

THE JOURNAL OF JAZZ AND IMPROVISED MUSIC

CODA MAGAZINE

MAY/JUNE 1993 • ISSUE 249 • \$3.95 CDN/\$3.50 US

THE STRING ISSUE FEATURING **DIEDRE MURRAY**
FRED HOPKINS • BOB HAGGART
BLOOD ULMER • JON ROSE

PLUS
VIDEO REVIEWS
NAT KING COLE
JAZZ EDUCATION
LOUIS ARMSTRONG
COMPACT DISC REVIEWS
WEST COAST JAZZ



**JAZZ &
CLASSICS
VANGUARD**



**BLUES
FROM THE
CATALOGUE**

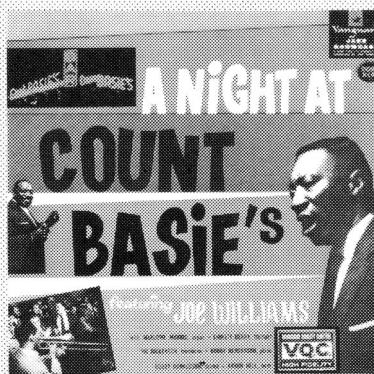
MISSISSIPPI JOHN HURT
THE BEST OF • VCD 19/20



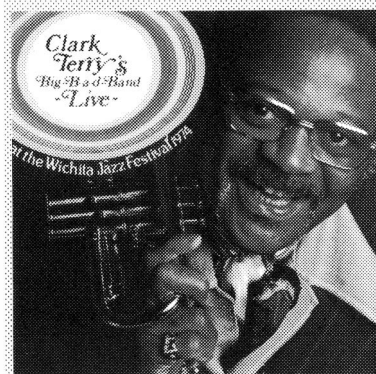
JIMMY RUSHING
THE ESSENTIAL • VCD 65/66



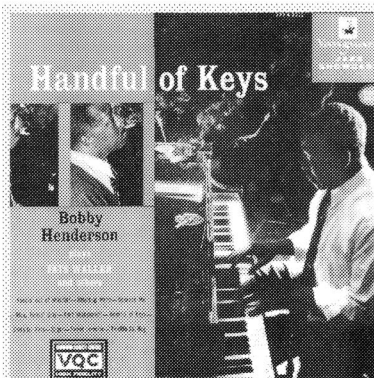
JOE WILLIAMS
A NIGHT AT COUNT BASIE'S
VMD 8508



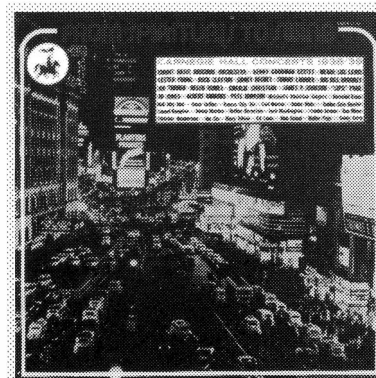
CLARK TERRY
BIG B-A-D BAND LIVE
VMD 79355



BOBBY HENDERSON
HANDFUL OF KEYS
VMD 8511



**FROM SPIRITUALS
TO SWING**
CARNEGIE HALL
CONCERTS 1938/39
VCD 2 47/48

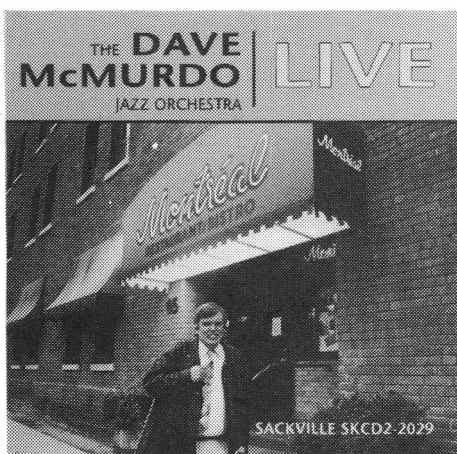


DISTRIBUTED BY THE
47 RACINE ROAD
ONTARIO
PHONE (416) 749-6601

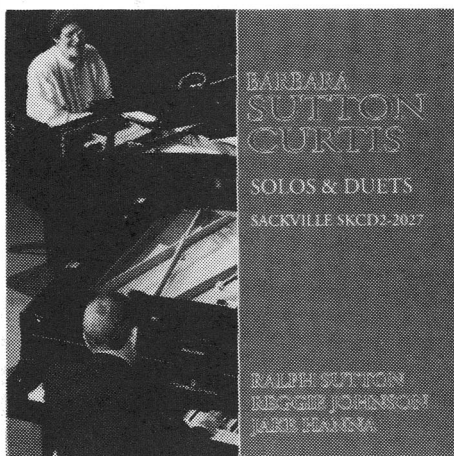


TREND MUSIC GROUP
REXDALE
CANADA M9W 6B2
FAX (416) 749-3918

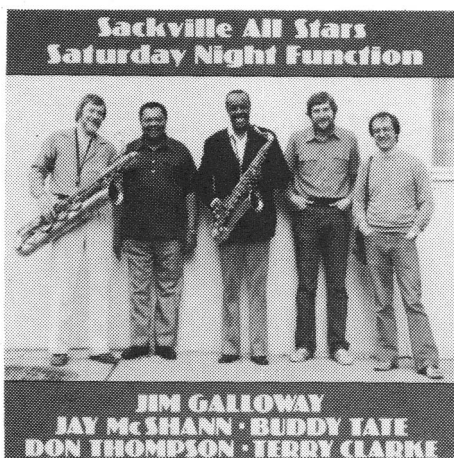
SACKVILLE RECORDINGS



SACKVILLE SKCD2-2029
THE DAVE McMURDO JAZZ ORCHESTRA • LIVE
A 19 piece orchestra featuring the solo work of
some of Canada's finest musicians



SACKVILLE SKCD2-2027 • BARBARA SUTTON CURTIS
SOLOS & DUETS • Barbara Sutton Curtis (piano),
with Ralph Sutton, Reggie Johnson & Jake Hanna



SACKVILLE SKCD2-3028 • THE SACKVILLE ALL STARS
SATURDAY NIGHT FUNCTION
Buddy Tate, Jim Galloway, Jay McShann,
Don Thompson & Terry Clarke

COMPACT DISC CATALOGUE

HAGOOD HARDY • Morocco • SKCD2-2018
RALPH SUTTON • Solo at Cafe Copains • SKCD2-2019
HENRI CHAIX • Jumpin Punkins • SKCD2-2020
DEL DAKO • Balancing Act • SKCD2-2021
GEORGE MASSO • Just For A Thrill • SKCD2-2022
RALPH SUTTON • Partners In Crime • SKCD2-2023
JAY McSHANN • Solo At Cafe des Copains • SKCD2-2024
STEVE HOLT & KIERAN OVERS • Just Duet • SKCD2-2025
RONNIE MATHEWS • Solo At Cafe des Copains • SKCD2-2026
BARBARA SUTTON CURTIS • SOLO & DUETS • SKCD2-2027
BUCK CLAYTON • Baden, Switzerland • SKCD2-2028
DAVE McMURDO JAZZ ORCHESTRA • Live • SKCD2-2029

HERB HALL • Old Tyme Modern • SKCD2-3003
ARCHIE SHEPP • I Know About The Life • SKCD2-3026
THE SACKVILLE ALL STARS •
Saturday Night Function • SKCD2-3028
BUDDY TATE • The Ballad Artistry • SKCD2-3034
THE SACKVILLE ALL STAR CHRISTMAS RECORD • SKCD2-3038
JAY McSHANN • Airmail Special • SKCD2-3040
THE SACKVILLE ALL STARS •
A Tribute To Louis Armstrong • SKCD2-3042
JUNIOR MANCE • Special (Solo) • SKCD2-3043
RED RICHARDS • Lullaby In Rhythm (Solo) • SKCD2-3044
DOC CHEATHAM & JIM GALLOWAY •
At The Bern Jazz Festival • SKCD2-3045
JAY McSHANN • Swingmatism • SKCD2-3046
KEITH INGHAM • Out Of The Past • SKCD2-3047
ABDULLAH IBRAHIM (Solo Piano) •
Fats, Duke & The Monk (Vol. 1) • SKCD2-3048
JUNIOR MANCE QUINTET • Here 'Tis • SKCD2-3050
RED RICHARDS • Dreamy (solo) • SKCD2-3053

PETE MAGADINI • Bones Blues • SKCD2-4004

PHONE OR FAX (416) 593-7230

COMPACT DISC PRICES INCLUDING POSTAGE

Canada & Foreign - 1CD for Cdn \$20.00 • 2 for \$38.00
3 for \$54.00 • 4 for \$68.00 • 5 for \$80.00
Each additional CD costs \$16.00.
(Canadian Orders include 7% GST).

USA - 1 CD for US \$16.00 • 2 for \$32.00 • 3 for \$43.50
4 for \$56.00 • 5 for \$65.00. • Each additional CD costs \$13.00.

Payment must accompany order. We accept Canadian
& U.S. cheques, money orders, bank drafts, VISA &
MASTERCARD. (Please provide CARD NAME & NUMBER,
EXPIRY DATE and your SIGNATURE.)
Orders to Ontario add 8% sales tax.

**P.O.BOX 87 • STATION J • TORONTO
ONTARIO • CANADA M4J 4X8**

WESTCAN

THE JAZZ WINNIPEG FEST
JUNE 21 - 27

DU MAURIER LTD.
INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL
VANCOUVER JUNE 25 - JULY 4

JAZZ FEST INTERNATIONAL
VICTORIA JUNE 25 - JULY 4

CALGARY INTERNATIONAL
JAZZ FESTIVAL
JUNE 25 - JULY 3

DU MAURIER LTD.
SASKATCHEWAN JAZZ FESTIVAL
SASKATOON JUNE 25 - JULY 3

DU MAURIER LTD. JAZZ CITY
INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL
EDMONTON JUNE 25 - JULY 4

Jazz

SUMMER
JAZZ FESTIVALS
IN WESTERN
CANADA
FEATURING
THE WORLD'S
FINEST ARTISTS



Air Canada

Alberta, in all her majesty.
Canada

FESTIVAL
CITY

INFO: (4 0 3) 4 9 1 - 7 3 5 4

CODA MAGAZINE

PUBLISHED CONTINUOUSLY SINCE 1958
ISSUE 249 • Published May 1st • 1993

CODA PUBLICATIONS
BOX 87 • STATION J • TORONTO
ONTARIO • M4J 4X8 • CANADA
PHONE / FAX (416) 593-7230

JOHN NORRIS • Founder/Publisher
WILLIAM E. (Bill) SMITH • Editor/Art Director
SHEILA MACPHERSON • Copy Editor
MICHAEL McNAMARA • Graphic Realization

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Coda publishes six issues per year. Rates for a one-year subscription are as follows

CANADA

Regular mail (Incl. GST) **\$25.68**
First class mail (Incl. GST) **\$29.96**

U.S.A.

Regular mail (US funds) **\$24.00**
First class mail (U.S. funds) **\$27.00**

ELSEWHERE (except U.K.)

Regular mail (Cdn. funds) **\$27.00**
Air mail (Cdn. funds) **\$36.00**

UNITED KINGDOM

Subscriptions are to be made payable to our U K agent, **Miss Rae Wittrick**, 33 Winton Lodge, Imperial Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex, England. The yearly subscription rate is **£12.00** surface or **£19.00** air mail.

PLEASE ENCLOSE PAYMENT WITH YOUR ORDER. Payment from outside Canada can be made via International Money Order or bank draft. We accept U.S. cheques, but require 50c additional to cover bank charges. We also accept **VISA and MASTERCARD BY MAIL** (send your card number, expiry date and signature) or **BY FAX or TELEPHONE** (please give your card number, expiry date and address) 24 hours a day **(416) 593-7230**

CODA MAGAZINE is published six times per year in *January, March, May, July, September and November*, in CANADA. It is supported by its subscribers and by its advertisers. We also gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the **Canada Council** and the **Ontario Arts Council**. Second class mail registration number R-1134. For availability of current and back issues of Coda on microfilm, contact **University Microfilms International**, 200 N. Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106 USA, 30-32 Mortimer Street, Dept. P.R., London W1N 7RA, England, or **Micromedia Ltd.**, 20 Victoria Street, Toronto, Ontario M5C 2N8 Canada. Indexed in The Canadian Periodical Index and The Music Index. Printed in Canada. ISSN 0820-926X

CONTENTS



4

STRINGOLOGY DIEDRE MURRAY & FRED HOPKINS
In conversation with Annie Landreville

6

WAY OUT WEST MODERN JAZZ ON THE WEST COAST
The final episode in a five part series by James Rozzi

14

BOB HAGGART THE BIG NOISE FROM GREAT NECK
An interview by Phillip D. Atteberry

18

JAMES BLOOD ULMER OMNI-AMERICAN ULMER
An overview by Ben Ratliff

23

PIANOS OF REVERIE, PIANOS OF REPETITION
Compact Disc reviews by Stuart Broomer

27

THE VIOLABLE TRADITION
JON ROSE interviewed by John Corbett

32

AN ADVENTURE IN DISCOGRAPHY
LOUIS ARMSTRONG 1929 • An introduction by Al Van Starrex

34

BRIGHT MOMENTS
Jazz Education by Bill McLarney

36

MORE JOYFUL NOISE
Compact Disc reviews by James Rozzi

39

NAT KING COLE
A Video review by Scott Yanow

COVER PHOTOGRAPH OF DIEDRE MURRAY BY GERARD FUTRICK

STRINGOLOGY DIEDRE MURRAY & FRED HOPKINS

Except for a few musicians during the fifties; Oscar Pettiford, Ray Brown, Red Mitchell..., the cello cannot be considered a traditional jazz instrument. But in the last few years this instrument has become prominent in improvised music, and Diedre Murray defines herself more as an improviser than a jazz musician. If women do not count that much in the jazz tradition, they have acquired an important place in the "new" tradition of improvised and contemporary music. Think about Carla Bley, Joelle Leandre, Zeena Parkins...



BORN IN NEW YORK CITY, this composer and cellist, started playing at the age of 10. She has performed with, among others, Henry Threadgill, Larry Young, Leroy Jenkins, David Murray, Butch Morris and Archie Shepp. Her duet partner, bassist Fred Hopkins, was a charter member of Air, but is also an eclectic and unconventional musician, who has worked at one time or another with Anthony Braxton, Cecil Taylor, The World Bass Violin Ensemble, Dewey Redman and Lester Bowie. Hopkins and Murray first worked together as members of the Henry Threadgill Sextet.

When Diedre Murray came to Montreal for the event *The Cello, No Strings Attached* (see Coda #244), she played her choral chamber piece entitled *Unending Pain*. The day after, she and Fred Hopkins played in duo in a club, and for the people in attendance who did not know them, it was a revelation. They returned to the province of Quebec in October, for the Festival de musique actuelle de Victoriaville (FIMAV), after recording an album for the

A CONVERSATION WITH ANNIE LANDREVILLE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GERARD FUTRICK

Victo label. On the day before their appearance, Diedre Murray and Fred Hopkins decided to come to the FIMAV by car. However, they had an accident just shortly after leaving New York. The car was wrecked, but they were fortunately not hurt. They took a plane to Montreal, a bus to Victo, and when they arrived on stage, people received them with a warm and friendly ovation. They were still in shock from the accident, but they decided to give the concert anyway. And it was

more than a professional decision... I met them after the concert: though tired, they were still high from the energy that the public had shared with them.

Diedre Murray and Fred Hopkins have worked together on this unusual duo since 1988. Well, they don't just work together: both speak at the same time, argue like an old couple, and laugh a lot... Next time I meet them, I will record the interview in stereo!

ANNIE LANDREVILLE: How did you start working together?

DIEDRE MURRAY: (Taking on a tone of voice as though she were to say: "Once upon a time...") Well, the first time I saw Fred Hopkins was somewhere in the 1970's. I was working with Hannibal Marvin Peterson, and Fred was working with Air (with Henry Threadgill and Steve McCall). I don't really remember Fred, but I remember that I said "Gee! Three guys playing and it sounds really good and they

don't have a piano!" I think it's the first time we actually met.

FRED HOPKINS: At that time, I was with my band Air, and it was new for me to play in New York, because I am from Chicago, so I did not know a lot of musicians. When I first saw Diedre, I said: "Who is this weird cello player? But what I heard sounded different.

ANNIE: The cello is not a traditional jazz instrument. How did you start playing it?

DIEDRE: It was because my aunt had a dance company. I've been in professional music for a long time, but I started as an improviser. So when I was a child (I was ten), the first time I had my instrument, my aunt said: "You, young lady, I'm gonna baby sit you, and you gonna be there with my dancers." I said ok. I did not know even a tune. What happened was I went there, so I started as an improviser. Just like that.

ANNIE: How did you decide to get together as this unusual duo?

FRED: I think it's a natural progression. We are both string players and we would like to play string music.

DIEDRE: Well, I would like to add that Fred is the first bass player who likes me (Fred laughs). Because all the bass players, male bass players, they are competing with each other in their playing. And I said: "Gee! he's a nice guy! He's not using my amplifier or pulled out my plug!"

ANNIE: As a Black woman working in a music system which was, and still is, mostly male and white, I supposed you had to deal with more constraints than male musicians.

DIEDRE: When I was young, you have to remember, things were different for women. I used to have bassists who pulled out my chords, they would turn me down, they would do anything they could to me, trick me, steal my bow... There are many more female musicians in jazz now, but when I was playing there was not, and the first ten or fifteen years of my career, I played with no women at all. Never.

FRED: She told me some of these stories, it's hard to believe, because the thing is you go on a stage to play music. But you don't look at the person and ask: "What is your sex, what is your gender?" You go to play the music, so she can tell so many stories about that...

DIEDRE: So when I met him, I said: "Oh! He's nice, real nice!" The other thing was that Henry had difficult music, so I think that maybe we could practice the score, and maybe I could practice with him. What happened was, after the gigs were over, we would practice Henry's music, and then, it was fun after that, and so we learned to play them together. We learned a symmetry of sorts.

FRED: We did actually know that we were in a process of developing this unity. Music is mostly dominated by saxophones, trumpets and piano. What about strings? We did know that we were actually working on it, but we would be developing it over a period of time.

ANNIE: Do you compose together?

FRED: We work separately. Diedre works more on compositions than me.

DIEDRE: I'd like to continue the story. One day Elliott Sharp called me, and asked if I wanted to play solo. I said no, but I suggested to play duo with Fred. It was in '86. It was our first gig in duo. We were still with Henry Threadgill then.

ANNIE: You worked all this time together and it was the first time you played in duo?

DIEDRE: That's right, but in '87 we came out as a duo.

FRED: Then we put together this unusual band, and that is when Diedre and I became professional friends. From that developed a kind of music. Music is bigger than all of us.

DIEDRE: We spent a lot of time together. Just working on music, wondering if we could play this better... We did that for hours and hours...

ANNIE: You are really good friends?

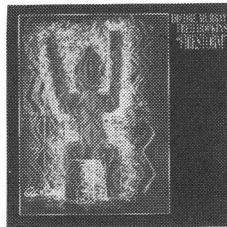
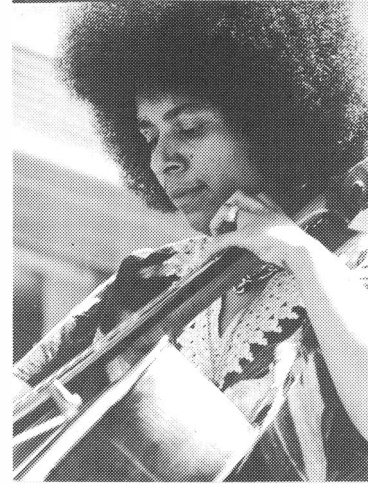
FRED: I think there is no way to do this without being friends. I think I can talk for both of us here... But we took a lot of time to discuss what we wanted to accomplish as business partners and musicians, because music also is business, a part of it is at least. In any event, I am a bass player, I work with a lot of different bands, but sometimes I really want to work on my own stuff.

