has produced an attractive recording of bassist Mario Pavone and his sparkling group.

Toulon Days offers much instrumental and compositional variety, and reaches the listener on emotional and intellectual levels. It's one of the most satisfying recordings of this group, in fact.

In addition to producing the recording, Ehrlich contributed three arrangements. The dirge-like *Old and New Dreams* features an impassioned tenor solo by Joshua Redman. *Toulon* is a *Night in Tunisia* for the 1990s, featuring simultaneous improvisation by Pavone and trombonist Steve Davis. *Freedom Song* features a thoughtful introduction by Pavone and strong solos by the horn players.

Also contributing arrangements to *Toulon Days* is saxophonist Thomas Chapin (who appears on the David Lahm recording below). The vibrant *Tepito* offers a rich horn arrangement in a 1990s version of *An American in Paris*. Joshua Redman plays a solo perhaps best described as "ballys." The humorous *Z Hopper* bases strong horn solos and ensemble work on a rather goofy-sounding rock-n-roll vamp, but it really burns, somehow. *Monk in Soweto* recalls you-know-who, and pianist Hotep Idris Galeta stabs his way through rhythmically.

From Leverkusen, Germany, home of Agfa film, we receive a snapshot in the form of *Live at Leverkusener Jazztage*. Spencer Barefield, Oliver Lake, and Andrew Cyrille performed there in October 1989. Typical of producer Pedro de Freitas, the recording produces a bright, lively, ambience.

Barefield's tune *Mirror World* honours Monk's melodic taste, again bringing home the importance of knowing one's predecessors. Barefield's processed guitar sound complements and parallels Oliver Lake's

soprano sax. Of metrical and timbral interest, Barefield's *In Between* alternates between 3/4 and 5/4 metres. Lake's deep soprano tone sounds like an alto clarinet, and Cyrille's subsequent drum solo includes powerful single-stroke rolls. Lake's abstract *Gallery* pits his soprano against staccato drums and guitar. Barefield finishes up with a swirling guitar solo. Cyrille's *Shell* offers a swinging pulse and a sophisticated harmonic structure, challenging Barefield and Lake as they trade improvisations of varying lengths. Here Lake's saxophone speaks so quickly and densely one cannot focus on each one note or even each phrase; one simply appreciates the gestalt and enjoys the energy.

Oliver Lake gets to call his own shots on his *Virtual Reality (Total Escapism)*. Does reality inhere in everyday life? In art? Lake's solos and his compositions raise those questions, as they pit outside playing against more traditional interpretation.

Among Lake's more accessible tunes are a couple based on blues chords—*Jest a Little*, where each musician solos for one chorus, and *Shedetude*, where soloists demonstrate that they've indeed put in time in the woodshed. Similar to the harmonic structure of the standard *Summertime* is that of Lake's cheekily titled *Jesus Christ*. Here Lake darts in and out of chordal tones and metric time. Suitable for this hard-bop style, guitarist Anthony Peterson plays mostly inside. Lake and Peterson also solo over the long 71-bar-form of Charles Mingus' *Fables for [sic] Faubus*. Politically speaking, the continuing popularity of this tune, inspired by racial tensions in the U.S., reminds us that nothing much has changed since Mingus wrote it. Musically speaking, bassist Santi Debriano demonstrates the agility of a guitarist, and his bass was recorded with a beautiful, woody sound. Among the less immediately accessible tunes are Lake's non-hummable *Virtual Reality*, involving mixed meters, unpredictable chords, and an alto solo of indiscernible form and tonal centre. A rather mechanical vamp drives the 5/4 meter *Handful of Fives*, but Debriano's bass smooths the feeling by breaking into walk time during Peterson's guitar improvisation. Here Peterson plays some technically

JOSEPH JARMAN • THOMAS CHAPIN • DAVID MURRAY

impressive and lengthy lines, and Cyrille plays the melody on the drum set before constructing more complex phrases. If this is escapism, I like it.

One way to escape is to transcend geographical limits and become a citizen of the world. Joseph Jarman's music reflects a global influence, not surprising, considering that his alma mater is Chicago's Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM). From the lighthearted to the brooding, from tongue-in-cheek to the meditation, from the boogie-down to the ethereal, three musicians here create the kaleidoscopic moods of *Calypso's Smile*. Among the lighter moments, the title tune is the kind of happy island tune Sonny Rollins might do. *Dance for Little T* is a waltz-time ditty, and *Treibhaus Tribal Stomp* recalls Jimi Hendrix, with its rock drumming and electric bass wizardry of Essiet Okon Essiet. Jarman's rock-and-roll tenor improvisation is typical A.E.C. irreverence.

Of a brooding nature is *As If It Were The Seasons*, a spare abstraction whose tonal elements range from Famoudou Don Moye's delicate triangle to rumbling bass clarinet. This is pure, uncompromising music, meant for close listening. It will sound as fresh twenty years on as it does now. *Morning Desert Song*, hints at music from the Mideast, with Moye's talking drum and clay pots, and Jarman's searching flute improvisation. *Public Hearing* sets up a dialogue between Jarman's flute and Moye's rolling mallets on tomtoms.

Miles away from the warm earth tones of Jarman's music is David Lahm's, which glistens like chromium. An aural architect, Lahm plans his blueprint compositions on *Muscle Memory Hoedown* with squeaky-clean execution.

A good example is the trance-inducing *Acid Bop*, which vamps along in 5/4; piano and bass lines interweave with precision under the melody of flutist Thomas Chapin. The good-natured and swaggering *Portrait of David Baker* recalls the 1970s Keith Jarrett/Dewey Redman collaborations, in part because of the thoughtful interplay, in part due to Chapin's alto style.

Chapin is a man to watch for. His busy improvisation during the 9/8 meter *Muscle Memory Hoedown* takes things way out. He really smokes on *One Man Blues*, which recalls Sonny Rollins' tune *Sommymoon for Two*.

Reinforcing the Jarrett/Redman feeling, *You're Late—Your Garbarek Down?* alternates 7/4 and 6/4 metres. Although the title puns on the name of Jan Garbarek, Chapin does not imitate Garbarek's icy tone. Here drummer Ron Vincent's improvisation locks in tight with bassist Dennis Marks.

Lahm augments his originals with standards. During *My Shining Hour* Lahm improvises without accompaniment, and Chapin's solo seems to impersonate Sonny Stitt. With Lahm's altered chord sequence, *All of You* takes on fresh flavour and gets really rollicking. This is fine toe-tappin' music. A piano introduction worthy of Bill Evans graces *The Summer Knows*, and Chapin invents a luscious flute solo.

David Murray and pianist Dave Burrell follow a successful 1989 collaboration, *Daybreak* (Gazell GJCD 4002) with a performance at the 1991 Victoriaville festival. Murray, co-leader of the World Saxophone Quartet from its founding in 1976, is fifteen years Burrell's junior; maybe that's why he seems to have more fire to burn.

In Concert features Murray's own *Ballad for the Black Man*, a composite of sentiment and anger. Murray divides his time between jazz ballad style and passionate squeals. As is the norm on this performance, Murray takes centre stage while Burrell more or less remains the accompanist.

Paul Baker pursues the Good, the True, and the Beautiful in Madison, Wisconsin. A native of Kentucky, he describes himself as a lukewarm Democrat, a former student of English literature, and a drummer. His day job is writing propaganda for the University of Wisconsin's Centre for Education Research. He is the membership manager for the Jazz Journalists Association (P.O. Box 9654, Madison, WI., USA 53715).

Burrell, who has played or recorded with Marion Brown, Grachan Moncur III, Beaver Harris, and Pharaoh Sanders, punctuates Murray's abstract *Hope Scope* improvisation effectively. His *Teardrops for Jimmy* (remembering Coltrane's bassist Jimmy Garrison) works well. Although I enjoyed Burrell's playing on *Daybreak*, he's not heard to best advantage here. His ballad *Intuitively*, inspired by a poem printed with the liner notes, is quite syrupy—it could have been written by Barry Manilow or Paul McCartney. His *Panaluu Peter* is a Chinese water torture: beneath Murray's improvisations, he plays an oom-pah stride-style vamp that continues for 12 minutes. Live, onstage at Victoriaville, it probably went over better, with the help of the duo's physical presence. The two seem to perform in separate boxes—more interplay would have been healthier, I think, and it's certainly preferable to Bill Clinton's playing. □