DIEDRE: Though we might be considered jazz musicians, we really deal with the strings. And if you listened to the concert tonight, you heard a lot of stuff, there are all kinds of styles. We call it stringology. It's a language of string playing, a new language, a contemporary language.

FRED: We take what we know, where we come from, and where we are right now, and then, we put it all together and more ahead of that too.

DIEDRE: It's a definition of what we try to play, but it also fits into jazz because of improvisation.

FRED: I think you should study your instrument and play the best you can. You should learn a lot of the music, so then you can express yourself, in whatever form it may be. We study classical music, orchestral music, jazz, blues, rock and roll. We do all this, but as an artist, you have to express something. Sometimes I'm happy, sometimes I'm sad, it has to be expressed: we just had a car accident, and we still played the gig today! We just have to tune up ourselves mentally. □



**DIEDRE MURRAY - FRED HOPKINS
FIRESTORM • Victo CD-020 (56:38)**

Throughout jazz history, stringed instruments have been of peripheral importance to the music. Notwithstanding the acoustic bass and the guitar, other members of that family (violin, viola, cello, mandolin) are heard only sporadically. Pairing a cello with a bass is an unusual occurrence indeed, but in the hands of seasoned improvisers like Diedre Murray and Fred Hopkins, the results are convincing. The success of their musical collaboration hinges, for the most part, on their refusal to take a horn-like point of view. As quoted in John Corbett's cogent liner notes, cellist Murray states: "We're trying to work in what makes the strings live. Even though it includes improvisation, some people don't recognize it as jazz. (...) We're trying to work in what sounds good on strings. It's a totally different alphabet." Musically, this duet produces deep-toned musings, almost brooding in character, yet giving off some flashes of lightness (as in the opener *Jollie Ollie*). Both musicians exhibit a full sense of empathy as they compliment each other's statements with fine counterlines. Both of them use the pizzicato and arco techniques (the latter used more by Murray than Hopkins, given the playing norm for that instrument). Of the eight pieces heard here, six are by Murray, the other two by Hopkins, the latter dedicated to a couple of departed colleagues, bassists Ronnie Boykins and Wilbur Little. In fact, the whole recording is actually dedicated to Murray's deceased brother, a contributing factor to the dark overtones hovering over the music. In view of this, the title of the release may come across as somewhat of a misnomer, because it does not crackle with the heat of a raging blaze, but flickers more to the warmth of slowly burning embers. More than anything else, this is a record to be enjoyed a little more at each new listening, a sure sign of what record collectors call a "keeper".

Reviewed by Marc Chenard

A feature interview with FRED HOPKINS appeared in CODA issue #196 (June 1984).

WAY OUT WEST

MODERN JAZZ ON THE WEST COAST

THE FINAL EPISODE
IN A FIVE PART SERIES

BY JAMES ROZZI

BE IT OF THE EAST OR WEST COAST, Midwestern or Southern, black or white, jazz enjoyed more popularity in the mid 1950s than it ever had or ever will. The January 17, 1955, issue of *Life* magazine announced, "Now at its peak, jazz stands half in the great hot past and half in the promising future of 'cool' counterpoint and heady harmonies. Its fans see and hear the ranking players at work in small clubs and big concerts. But it is largely the records, selling at seven times the rate they were selling five years ago, that have given jazz the widest audience in its lavish history." In Marshall Stern's authoritative book, *The Story of Jazz* (Oxford University Press/1956), he reports, "The time is now come when the so-called informed person must know enough about jazz to conceal his ignorance."

As for the almost exclusively Caucasian critics of the early 1950s, many were gravitating toward the white musicians for reasons as often based on cultural bias as on love of the music. While it's true that the white jazz was often in sync with the critics' tastes and personalities, permeating their reviews was the reflection of the white musicians being more accessible for interviews and generally more agreeable when engaged in conversation. The black musicians who were the true innovators were momentarily forgotten by many critics who likewise felt New York no longer to be the "Mecca" of jazz. When it came time to vote in the annual polls, the readers also favoured the white musicians. Hence, the winners of the 1953 *Downbeat* reader's poll were Stan Kenton (big band); Dave Brubeck (small combo); Charlie Parker (as); Stan Getz (ts); Buddy



SHORTY ROGERS photograph by Mark Ladenson

DeFranco (cl); Gerry Mulligan (bs); Chet Baker (tpt); Bill Harris (tbn); Don Elliot (miscellaneous instrument-mellophone); Oscar Peterson (p); Ray Brown (b); Les Paul (g); Gene Krupa (d); Terry Gibbs (vib).

In *Miles: The Autobiography*, Miles Davis vents his frustration: "A lot of the white critics kept talking about all these white jazz musicians, imitators of us, like they was some great motherfuckers and everything...And some of them white guys were junkies like we were, but wasn't nobody writing about that like they was writing about us...Now, I'm not saying here that these guys weren't good musicians, because they were...But they didn't start nothing and they knew it." Apparently, by 1955 the *Downbeat* readers began wrestling with their own prejudices as Count Basie replaced Kenton; Miles Davis replaced Baker; J.J. Johnson won as trombonist; Max Roach ousted Krupa; and Milt Jackson was chosen as top vibes player.

ALTHOUGH DENIGRATION OF THE WEST COAST STYLE BECAME FASHIONABLE among critics by the middle of the decade, the records continued to sell in inordinate amounts. In February of 1960, Emily Coleman, music editor of *Newsweek*, still was able to report that "there are jazz albums which sell more than 100,000 copies apiece. And jazzmen take pride that sales have nothing to do with the shabby payola pushing of the rock 'n' roll pressers."

"Those with the power were pushing a certain type of record—a brand of music that most dedicated Negro musicians didn't want to play and weren't being asked to play anyway," altoist Sonny Criss relates in the liner notes to *The East/West Controversy* (Xanadu 104). Bassist Leroy Vinnegar, one of few blacks to remain in Los Angeles and fare well, counters, "I didn't always like that hard sound. I loved Zoot Sims; that was a good sound." And continues with a blanket statement regarding the accepted West Coast style of saxophone playing: "If you're going to copy somebody, why not copy somebody like Pres?"

WEST COAST JAZZ...SWING OR BOP?

RESPECTED FRENCH CRITIC ANDRE HODEIR, IN HIS BOOK, *JAZZ: ITS EVOLUTION AND ESSENCE* (Grove Press/1956), states: "Ignoring what bop had achieved, the cool musicians generally adopted outmoded melodic and rhythmic conceptions... This choice has resulted in a kind of backtracking that may be only temporary but is nonetheless one of the most disquieting signs in the history of jazz."

In *Jazz West Coast* (Quartet Books/1986), author Robert Gordon affirmed: "It is by now a commonplace of jazz criticism that Shorty [Rogers] and many of the West Coast musicians were inspired more by Count Basie and Lester Young than by Charlie Parker. That is, they were essentially swing era musicians rather than boppers."

Shorty Rogers counters: "I can't agree with that... that one was more important than the other. We grew up in an era with Basie and Ellington. I grew up in New York City and I'd go and hear those guys live at the Apollo Theater. I'd hear them on regular broadcasts before Bird hit the scene. But when Bird came along, it was like 'The Sun Has Risen.' He had that kind of power, but at the same time, we had absorbed our jazz heritage. Rather than one being more important than the other, Bird was another part of our jazz heritage."

AT THE SAME TIME THAT MOST OF THE BLACK WEST COAST MUSICIANS WERE EMIGRATING EAST in pursuit of gigs (even after they managed to win a major civil rights battle by forcing the integration of the separate white and black Musician's Unions) or stayed and remained inactive, many white musicians were leaving the touring big bands as they passed through California, enticed by the abundance of club activity and jazz's latest coup involving the introduction of jazz music into film scores, and the need for competent musicians to perform them.

Thanks to high-profile clubs like The Lighthouse, Shorty Rogers and others were able to build a following of people involved in the film industry, culminating in the first jazz score for a film entitled *The Glass Wall*. From there, jazz was used as incidental music in perhaps six or seven other films, finally arriving at *The Wild One*, starring Marlon Brando, the first major film with an extensive jazz score. Shorty Rogers remembers, "[Music director] Leith Stevens was the primary composer and writer for the orchestra. I was one of the orchestrators along with several others, including Nathan Scott, Tom Scott's father. The jazz-type things I did, which they call the 'source music,' are things like the music coming off of the juke box. *The Wild One* score came about because of Marlon Brando. He used to sneak into bars and try to find a place to hide and just listen to our group. We eventually had this music production meeting with the producer, director, and everyone. Leith Stevens had also heard us at The Lighthouse."

MARTY PAICH: "What comes to mind is the Johnny Mandel score for *I Want To Live*. That's when they gave him a chance. That was done with a big band and written like a jazz score with players improvising. Then shortly after that was *Peter Gunn*; those started the trend. Later, of course, came a multitude of jazz scores."

BILL HOLMAN: "The studios weren't a place to develop; they were a place to work. You were under pressure to stay within the guidelines. Usually an older guy was the composer and musical director on a picture and if it was a jazz kind of score, he would hire some younger guys to do some writing. But it was not a place to be adventurous."

BOB COOPER: "When Shorty started writing more film music, we got into the studios that way. Pete Rugolo was under contract to MGM for a while. He would call us whenever he possibly could. Other people who were jazz-oriented would try to get us even though in the beginning they had staff orchestras they were committed to."

BILL HOLMAN: "It was kind of like a country club; they hired the guys they knew. I don't think it was purposely excluding the black players. It was buddies. Of course, Benny Carter worked in the studios, but he was the exception."

BOB COOPER: "I remember them bringing in jazz musicians, white and black, just to play some solos. But, to be able to play all day long and play the source music, you had to play the doubles. There were a lot of great jazz players out there who didn't play the flute or clarinet, let alone the oboe and English horn."

LEROY VINNEGAR: "Oh yeah, it was terrible. It was hard. There were a few black musicians that got in, but there wasn't enough. They said, 'That's all we're gonna hire and that's it.' It even happened in my case, but you've got to realize that there weren't that many black musicians on the coast. A lot of cats left and there became a big hole which couldn't fill up fast enough."

As the music scene expanded, record companies were forming in Los Angeles to cash in on the popularity of the West Coast jazz. New York disc jockey Mort Fega recalls that period of activity with typically cynical East Coast flare: "Record labels were like assholes; everyone had one."

Typical of the newly formed West Coast labels, Mode Records, founded by two former Bethlehem Records A & R men, Red Clyde and Joe Quinn, was responsible for many sessions within its short six-month (June to December of 1957) existence. Leroy Vinnegar compares Red Clyde to Contemporary's Lester Koenig in that Clyde "knew how to come up with the combination [of musicians] to get that *sound*." "On the other hand, Marty Paich, who became Mode's musical director was not particularly pleased with Clyde's rigorous recording schedule and business tactics: "I did a trio one day that had myself as leader, Red Mitchell and Mel Lewis. Three days later, we were back in the studio with the same personnel, this time as 'The Red Mitchell Trio.' This type of thing went on for an awful long time."

Following the leads of Contemporary and Pacific Jazz, these smaller labels did succeed at producing some fine recordings that show-

cased the up-and-coming talent on the West Coast, many of whom may have gone unrecorded or been recorded at a much later date.

Former Herman/Kenton sideman Richie Kamuca's first session as leader, **Richie Kamuca Quartet** (Mode/V.S.O.P.#17CD), features his fluid tenor in the company of Carl Perkins (p), Leroy Vinnegar (b) and Stan Levey (d). Although Kamuca was not a mature player at twenty-seven years old, he spoke in the sweet, engaging tones of Lester Young, thereby earning himself a sizable following. **Perkins & Kamuca/Tenors Head-On** (Pacific Jazz CDP 7 97195 2) from 1956, pairs Kamuca with another Pres-influenced stablemate in Bill Perkins (ts) for an excellent blowing session spurred on by the stellar rhythm sections of Pete Jolly, Hampton Hawes (p); Red Mitchell (b); Stan Levey, and Mel Lewis (d).

Mel Lewis' second outing as a leader occurred in June of 1957. **The Mel Lewis Sextet** (Mode/V.S.O.P.#18) has Buddy Clark (b), Marty Paich (p), Jack Sheldon (tpt), Bill Holman (ts, bs), and Charlie Mariano (as, ts) performing mostly originals in a not-so-hard bop vein. (For some out and out searing bebop, check out the Bethlehem quartet and sextet sides of Kentonite Charlie Mariano on **Swingin' With Mariano/Affinity** CD 767, from 1953 and '54).

Vocalist Lucy Ann Polk held the number one position in the **Downbeat** reader's poll from 1951 through '54 while she sang with several big bands. **Lucky Lucy Ann** (Mode/V.S.O.P.#6CD) finds her in the company of a nicely arranged sextet (Marty Paich-p; Dick Noel-tbn; Bob Hardaway-ts; Tony Rizzi-g; Buddy Clark-b; Mel Lewis-d), in crystalline voice, giving her own simple treatment to ten standards.

The Pepper Adams Quintet (Mode/V.S.O.P.#5CD) from 1957 was Adams' impressive recording debut as a leader that helped earn this baritone saxophonist the **Downbeat** new star award. With Stu Williamson (tpt), Carl Perkins (p), Leroy Vinnegar (b) and Mel Lewis (d), Adams' biting, edgy attack was a welcome relief from some of the more fluffy articulation.

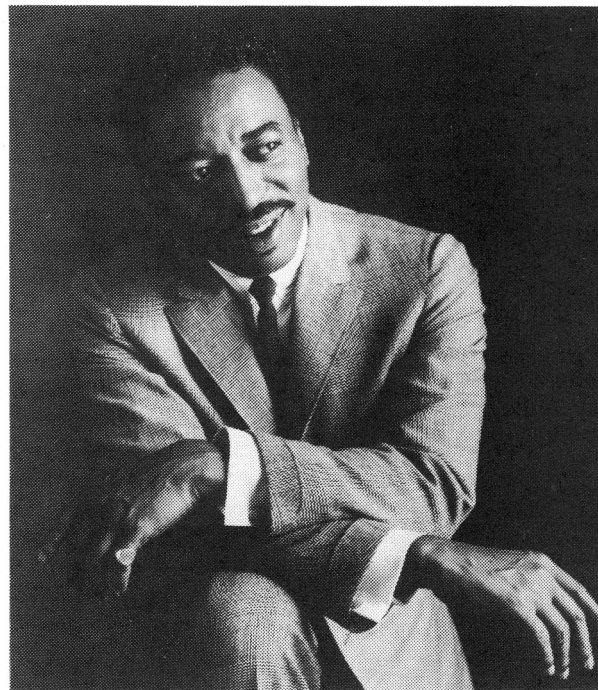
The Conte Candoli Quartet (Mode/V.S.O.P.#43) is a fine example of Candoli's straight-ahead, blowy style, in the company

of Vince Guaraldi (p), Monty Budwig (b) and Stan Levey (d). Likewise with **The Frank Rosolino Quintet** (Mode/V.S.O.P.#16), as Rosolino displays his reckless, yet accurate technical flurries, joined by the same rhythm section and Richie Kamuca on tenor. Both sessions are from June of 1957.

Dempsey Wright, an obscure guitarist with a lovely, dark sound, advances the style of fellow Oklahoman Charlie Christian on **The Wright Approach** (Andex/V.S.O.P.#57). This recording from September of 1958 shows Richie Kamuca in a different light as he and almost every other young tenor saxophonist fell under the spell of John Coltrane. With Ben Tucker on bass and Stan Levey on drums, Bill Holman's crafty arrangements come alive here on what succeeded at being much more than just another record date.

Tampa Records was formed in 1951 with its earliest recordings being reissues from Robert Scherman's Skylark catalogue. Most of the sessions took place prior to 1957, but continued through 1960. Trombonists Herbie Harper and Bob Enevoldsen (vtbn, ts) recorded some fine moments for Tampa in 1955, now available as **The Five Brothers** (Tampa/V.S.O.P.#9CD) and **Moods in Jazz & Reflections in Jazz** (Tampa/V.S.O.P.#14/15CD), the latter featuring excellent soloing by the talented but short-lived baritone saxophonist, Bob Gordon. In accordance with Frank Rosolino, Harper and Enevoldsen prove that the accepted mode of West Coast trombone playing constituted a harder blowing, more robust style than their saxophonist counterparts.

CHICO HAMILTON • Photographer unknown



THE COST OF A 1950S RECORDING SESSION

RECORD COMPANIES FLOURISHED DURING THE 1950s, AND IT'S LITTLE WONDER WHEN TAKING THEIR LACK OF EXPENSES INTO ACCOUNT. In accordance with the pay scale agreed upon as a result of the Musicians' Union recording ban of 1948, a recording session (called a "single session") netting four 78 r.p.m. sides translated into dollars with the leader of the session making \$82.50; sidemen made \$41.25 each.

When 10" LPs came into being in the early 1950s, they cost the equivalent of two single sessions. The 12" LP of the middle 1950s was the equivalent of three single sessions: an LP would have the leader of the session making \$247.50; sidemen made \$123.75 each. Of course, if the leader had an established name, he could negotiate for more money, which usually was resolved with the record company kicking in an extra couple of hundred dollars. Royalties amounted to 5% of the retail selling price of the records, less the cost of the session.

RIDING THE CREST OF THE WAVE CREATED AT THE END OF THE PREVIOUS DECADE by Miles Davis' "Birth of the Cool" nonet, the 1951 octet of Shorty Rogers, and the Gerry Mulligan Tentette of 1953, the little big band continued to be a very popular tool for the West Coast arranger. **Eight by Eight/Don Fagerquist Octet** (Mode/V.S.O.P.#4CD) finds trumpeter Fagerquist in the context of Marty Paich's well-arranged charts, showing the reasons for his employment as a staff musician with Paramount Studios. His gorgeous sound is at the forefront here as he presents one melodically correct solo after another.

Another scaled-down big band with quantitative brass (three trumpets, two trombones and rhythm) surrounding the lead voice of the tenor saxophone was Bob Cooper's 1957 experiment entitled *Coop!* (Contemporary/OJCCD-161-2). Included is an interesting original called *Jazz Theme and Four Variations*, followed by textured arrangements of *Confirmation*, *Easy Living*, *Frankie & Johnny*, *Day Dream*, and *Somebody Loves Me*. Coop's soaring tenor and Frank Rosolino's rambunctious trombone are highlighted throughout as they add their individual flare to the cohesive charts at hand.

CONSIDERING THE WEST COAST SCENE'S PREOCCUPATION WITH ARRANGING, it's no surprise that big bands continued to remain in vogue with the players and listening public alike. By the mid-1950s, the Los Angeles area had an incredible pool of well-rounded talent available whose specialties included both improvisation and an uncanny ability to interpret with uniformity difficult notated music with little or no rehearsal. As for the approaches to writing, Gil Evans' contributions continued to be influential, as explained by Marty Paich: "The big band thing that really grabbed us was *Miles Ahead* (Miles Davis +19/Columbia CJ40784, from 1957). I'm not alone on this either. That was the Bible for years and years. And the other album that came out after that, *Sketches Of Spain* (CJ40578)." (Note: Gil Evans recorded two outstanding big band albums in 1958 and '59 which have been out of print for many years. Although the musicians were primarily East Coast players, taking into consideration the quality of the music, the fact that they originally were released on Pacific Jazz, and that they recently have been reissued on the same label warrants them a mention here: *New Wine Old Bottles*-CDP 746855 2 features the bluesy alto saxophone of Cannonball Adderley performing *St. Louis Blues*, *King Porter Stomp*, *Willow Tree*, *Struttin' with Some Barbecue*, *Lester Leaps in*, *'Round Midnight*, *Manteca*, and *Bird Feathers*; *Great Jazz Standards*-CDP 7 46856 contains beautiful renditions of *Davenport Blues*, *Straight No Chaser*, *Ballad of The Sad Young Men*, *Joy Spring*, *Django*, *Chant of The Weed*, and *La Nevada*.)