OLIVER LAKE • Photograph by Ira Berger
JOSEPH JARMAN • Photograph by Efrain Ribeiro

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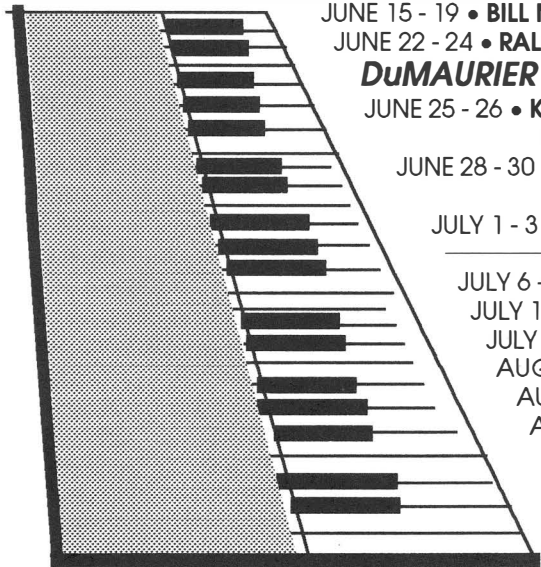
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BILLY ROBINSON

TENOR OF THE STATE

AN INTERVIEW WITH MARC CHENARD

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
MARK MILLER

marrying a French Canadian. A decade later, he has made Ottawa his "pied de terre", from where he travels regularly to the States, New York and Texas being his prime destinations.

Another reason for his relative obscurity has been a lack of recorded material. In the summer of 1992, he released his second recording as a leader, some 19 years after his (now long out of print) debut album. Entitled *Doubt Dropping*, this newest effort of his shows a musician with a huge sound and a fresh musical concept. The following conversation took place last December during a brief stopover in Montreal to promote his record. Parts of this interview were broadcast on the

program *Jazz Euphorium*, a weekly jazz radio magazine heard on the airwaves of Radio McGill CKUT.

BILLY ROBINSON: Fort Worth was a really happening town back in the 40's and 50's, even though an apartheid system prevailed. There were very few benefits that trickled down to the black community and, if you wanted to gain some sort of recognition, you had to leave, either by joining a band coming through town or just make the move to a major city like New York or Los Angeles. But the whole environment was very supportive and people would also keep track of your development. In those days, everybody was like your cousin, it was just very communal and helpful to you spiritually.

I grew up in the east part of town and got to know quite a few people who eventually established themselves. Dewey Redman lived on the next street and I used to go by and listen to him play his clarinet. But he is somewhat older than I am. Julius Hemphill, however, is just about my age and we grew up together. We even did a lot of playing together, doing the Chitlin Circuits and all of the R&B bands traveling through the South. Another musician I've known since my childhood is the drummer Ronald Shannon Jackson. When I started on saxophone he was getting into drums and we'd try to play together.

Herschel Evans, Buddy Tate, Arnett Cobb, John Hardee, Illinois Jacquet: a distinguished fraternity of musicians to say the least, these players share the common distinction of belonging to that now almost extinct lineage of saxophonists, best known as the Texas tenors. With their broad and cavernous sounds, they embodied the very spirit of the blues, from the honking lows to the piercing highs.

Succeeding generations of musicians hailing from the Lone Star State have also captured that human-like cry in their stylings, not all of them tenors either. Whether they be called Dewey Redman, Julius Hemphill, John Carter or Ornette Coleman, all of these reedmen share that distinct ability to vocalise on their horns.

To that list, one may also add the name of Billy Robinson, undoubtedly one of the least-known members of this remarkable fraternity. Born in Fort Worth in 1939, Robinson has spent a good deal of his career away from the spotlight, most of it by design. After his formative years in his home town, he moved to San Francisco at the beginning of the Flower Power era of the late sixties. From there, he eventually moved to New York where he landed a job with Charlie Mingus in 1969-70. In the early 70's, he moved to Montreal after

BILLY ROBINSON • TENOR OF THE STATE

Ornette was also from there, but he came from the other side of town. One person I also knew at the time was John Carter, he was the music teacher and leader of the school band. People used to call him J.W. back then. But he eventually moved to L.A.

My parents had this club called the Jamboree Dine and Dance and a lot of people played there. It was right next door to a place called the Jim Hotel which was really where most of the action was. So, a lot of people coming through town would do the hotel first, then they'd come to my parents place. I remember Gene Ammons and Sonny Stitt playing there once, when they were a team. My parents would often bring musicians to our home and they would jam there right into the night. Because of that, I could practice pretty well any time I wanted. It could be eleven or twelve at night and I'd be playing away right next to their bedroom and they'd never complain.

I first started playing boogie woogie piano when I was four and a half and I always liked to get people excited when there were get-togethers at my parents house. I was always concerned about everyone patting their feet and getting into it. To me, there always has to be joy in music. There are people now who play a lot of advanced and highly technical stuff, that might be considered by many as far out of the mainstream of forms, but whatever you do, that sense of joy, fun and love have to be part of it. There has to be that commitment of sharing the music with other people and figuring out how it relates to them in a very human way. When you do that, it gives the artist an outlet to ventilate himself, which does the same thing for the audience as well.

As a youngster, I remember attending those once famous JATP travelling jam sessions with people like Roy Eldridge, Lester Young, Flip Phillips and I found those very exciting. That had a strong effect on me at the time. I first met Dizzy Gillespie on one of those tours and his advice was: "Practice everything in half steps." Which is what I have done over the years too.

In the South, all of the music was steeped in the blues which was most powerful when it came to the singing of spirituals. But one has to make a distinction here between "spiritual" and "gospel" music.

Gospel is much more notated and arranged, while spiritual is in a way much deeper; it's like a moaning chant that comes deep from inside and it has a power that one cannot resist. One feels a deep sense of community, which I guess goes back to Africa, and in it there is this power that transforms the melody into something deeper and stronger.

MARC CHENARD: When one talks about the jazz scene in the Fort Worth area, one name keeps popping up all the time and that is Thomas "Red" Connor. There always is such reverence regarding him. I gather you knew him at some point. Did you ever study with him, so to speak, and if so, was he in anyway a mentor to you?

BILLY ROBINSON: If not a mentor, he was a person I admired very much. In fact, he was a person everyone loved, he had such a capacity to understand other people's situations and he never put anyone down either. No matter what walk of life you were from, you'd be attracted to him, even racists! As a musician, he was phenomenal too. He had that broad tenor sound which also had something piercing to it. His sound was bigger than Coleman Hawkins', for instance; his style was something of a cross between Hawk, Lester Young and John Coltrane. He might not have had all the fluency or the quickness of a Charlie Parker, say, but he was still one of the best saxophonists of that day.



Somebody told me that there are tapes of Red Connor that exist. Julius (Hemphill) may know who has them. The summer before he died (September 1956), he would come around to my house and show me things on the piano, like the voicing of chords, but these were not really lessons. Funny thing, though, before he passed, I saw death on his face, it was unbelievable. It was a wild experience.

MARC CHENARD: Like a lot of musicians from your town, you too left. And you also headed to the West Coast. I always found that interesting that most of the Texas player went to California instead of New York.

BILLY ROBINSON: Originally, I was planning to head to New York, but I went west instead. A lot of musicians chose Los Angeles, after all it was much closer to Fort Worth than New York, but I landed in San Francisco instead, because an uncle of mine was living there. He thought it would be a better idea for me to stay there than in New York, because he was concerned more about the existing part of things than the music, like getting around the streets and all of that.

AN INTERVIEW WITH MARC CHENARD

I arrived there just before the hippy movement came into being, the beats were still happening then. I settled right in the middle of the Haight Ashbury district on Clayton Street. I never got involved with the Hippies in style, but I interacted with all kinds of people. I first shared a flat with Henry Grimes, Daron Ritchie and Oscar Williams, a drummer from Dallas. We'd rehearse there and try out different things, like, when someone would finish a tune we'd get together and try it out. There was just a lot of experimenting at the time and the whole area was perfect for it too.

After that I hooked up with drummer Clarence Becton, pianist Bill Bell and bassist James Leary. We started another band in another place on Oak Street. During that period, I first met Freddie Hubbard and he was one of the first people who really wanted me to come to New York. Before leaving, I met Sonny Rollins and he even invited me to play with him once. I remember the two of us talking together in a Volkswagen, he would drive down a stretch of the highway along the coast, turn back and go right up again and do the same thing back and forth. I first met Ornette Coleman at John Handy's place, and Charles Moffett was there too, but I knew him from before. Ornette, however, left Fort Worth when I was still young.