Of course, at the mention of big bands, Shorty Rogers' name once again must appear (see Part 3 of this series); it was he who first introduced the concept of organizing a big band for the sole purpose of recording. Prior to the *Cool and Crazy* sessions of March and April 1953 (available on *Shorty Rogers/Short Stops* Bluebird 5917), big bands were strictly working bands. Now, due to economics, they were a dying breed. The extreme proficiency of the West Coast musicians allowed Rogers to set this precedent which carries over into many of today's large studio ensembles. *Shorty Rogers/Swings* (Bluebird 3012) is another CD compilation from Rogers' productive RCA years, featuring titles such as *Chances Are*, *No Such Luck*, *Who Needs You*, *My Shining Hour*, *Get Happy*, and *That Old Black Magic* from 1958-59.

Bill Holman's offering, *Big Band In A Jazz Orbit* (Andex/V.S.O.P.#25CD) from 1958 is a masterpiece of hard-driving straight ahead jazz. Utilizing featured soloists Jack Sheldon and Conte Candoli (tpt), Charlie Mariano and Richie Kamuca (sx), with Frank Rosolino and Carl Fontana (tbn), Holman's imaginative arrangements easily stand repeated listening some thirty-five years later.

Fantasy Records recently made a quint of CDs available which epitomize the results of combining impeccable musicianship with the venerable ferocity at the disposal of a big band. *Terry Gibbs Dream Band Vols. 1-5* (Contemporary 7647, 7652, 7654, 7656, 7657) from 1959-61 collectively feature over fifty charts by some of the best arrangers and composers in the country, including Bill Holman, Bob Brookmeyer, Al Cohn, Marty Paich, Manny Album, Lennie Niehaus, Med Flory and Sy Johnson. Featured soloists include Joe Maini (as), Bill Holman (ts), and Conte Candoli (tpt), with Mel Lewis showing why he forever will be heralded as one of the greatest big band drummers.

Marty Paich's tight, ultra-clean ensemble passages of *Moanin'* (Discovery-962), from 1959, come alive with the fire-breathing solos of Art Pepper (as), Jack Sheldon (tpt), Bill Perkins (ts), and Russ Freeman (p), and the early bass style of Scott LaFaro. Containing two albums originally issued on Warner Brothers, this single CD features a twelve-piece band showcasing Marty Paich's skilful writing. *Mel Torme With The Marty Paich Dek-Tette* (Bethlehem BR-5007/BCP-52), from 1956, was a commercial success comprised of an all-star West Coast ensemble

backing Torme's vocal excursions with charts that produce very complimentary results. Paich's first session as a leader was also exemplary of the West Coast sound with its smoothly devised horn voicings: *Tenors West/Jimmy Giuffre With The Marty Paich Octet* (GNP Crescendo GNPS 9040, from 1955) features the lyrical, swinging tenor of Jimmy Giuffre contrasting with the angular bop trumpet of Conte Candoli.

By the late 1950s, the subdued sounds of Californian jazz were beginning to come under scrutiny from within the Los Angeles music community as well. At the onset of this movement were several extremely talented black musicians who opted to be true to themselves, regardless of the financial setbacks. Drummer Chico Hamilton epitomized this growing wave of musicians who felt that West Coast jazz, in this case, the music of his own extremely popular quintet, had stagnated by design.

Currently unavailable in the United States, the Pacific Jazz recordings of the original Chico Hamilton Quintet prove this group to have been both innovative and highly interactive. With Jim Hall on guitar, Carson Smith on bass, Hamilton on drums, Buddy Collette on reeds, and Fred Katz on cello, their first LP (PJ 1209) explored a unique blend of chamber jazz covering the gamut from tightly arranged music to a piece based on free improvisation, entitled *Free Form*. (Note: Lennie Tristano's quintet explored the same territory several years earlier with two free improvisations entitled *Intuition* and *Digression*, available on *Crosscurrents/Affinity* 149). Hamilton's subsequent LPs contained more of the same style, which continually proves to be interesting, if not particularly emotional music. Katz's cello and Hall's guitar (John Pisano eventually replaced Hall) intertwine with Collette's (later Paul Horn's) flute or clarinet while exploring the lighter side of these inventions, with the switch to saxophone reserved for the more impassioned moments.

By 1958, the quasi-classical sound of the Chico Hamilton Quintet was dramatically changed by replacing Horn with a consistently heated player in the form of Los Angeles native, multi-reedman Eric Dolphy. *Gongs East!* (Discovery DSCD-831—originally on Warner Bros.) finds Dolphy on his usual horns: alto saxophone, flute and bass clarinet, with an unusual outing on B-flat clarinet. He and Hamilton are joined by Dennis Budimir on

guitar, Nathan Gershman on cello and Wyatt Ruther on bass for dynamic performances of *Beyond the Blue Horizon*, *Where I Live*, *Gongs East*, *I Gave My Love a Cherry*, *Good Grief Dennis*, *Long Ago and Far Away*, *Tuesday at Two*, *Nature by Emerson*, *Far East*, and *Passion Flower*.

John Tynan describes the progress of Hamilton (who by this time had Charles Lloyd on reeds) in the March 28, 1963, issue of *Downbeat*: "Since 1955, when he, with reed man Buddy Collette and cellist Fred Katz, formed his first quintet, Hamilton has sniffed the aromatic breezes wafted by wide public acceptance. After a while, [Hamilton] contends now, he felt trapped. 'I realize,' he said weightedly, 'perhaps more so than the average musician, that it's easy to get caught in that web. Your agent's happy because he can sell you; your record company is happy because they can sell your records; you become popular, and so on. But are *you* happy with what *you're* doing?'"

THE WINDS OF CHANGE ... (A NORTHEASTER)

BILL HOLMAN: "That contrapuntal thing that went on for a few years...that polite thing...the fugue...the classical treatment...it was a way to make a living. But with the way the dates were organized, it was not a chance to have deeply felt expression because it was kind of arbitrarily thrown together. We wanted to do something we really felt, and the way to do that was to have a group that really played."

LEROY VINNEGAR: "There was a lot of reading at recording sessions... a lot of music...too much of it. It took away from the purity. [Written] music made the sound tighter than it need be; it locked up the rhythm section. You get guys coming from different parts of the country like me, coming from Chicago, I didn't see that much music. You'd go on the bandstand, they'd call a tune and expect you to know it."

After a while on sessions, the rhythm section started getting a break by not getting music. They were freed of reading music first. They had to loosen it up and let us use our creativity. Carl Perkins didn't read, and we made a lot of records together, so they had to loosen it up."



ORNETTE COLEMAN photograph by Val Wilmer

"At times we played a lot, but there were dry periods. That was unfortunate because it could have received more recognition than it did."

Harold Land's first session as a leader, "*Harold in the Land of Jazz*" (OJC-162) was recorded in January of 1958, and is a beautifully cohesive work featuring Rolf Ericson (tpt), Carl Perkins (p), Leroy Vinnegar (b) and Frank Butler (d). With his original influences including Coleman Hawkins ("I didn't even want to play the saxophone until I heard Coleman Hawkins play *Body And Soul*."), Lester Young and Don Byas, Land was one of the first tenor players to develop the hard sound that later became standard via John Coltrane and remains popular today. "I just searched for the sound that I ended up with," Land

MARTY PAICH: "If it's standard material, it's okay. But, if you get four or five guys and go into the studio with new material expecting to get a top performance, it's not going to happen. It doesn't give the players a fair chance. Unfortunately, that happened a lot."

"Yeah, it was a little hard to take," reluctantly answer tenor saxophonist Harold Land when questioned about the struggle to break back into the mainstream of the L.A. scene once he returned from time spent with the Clifford Brown/Max Roach Quintet. "But I was into my own thing. I felt I was being true to myself; I wasn't trying to fit into a mold."

In the Fall of 1956, Land joined forces with four West Coast players of a similar mind and The Curtis Counce Group was formed, one of the finest and most underrated of the hard bop bands. With Curtis Counce on bass, Land on tenor, Jack Sheldon on trumpet, Carl Perkins on piano and Frank Butler on drums, this quintet succeeded at recording four forcefully swinging albums for Contemporary (*Landslide*/OJC-606, *You Get More Bounce with Curtis Counce*/OJC-159, *Sonority*/C-7655, and *Carl's Blues*/OJC-423) prior to Carl Perkins' untimely death in March of 1958. Despite the group's high calibre of musicianship, Land recalls that bookings were sporadic:

relates. "It was never planned; I just came up with it." What effect did John Coltrane have? "The same effect he had on everybody else. He was playing like mad. It was a very strong impression...the energy level he played at, his constant search, the depth. It inspired me and many others."

Another gem of a recording is **Harold Land/The Fox** (OJC-343) from 1959, originally issued on Hifijazz. This time Land is joined by Dupree Bolton (tpt), Elmo Hope (p), Herbie Lewis (b), and Frank Butler (d) for a superb demonstration of the progression to harder-blowing West Coast dates, and Harold Land's consistent ability to provide well-crafted, highly emotional solos.

Guitarist Wes Montgomery's first LP as a leader is included on **Far Wes** (Pacific Jazz/CDP 7 94475 2), and shows why Montgomery turned the state of jazz guitar completely around with his original style. Harold Land blows up a storm on seven cuts, with Pony Poindexter's alto featured on the remaining four. Brothers Buddy (p) and Monk (elec.b) Montgomery are heard throughout, with Tony Bazley and Louis Hayes sharing the drum chair.

One of tenor saxophonist Sonny Rollins' finest recorded moments occurred **Way Out West** (OJC-337) in March of 1957, as Lester Koenig of Contemporary Records matched Rollins with Ray Brown on bass and Shelly Manne on drums for classic results. The means by which Rollins turns *I'm an Old Cowhand*, and *Wagon Wheels* into jazz masterpieces remains one of the wonders of the (Western) world.

As "soul jazz" came into its own and was exploited on the East Coast by Alfred Lion of Blue Note and Bob Weinstock of Prestige, Richard Bock was granted a major find in organist Richard "Groove" Holmes, first recording him in March of 1961 with none other than Ben Webster on tenor. **Groove Holmes with Ben Webster** (Pacific Jazz/CDP 7 94473 2) is now once again available, and successfully reinforces the appeal of instrumental R&B.

NO REGRETS

"Regrets? ...No, not really," replies jazz entrepreneur Gene Norman in a recent interview. "Well, I could have been the first to record Ornette Coleman, but I didn't like him then and I don't like him now."

Inside of two years after sufficiently impressing Lester Koenig of Contemporary Records, leading to the release of his first record, **Something Else! The Music Of Ornette Coleman** (OJC-163/March 1958, with Don Cherry-tpt; Walter Norris-p; Don Payne-b; Billy Higgins-d), Emily Coleman of *Newsweek* reported: "Only a few minutes before, the man on the sax—Ornette Coleman—had poured the lushest of ripe tones out of his gold and white plastic instrument. Now it sounded like a frazzled horn left over from a New Year's Eve party. Yet in between the two extremes, he had explored the outer reaches of some private dream world. The audience at New York's Bohemian Five Spot Cafe—a mixture of arty types and clean-cut collegians—listened in absolute silence as the skinny, 29 year-old Texan worked a cool blue trail to the end of his weird solo.

Yes, modern jazz is controversial," she continues in the February 29, 1960 article. "But it is not old and tired, as some people have declared, nor has it been refined to death, or commercialized beyond recall. Jazz has never been more alive. And it still has something new to say. This new jazz is prevailing—almost, one might say, in spite of itself."

As the 1960s rolled around, rock & roll continued on its fast and furious course as the "British invasion" grabbed control of the market and began squeezing the life out of jazz by converting many who were keeping jazz on course with steady record purchases. While the Los Angeles jazz musicians chuckled to themselves, knowing for certain that this new music couldn't possibly last, the basics of survival quickly became a priority for those who hadn't had an economic worry in years.

SHORTY ROGERS: "Well, I didn't make a conscious decision to play less. What was going on simultaneously with me doing more TV writing, was the whole jazz scene was drying up. There were at one time clubs all over the place, narrowing down to a few. Around this time, the guys were working in the studios more and more and gigging less as the opportunity to gig presented itself less."

HAROLD LAND: "Years back, there was a club where I'd work five or six nights a week constantly. Right across the street there was a theatre where there would be sessions right after the club closed. You could walk right across the street if you still wanted to play...Play 'til dawn. Those were better days, I'd say. I used to work with Frank Butler, Elmo Hope, Phineas Newborn when he was living here. Frank Morgan was there. Teddy Edwards..."

MARTY PAICH: "Mainly, I would say, a new generation came up with electrified instruments...rock & roll. At that time, a lot of the big bands folded and there were only two or three left travelling around the country. The demise was a normal demise; a new kind of music came in. We arrangers were really getting a hold on big bands. Just at the point when we were learning and mastering what it was all about, the bottom dropped out. I wish it could have lasted longer. It was an incredible era."

"I sensed I was starting to say more, to swing harder and more aggressively," remembers West Coast reedman Bud Shank in the September 1986 issue of *Downbeat*. "But just as I was actually getting into a new thing, the bottom fell out of the jazz market. In 1963, clubs closed all over L.A. Jazz recording just about came to a halt. It was the beginning of the Dark Ages in California. There was nothing else I could do, so I went into the studios."

THE DARK AGES GREW DARKER.

SHORTY ROGERS: "As the synthesizer sound became more and more popular, the people who could play the electronics and could deliver that kind of sound were more and more in demand. As far as film goes, synthesizers blend beautifully with dialogue. They never really step on dialogue; they're able to control it better. The *Miami Vice* score kind of spearheaded that trend, but their price kept going up, so that by now, it's about the same

as an orchestral score, including studio time and payment of the musicians."

MARTY PAICH: "It's still very difficult for me to appreciate a TV film when all they've got are synthesizers. I have to tell you, it's so uncalled for too, because they're actually spending as much, if not more for a synthesized score as they are for a live score, including having twenty-five or thirty players in the studio. And look, I'm not downgrading synthesizers. I love synthesizers, but one of the reasons for it is many times the people in charge are so far behind in their production that they only have two or three days to formulate a score for something. So, they literally throw it together. The player will take the cassette home and improvise over it while he's watching the scene, and inside of forty-eight hours, you'll have it."

BOB COOPER: "One thing that I don't like right now is the electronic music behind every television show. Everything is synthesized. The problem with that is, like most other things, the public doesn't seem to care. Whereas, if I'm watching one of those shows and it's all synthesized, it bothers me to the point where I can't even watch it."

Some thirty-odd years after the heyday of West Coast jazz, American jazz carries on in relative obscurity as the quality of the popular song continues to digress. For jazz musicians, even that element of the music business which has always been there to fall back on—commercial composition, orchestration and the performance thereof—has all but disappeared. Las Vegas, once a haven for the working musician, has made the switch to taped music for shows. Travelling Broadway shows are suffering a similar fate. Symphonies continue to go under due to lack of support, and the film industry maintains its twenty year-old practice of ignoring musical aesthetics. Jazz continues to remain more popular and better funded in Europe and the East than in the country of its birth. □

THIS SERIES BEGAN IN ISSUE 235, DECEMBER 1990 / JANUARY 1991

James Rozzi is a freelance musician, teacher and writer in the Orlando, Florida area. His services are available for publications and liner notes by contacting him at P.O. Box 97, Killarney, Florida, USA 34740. PHONE (407) 877-8225



BACK ISSUES

WE ARE OFFERING THE FOLLOWING ISSUES OF CODA MAGAZINE AT SPECIAL RATES.

CANADA • 10 issues for \$11.00

Each additional copy \$1.10

(includes GST. Ontario residents add 8% PST)

USA/ELSEWHERE • 10 issues for US \$15.00 or CDN equivalent.

Each additional copy \$1.50

LESS THAN 10 ISSUES • CANADA • \$2.50 each
USA/ELSEWHERE • US \$2.50 or CDN equivalent.

230	(Feb. 1990)	Jackie McLean, Jayne Cortez, Willem Breuker, Bob Wilbur
229	(Dec. 1989)	Dave Holland, Maarten Altena, Thelonious Monk, John Casavetes
228	(Oct. 1989)	Pharoah Sanders, Roscoe Mitchell, Paul Smoker
227	(Aug. 1989)	Wardell Gray, Harvie Swartz, Butch Morris, Cassandra Wilson
226	(June 1989)	Oscar Peterson, Ronnie Mathews, Jane Bunnett, Francois Rabbath
225	(April 1989)	Frank Foster, Susan Chen, Frank Morgan, Cedar Walton
224	(Feb. 1989)	Paul Desmond / Jim Hall, Buddy Collette, Sam Rivers
223	(Dec. 1988)	Charlie Parker, Chet Baker, Mal Waldron, Steve Tibbetts
222	(Oct. 1988)	Anthony Braxton, Irene Schweizer, Lonnie Johnson, Dave Brubeck
221	(Aug. 1988)	Sonny Stitt, Al Cohn, John Tchicai, John Zorn
220	(June 1988)	Cecil Taylor, Misha Mengelberg, John Hicks, Herbie Nichols
219	(April 1988)	30th Anniversary Issue with Freddie Green, Bill Frisell, Rene Lussier
218	(Feb. 1988)	Ed Blackwell, Jack DeJohnette, Claude Ranger
217	(Dec. 1987)	Charlie Parker, Lee Konitz, Nick Brignola, Paul Cram
216	(Oct. 1987)	Bea Benjamin, Marilyn Crispell, Sheila Jordan, Steve Lacy
215	(Aug. 1987)	Ornette Coleman, Paul Rutherford, Grachan Moncur
214	(June 1987)	Woody Shaw, Kenny Burrell, Cannonball Adderley
213	(April 1987)	Duke Ellington, Art Hodes, Andrew Hill, Reg Schwager
212	(Feb. 1987)	Charlie Haden, Carla Bley, Ray Anderson, Peter Leitch
210	(Oct. 1986)	Lee Konitz, Teddy Edwards, Bobby Watson, Dexter Gordon
209	(Aug. 1986)	Don Cherry, Pee Wee Russell, Ornette Coleman/Metheny
208	(June 1986)	Woody Herman, Stanley Jordan, Jim Hall
207	(April 1986)	Kenny Wheeler, Bill Dixon, Wynton Marsalis
206	(Feb. 1986)	Charles Mingus, Jimmy Blanton, David Holland
205	(Dec. 1985)	Big Bands, Gil Evans, Artie Shaw, Thad Jones, Basie, Duke
204	(Oct. 1985)	Coleman Hawkins, Sahib Shihab, Sonny Rollins
203	(Aug. 1985)	The Jazz Singer, BB King, Eddie Jefferson, Jimmy Rushing
202	(June 1985)	Art Pepper, Johnny Hodges, Carlos Ward, Braxton
199	(Dec. 1984)	Lester Young, Andrew Cyrille, Vienna Art Orchestra
198	(Oct. 1984)	Bud Powell, Sidney Bechet, Barre Phillips, Bob Mover
197	(Aug. 1984)	Lew Tabackin, Steve Lacy, Fred Anderson, Bebop on Record
195	(April 1984)	Buddy Tate, Jay McShann, Nelson Symonds, Mel Lewis
192	(Oct. 1983)	Leo Smith, Baikida Carroll, Mal Waldron, Piano Variations
191	(Aug. 1983)	Pepper Adams, Charles Moffett, Johnny Griffin
190	(June 1983)	Don Thompson, Tristan Hopsinger, Mario Pavone, Al Haig
189	(April 1983)	Lol Coxhill, George Shearing, John Surman, Jim Galloway
188	(Feb. 1983)	Roy Porter, Buell Neidlinger, 1982 Writers Choice
187	(Dec. 1982)	Charlie Rouse, Frank Rosolino, Fraser MacPherson
186	(Oct. 1982)	Cannonball Adderley, Pheeroan Ak Laff, Michael Zwerin
185	(Aug. 1982)	Sam Rivers, Bobby Naughton, Trevor Watts, Roscoe Mitchell
184	(June 1982)	Sonny Greenwich, Ray Crawford, Ganelin Trio, Ed Bickert
183	(April 1982)	Roswell Rudd, Milford Graves, Art Davis, Sonny Rollins
180	(Oct. 1981)	McCoy Tyner, Joe Sealy, Loek Dikker, Fred van Hove
179	(June 1981)	Dannie Richmond, Jimmy Knepper, Blues News
174	(Aug. 1980)	Leroy Jenkins, Jemeel Moondoc, Eddie Jefferson
169	(Oct. 1979)	Amina Claudine Myers, Kenny Burrell, Pisa/Bracknell Fests
168	(Aug. 1979)	Albert Mangelsdorff, Barry Altschul, Moers Festival
167	(June 1979)	Evan Parker, Incus Records, Red Callender, Rova Sax Quartet
163	(Oct. 1979)	Henry Red Allen, Frank Lowe, Albert Nicholas
159	(Feb. 1978)	Randy Weston, Milt Hinton, Blues News
158	(Dec. 1977)	Joseph Jarman, Eddie Durham, Bobby Hackett
157	(Oct. 1977)	Bobby Bradford, John Carter, Chet Baker, Butch Morris
155	(June 1977)	George Lewis, Lloyd Glenn
154	(April 1977)	Milt Buckner, Christmann, Schonenberg
151	(Oct. 1976)	Don Pullen, Benny Waters
150	(Sept. 1976)	Milford Graves, Will Bradley
134	(Dec. 1974)	Julian Priester, Muggsy Spanier Big Band, Steve McCall
133	(Nov. 1974)	Charles Delaunay, pt. 1, Rex Stewart, Howard King
132	(Oct. 1974)	Karl Berger, Jazz Crossword, Johnny Shines



du Maurier Ltd.

DOWNTOWN

JAZZ

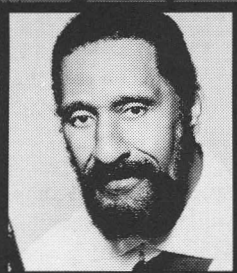
Toronto
June 25- July 4, '93

*A World-Class
Festival showcasing
over 1,000 Artists*

- 40+ Venues
- FREE Concerts,
Workshops and Films
- Jazz Cruises

Featuring Grammy Award
Winner

Dr. John
June 28, 8PM- \$17.50



Sonny Rollins
July 4, 8PM- \$17.50

Molson Place at HARBOURFRONT
CENTRE

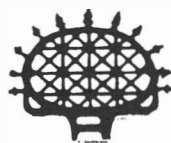
For Tickets call (416)973-4000

Citytv

Holiday Inn
ON KING

JAZZ HOTLINE
(416)363-5200 (JAZZ)

Starting May 12



HITTITE RECORDS

PRESENT THE **ORHAN DEMIR** PROJECT



HOT CARGO • HTT-CD 2005

ORHAN DEMIR guitar • **THOMAS OLEJNICKI**
bass • **PERRY PANSIERI** drums • **FRANCOIS**
BRIERE tenor saxophone
ALSO AVAILABLE

SULTAN OF STRINGS • HTT-LP 2004
ORHAN DEMIR Solo Guitar

DISTRIBUTED BY

NORTH COUNTRY DISTRIBUTORS, The Cadence Bldg., Redwood,
NY, USA 13679 - Tel. (315) 287-2852/Fax (315) 287-2860

WAYSIDE MUSIC DISTRIBUTORS, PO Box 8427, Silver Spring, MD,
USA 20907-8427

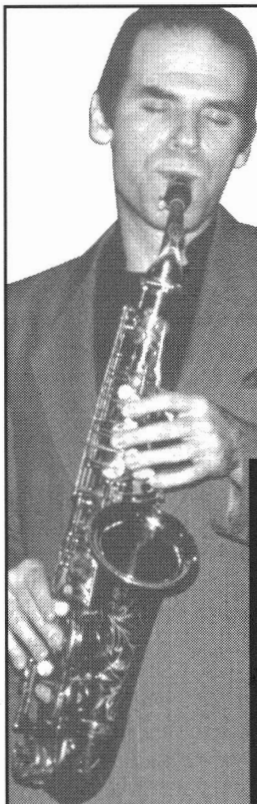
INDIE'S DISTRIBUTORS, 634 North Glenoaks Blvd., Suite 26, Burbank,
CA, USA 91502 • Tel. (818) 768-5546

HITTITERECORDS, PO Box 81, Stn. H, Toronto, Ont., Canada M4C 5H7

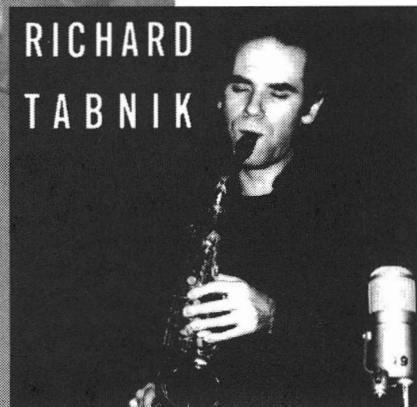
NEW FROM **NEW/ARTISTS**™

**Richard
Tabnik**
SOLO JOURNEY

Available at
TOWER RECORDS, HMV STORES, J&R MUSIC
or order direct
North Country Distributors
Cadence Building • Redwood, NY 13679



**RICHARD
TABNIK**



NA1011CD

BOB HAGGART

THE BIG NOISE FROM GREAT NECK



BOB HAGGART IS ONE OF THE BUSIEST, most versatile, and most widely interviewed figures in jazz. And yet virtually all interviews with him focus on a particular segment of his musical career. John Chilton's book, for example, *Stomp off! Let's Go*, examines in considerable detail Haggart's career with the Bob Crosby band. George Simon, in his encyclopedic volume, *The Big Bands*, focuses on Haggart's song writing. Mary Lou Hester, writing in the *Mississippi Rag*, examines more recent biographical matters.

When I sat down with Bob Haggart for an hour on July 4, 1992, I was more interested in his musical ideas than his biography. The only biographical details we discussed were his largely ignored pre-professional days, when his musical tastes and interests were being formed. Beyond that, Bob talked about music, about what it means to him, how it works for him, about his accomplishments, disappointments and reflections. The results were interesting. Bob is articulate, thoughtful, and straightforward, and much of what he had to say helps place his career in a new and more complex perspective.

I've read that you once took guitar lessons from George Van Eps.

YES, WHILE I WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL. George was the most original guitar player I had ever heard. His tuning was particularly imaginative. He tuned the bottom string up an octave and the top string down an octave, creating kind of a cluster chord—very close harmony, a lovely sound. I wanted to play the same way, so I got him to give me lessons, on Saturday afternoons. I had known the Van Eps family pretty much all my life, they lived on the south shore of Long Island and I lived on the north, around Great Neck. While I was in high

school, George and his brothers played in Smith Ballew's band at a posh little restaurant down by Grand Central Station. George played guitar; his brother, Bobby, played piano, and his other brother, Johnny, played sax and clarinet. I used to go in a lot and listen, and that's where George gave me lessons. He worked a Saturday luncheon session from twelve till two, but then had all afternoon off until the evening dinner show.

Before all that I played tuba in the high school band. I've always been musically inclined and the tuba presented certain challenges and performed certain orchestral functions that were interesting to me. After my freshman year in high school, I went to a summer music camp up in Maine. It was one of those deals where if you could play an instrument well enough you paid only half the tuition. While I was there I started fooling around with somebody's trumpet,

and I picked it up fairly quickly because, playing the tuba, I was already familiar with the fingering and what it took to blow a brass instrument. In fact, I liked it so well that before the end of the summer I went out and bought a trumpet of my own, for \$12.50, and spent a lot of time with it. That fall my parents sent me to a Prep School in Salisbury, Connecticut, and I started playing trumpet in a little five piece band.

So why don't we know you as Bob Haggart the trumpet player?

POSSIBLY BECAUSE THE DEPRESSION HIT and my parents couldn't afford to send me back to Prep School, so I lost my job with the band and ended up at Great Neck High again. That's the year I started on the bass.

I really don't know what the fascination was, but it seemed completely natural. I never remember practicing and working on the bass like I did the other instruments. I remember there was an old string bass in the band room, lying off in the corner that no one ever touched. So I started fooling around with it, and it just seemed as if I could hear bass lines. Of course having played the tuba helped me there, because I had learned to think in bass lines, to be conscious of them and how they contribute to a piece of music. And then of course I had played guitar and knew a little something about how to handle a string instrument, so it was almost as if I knew how to play the bass when I first picked it up.

We tend to forget it, but the string bass had just become common with jazz and dance bands. You know in the early days, jazz bands used

INTERVIEW BY PHILLIP D. ATTEBERRY

tubas for their bass instrument. It wasn't until the twenties, I suppose, that the string bass took over. And the string bass was so much fun. It does essentially the same thing as a tuba, but does it so much better, is so much more flexible and less cumbersome. I think that first dawned on me when I heard Artie Bernstein, who had been a cellist and switched over to the bass.

What distinguishes a first class bassist from a mediocre one?

THAT'S A HARD QUESTION. My first impulse is to say rhythm, because rhythm is so important. But virtually all bass players, even the mediocre ones, have mastered the rhythm end of it. I'd say the main difference is the quality of the patterns they play. Bass patterns need to have a melodic element to them, but they also need to lay down a cushion for the rest of the ensemble—that means helping the front line guys know where they are. As a bass player, you can't play just any note in the chord, you have to arrange those notes so that the front line guys can feel the change coming and then feel it happen, but you have to do that while preserving some kind of melodic element at the bottom of the ensemble.

The 1940's was a time of innovation in jazz, but also controversy—with the bop guys establishing a style that some of the more traditional players felt threatened by.

OH, NO DOUBT. During that period people were taking sides like crazy. The boppers thought the traditional guys were moldy figs, and the traditional guys thought the boppers were anarchists, or something like that. I was interested in the bop movement from the beginning. And I remember going out and buying a lot of the Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker stuff as soon as it was available, still on 78's then.

And yet most of your music remained pretty traditional.

YES. BUT YOU CAN BE INTERESTED IN SOMETHING—and like it—without being necessarily influenced by it. My tastes, for example, were shaped long before all that. I was bitten so hard by Louis Armstrong's Hot Five and the Ellington band, that they have always been the yard stick for what I regard as ideal jazz. All this other stuff was interesting musically, but it was nothing that went to my heart, that got very close to me. My ideal of a tenor sax player, for example, has always been Bud Freeman. Very traditional player. When Lester Young came along, I liked him. I could appreciate what he did. But I was never a big Lester Young fan. He never moved me like Bud Freeman. It has a lot to do with your age, I think. How old you are and what you are exposed to when your tastes are being formed.

So you don't find that your musical tastes have changed over the years?

NOT REALLY, but if you are talking about my personal tastes now, they didn't start with jazz and they've never been confined to jazz. My favourite composer for example, has always been Ravel, and then Debussy. I've liked the French Impressionists from an early age. And Bach has been another favourite. I love Bach in the morning. Straight-forward and no nonsense. And bass lines. Great bass lines. Being a bass

player that's what appealed to me. Voice leading and intervoices moving around. The Van Eps family first made me aware of voice leading, and Bach reinforced that. Most people think of a piece of music in terms of a set of chords. And consequently they think about harmony vertically. Bach writes horizontally. The different harmonic strands thread through a song. I've always liked to think of music like that. I very seldom listen to music at home. I don't have time. I paint a lot when I'm home, and there is no point in my putting on a tape while I paint because I can't listen and paint at the same time. In fact I can't listen and do anything at the same time. I either don't listen at all, or I'm completely absorbed in what I'm listening to. That's why I never listen to tapes in the car. I'd be dangerous. When I was younger. I pretty much split my time between the jazz guys and the classical guys. I'd listen to Ravel for a while, then Red Nichols and the Five Pennies. Bix for a while then Bach for a while.

You went right out of high school into the music business. You didn't go to college and take classes in music theory, harmony and such things?

NO. I STUDIED HARMONY with a man named Rupert Graves, in my home town of Great Neck. And after I got out of the Bob Crosby band I studied some with Frank Marx, who was teaching the Schillinger system, and other less well known people. The most informative music lesson I ever had was from a man with a strange sort of Hungarian name that I can't remember, who began by asking me to write a composition using nothing but the C chord. No G⁷, no dominant, no nothing. Just the C chord. It was very illuminating. Forced me to think about chord changes, why they happen, how they happen, what they contribute to a piece of music, how their absence affects a piece of music. I've never thought about a song in quite the same way after that.

When did you start arranging?

WELL I ARRANGED A FEW LITTLE PIECES in high school, learned to transpose and that sort of thing. But I didn't become an arranger until I joined Bob Crosby and hooked up with Matty Matlock and Dean Kincaide. Those guys were excellent arrangers, and I learned a lot from them. They got me interested in arranging, taught me a lot about it, and ultimately the three of us worked together on most all the arrangements for that band. That was the big advantage of staying with them for seven years. We got to hear our arrangements mature, fill out, and get better with age. Sort of like watching children grow. That's very satisfying.

And after you left the Crosby band, you free lanced for about twenty-five years. What are the professional advantages of free lancing as opposed to playing with a band?



THE BOB HAGGART INTERVIEW

FOR ME THE BIG ADVANTAGE WAS MONEY. I worked with an agency that wrote commercial jingles, and that was a constant source of work. At the same time, I did a lot of arranging for different albums. And then I often had two or three record dates a day, playing bass for somebody or another, and then there were the radio shows—which later turned into television shows. I didn't play much jazz at all during that time. I couldn't afford to, I was too busy and making too much money with what I was doing.

Was it professionally satisfying?

SURE. THERE WAS ALWAYS A NEW CHALLENGE, something different to try to accomplish. I never found myself saying, "Gee, I wish I was back on the road playing jazz."

And yet after twenty-five years of free lancing, you did go back on the road playing jazz. How did that happen?

DICK GIBSON IS LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT. You know he started this jazz party idea thirty years ago or so, and got me involved with it, playing here and there three or four times a year. And once I got out of New York, it was liberating. It's not that I didn't like what I was doing there, but after all that time I needed a change. And as the jazz parties became more and more numerous, I became more and more involved with them.

Did the Dick Gibson jazz parties have anything to do with the origin of the World's Greatest Jazz Band?

NOT DIRECTLY, though I think bringing together so many jazz veterans demonstrated possibilities that no one had yet thought of. And when an opportunity came to put a band together in 1968, Dick Gibson was quick to pursue it—using mainly his jazz party cronies.

1968 seems an odd time for a group like the World's Greatest Jazz Band to achieve success—with the conflicts over Vietnam, campus riots, Chicago policemen thumping people at the Democratic Convention—somehow the music doesn't fit the age. Any explanation for it?

ONLY THAT GOOD MUSIC IS AGELESS. Music that is tied to a particular time doesn't survive. I can't tell you what is ageless about traditional jazz, but something is. It's infectious. And maybe in an age of protest and unhappiness, an infectious, timeless kind of music sounded good to people.

And yet some of the songs you recorded were more timely than timeless—"Mrs. Robinson," "Sunny," "What the World Needs Now is Love," "Up, Up and Away"—very sixtyish type songs.

IN THOSE INSTANCES, HOWEVER, THE SONG IS LESS IMPORTANT than the treatment of it. What we did with those songs was rescue them from the 1960's by tapping their possibilities. Now of course you can't do that with every song, only the good ones. Some songs just aren't adaptable. Dick Gibson's idea was to record some popular

songs of the day to try to broaden the band's audience. Most of the musicians, in fact, wanted to stick with a more traditional repertoire—until they heard what could be done with the contemporary pieces.

What do you regard as your most significant musical accomplishment?

ARRANGEMENTS I DID IN 1957 FOR AN ALBUM ON DOT RECORDS. Yank Lawson and Billy Butterfield are on that album, Cutty Cutshall and Lou McGarity on trombones, Bill Stegmeyer on clarinet, Bud Freeman on tenor, Lou Stein on piano, Cliff Leeman on the drums, and others—I played bass. There's not a weak link in that album. The arrangements have held up overtime. Everybody's featured. Everybody's in top form. It's been thirty-five years since we made that album, but it still sounds fresh and interesting and up to date. It's almost completely unknown because not a single person involved with the album is mentioned on the liner notes. The album was made as a promotional thing for Bob Crosby, who had some kind of pick up group at the time and sold the record wherever he played. The title of the album, I think, is *Bob Crosby's Porgy and Bess*. It has a sappy picture of Crosby on the front and a few ambiguous words on the back—by Nelson Riddle, I think—and there is nothing at all that would remotely give you a clue as to who is on the album or what kind of quality it is.

The promoters of that Crosby group didn't want club owners saying, "Where's Haggart?" "Where's Butterfield?" "Where's Lawson?" So they kept our names off the album. It's a stupid way to handle an album. I was mad about it at the time, and I'm still a little mad about it. I keep making tapes of it and sending it to people, but the day may well come when the album is completely forgotten about—no one will know who is on it or realize that it's worth preserving.

At the time, though, it was appreciated by musicians. Shortly after the album was released, Gerry Mulligan and Andre Previn both called to congratulate me on the arrangements. I've thought about it a lot over the years, and I still think it's the best recording I've ever been a part of.

Musically speaking, is there anything that you haven't done that you would like to do?

NO, NOT REALLY. I'm busier now than ever, playing jazz parties, recording, arranging. Not long ago we finished a new album for Kenny Davern. I worked a long time on the arrangements for that album, and it was very challenging. I had done string arrangements before, but not in a while. And it's a tricky business, because it's easy to let a string section take over an arrangement. That's death on a jazz album. So that was a challenge, and basically I just look for challenges. As long as you're challenged you stay sharp and vigorous, and that's what I aspire to do. □

PHOTOGRAPHY

BUD FREEMAN, MAXIME SULLIVAN, BOB HAGGART, YANK LAWSON, BILLY BUTTERFIELD, LOU MCGARITY • Photograph by Jack Bradley. BOB HAGGART • Photograph by Roscoe Allen

NEW ORLEANS JAZZ FANS THIS IS FOR YOU!

A unique combination of book, photo album
& compact disc brings together the sights,
sounds and story of the

Great New Orleans Revival of the 1960s

During the 1960s a handful of small record producers & jazz promoters went to New Orleans and started the greatest jazz revival in history. Through their efforts many oldtime jazz greats gained wide recognition for the first time and began touring the world. A whole new generation of jazz musicians and fans sprang up. And, most important, scores of new New Orleans jazz recordings were made.

Bill Bissonnette was one of the most prolific of these promoters. His **JAZZ CRUSADE** record company issued dozens of New Orleans jazz releases. He recorded many sessions for other companies. His **EASY RIDERS JAZZ BAND** was one of the few bands the oldtime musicians toured and recorded with. He was the protege of Big Jim Robinson on trombone and of Sammy Penn on drums. His crusade took him from Texas to Connecticut to New Orleans, and finally on to California. This is his saga: the sights, sounds and story of what it was like to live and play with those New Orleans Jazz Legends in their prime.

They're all here in words, photos and music: **GEORGE LEWIS, KID THOMAS, KID SHEIK, BILLIE & DEDE PIERCE, ALVIN ALCORN, PUNCH MILLER, SAMMY PENN, CAPTAIN JOHN HANDY, SAMMY RIMINGTON, POLO BARNES, SING MILLER, CAROL LEIGH, BARRY MARTYN, MANNY PAUL, DON EWELL** and more.

Deluxe Limited Edition book contains Exclusive **JAZZ CRUSADE** Compact Disc: **THE BEST OF THE JAZZ CRUSADE**. Over 70 minutes - 15 tracks - of digitally remastered original New Orleans Jazz!