I decided to head to New York in 1969 and I arrived there with my fiance of the time, but it was like coming out of a dream right into the real world. No more flowers and love there, it was like facing hard core reality. At first, we stayed at a hotel, which cost us dearly, then we moved in with another uncle of mine. Strange as it may seem, I never really hung around much at the sessions. Instead, I took a day gig working in a book factory.

One day, my uncle came across Mingus who was looking for a tenor player in his comeback band. That was right after the couple of years he spent away from the scene, the '66 to '69 period. In any event, my uncle told him about me, so he told him that I was welcome to come down to the rehearsal. I went there, not knowing what to expect, just that I would go down and do my best. And I knew I could play. Well, he hired me and I joined this pianoless quintet of his which had Charles McPherson and Bill Hardman as other hommen, Danny Richmond on drums, of course. The band sounded nice and after three months Mingus was back in shape, but he never really got around to recording it. I must say that I was one of the rare people fortunate enough to get a gig without ever hanging out in New York.

Actually, it was during and after my tenure with Mingus that I really started hanging out. I got to meet Lee Morgan, because his band and Mingus' would sometimes play opposite each other. After our set, Lee asked me to sit in with him and I must say I admired him very much as a man and a musician.

During my stint with Mingus, I first came up to Canada, because I had married a French Canadian. I settled in Montreal, but stayed in the suburbs near the airport, so I could commute back. At first, I really had no contacts with the local scene, but when my son was born, I began to stick around more. One summer, I played at the Black Bottom, a

well-known hangout at that time. But I would still go back to New York on a regular basis. In Canada, I cut my first album as a leader for the RCI label (Radio Canada International) and another one as a sideman for Sadik Hakim .

About a dozen or so years ago, I moved to Ottawa, and I make it my home base of sorts. I spend my time writing and preparing new music, not so much to play, though I know some of the local cats like (pianist) Dave Hildinger and (guitarist) Rod Elias.

But over the last decade or so, I took some time off to study psychology at the University of Ottawa. At that time, I also became very interested in music therapy and have even begun to develop this system which I plan to introduce to certain people in medical circles. You see, I've done a lot of experiments with sounds in relation to certain psychosomatic disorders and this study has led me to this system which I call audioneuromusichiatry. I then started a company which would distribute sets of jazz instructional tapes. But it did not really get off the ground, because I had a partner who was much more into classical music and teaching, so we could never really get on the same wavelength. Mind you, we did get some of the product out, and some people have enquired about it since. For the moment, though, I'm getting back into playing, but I also plan to further my studies in nutrition.

Now, as for my recording, I did it for a small label in Ottawa that mainly records Indian classical music. But the owner, a Pakistani, was interested in doing some jazz so I decided to give him a hand in that regard. The music on this record is quite different to something you would consider mainstream: the structures of the tunes are very long and involved with some unusual harmonic twists as well. And I must say that the three musicians involved worked hard at getting the music down, because it does not fall into a standard kind of repertoire.

I have many projects in the works. My sister now books me out of Atlanta and she is planning a Japanese tour and I have another person in Europe who is doing some booking. But these trips will be with my American band, which features a pianist by the name of Thomas Reese. He plays a bit in the style of Tommy Flanagan, and I'm keen on getting him better known. More recently, I've been putting things together for a larger ensemble, a 14-piece thing with four latin percussionists. I've been also planning this performance-type project with an actor-singer, a poet and a band accompanying each of the performers. I call this the "human-medium-playhouse".

Nowadays, I'm much more interested in developing special projects or just playing concerts, because I really don't like doing lots of clubs anymore, which is why people haven't seen me that much over the years. You see, I started playing clubs when I was 14 and a half, and I hung out with older cats all the time, guys of 35 or more. At my age, I feel that I can get away from all of that smoke and what not, so as to do the things the way I want and to have the most fun doing it too. And that's what it's really all about if you want to be creative and find some purpose in what you are doing.