CD includes: **BIG JIM'S LITTLE SIX**, the **JAZZOLOGY POLL WINNERS**, the **ALGIERS STOMPERS**, the **MOULDY FIVE**, the **NEW ORLEANS RASCALS**, the **DECEMBER BAND**, the **EASY RIDERS JAZZ BAND** and many others including previously unissued **JAZZ CRUSADE** recordings.

60 Exclusive Photo Portraits by **DON MOORE, ANDREW WITTENBORN & ED LAWLESS**

432 pages, 38 page Discography, 51 Album Photographs, Fully Indexed, Premium Softcover, 15 track CD

DELUXE LIMITED EDITION with EXCLUSIVE COMPACT DISC

In Canada • \$40.00 (Cdn.) pp (including GST)

US and Elsewhere • \$35.00 (US) pp

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

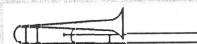
VISA & MASTER CARD • PHONE/FAX (416) 593 - 7230

The Jazz Crusade

The Inside Story of the
Great New Orleans Jazz Revival
of the 1960s



*and the musicians who created it:
George Lewis, Big Jim Robinson, Kid Thomas
Billie & DeDe Pierce, Punch Miller, Kid Sheik
Sammy Rimington, Polo Barnes, Alvin Alcorn
Capt. John Handy, Sammy Penn, Manny Paul
Creole George Guesnon and many others.*



by **Big Bill Bissonnette**

JAMES BLOOD ULMER

AN OVERVIEW BY BEN RATLIFF

PHOTOGRAPH BY LEN HARRIS



WHEN AN AMERICAN ARTIST is said to be in possession of “native genius,” it means that he has managed to do something orderly with his inheritance of a bewildering cultural mix, a mix made in entirely unpredictable ways. It’s about finding organization in a chaotic swirl of cultures and practices. Stanley Crouch, in defense of the theories posited by his philosophical mentor Albert Murray, has written that “an American at his or her best can feel the cowboy (who is white, black, and Mexican), the Negro, the Irish, the Jewish, the Italian, the Asian rise up, depending on the stimulus or the image or the reference.”

JAMES BLOOD ULMER, born 1942 in St. Matthews, South Carolina, a native genius, and an American at his best and even at his worst, was ushered into the public eye by another native genius, Ornette Coleman. Knowing in the mid-70’s that Coleman’s new music provided a completely natural new role for guitarists, Ulmer played the role of disciple to the point of making the question of his leadership academic on *Tales of Captain Black*, his first lp, in a 1979 group that had Ornette and Blood up front playing intertwining lines. But he had to shake off Coleman to come into his own; clearly those rhythmically free-floating single-note themes, Coleman’s compositional bricks-and-mortar, were too confining for the way Ulmer wanted to play his chordal instrument. Blood became musically unbound a few years later: by the time he had

signed with CBS, his trademarks of frenetic, rumbling picking, tortured long notes, and slashing diminished chords had already been established—but all of a sudden the overall feel was twice as dirty, more harmonically complex, much more arresting. Ulmer, who before becoming interested in avant-garde improvising had a steady job with the R&B organist Hank Marr, has always been smart enough to confound his audience’s sense of genre while giving them a steady groove. He has dressed his music as jazz while filling it out with much more unassuming stuff—and thereby has lured the best and most flexible jazz improvisers to share his particular mindset of soul and intellect. Blood himself, in a 1981 interview for *New York Rocker*, explained his claim to the title of “jazz musician”: “If somebody gave you a job in a rhythm and

blues band, you’d probably learn how to play jazz if [later] somebody’d give you [a jazz] job. After you learn chords and scales, you can make somebody think you playing jazz if everybody else is playing it. But the real way I got into jazz was when I traded my Fender guitar for the Gibson Birdland guitar. Then it looked like jazz, so that’s what I was playing!”

But Ulmer, analyzed as a single instrumentalist, plays jazz by almost anybody’s definition (except those who say jazz is never loud). What draws the almost entirely white, young, and mostly non-jazz crowds to his concerts is his intimation (but never a total embrace) of funk; and the concept, preceded in rock, of a black guitarist playing with outgoing power, originality and individual genius—rather than the jazz concept of introspective eighth-note

OMNI-AMERICAN ULMER

guitarists reeling off dampened solos that follow a tune's changes. Consequently, some of Ulmer's most eloquent champions in the press have been writers who openly admit their ignorance of jazz history, including Andy Schwartz in *New York Rocker*, Tom Carson in the *Village Voice*, and Chuck Eddy in his book on heavy metal, *Stairway to Hell*.

The Ulmer album often given top priority among his supporters is *Odyssey*, his final Columbia lp before being dropped from the roster for weak sales. Cut in 1983 with Warren Benbow on drums and Charles Burnham on violin, it uses Ulmer's smallest recording group, and it's as powerfully distilled as pemmican. Gary Giddins, forgetting his general dislike of jazz-rock fusions, wrote about *Odyssey* that it was "one of those rare works that at first seems to have sprung from the head of Zeus." Not only a success as jazz, it's a far better rock album than the Rolling Stones' offering of that year, *Undercover*. This is the point of Ulmer's status as, to use Albert Murray's term, an "Omni-American": it's music that can simultaneously bring to mind the Stones' choppy groove, the cyclical rhythmic and melodic vamps from Jajouka or Nigeria, Georgia Sea Islands call-and-response gospel, and most definitely the high lonesome jigs of early southwestern country music. (Don't forget that Czech is the third most spoken language in Texas, and that country music is an Omni-American mix of Spanish, German, French, and African base ingredients.)

A bunch of new records released on CD within the last several years are giving us all we need to know about Ulmer—except for the black rock music from his CBS period, which lies dormant in the Black Rock building on 6th Avenue, and his album *Are You Glad to Be in America*, released in 1980 by Rough Trade but never reissued. *Revealing* is Ulmer's first recording as a leader (it predated *Captain Black* by a year), and it has recently been reissued by the German label In & Out (In & Out CD7007-2). It's a transitional piece of work from 1977, but interesting for several reasons. It documents Blood at a time when his sense of

rhythm—either by design, or out of deference for the other musicians on the session—was more traditional. The point of the session seems to be: keep stretching out the jams, keep straying from the tension of the song's form, and shake all the exotic percussion instruments you need for the proper otherworldly feel, but the bassist and drummer must play appropriate scales and strict meter. In much of the music, neither Ulmer nor his companions (tenorist George Adams, bassist Cecil McBee, drummer Doug Hammond) refer to the composition's melody shape, or *any* melody shape, except in the expositions at the beginning and end. The result is a quality of frozen, directionless swing. There's hardly a "dirty" chord on the first three tracks of the record, but in the last track, the dirgelike *Love Nest*, the band all of a sudden seems to snap into the knowledge of where it is and where it's going: it's great, headlong, early Ulmer, with direction, attack, and rhythmic dislocation. Ulmer comes slowly in at 1:28, followed by a moody George Adams bass clarinet solo, and then a repeat chorus. Blood follows with his solo, and twenty seconds into Blood's turn, at 3:52, we get the anthemic, five-chord double stopped riff that will be one of Blood's signatures for the rest of his career—it became the kernel of *Are You Glad to Be In America* and the backbone for much of his 1987 Blue Note Album *America—Do You Remember the Love?* It's a simple folk detail, but startling, almost ghostly. It's like coming upon a perfectly preserved hundred-year-old object under the floorboards of your house. Most of the rest of his solo plays with those same five chords, trying to regain the power of his entrance; he knew it was his trump card.

Bern Nix, the guitarist who replaced Blood Ulmer in Ornette Coleman's group, and whose stylistic closeness to Blood is both obvious and entirely logical, told me this: "The thing I like about Blood is he has a sense of humour. I can hear that in his playing a lot—he's got this really loopy sense of humour. I think his stuff is funny in a positive sense. The same way that when you listen to Thelonious Monk, sometimes it's funny. It's a joke, but it's serious. And for anybody to come up with a new

wrinkle on how to play jazz on the guitar, that's something remarkable. There are a lot of great guitarists, but there aren't that many people who are really doing something that's new or different. Blood's probably the only person who is still working out of what you would call 'the jazz tradition.' You have a lot of other people playing improvised music, or whatever they call it. But he seems to be the *only* person who has some awareness of the roots of the music, where it came from, the antecedents—the blues players. And it comes through in his playing."

Now we jump a decade ahead of *Revealing* to find Blood with his on-and-off recording band, Phalanx. Their precedent is one album on Moers Music, *Got Something Good For You*—a solid set of melody-driven songs, with the rubbery crunch of Adams' tenor meshing nicely into Ulmer's similarly rough-textured tone. *Original Phalanx*, (32DIW801), recorded in February 1987 with Adams, Sirone and Rashied Ali, is the best of the recent Ulmers. Ulmer's relationship with Adams is very different here: Adams soars around in the middle register, holding on to long notes, providing a melody shape; Ulmer's guitar makes shadings in and around the line drawings, playing quick chord sequences up and



OMNI - AMERICAN ULMER

down around the balance points of Adams' lines. Ali is a great drummer for this music—he has an agreeable looseness to his rhythms, and he echoes Ulmer in rubato, ride-and-snare figures. These pieces bounce and sing, and that's partly due to Sirone, who's great at sitting on the tonic, like Charlie Haden, while making the rhythm a bit more buoyant. On *Playground*, especially, Ulmer's playing is ferocious: his circular sprays of single notes, articulated cleanly and brilliantly, fold into each other, responding not only to the harmonic implications of the tune's theme, but to Ali's incessant discourse on the snare.

"orchestral" approach to the guitar: "Ulmer's orchestrations are brought off by improvised lines that are italicized or magnified by modulations that transcend his instrument's range. That is, by changing keys in a calculated fashion, he achieves the impression of playing higher or lower while maintaining the same register." Spinning single-note lines out of small chords, or buzzing one tone with the flat side of his pick until he's reaching for three or four, Ulmer's solo in *Line In* uses devices that distract the listener from understanding too quickly the improvising guitarist's process of alternating between

increasingly unique sensibility through his instrument, is Joe Morris, from Cambridge, Massachusetts. As Morris explained it to me, the greatest victory of Ulmer's work has been to strike a balance between using his instrument's *sui generis* capabilities, and also making it catch up to the demands posed by post-bop horn players like Coleman and Dolphy. "Blood is really a *guitar player*," Morris emphasized. "He sounds to me like Wes Montgomery and Jimi Hendrix and Muddy Waters, and all those other really guitar-based sounds." Their paths crossed for the first time in Europe, in 1981. At the time, Morris said, Ulmer was "dealing with melodic structure that was created for the alto—basically, Ornette's music. He had a sense of melody that was more about the alto.

"When I first met Blood, he gave me his guitar, and he said 'here—it's tuned to A.' And I said, 'tuned, what—to the chord of A?' He said, 'no, man, A. Unison. The Harmolodic Unison.' He tuned four strings to A, one to D, I think, and one to an out of tune E. That's the Harmolodic Unison. He did that so that he could play anything he wanted in his harmolodic range. I think the meat of it all is that he was trying to deal with that kind of intonation, that intervallic structure of Dolphy and Ornette and Cecil, by tuning his guitar that way—so that he didn't get locked into strict diatonic or modal situations."

Music Revelation Ensemble is the name Ulmer has given to three different recording quartets; the only requirements for a MRE are for a backbeat and that he and David Murray be the principal soloists. Pairing Ulmer with Murray has never seemed like a great idea to me—each has an idiosyncratic language that can be turned on and off like a tap, but the languages are at odds with each other. Ulmer deliberately walks sideways against the melodic current, whereas Murray derives his power from steaming full ahead, driven by the diatonic blues. Likeliest sessions featuring two geniuses with irreconcilable differences, (think of the '58 Taylor and Coltrane session, or more recently, the DIW Taylor/Art Ensemble record) the two don't play simultaneously all that much. When they do, they're either trying to overpower each other (that's when it becomes time to get interested in Ronald Shannon Jackson's



A session from a year later by the same group, *In Touch*, also on DIW (DIW-826) is similar: more compositions driven by thematic strength than by meter. It's the quality of the group acting together as a single pulsating identity that becomes the highest criterion on these Ornette-like organic workouts, and the sensual interplay—agreeable rather than reactive—results in an expansion of tone colour. Perhaps most compelling on *In Touch* is *Line In Line Out*, in which Ulmer and Adams, both playing flute, state the melody line in unison, and then Ulmer switches to guitar and Adams to soprano. After a somewhat desultory solo from Adams, Ulmer leads into a good demonstration of what Stanley Crouch described in 1978 as an

chord-comping on the changes and forging a single-tone path. He switches between the two roles so quickly within any given few bars of music, and places such great intervals between the single-note solos and the chords, that one is forced to listen along in several directions at once. Gradually, Ulmer decelerates and creates a greater continuity between single-line and chords, ending everything in a delicately strummed, single, declarative major chord—as major as Ulmer can sound with his idiosyncratic tuning system.

Another of the few jazz guitarists who have learned more from the history and applications of the *guitar* than from the history of the saxophone, and who continually shows an

AN OVERVIEW BY BEN RATLIFF

backbeats), or Murray's personality gets lost in what is without question an Ulmer date. Not surprisingly, he ends up sounding more than a little like George Adams—or is that just the generic sound of a powerful tenor adrift, not building up anything? The band's self-titled album for DIW from 1988 (DIW-825) is a great advance over their 1980 debut on Moers Music, *No Wave*; at least this time it sounds premeditated, whereas they seemed underprepared on the earlier record. In a Murray/Ulmer duo, Ulmer has to play chords harder to be distinct over Murray's volume, and Ulmer's power chords (especially on *Nisa*) are marvellous.

Elec. Jazz (DIW-839), from 1990, is even better. The rhythm section of Amin Ali—whose bass pops and rumbles like a bass should when it's competing against a backbeat—and drummer Cornell Rochester is more straightforwardly funky; there are no compromises there. The Murray/Ulmer concept is now much cleaner, and the differences between the two are finally exploited for their possibilities in creating the structure of a single composition. *Inter City* features an extended Murray solo that begins when the band has come off an Ulmerish, craggy unison theme, and at the moment of his entrance, the beat leaves its 4/5 opacity and runs into straight jazz fours. It's not just funny; it provides a somewhat necessary transition, and it works. Murray comports himself like Murray in 1990, not willfully regressing into the mid-seventies Murray as he did on the MRE album only two years previously. Ulmer and Murray find common ground again on *No More*, a slow, quiet blues, in which they work up an agreeable moodiness in the long beginning and end themes. Only Ulmer gets to solo, though, which is a disappointment; at this unhurried setting and low volume, it would have been nice to hear two versions of the blues from such drastically different players.

Calvin Weston, the drummer most associated with Blood (he was on Phalanx's first album, and he's played with most of the core Ulmer bands over the past decade) made *Dance Romance* under his own name in 1988 for In & Out (In & Out 72), which has only recently been brought to my attention. Ulmer is on it, as well as Jamaladeen Tacuma, and the altoist and singer Fostina Dixon. It's a very, very good record—so tasty are Weston's heavy

beats and so respectable Ulmer's chops that you wonder why a major American label couldn't do anything with this group in the interest of the new Black rock music. (I'm only suggesting this because *Dance Romance* is better than the recent big-label releases by Eye & I, 24-7 Spyz, and Living Color; it's relatively simple, and it's unified despite all its different moods, which the others aren't.) You wouldn't have to know anything about Weston or Ulmer to understand that they were accomplished improvisers and masterly rock-groove players; if you did know their work, you'd be pleasantly surprised. Weston splits up the record into three songs and three improvised jams—the first group is called *Easy Part*, the second *Serious Part*. On *I Can Tell*, a slow Prince-like ballad which reveals itself slowly, Ulmer sings in harmony with Dixon, and his cement croak works beautifully against her pure soprano. *Planetarian Citizen* (whose refrain turned up later in rapper Schoolly D's song *Black Education*) has Weston providing a ferocious funk 12, and Ulmer's solo is more suggestive of Hendrix than I've ever heard him, but still distinctly Ulmer: he's chewing up phrases, spitting them out, skidding on them, tripping over them. It belongs in a catalogue of distinctive rock guitar performances. *Preview*, at a meandering eleven and a half minutes, is the only harmologically-based piece on the record, but it's at least as good as some on *Elec. Jazz*; *Dance Romance* is a pummeling Weston solo feature; finally, *House Blues* is Ulmer at his eeriest, and one of the few times I've heard him play with liberal doses of an echo unit. He's good at it.

I did mention that Ulmer was American even at his worst. *Blues Allnight* (In & Out 7005-2), a straight rock session recorded by In & Out in 1989, is a puzzlement: it does nothing for admirers of Ulmer the guitar player, and little for admirers of Ulmer the soul singer. It sounds generic and commercial, a charge you wouldn't ever normally level at Ulmer. I'm not saying that it's a bad idea for Ulmer to make a record of songs with hardly any solos and lots of background vocals on every chorus, but this is a man who, in *Odyssey*, made one of the best-ever rock albums without the slightest compromise. You still get glimpses of that sense of humour Nix referred to, and a catholic-minded genius; *She Ain't So Cold* is ersatz two-step country-rock, and his range of tone runs from

fat and oppressive to attenuated and only barely amplified—but the overall picture is quite smooth and flat. The rhythms aren't plodding, the singing's okay, and what's predictable coming out of Ulmer is still unpredictable from lesser guitarists. But it doesn't really succeed as a rock album.

Still, *Blues Allnight* rounds out the picture of Ulmer as a guitarist who holds several entire guitar traditions in his hands: Muddy Waters to Albert King to Kenny Burrell to Hendrix to Keith Richards (and Ornette Coleman by extension, inasmuch as Ornette has helped launch a guitar tradition). The Rolling Stones picked Vernon Reid and Living Color to patronize with a record deal and opening slots at enormous concerts, but if Ulmer were younger and more photogenic, it could have been an Ulmer group—his music is versatile and sexy enough. Why does Ulmer have to go to a poorly distributed German label, or a well-distributed Japanese label, to record his work? Why doesn't Columbia make a move to reissue his early 80's records (following Atlantic's lead in re-releasing esoteric classics from their back catalogue) or agree to lease them to another company? It's not just a heartless business decision; it's unamerican. □

BEN RATLIFF is a contributing editor of *Option*, and has also written for *Cadence*, *Request*, and *Downbeat*. He lives in New York City.





THE MUSIC BOOK STORE

203 HARBORD STREET TORONTO
ONTARIO CANADA M5S 1H6

We have a large selection of new
and out of print books on

**Jazz • Blues • Ragtime
R&B • Gospel and Soul
Study Guides for various
Instruments • Song Books
Discographies • Fake Books
Rare Sheet Music • Posters
Postcards • Calendars
WORLDWIDE SERVICE
PHONE (416) 588-9415
MASTERCARD VISA
MONEYORDER**

SUBSCRIBE TO

EXPERIMENTAL MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE DESIGN,
CONSTRUCTION, AND ENJOYMENT
OF UNUSUAL SOUND SOURCES.

\$24.00/YEAR FOR 4 ISSUES
(US \$27.00 IN CANADA AND MEXICO)
(US \$34.00 OVERSEAS)

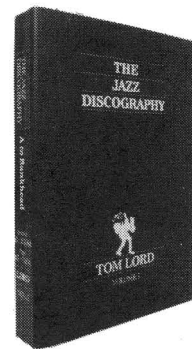
POST OFFICE BOX 784
NICASIO • CA 94946 • U.S.A.

Vol. 4 Now Available!

The Jazz Discography

by Tom Lord

*The Ultimate
Directory of
Recorded Jazz*



*"Tom Lord's Jazz Discography
is a magnificent and much
needed job of research..."*

— Leonard Feather

The Jazz Discography is the most
comprehensive, all inclusive general
jazz discography ever published - and
the easiest to use. Covering over 93
years of recordings from 1898 to 1992,
and beyond, it will include over a
million musician and tune entries, in
most categories of creative and
improvised music.

Published as a series of 600 page
volumes from a sophisticated computer
data base, *The Jazz Discography* details
all musician and recording data,
chronologically, by leader or group.

Volumes 1-4 (A-Da) are now available
from specialty jazz record retailers or
bookstores, or by mail order in N.
America for US\$45.00 per volume post
paid (US\$50.00 elsewhere).

For a free brochure or to order by Visa/
MC/IMO/Check: *North Country
Distributors*, 3 Cadence Building,
Redwood, NY 13679, USA.

Tel: (315) 287-2852; Fax: (315) 287-2860.

Dealer inquiries welcome.

MARGINAL DISTRIBUTION

Unit 103-277 George St.N. • Peterborough • Ontario
Canada K9J 3G9 • Tel/Fax (705) 745-2326



THE COMPLETE *victo* COMPACT DISC CATALOGUE

MARILYN CRISPELL • LABYRINTHS • VICTO 06

ANTHONY BRAXTON • ENSEMBLE (VICTORIAVILLE 1988) • VICTO 07

BARRE PHILLIPS • CAMOUFLAGE • VICTO 08

COMPILATION • DIX IMPROVISATIONS- VICTORIAVILLE 1989 • VICTO 09

ANDRE DUCHESNE • L' ou 'L • VICTO 010

ROSCOE MITCHELL • SONGS IN THE WIND • VICTO 011

MARILYN CRISPELL QUINTET • CIRCLES • VICTO 012

SLAWTERHAUS • LIVE • VICTO 013

HENRY KAISER/JIM O'ROURKE • TOMORROW KNOWS

WHERE YOU LIVE • VICTO 014

LINDSAY COOPER • OH MOSCOW • VICTO 015

DAVE BURRELL-DAVID MURRAY • IN CONCERT • VICTO 016

KONRAD BAUER SOLO • TORONTO TONE • VICTO 017

ZEENA PARKINS • URSA'S DOOR • VICTO 018

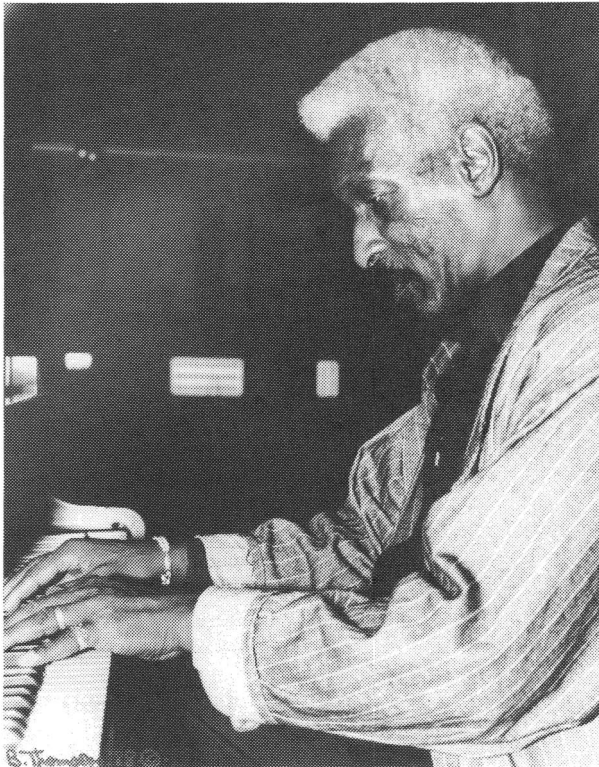
ELLIOTT SHARP/ORCHESTRA CARBON • ABSTRACT

REPRESSIONISM: 1990-99 • VICTO 019

DIEDRE MURRAY/FRED HOPKINS • FIRESTORM • VICTO 020

Pianos of Reverie, Pianos of Repetition

Reviews by Stuart Broomer



Since the piano readily lends itself to reverie and reflection, and jazz is at a point where gazes tend inward or backward, a collection of mostly recently recorded, and frequently very good, piano CDs includes a number that dedicate themselves to the memories of other musicians, memory in general, the recycling of old material, or to sustained lyric meditation.

Hank Jones plays Ellington; McCoy Tyner plays Coltrane; Geoff Keezer dedicates a record to Art Blakey, imitates Phineas Newborn and plays *The Feeling of Jazz*, a tune Ellington recorded with Coltrane. Mal Waldron begins with *Yesterdays* and ends with *How Long Has This Been Going On*, touching in between on *Dear Old Stockholm*. Steve Kuhn associates half his program with Charlie Parker, the rest with Miles Davis, Kenny Dorham, and Julie London, and opens with *Old Folks*. Waldron plays Monk; Tyner, remembering Coltrane, plays Monk's tribute to Powell.

In reverie, memory becomes wondrously elastic. While Paul Bley composes *Willow* (ask not for whom it weeps), he assigns *Summertime* to George Gershwin; he could have called it *Dream Flight* and credited it to Liz Gorrill (who in this practice, among others, owes something to Lennie Tristano). An 18 year old performance by Bill Evans appears that includes some music he first recorded 15 years before. Elsewhere, Jon Ballantyne takes a great leap forward by playing with Bley, whose playing for these purposes need not be more challenging than it was before Ballantyne's birth.

In varying degrees these recordings tend to retrospection and/or introspection, ruminations in the pastures of jazz history and the American popular song, whether "standard" or merely old.

SOLO PIANO

Hank Jones • *Hank!* • All Art Jazz AAJ 11003
Liz Gorrill • *Dreamflight* • New Artists NA 1010 CD

Mal Waldron • *Evidence* • Dark Light Music DL24002

Steve Kuhn • *Live at Maybeck Recital Hall, Volume Thirteen* • Concord CCD 4484

Paul Bley • *Changing Hands* • Justin Time Just 40-2

Hank Jones' *Hank!* (All Art Jazz AAJ-11003) was recorded in Japan in 1976. The CD's 14 tracks are evenly divided between Ellington tunes and standards or, in such cases as *Gone with the Wind* and *If I Had You*, old pop songs. As with any Hank Jones performance, it's

music refined to a high degree, absolutely without excess. One is seldom aware that Jones is playing alone, testament to how well he matches his approach to the song under consideration.

"As they used to say, 'You can't go wrong/with an Ellington song'" (the person I remember hearing say that was Derek Bailey) and for the Ellington selections, the material of primary interest here, there is almost perfect mating of composer and player. These are brief, gem-like treatments (most fall within seconds of three minutes; the longest, and perhaps best, *Prelude to a Kiss*, is under four minutes) in which Jones sometimes alters in only the subtlest ways, supplementing chords, shifting emphases. The ballads are limpid, guitar-like; the notes seem

to slip from Jones' fingers. The medium tempo move with a bounce approaching Earl Hines; at other times Jones suggests Ellington's own attack. There are more distinctive, and more stimulating, approaches to Ellington available, but those are not Jones' aims, and it would be hard to fault a performance that approaches its subject with such fidelity and discretion. In effect, Jones returns Ellington to Ellington, almost succeeding with even the long battered *Satin Doll*. I only wish the material was all Ellington and the selection was more imaginative.

Jones is a classicist, brief where others are diffuse; he resists what is most common to these soloists, the concentration and extension of reverie, the association of idea with

Pianos of Reverie...

idea, individual notes and ideas disappearing into the instrument's resonances, its accumulative sound or discrete reverberations, its range, its environment. The modern piano is an invention of Romanticism, either the great strung drum or fixed lute of the nineteenth century.

Because much of the music under discussion is highly introspective, it inevitably feeds and mingles with a listener's introspections. Often these musics are able to achieve their most interesting effects only through means that some may find irritating. If much solo playing is compulsively varied, glib, innocuous, or merely entertaining, each of the pianists who follow has a distinctly individual approach that hardly fits within a major style, let alone flits among them. There is more gravity in the playing of Gorrill and Waldron, more space in Kuhn and Bley, than most pianists would imagine or dare.

The specific gravity of late nineteenth piano music provides a measure of Liz Gorrill, whose *Dreamflight* (New Artists NA 1010 CD) documents a 1990 concert at New York's Greenwich House. It runs 74 minutes; the final half hour is a three part suite. It's difficult, uncompromising, music that is well worth hearing. Though Gorrill is associated with the Tristano school, and her penchant for chordal extension comes from there, she takes it to lengths and weights that can suggest Busoni, the brilliant pianist, composer and deranger (of Bach organ works, especially) who around the last turn of the century achieved levels of pianistic excess that Liszt is only accused of.

Gorrill's music here has a density that just about obscures roots in song form changes, often fixing itself within the lower and middle registers where sheer resonant force eclipses specific triadic origins. The short *Chord Storm* is just that, very heavy, very deep, very thick chords, that pile up. (For immediate purposes, a chord is a combination of ten notes, an unfortunate physical limitation that can be overcome with the sustain pedal and rapid hand movement.) There is great power here, though it's power that sometimes feels oppressive.

The final *Dream Sequence* begins with a piece entitled *Blues for a Subterranean Galaxy*, which,

without a hint of Sun Ra's leavening humour, should give a sense of what's going on here: just imagine space converted to mass. What is remarkable, however, is what Gorrill achieves by the end of the sequence. The final *Deep Awakening*, along with numerous other moments in the performance, has such kinetic energy that it levitates not only itself but the burdens of history, particularly piano history, that Gorrill so willingly assumes elsewhere.

On *Evidence* (Dark Light Music DL24002), a recording made in Toronto in 1988, Mal Waldron plays music that is usually medium slow, often in a minor key, chordally insistent, insistently chordal, and drenched in blues, bop and Monk (a 1986 solo recording, *Up Date*, managed to include a medium slow version of *A Night in Tunisia*). If that suggests deficiencies, they consist only in a certain lack of variety, which is not something Waldron reveals the slightest interest in and which could only undermine the essential quality of his solo playing; he is able to develop concentrated depths of feeling that make most piano music sound trivial. It is a profoundly reflective approach (two long improvisations here are called *Rhapsodic Interludes*) and its reiterated, resonating chords summon up other voicings and voices. One

hears Waldron's listening, and some of the great voices with whom he's played seem to seep through the insistence—Holiday, Dophy, Mingus. By limiting his means when playing solo, Waldron often achieves expressive essences, channeling history rather than repeating or alluding to it.

Steve Kuhn's appearance in Concord's solo piano series, *Live at Maybeck Recital Hall, Volume Thirteen* (CCD-4484), is his first solo recording in 16 years. The delights of his solo playing are many; it's remarkably spare and often wittily deviant. He's not preoccupied with finding things for his left (or even his right) hand to do; and, if he can cover many bases within a single tune, his pastiches are witty rather than banal. *I Remember You*, for example, becomes almost comically unspecific as his "rememberings" range from Powell to pointillism, glued together with Tatum-esque skitterings up the keyboard. *Autumn in New York* begins as a kind of calypso that sounds as if it's being picked out with one finger. His apparently transparent simplicity disguises remarkable linear development. His solos are sometimes long perambulations of melody—*Solar* and *Autumn in New York* are examples—that develop intriguing, almost circular forms that can suggest a Bill Evans





BILL EVANS & EDDIE GOMEZ
Photograph by Bill Smith

performance reconstituted as a continuous line of single notes.

Changing Hands (Justin Time Just 40-2) is the latest of Paul Bley's solo recordings, a remarkable body of lyric piano improvisations. His reveries assume the most positive form since they have less recourse to memory than to the immediate suggestion of the piano's sonorities. Space is always beautiful in Bley's work, whether it's the space in which overtones hang and suggest other evolutions and incarnations or the strange little gaps that suddenly assert themselves in a bass line or run that had acted as if it might be regular. Structure arises rather than being predetermined, and sometimes arises to dismantle itself. Hesitant chordings can suddenly underpin the most resilient melody. Even pieces with their roots in standards, *Summertime* and *Willow*, seem formed out of Bley's unique attentiveness to the moment; it is that fidelity to the possibilities of improvisation, as much as the range of his resources, that makes his work especially valuable.

PIANOS AND OTHERS

Jon Ballantyne • *A Musing* • Justin Time Just 39-2
McCoy Tyner • *Remembering John* • Justin Time JTR 8427-2
Bill Evans • *Blue in Green* • Milestone MCD 91-85
Geoff Keezer • *Here and Now* • Blue Note CDP 7 96691 2

Bley also appears on another pianist's record, Jon Ballantyne's *A Musing* (Justin Time Just 39-2). The cover actually lists both

pianists, but the session is Ballantyne's. The annotator writes (in the most fatuous comment I've read this year), "Lest you begin to wonder whose album this really is, just listen to Ballantyne...beat Bley at his own introspective game..." A worthy assumption for the retro age: you can play someone else (even their "introspections") better than they can. Of course, no one would imagine it was other than Ballantyne's record if the company hadn't, for some obscure reason, given Bley's name equal prominence.

The recording is evenly divided between music with Bley (a sequence of five duets) and music without (two duets with drummer Dave Laing and two solos by Ballantyne). The duets with Bley are, perhaps inevitably, the most interesting aspect of the record, music going about shaping itself, often amorphous, frequently spiky, sometimes tangential. There's nothing particularly memorable about the duets, which is their finest quality: they're sufficiently undefining to sound different upon repeated hearings.

Ballantyne with Bley is a good deal more adventurous than Ballantyne without (necessarily, since the context Bley provides keeps shifting), but the remainder of the record confirms Ballantyne's development and an increasingly abstract turn to his playing. The one standard, *Polka Dots and Moonbeams*, only alludes to the melody. The duets with Dave Laing make effective use of the gaps inherent in the relatively unusual duo for some strongly percussive, linear playing. That percussiveness, too, is a distinguishing mark; though it echoes Bley, it mitigates the harmonic influence of Bill Evans.

As we mark the 25th anniversary of his death, someone might consider a museum devoted to the ways John Coltrane is remembered. For starters it might include Philadelphia's commemoration of its musical greats, wherein Coltrane is enshrined with Dick Clark and Fabian; a copy of the *Cosby Show* in which Cosby plays the record of Coltrane with Ellington; every recording of *Giant Steps* that Archie Shepp ever made; dubious vocal tributes by Abdullah Ibrahim and Carlos Garnett.

If such a museum is erected, McCoy Tyner should have a wing of his own. His first solo record, *Echoes of a Friend*, was dedicated to Coltrane's music; he has recorded *Afro-Blue* with a large ensemble, in an arrangement, appropriately enough, that sounds like the *Africa/Brass* sessions; in what may be his best record, *Sahara*, he echoes Coltrane's geographic preoccupation as well as his music; he has also recorded a tribute with Pharoah Sanders and David Murray (preferable to another tribute with Dave Liebman and Wayne Shorter, which can also go in the museum). In fact, Tyner was recording tributes when Coltrane was still alive. There's a Grant Green recording of *My Favorite Things* on which Tyner uses the same intro and vamps that he played with Coltrane. There's a kind of triple cover on a Hank Mobley session, a tune called *Chain Reaction* wherein Mobley gets to play *So What*, Tyner *Impressions*. I assume there is more; I haven't been following closely.

Remembering John (an Enja production, available in Canada as Justin Time JTR 8427-2) is the most recent of these invocations. With his working trio of Avery Sharpe on bass and Aaron Scott on drums, Tyner plays six Coltrane compositions, two standards and Monk's *In Walked Bud*.

This is still the most significant body of music that Tyner has played; he is certainly the most authentic representative of sides (the rhetorical and harmonic sides) of middle period Coltrane; his own power as a soloist grew tremendously after he left the Coltrane quartet. I took the rather crazed step of listening to some of these performances in alternation with the original recordings, and the development in Tyner's playing makes the current record worth hearing. His attack and velocity make one forget this is a piano trio, particu-

...Pianos of Repetition

larly during such unlikely pieces as *Giant Steps* and *Pursuance* (from *A Love Supreme*). Coltrane crafted wonderful tunes (given how little material he needed) and Tyner plays this music with greater authority than anyone else is ever likely to.

If there's a deficiency here, it's in the accompanists, whose tasks seem thankless ones. Avery Sharpe is a solid accompanist, certainly suited to Tyner's usual purposes, but the format gives him a great deal of solo space and his solos—which often end in rhythmic slap/damping on the fingerboard and funk clichés—are out of keeping with the frequently reductive majesty of Coltrane's compositions. Aaron Scott is spared the solo space, but sounds inevitably like an imitation of Elvin Jones scaled down to piano trio dynamics.

As good as it is, Tyner's playing might have gained if he matched the challenge of the material with players possessed of his force. Oddly enough, only a couple of months prior to this recording date, Elvin Jones, too, surprised Coltrane material with a piano trio, recording *Cousin Mary* and *After the Rain* with John Hicks and Cecil McBee (*Power Trio* on Novus). The piano trio marks Coltrane's absence with a special, poignant precision. While, as Thomas Wolfe claimed, you can't go home again, since they're doing it anyway and since going back to your own home is less improbable than going "back" to someone else's, Tyner and Jones might have gotten together on this with a bassist—McBee, for example, or Reggie Workman—who could both match their power and alter the mix.

No musician has been better served by CD reissue programs (though I can think of many I would like to see served as well, most prominently Ornette Coleman on Atlantic) than **Bill Evans**. Boxed sets are now available of everything he did for Fantasy and Riverside. Fantasy, however, manages to come up with still more. *Blue in Green* (Milestone MCD 91-85) is a CBC recording from 1974, a typical set from Evans' long standing trio with Eddie Gomez and Marty Morell. The pieces played here appear elsewhere, both among Evans' numerous recordings from the period, and earlier, of course, stretching right back to the landmark *Kind of Blue* for the title tune and *So What*.

The things that kept this constant reiteration of material fairly vital were Evans' abilities to make the almost trite genuinely, if narrowly, beautiful; his very real gifts as a pianist and improviser; and his seeking accompanists who could kick start the music out of benign catatonia. This particular tension is essential to any good Evans performance, its essential dynamic, its rhythmic and structural life. Here the trio's character comes as much from Gomez as Evans, the former's press the necessary complement to the latter's lag. At times, the bassist seems to articulate both bass lines and leads; elsewhere he ranges from feeding into the piano sonority to virtuoso charges.



But then, Gomez spent more time in the Evans trio than anyone other than Evans and they made many records. This is a good performance, but hardly essential. Since serious Evans fans (like their more aggressive older siblings, Kentonians) tend to be completists, they'll want this anyway (How would *Blue in Green* sound outdoors in Canada?). If you're seeking one Evans performance from the period, though, the duets with Gomez from Montreux are outstanding; for one trio recording, however, go straight to the live Village Vanguard performances from 1961, where Scott LaFaro and Paul Motian defined this kind of trio playing.

GeoFF Keezer, one of Art Blakey's last alumni, is heard on *Here and Now* (Blue Note CDP 7 96691 2). The CD is dedicated to the late drummer's memory and the title appears in a prefatory quotation from him: "Anyone who has gone through life and has not heard this music has missed something here and now." There's an unfortunate irony here: the music, a neo-conservative hybrid, might as readily call itself "there and then." If brilliant stylists can seem trapped by their own rhetorics (Tyner and Evans somehow come to mind), Keezer is trapped by someone else's.

While there's an unaccompanied solo and a grandstanding trio rendition of *It Was Just One of Those Things*, the basic group is a quartet with Steve Nelson on vibraphone, Peter Washington on bass and Billy Higgins on drums. Donald Harrison's alto is added on three selections. Despite the dedication, this is most un-Blakey-like music, with lighter instrumentation and very even, almost homogenized, textures. It's pleasant, sometimes engaging music, particularly in the contributions of Higgins and Nelson who offer resilient, sparkling work. Keezer is at his best when Nelson is playing, often matching the vibraphonist's light, fleet, inventive lines without imposing his identity.