DISCOGRAPHY

Evolutions Blend • RCI J75 (1973)

Doubt Dropping • Tocma (1992)

AS A SIDEMAN

Sadik Hakim - London Suite • RCI J78 (1973)

Archie Shepp - Attica Blues • Impulse (1975)

BILLY ROBINSON can be contacted at: 250 Parkdale Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario, CANADA K1Y 1E9

BILLY ROBINSON • DOUBT DROPPING

Tocma RDRCD-267/BN 101-1

Tenor saxophonist Billy Robinson's latest CD, doesn't fare well as background music. Not that it's too brash or disquieting. It simply demands a serious listen; a concerted amount of thought and focus is needed for appreciation. Few clichés present themselves, and although heavily rhythm based, seldom is the listener prone to finger popping.

Even the two straight-ahead blues cuts (*It Can Happen Another Way*, takes 1 and 2) are accomplished from oblique angles, with tenor, piano, and bass improvisations placing individual harmonic treatment over an age-old series of chords. Robinson's tone is as dark as ebony, with shades of early '60s avant garde breaching a style based on seemingly unrehearsed linear and angular jaunts. As he rears head-on into a flurry of notes, he begs the listener to question whether he is able to execute his idea while in progress. This he does, with complete resolve.

Rallentandi and gaps of silence are but a few of the means by which his compositions garner interest. Alternating time signatures (at times exploring odd meters) and sudden tempo changes are also maximized.

Particularly appealing throughout these five originals is the chemistry of Robinson's rhythm section. Pianist Jean Beaudet is a fine soloist, spurred on in no small way by bassist Steven Watson and the driving accompaniment of drummer Nasir Abdul Al-Khabyr, who truly excels.

From the funk-infected title track, to a lilting jazz-waltz (*Calls from the Other Side of a Dream*), to an extended modal vamp (*A Goal for the Tolerant Eye*), and finally the three-part closer (*Outside Under the Derby Hat*), Robinson's socially disposed, thoughtful compositions have been captured here in the midst of abundant musicianship. *Review by James Rozzi*

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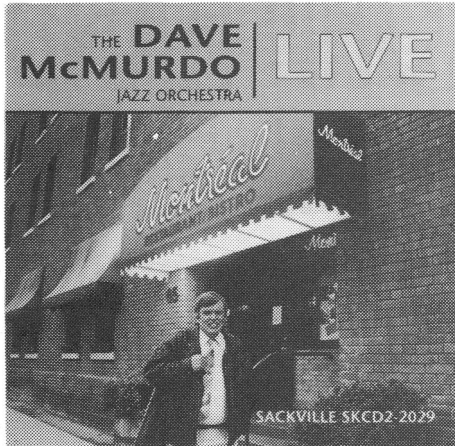
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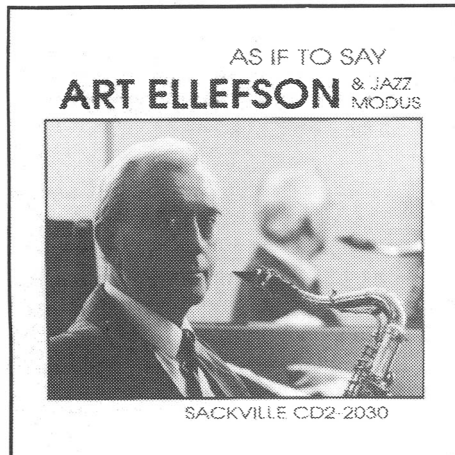
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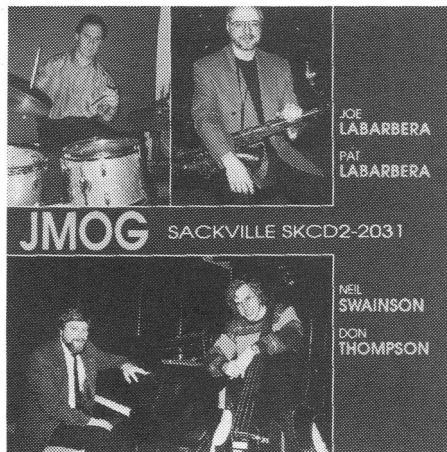
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CAP'N JOHN HANDY



Art forms do not become “dated” just because they’ve been around for a while. If the earliest types of bop provided room for a genius like Charlie Parker to create jazz that still speaks to today’s listeners, then a gifted jazzman who takes the trouble to comprehend the idiom should be able to use its rules today to produce something original and of lasting value.

Dixieland works the same way. If the musical statements of Louis Armstrong, Bix Beiderbecke and others from the twenties still strike responsive feelings from listeners in the 1990s, then other more recent players working within the various Dixieland styles should, using the proper musical conventions of Dixieland, be able to come up with jazz that bears re-hearing years later.

Jazz critics have always been quick to recognize valid contributions by performers working on the music’s cutting edge. In general, they have been less willing to reward significant accomplishments by artists who choose to work in older styles.

By sheer force of talent and longevity on the scene, a Bob Wilber or Dick Wellstood can attain the stature he deserves, but doing so is an uphill battle. Much the same is true of veteran musicians who, like trombonist Jim

Robinson, did not come to the attention of the larger jazz community until after the heyday of the styles in which they performed. This series intends to remember pre-swing jazzmen whose recorded legacy justifies the attention of today’s listeners, without regard to whether those musicians made their contributions during the classic era or at some later date.

Dixieland jazz went through a revival in the early 1940s that has continued, with some ebbs and flows, to the present day. The revival eventually embraced two brand-new styles of Dixieland,

West Coast revival, pioneered by Lu Watters, and British trad, pioneered by Ken Colyer and Chris Barber. It also focussed national attention, for the first time, on the “uptown” New Orleans style, starting with Bunk Johnson’s historic 1942 recordings and continuing into the current world-wide fame of The Preservation Hall Jazz Band.

In the 1960s, the ravages of time had taken a toll on the original uptowners. Bunk Johnson was long gone, and revered names like George Lewis were nearing the end of the trail. However, the 1960s still had one last card to play, coming up with a few remaining veterans who could still deliver the goods and who had not yet received their just due from the Dixieland establishment.

One of the most important of these was alto saxophonist Cap’n John Handy (not to be confused with reedman John Handy whose speciality is post-bop modern jazz). Cap’n John Handy was born June 24, 1900 in Pass Christian, Mississippi to a musical family—violinist father, pianist mother and sister, brothers who played bass and guitar.

His initial instrument was drums, his first gig coming at age twelve when his father had to carry the equipment for the little lad. Handy turned to clarinet in his teens, coming to New

Orleans in 1918 where he played the licorice stick with various bands throughout the 1920s.

In the late twenties, he switched to alto saxophone, seeing it as a way of “keeping up with the times.” Shortly thereafter, he acquired his nickname when, late for a rehearsal at a New Orleans dancehall, his appearance was greeted with a shout of “Here comes the Cap’n now!”.

Handy continued to work regularly in the Crescent City, both as a sideman and a leader, obviously (as his later recordings demonstrate) keeping his ears open to the sounds of swing, jump and rhythm ‘n blues. Despite the intense interest in early jazzmen that occurred as a result of the success of Bunk Johnson and George Lewis, fame appeared to have passed him by.

However, in the 1960s, Bill Bissonnette, a Connecticut-based trombonist obsessed with the uptown New Orleans jazz, began importing musicians from the Crescent City as guest artists with his Easy Riders Jazz Band. The results of these trips were recorded on Bissonnette’s Jazz Crusade label, one of the first independent lp labels devoted exclusively to Dixieland.

The full story of Jazz Crusade is told in Bissonnette’s highly entertaining book *The Jazz Crusade*. Suffice it to say that Cap’n John Handy was one of the musicians Bissonnette particularly liked, and that Handy’s ceaselessly hot and inventive playing for Jazz Crusade more than justified Bissonnette’s opinion. Along with trumpeter “Kid” Thomas Valentine (another Bissonnette favourite), Handy was one of the two most important uptown-style musicians to emerge during the sixties.

As a result of this exposure, Handy eventually toured Europe and Japan, and was featured at the Newport Jazz Festival. Connecticut’s proximity to New York City brought him to the attention of producer Brad McCuen, whereupon Handy was spotlighted on two late-sixties lps for RCA Victor, just about the last gasp of Dixieland specifically waxed for a

LET'S NOT FORGET BY TEX WYNDHAM

major label (except for the sustained popularity of Preservation Hall). He died at his home in Pass Christian on January 25th, 1971.