At this stage, Keezer is a very skilful performer. What's distinctive in his playing isn't original, however, but the extent to which it derives from Phineas Newborn. There's no question that the resemblance testifies to Keezer's adroitness; what is questionable is whether such an influence leads anywhere. Newborn style markers already tend to involve repetition. What is playing in octaves (a Newborn signature that Keezer frequently signs) but a kind of simultaneous repetition, repetition in advance, insisting on its inevitability? The same applies to the repeated transposition of a phrase through a sequence of chords. The style was rococo at its inception, responding to formal constraint with compulsive decoration and grandiose, rhetorical flourishes.

If he lacks Newborn's brilliance, Keezer has obvious talent. What his development may need is a stylistic model antithetical to the one he's currently using, preferably one as anti-rhetorical, and reductive, as possible. □

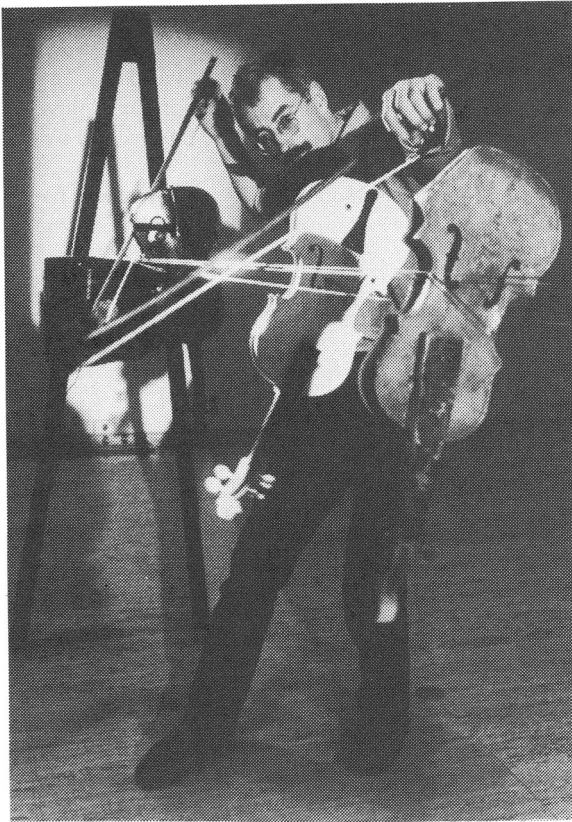
THE VIOLABLE TRADITION

AN INTERVIEW WITH
JON ROSE

Few musicians maintain a scope that is at once as narrow and as all-encompassing as violinist Jon Rose.

His work is exclusively about the violin. Everything in the world, that is, as seen through the violin. With this four- (or in his case sometimes more-) stringed cipher, and fictitious characters like Australian unsung hero Jo "Doc" Rosenberg — about whom Rose has just edited a volume of essays — the violinist spins a tangled tale, a disinformational mythology of Western musical culture. As an instrumentalist, Rose is a virtuosic improviser, but he's an improv-subversive (even by improvisor's standards), out to overturn

expectations, to mercilessly upset conventions wherever he hears them.



BY **JOHN CORBETT**

Back in 1990, on the day after he recorded live with his German quartet Slawterhaus (Slawterhaus Live, Victo cd 013), Rose and I sat down in the restaurant of Victoriaville's, Hotel Colibri for an involved chat and a cup of much-needed coffee. Between sips, we discussed a vast diapason of topics, from his historical radio plays on Paganini, Beethoven

and Mozart to rebop, postmodernism, technology and the politics of consumerism.

We Started by going back into his history

JON ROSE: DANGEROUS. COMPLICATED. DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE unless you know it all. I've played the violin from the age of seven, and I'm nearly forty. It's an instrument that's central to everything I do. Whether it's in radio, playing live or whatever, it's a story between me and the violin. Classical education with scholarships and all that kind of stuff, the usual thing — rebellion and joining rock bands and jazz groups.

I was born in England. I did a whole bunch of different things. Anything from playing with flamenco guitarists to studying sitar to studying electronic music to composition like Berio to playing in a swing group to playing in cafés to playing in strip clubs to playing in session orchestra, writing pieces for big-band, jazz notation and stuff. Extreme background. Many different things, none of which, of course, satisfied in any particular way. And then about 15 years ago I suddenly found "the way" to make sense out of the whole thing, and that was to build — in German it's Gesamtkunstwerk, "total art work" — around the instrument. Once I finally figured out how to get these abilities focused, then it all fell into place.

SO THE VIOLIN BECAME THIS GESAMTKUNSTWERK. And that involved working out a language, an improvised music language on the instrument. That's the most important thing to do. But then to actually rearrange the instrument itself, completely rebuild it. I've made over 20 different kinds of violins — violins with extra necks, more strings, joined together like siamese twins, controlled by wind or by wheels like steam train pistons with two bows on the end, all that kind of stuff. Plus interfacing with electronics, building electronics into the instrument, microamplification systems. Then there's the thing of taking the violin into new situations. I did a lot of concerts of improvisations that were outside — like in the desert, sea, at supermarkets, on freeways, whatever. The other major thing then was to make radio and film about the violin — it sounds very pretentious, but to actually rewrite the history of the instrument.

I was kind of an obnoxious kid that would never accept anything that I was told. And with the violin it's all very clear what's supposed to happen; it's the most rigid education that exists in music. So I wanted always to make up my own history. That's really why I started to write things about it, make films about it.

JON ROSE THE VIOLABLE TRADITION

IT IT SEEMS LIKE THE PROBLEM OF FINDING THE "EDGE" OF THINGS IS CENTRAL TO YOUR WORK, BOTH IN TERMS OF THE VIOLIN ITSELF AND MAYBE IN THE HISTORY OF THE VIOLIN, TRYING TO FIND THE EDGES OF ITS HISTORY.

WELL THAT'S IT. I mean the history that's set there is awesome. Another thing about the violin, it's the perfect instrument for any kind of political or musical-political attack. It is the icon in Western music. I mean nobody wants to play a 200 year-old trumpet. It's green and things are growing in it.

You can't possess a piano. You can possess a violin, pick it up and hold it, and you know it's worth a lot of money. Actually there was a great ad in some one of these home buyer magazines that America invented. David Prentice sent it to me. Unbelievable ad saying something to the effect of "improve your self-esteem and show your good taste to your friends, buy this demonstration violin." You could put it beside your armchair. It was made of gold with gold strings, but it wasn't a proper instrument anyway. The whole ad was to improve your taste. About the most tasteless thing I've ever seen. Really incredible. But you can do that with a violin. Everybody understands what a violin is, you go on the street and ask anybody and they'll have a clear idea what it is. There aren't too many things you can do that with.



Before the violin, everything was much more interesting. It put an end to interesting string instruments in Europe, actually. They came up with this one simplified thing that was supposed to do it all, but it really couldn't. I mean the situation before the violin was much more varied, with no set rules about how to tune it, what it should look like or even how to play it. So it was much freer. And then there's this connection with the Islamic tradition, of course, which is really important. Anyway, that's a side I've really explored with the string instruments. But now I'm more interested in the electronic-cultural aspect of it. The situation we're living in is quite ridiculous. I mean it's very hard to take seriously sometimes.

DOES SLAWTERHAUS ALSO REVOLVE AROUND THE VIOLIN?

IT'S STRANGE BECAUSE THE FIRST THREE YEARS I played cello with Slawterhaus, one with a lot of strings. It was fun, but it was quite clear that once [drummer Peter] Hollinger is playing full out,

an instrument with that kind of subtlety of sound and frequency range just doesn't cut it. Everybody disagreed with me. But every tape I ever heard of the band, I could have put on a vacuum cleaner or something. I mean you couldn't hear anything. So one day I turned up with a whole bunch of sounds I'd worked up for Slawterhaus on a synthesizer, and everybody freaked out. "What?!!" Very soon they agreed. But it also meant I played more violin, which is actually one reason I did it, 'cause I wasn't playing that much violin.

I now feel much better about the balance of what I do in the group. If I just played the violin or cello, it lacks some sort of bottom end.

When I was first living in Berlin full-time, which was '86-'87, DDR (East Germany) was still going and Johannes Bauer had a concert like they often had with Dietmar [Diesner] and Peter [Hollinger]. Somebody was going to play bass but couldn't make it, so they asked me to fill in. We did four concerts, and it was a band. We've never discussed the music, really. Now and then someone might say something. We have the chemistry. Everybody feels they can do exactly what they like.

The group has played in very different circumstances. There've been gigs where it was like a video gig and we've been invited to do the music for it and Peter's played a plastic mug and wastepaper bin and everybody else played acoustic. But it's still a group. Music often comes down to personalities — unfortunately and fortunately. I

AN INTERVIEW BY JOHN CORBETT

mean, there are bands that would just never work, not because of the players but the people. If the people trust each other and there's a connection...

Sometimes we get unbelievably theatrical on stage, especially Dietmar and me. And Johannes is completely untheatrical, just goes and has a cup of tea or something.

WHEN DID YOU MOVE TO AUSTRALIA?

In the mid-70's.

WAS IT THERE THAT YOU STARTED TO IMPROVISE?

IT WAS THERE THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT IDEAS STARTED to emerge. I never go to England, except to see my parents. I had to get away from that thing so I could expand.

Up until about '83 I was thinking that the scene in Australia was about as good as anywhere, better than most. There are some problems specific to Australia. First, to make any kind of events which involve anybody from overseas, you have to have government funding. It's just too expensive. And in the '70s there was a big boom to get things happening. And then in about 1984-85, there was this whole political debate where the Australian Opera Company, which was already taking 87% of all government money for all artistic activity of any kind, wanted another \$2 million! And they went directly to the government, and got it. And that money came from all the fringe and interesting activities. On the economic front, a town like Sydney has been totally gutted in the last ten years. All the places where there used to be to play don't exist anymore. The streets don't exist. They're changing it into a banking and insurance place, where all the money from Hong Kong and Japan will come.

NOW YOU'RE LIVING IN HOLLAND, WHERE THE SITUATION HAS HISTORICALLY BEEN OPPOSITE, WITH THE GOVERNMENT BEING MORE SUPPORTIVE.

IT'S CHANGED THERE. I MUST SAY, BERLIN IS MY TOWN in Europe. In Amsterdam, there's clearly a scene around the BIMhuis. This is actually quite a closed little scene. If you're visiting it's not so bad. But if you actually decided to go and live there and do your work there, you wouldn't be looked at. Whereas, in Berlin it's a town of immigrant population and it's expected that everybody's from outside. It's more open, I find.

This closed scene was something I couldn't understand, 'cause in Australia everybody is immediately interested in anybody who pops up. But it can work both ways. It depends on the political formulation of the situation. If you're a famous black American jazz musician and you come from New York, I mean that's definitely a positive selling point. A lot of Europeans would use that as a favourable thing in terms of marketing anything having to do with jazz or improvised music. It depends on individual situations. I mean, I can say there are situations — I'm not gonna mention any names — but that person is there and

that person is getting work purely by nature of the fact that he is coming from the right country and is the right colour. And it's really shit, it's unbelievably bad. That's not a common thing, but I have seen it work. Of course. But that's nothing peculiar to music. It's like the whole of our economy — I call it the "age of shopping" — post-communism, post-capitalism, it's the shopping age. It's just nonstop "sell sell." And there's a natural European aesthetic, I suppose, which is against that.

BUT IT SEEMS LIKE THERE'S A STRONG FASCINATION WITH IT AS WELL. I MEAN IT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A PLACE WHERE EVEN THE MOST FRAGMENTED THING IS GROUNDED IN TRADITION AND A PLACE WHERE THERE'S A WOOLWORTH MENTALITY...AND EVEN THAT'S CONSIDERED TRADITIONAL.

THAT IS A TRADITION. That tradition of selling and packaging, that's not a young tradition now. It's more than 45-years-old. It's not something that sprang up yesterday. It's sort of weird. Personally, I don't have a "side". I'm an immigrant wherever I go. Australia is somehow even more strange than Europe or America because it has this sense that they're missing everything in Australia, a sense that they have to compensate for the fact that they're not in Europe. This alarmed me when I was first in Australia, because the place had everything going for it, so to import this static bullshit was unbelievable. To voluntarily give everything to an opera company! We worked it out: it would be cheaper to send each of the people who go to the opera on holiday first class to Italy for three months of the year and take in like 30 operas! Anyway. Australia is like a place that is neither America nor Europe. Big American influence, big Japanese influence. It's an element of belief. That's what's interesting about American culture. There's a belief syndrome here. People watch the television and there's a big enough percentage to keep the whole thing working. In Europe it's very hard to get 10% of any group of people to believe anything. We've been blown apart by two world wars and God knows what. You don't accept, you can't go along with that sort of thing. So that's one sort of fascination. And that's the big plus for American culture in Eastern Europe.

They're doing a lot of self-inflicted damage. I must say, the whole thing with America and its cultural side, it's really interesting, particularly now. I mean, all these old games with East/West confrontation, all the reasoning behind how the economy has been set up is gone. So it's like — what are you gonna replace it with?

We're also in this post-culture age, in the sense that every empire that there ever was — the American one, or the British, or the French, or the Romans or the Greeks — always, in terms of the idea of dominating other parts of the world, it meant military presence and economic presence, but above all, to sell your way of life, and your way of thinking, and your music and your art and everything. And introduce that wherever you were. Now that's really changed with the Japanese. It's the first time that guys who are really hell-bent on dominating come along and say "You just keep doing what you're doing. It's fine. We're just gonna take the money...and own it." This thing with Sony now, it's unbelievable — like one company can own what we record

it on, what we play it on. They own the Berlin Philharmonic. And they're not saying "We want you to change." They don't want a Japanese Berlin Philharmonic or a Japanese Miles Davis. This is new, I think. I don't know any other empires where they had that. I mean, I can't understand it.

ONE THING THAT I FIND APPEALING ABOUT YOUR WORK IS THE ABILITY YOU HAVE TO GO BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN DIFFERENT KINDS OF PROJECTS, FROM DOING THE RADIO PLAYS TO DOING, SAY, "STRAIGHT" IMPROVISED GIGS WITH JOELLE LEANDRE. IS THAT FLEXIBILITY IMPORTANT TO YOU?

I COULD NEVER BE A POLISHED PERFORMER in the way that some people are. I would get too nervous about it. I have to have this built-in failure-risk. The idea of perfection, something finished or 100% — anything with these fixed measures I just don't like. I have a natural chemical reaction against it. Even on big radio productions, I use a lot of material the quality and techniques of which are really non-studio.

IT SEEMS THAT THAT KIND OF "UNFINISHED BUSINESS" ATTITUDE SEEMS TO COME OUT OF DADAISM. DO YOU SEE IT THAT WAY?

YEAH, NATURALLY. I THINK THE WHOLE NOTION of dadaism is the most important thing that happened in art in this century. It's critical, I think. If you don't realize it, if you don't see it then...my God life is just unbearable. It's like this whole thing with postmodernism now. If you can stand up there like these 20-year-old bebop players, they stand up there and pretend they're jazz players, you know? How can they do that? I mean, how can anybody with a brain believe that what they're doing is not just total reiteration of the past without any awareness of what it means now? You can see all these things that are going on with somebody while they're playing within a minute. Of course, these younger people were invented for the jazz industry. For me, a really good musician from now is somebody who's really aware of where they are in time and of the history. You can see it in the way that they use musical genre, musical language, their own language, or they divide it or mix it. □



SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

VIOLIN MUSIC FOR RESTAURANTS • ReR BJRC D
FORWARD OF SHORT LEG • Dossier ST7529
DIE BEETHOVEN KONVERSATIONEN • Extraplatte EX 106 CD
PAGANINI'S LAST TESTIMONY • Konnex KCD 5021
THE RELATIVE BAND '85 • Hot HOTLP 1017
VIVISECTION • Auf Ruhr

WITH SLAWTERHAUS • **SLAWTERHAUS LIVE** • Victo cd 013

WITH SHELLY HIRSCH • **A ROOM WITH A VIEW** • Hot HOTLP 1019

WITH JOELLE LEANDRE • **LES DOMESTIQUES** • Konnex

WITH GREG GOODMAN & HENRY KAISER • **THE CONSTRUCTION OF RUINS** • The Beak Doctor 4/Metalanguage 11

WITH EUGENE CHADBOURNE • **CULTURAL TERRORISM** • Dossier

A BOOK • **THE PINK VIOLIN** • Edited By Jon Rose
(Melbourne: NMA Publications, 1992)

ABOUT THE WRITER

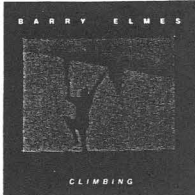
John Corbett is a freelance writer living in Chicago. He is a regular contributor to **Downbeat**, **The Wire**, **Option**, and **Butt Rag**, and he is the editor of the **Time Arts** section of the **New Art Examiner**. He is also host of weekly radio programs on **WHPK** and **WNUR FM**.

FAVOURITE RECORDINGS OF 1992

John Butcher • **THIRTEEN FRIENDLY NUMBERS** • Acta / Gush • **FROM THINGS TO SOUNDS** • Dragon / Karl ein Karl • **KARL'S FEST** • Unit
Derek Bailey • **SOLO GUITAR Volume 2** • Incus / Anthony Braxton • **WILLISAU (QUARTET) 1991** • hat ART / Julius Hemphill • **FAT MAN AND THE HARD BLUES** • Black Saint / David S. Ware • **FLIGHT OF i** • Columbia/DIW / Joe McPhee/Andre Jaume/Raymond Boni • **IMPRESSIONS OF JIMMY GIUFFRE** • CELP / London Jazz Composers Orchestra • **THEORIA** • Intakt / Betty Carter • **IT'S NOT ABOUT THE MELODY** • Verve

C O M I N G T O Y O U R C I T Y

THE BARRY ELMES QUINTET *featuring* Ed Bickert Mike Murley, Kevin Turcotte, Steve Wallace



CLIMBING

**NOMINATED FOR BEST JAZZ RECORDING
JUNO AWARDS
JULY 1992**



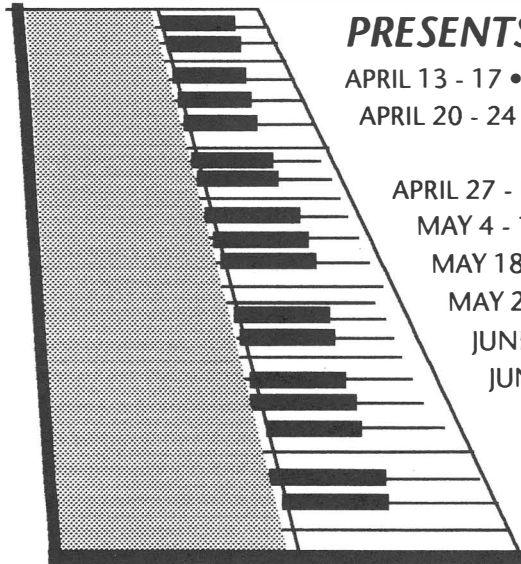
CROSS CANADA TOUR

The Canada Council
Touring Office  Conseil des Arts du Canada
Office des tournées

June 24: WINNIPEG	Winnipeg Art Gallery	July 2: TORONTO	Downtown Jazz Festival
June 26: CALGARY	Petroleum Club	July 3: TORONTO	The Pilot Tavern
June 27: CALGARY	La Cueva Club	July 4: MONTREAL	The Ultramar Amphitheatre
June 29: VANCOUVER	Granville Is. Performance Works	July 21: ST. JOHN'S	The Duke of Duckworth
June 30: VICTORIA	Hermann's Jazz Club	July 22: HALIFAX	The Halifax Hilton
July 1: SASKATOON	Delta Bessborough Hotel	July 24: OTTAWA	Ottawa Jazz Fest./Mainstage

MONTREAL RESTAURANT BISTRO

65 Sherbourne Street • Toronto • Ontario M5A 2P9 • Phone (416) 363-0179



PRESENTS

APRIL 13 - 17 • ADAM MAKOWICZ

APRIL 20 - 24 • JIM GALLOWAY'S WEE BIG BAND with special guests
JAY McSHANN • JAKE HANNA • KEN PEPLOWSKI

APRIL 27 - MAY 1 • CAROL WELSMAN DUO

MAY 4 - 15 • HOD O'BRIEN & DAVE YOUNG DUO

MAY 18 - 22 • BONNIE BRETT with MARK EISENMAN TRIO

MAY 25 - JUNE 5 • HAROLD MABERN

JUNE 8 - 12 • BILL MAYS & ED BICKERT DUO

JUNE 15 - 19 • BILL MAYS

Light American - French Menu served noon to midnight
Music 9pm to 1am Nightly

FREE EVENING PARKING

AN ADVENTURE IN DISCOGRAPHY

AN INTRODUCTION BY AL VAN STARREX

DEEP IN AN ABANDONED MINE SHAFT IN IRON MOUNTAIN, AN OLD MINING TOWN in upstate New York, lay the mouldering metal masters of jazz treasures that had not been heard for over sixty years...