Handy's is thus a romantic and emotionally satisfying story, but his records prove that the adulation is well deserved. Although he always appeared in a Dixieland context, his lines incorporate a broad range of jazz ideas and they swing like crazy.

His playing has frequently been compared to that of a hard-swinging alto man from the thirties, Pete Brown. While Brown has a cleaner sound than Handy, the comparison is an apt one in terms of their ability to generate irresistible momentum. Music seems to flow effortlessly from Handy in a seamless stream of cliché-free improvisation that never looks back.

Bissonnette sold the early Jazz Crusade albums to George Buck, who has maintained many of them, plus other Handy material, on his G.H.B. and Jazzology labels. The session titled *The December Band* is particularly choice. You'll probably have to dig to unearth the two lps on the British 77 label entitled *Handyman Volume One and Two*, but they are worth the search.

When you hear Handy, the first thing you'll notice is his overpowering drive, relentlessly surging despite the sometimes uneven abilities of the sidemen on certain of his sessions. One can easily be swept up in it to the exclusion of concentrating on the notes he plays, but the bracing freshness and imagination inherent in Handy's lines—along with the swing—is what makes relistening to him such a pleasure and has kept his name alive among aficionados of uptown New Orleans Dixieland.

On today's scene, perhaps the foremost uptown reedman is Britisher Sammy Rimington. While he is probably best known as a splendid post-George Lewis clarinetist, Rimington's red-hot alto work, liberally displayed on many of Rimington's albums, is firmly based on Handy's. □



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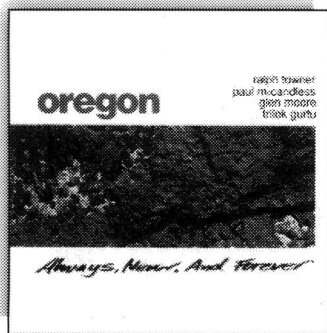
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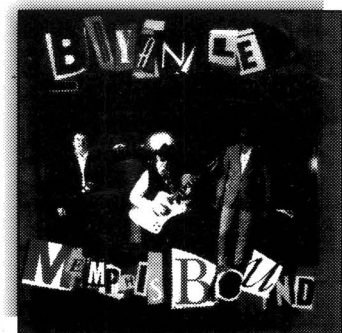
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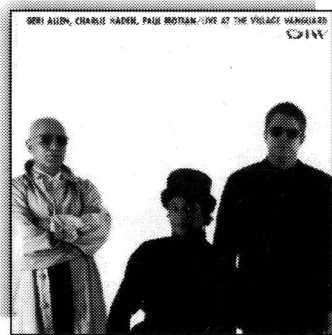
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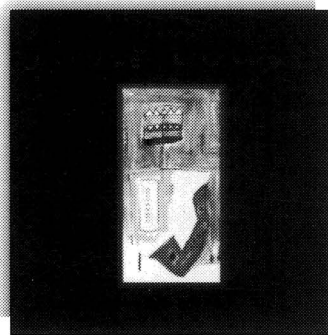
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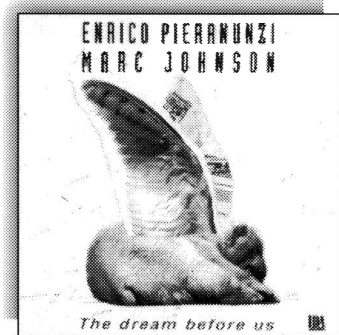
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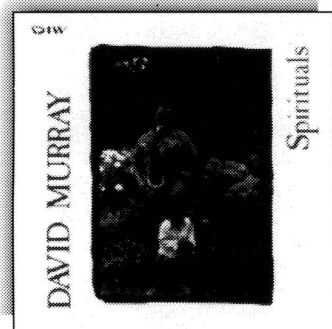
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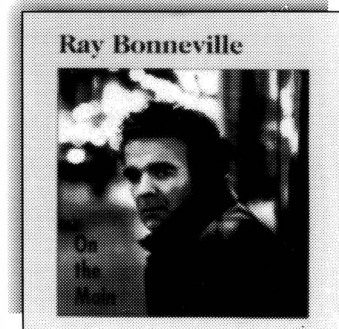
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