When, on New York City's jazz-playing station WKCR, I heard an alternate instrumental version of Louis Armstrong's *St. Louis Blues*, recorded in 1929 with the Luis Russell Orchestra, I couldn't believe my ears.

Armstrong's recording of this jazz "Hamlet" with its unforgettable way-out vocal, trumpeter Henry Allen's Louis-like obligato, and Louis' skyrocketing trumpet riffs, has been so familiar to fans and musicians for decades, that it was almost inconceivable that alternative versions still existed. But here was more glorious Louis, with additional solos by the inimitable J.C. Higginbotham, Albert Nicholas, Charlie Holmes and Henry Allen, Armstrong's closest "rival", to round out this fresh feast.

When this was followed by yet another instrumental take, repeating the format (including the stunning Tango passage) but with different solos, I was dazed. Fortunately I was able to tape part of the first alternate take and the whole of the second to convince myself that I wasn't going disc-dizzy from too much jazz research.

I immediately contacted Columbia's present day owners Sony and yes indeed, the alternates to *St. Louis Blues* as well as alternate takes of *I Ain't Got Nobody* and *Dallas Blues*, from the same monumental session that produced some of Armstrong's best big band sides for Okeh, the ones with Luis Russell, had been discovered after more than half a century and issued on *Columbia Jazz Masterpieces CD Vol. VI*. Two other previously unissued non-vocal takes of *After You're Gone* from an earlier session (with Carroll Dickerson) had also been discovered and issued on *Vol. V*.

Not long after (having got past a veil of Sony secrecy), I asked Michael Brooks, producer of the Columbia Jazz Masterpieces series, how he came to make these astonishing discoveries which had eluded other jazz researchers for over half a century: The last time new Armstrong performances had been discovered was in 1939, when George Avakian combed the Columbia vaults and unearthed several previously unissued Hot Seven sides (recorded in 1927) including *Ory's Creole Trombone* and, appropriately as it turned out, *The Last Time*. They came out for the first time on Columbia shortly after (in a 78 rpm album). Brooks, a sort of Indiana Jones of the Jazz Archives, is responsible for ferreting out and releasing previously unissued performances by Duke Ellington groups, Billie Holiday, Lester Young, etc., in albums devoted to these artistes, including *The Okeh Ellington* (2 CDs) and *Billie Holiday: The Legacy* (3 CDs), the last two in the Columbia Jazz Masterpieces series.

But finding the "lost" Armstrong masters was a bit of a surprise even for Brooks, who spent years doggedly searching out such treasures,

when others had given up. It involved considerable detective work — and more than a little luck.

The first clue to the existence of alternative Armstrong material from this period — a key one in Armstrong's career and in all jazz — lay in the fact that Okeh records, or rather Tommy Rockwell its recording director who was shaping

Armstrong's career as a popular recording personality as well as a jazz star, had insisted on making alternative non-vocal versions of each title, the latter primarily for the South American market.

Some of these instrumental takes, such as *Some of These Days* and *When You're Smiling* were recovered and reissued in Europe in the lp era on British Parlophone. But a number were never issued here or anywhere else — according to Columbia's jazz files, and their masters (negatives) were presumably destroyed, as was the custom. However it was just possible that stray alternates may have appeared on Okeh's subsidiary labels — American Parlophone and Odeon. And thereby hangs a tale.

American Parlophone, derived entirely from Okeh, had a short if exciting life between 1929 and 1931 — the period covering the Armstrong big band issues. The records were identical to Okeh, bore the same catalogue numbers, but were pressed in Oakland, California for the West Coast.

They were also identical to Okehs in the sound and surface quality of their pressings — "the finest that science has ever produced on any 78 rpm label" according to discographer Brian Rust — and in the style and lettering of its labels. (But they also bore a different trademark — the pound sign over a morning glory horn disc phonograph familiar to customers of British Parlophone, which came first and was derived



LOUIS ARMSTRONG DISCOVERIES • NEW FINDS FROM 1929

from Franco-German Odeon, the original parents of Okeh-Columbia. It's all in the family!) So it was obviously a place to look for lost alternate masters.

But to confuse the issue — and stymie any would-be Sherlock — American Parlophone, for some quirk of reason, renamed most of the Okeh artistes, giving them “some of the most ingeniously allusive pseudonyms in the history of recording” (Rust). Annette Hanshaw, for example, was renamed Janet Shaw; Frank Trumbauer became Tom Barker, the Casa Loma Orchestra was Hal Laska and his Orchestra, Smith Bellew was Kyrle Bell. And the two most prominent jazzmen recording for Okeh got names quite unlike their own: Miff Mole was Gilbert Marsh, and Louis Armstrong basked under the pseudonym Ted Shawne!

This mislabelling virus spread across the pond to British Parlophone, producing some oddball subterfuges in artiste and titles. Clarence Williams' Washboard Four was issued as Louis Armstrong and His Original Washboard Beaters, although Armstrong was nowhere near it, but must have been making quite an impression in Britain at the time (1928-29) for Duke Ellington's *Black and Tan Fantasy* was also credited to the same mythical group — with no washboard to be seen or heard.

A genuine Armstrong title, *That's When I'll Come Back To You*, on the other hand, was labelled as by Butterbeans and Susie accompanied by Louis Armstrong's Washboard Beaters, which led one British reviewer to authoritatively state the “Butterbeans is what Louis Armstrong's wife, Susie, calls him.”

American Odeon had an equally short and distinguished history, after Columbia purchased the label from the General Phonograph Company. Also noted for its exceptional sound quality and surface smoothness, it barely lasted two years, but within that period put out some of the best titles from the Okeh jazz catalogue, pressed in Okeh's Oakland plant. They included non-vocal versions by Miff Mole's Little Molers and, notably, Louis Armstrong — the ones insisted upon by Tommy Rockwell but never issued by Okeh itself.

Brooks' breakthrough came when he uncovered a previously unknown instrumental master (Take B) of Louis Armstrong's *After You're Gone*, recorded November 26, 1929, on Odeon. Research revealed that this title was originally scheduled for release, mainly for the South American market. But at the last moment, for reasons unknown, it was withdrawn and the Okeh vocal version (Take A) was substituted. 250 copies were shipped from Okeh's Oakland plant. There was no second pressing.

Even more surprising was the discovery of yet another instrumental take of the same title (Take C) that was never issued. The game, as Sherlock Holmes used to say, was afoot.

Brooks began a frantic search through Parlophone and Odeon files and stockpiles, but drew a blank — several blanks in fact, where file cards were concerned. Nevertheless he sent out to Columbia's pri-

vately leased vault, located in an abandoned mine shaft in Iron Mountain, New York, a remote Appalachian mining town not on most maps. (It's near Rhinebeck, if you're curious.) As mysterious a spot, in fact, as you might want to unravel deep discographical secrets.

Moles here dug up some metal masters pertaining to the period, at Brooks' behest, but initially they didn't look too promising. Finally, working his way through a labyrinth of mislabelling and mixed-up master numbers, some obliterated or wrongly etched over, Brooks struck gold: an instrumental take of Louis Armstrong's *I Ain't Got Nobody*, recorded with the Luis Russell Orchestra on December 10, 1929.

Then, from the same classic date, a non-vocal *Dallas Blues*. Then came the ace-in-the-hole — *St. Louis Blues* in not one but *two* instrumental versions. All of these takes were previously unknown and unlisted even in Brian Rust's exhaustive discography of the era.

All these discoveries were subsequently digitally remastered and issued for the first time on Columbia Jazz Masterpieces Louis Armstrong series Vol.V *Louis in New York* and Vol.VI *St. Louis Blues*. The series covers Armstrong's entire recording output for Okeh-Columbia — the most important recordings in his career and *the foundation of jazz art* — for the first time in chronological order and with alternate takes (some 150 sides in all).

Previous attempts to issue Armstrong's classic recordings in any sort of order in North America by Columbia/CBS were, to put it mildly, nipped in the bud. There was, for instance, one lone volume of a projected series on Epic — *Louis Armstrong V.S.O.P. Vol.I* — there was no other volume.

But while the new discoveries may have turned bonus to bonanza for jazz fans, they hardly received the acclaim they deserved from reviewers and other media all-sorts, to the bafflement of even Brooks. They were hardly ever played on radio.

Even my hearing the alternates on jazz station WKCR came purely by chance. There was no prior announcement, or any details afterwards; they were merely part of a Louis Armstrong birthday celebration that included recordings from this period in chronological order. However there was a reason for this — the station generally refuses to play CD versions of 78 rpm discs where the originals or lps are available, because of the usually atrocious electronic sound quality of digital remastering. One reason possibly why the new recordings aren't selling like hot cakes, or Hot Fives. I will discuss this in my overall review of this invaluable Armstrong material, gems in the jazz canon, which will follow.

Perhaps another reason for non acclaim and lack of enthusiasm may be the difficulty of finding the new CDs, although they were issued well over a year ago. (It took me nearly six months to even get review copies, through a maze of Sony bureaucracy.) But the fan who takes the trouble to search these recordings out, among heterogeneous piles of CDs stacked in record stores, will be amply (if not totally) rewarded. □

BRIGHT MOMENTS

MANY PRACTICING JAZZ ARTISTS HAVE CRITICIZED JAZZ education as practiced in the universities and conservatories. Yet no one doubts the need for something more than the “academy of the streets”, especially now that sitting-in opportunities are so diminished. One of the many musicians who has pondered the formal/informal education dichotomy is Rahsaan Roland Kirk who, just before his death in 1977, had founded a music school in his home in New Jersey. Kirk felt an obligation to share what he had learned; he also felt that a jazz musician shouldn’t have to spend an entire lifetime on the road, that after a certain point he or she had a right to a home life that would include involvement in the community, like any other professional.



RAHSAAN ROLAND KIRK • Photograph by Gerard Futrick

Kirk’s dream is being carried forward by the Bright Moments Music Lovers Club in San Francisco (named after one of his best known and most affecting compositions). Bright Moments was founded, not by renowned musicians or educators, but by two of the “little people” who make it possible for the art form to survive, the late Dempsey Robinson, a postal worker, and Altaneze Taylor, a homemaker. Both were friends of Rahsaan and members of the “Vibration Society” well before there was a musical group by that name.

Altaneze Taylor’s home in San Francisco’s Bayview District has long been one of those places where travelling musicians go for a semblance of the home life touring artists miss. “It’s an old tradition in the black community to take people in”, says Taylor. “It goes back to the time when blacks couldn’t stay in white hotels. I got the idea 30 years ago from a woman just down the block here on Thornton Street who used to put up Martin Luther King, Pearl Bailey, Ethel Waters. . .”

One of the features of Taylor’s home is an abundant backyard vegetable garden. The literature of jazz titles is replete with references to “greens”, and organically grown greens from this garden have done their part to fuel creative music in San Francisco over the years. It’s not difficult to extract metaphors from the Taylor garden and kitchen. In a neighbourhood no one would describe as “green” they are Bright Moments’ Lesson No. One in self-reliance. More than one young musician has laboured in the garden and realized the value of growing and eating, as well as playing, “your own thing”.

Lesson Two is that once you have a measure of self-reliance you must give something back to the community. And so the produce of Bayview does more than fuel concert and club performances by “name” musicians like Billy Higgins, George

Coleman, Dorothy Donegan, Henry Butler, Frank Foster, Cedar Walton, Kenny Barron, the Harper Brothers, and their Bay Area peers. It is returned to the community in the form of free performances, benefits, clinics, and personalized instruction by these same artists.

The value to a youngster of receiving, say a “hands-on” drum lesson from Billy Higgins, is obvious. Less tangible, but perhaps even more important to inner city kids is getting to know artists who are often from a similar background as studious, hard working role models.

It could be said that Bright Moments is more about motivation than it is about jazz. As Taylor tells youngsters, “There really isn’t that much time to just hang out. If you’re hanging out all the time, you’re just going to want to keep hanging out. I love you too much to lose you.” And so other forms of music are encouraged, too. At least one Bright Moments graduate, pianist Frederick Harris, is headed for a career as a classical musician. For those who are not studying an instrument, non-jazz choral music is available. Or the garden may be the answer. Even further afield, it might seem odd for something called a Music Lovers Club to sponsor a SCUBA diving demonstration, until you realize that the diver was “Bayview’s own” David Raymond Taylor, Altaneze’s son and now a Chief Petty Officer

JAZZ EDUCATION BY BILL McLARNEY



ALTANEZE TAYLOR (front centre) • BILLY HIGGINS (second row centre)

in the U. S. Navy. Bright Moments' musical curriculum, put together with the help of the group's musical consultant, drummer Dr. Willis Kirk, goes beyond technician competence, artistic expression and professional survival. To be sure, the students are given both the foundation and the opportunity for self expression, which includes Bright Moments students sharing the bandstand with notables at local clubs. (One memorable night found them opening for Dizzy Gillespie.) And there are scholarships for outstanding Bright Moments graduates like Frederick Harris, now studying at the San Francisco Conservatory. But there is also preparation for a kind of responsibility which is missed in all the talk about "professionalism" one hears in the music schools. Through events like hospital concerts, Bright Moments students are guided to see themselves not only as aspiring performers, but as healers, with a direct useful link to the community. None other than Dempsey Robinson, during the last weeks of his life at San Francisco's Mt. Zion Hospital, was able to quip that "What this hospital needs is a good jam session" and live long enough to see Billy Higgins and the Bright Moments youngsters perform in his ward.

Perhaps the best role model of all, though she would never say so herself, is Altaneze Taylor. No student could fail to notice that Bright Moments is one of those unpretentious, bootstrap

operations which goes beyond preaching self-help. The core of their educational program is funded by such activities as sale of T-shirts, raffles, bake sales, benefit concerts and even penny wrapping parties.

And when the needs exceed what can be garnered by such homely means, Taylor and Bright Moments have no need for false humility in asking for help. This has led to a record donation/sale program sponsored by Tower Records which was the basis of a listening library which Taylor notes "will be open to all the schools in the Bay Area. Many of them don't have the music we have." It has also gotten Bright Moments

groups on the stand repeatedly at the prestigious Kimball's and Kimball's East Clubs. "It's hard to say no to Altaneze" notes Jane Allen, Kimball's manager. Bay Area artists' manager Tup Lohse adds that "Altaneze is a fairy godmother. She has that innate quality that draws the best out of people."

Similar qualities also draw people to Bright Moments. Of the school Taylor says "There is no competition here. The only question is 'Have I grown from yesterday?'... I only hope that in ten years there is a long line of musicians and a long line of kids at our door, all eager to take part in what Bright Moments has to offer."

Musicians and kids. If I were a Bayview parent worried about my kids, I would send them to Bright Moments, even if I thought they had no musical talent. As a jazz listener who, on the one hand embraces jazz as a universal music while at the same time worrying what will become of the music if it loses touch with the streets and the mainstream of Afro-American culture, I see Bright Moments as guarding the precious link between the art and the community. Let us have programs like it arise in other cities. □

BRIGHT MOMENTS MUSIC LOVERS CLUB CAN BE CONTACTED AT 231 THORNTON, SAN FRANCISCO, CA, USA 94124

MORE JOYFUL NOISE

REVIEWS BY
JAMES ROZZI

The current rage of bungy-jumping, whereby one seeking thrills jumps from an elevated platform entrusting a thin elastic chord around the ankles to prevent the minor mishap of having his or her brains splattered on the pavement below, is (strangely enough) not unlike the retrogression of jazz since the 1960s. Spurred on by the endeavours of individuals such as Ornette Coleman, John Coltrane and Cecil Taylor, a sizable group of musicians stretched jazz (in their own likeness...as was meant to be) to the point of alienating those endeared to it, only to have it quickly bounce back into a realm less stressful, risky, and profound. Of course, this all happened while oppressive political and social conditions continued. It certainly begs the question, "Just what have we learned from the 60s...politically, socially and musically?"

Bringing the plight into perspective is the CD reissue of the much heralded **Joseph Jarman: *Song For*** (Delmark DD-410) from 1966. This first session by the alto saxophonist of the soon-to-be Art Ensemble of Chicago could safely be termed "classic" in the scheme of this cataclysmic decade. Considered an affront at the time of its initial release, the multi-layered textures, brass-reed fanfares and free group improvisations to wrap-around drum dynamics that constitute this reactionary music seem particularly real in the face of our current fascination with all that graced "the silent generation."



Jarman, Bill Brimfield (trumpet), Fred Anderson (tenor saxophone), Christopher Gaddy (piano & marimba), Charles Clark (bass), Thurman Barker (drums), and Steve McCall (drums) succeeded at producing the cries that echoed an era, still sounding poignant after 26 years.

The blending of Asian folk music (elements of which include pentatonics, parallel fourths and fifths, authentic rhythmic patterns and phrasings) with jazz is the artistic means by which **Jon Jang and the Pan Asian Arkestra** choose to make a general statement of life, including the unfortunate racism, experienced by Asian Americans. Compared to the protest music of Joseph Jarman, Jang's *Never Give Up!* (Asian Improv Records Air 0007) contains similar sentiment, but is completely structured by expertly conceived arrangements. The ten musicians involved are all excellent techni-

cians on their respective instruments. Highlights include Melecio Magdaluyo's extremely musical soprano on *Butterfly Lovers Song*; Jeff Cressman's multiphonic trombone on *Redress/Blues*; Jim Norton's virtuosic bass clarinet on *Reparations Now!*; and Jang's lyrical piano on the one included jazz standard, *A Night in Tunisia*. Jon Jang is a meticulous arranger who is able to articulate to the world, with the help of his outstanding soloists, the important social issues valid to the Asian community.

Archie Shepp Quartet: *I Didn't Know About You* (Timeless CD SJP 370) is a recent offering by a musician who was in the thick of the angry, political avant-garde of the 60s (as documented on the Impulse label), but since then has made a conscious effort to realign himself with the more basic elements of black American music. Specifically, Shepp has cho-

JOSEPH JARMAN • ARCHIE SHEPP • KEN McINTYRE

sen to go back to the blues, spirituals and gospel music of his youth, realizing that at this point in time, these genres of a rich cultural heritage need to resurface and be reappraised.

Shepp gives historical background in his spoken introduction to *Go Down Moses (Let My People Go)*, followed by a duet rubato with soulmate pianist Horace Parlan, who plays beautifully throughout. As bassist Wayne Dockery and drummer George Brown enter, shades of 60s Shepp, whose arsenal included an array of provocative sounds, begin to surface but with an apparent element of restraint. The wide vibrato, scoops, smears and groans serve instead to call to mind another slice of history in the big-toned tenors of the swing era. The coda consists of Shepp setting down his tenor and letting his resonant baritone voice (which, as with most horn players, is a duplicate of his reedy side) take over with dramatic results.

Shepp dons his alto and waxes poetic on *I Didn't Know About You*, as the rhythm section gently swings beneath. Tadd Dameron's *Hot House* is also broadcast from the smaller horn. Shepp's deep vocal chords constitute the instrument of choice on *The Good Life*. Likewise on *Partytime*, a blues which coaxes the shout in Shepp, outdoing his own tenor on this one. Kudos to Timeless for a recorded studio sound that signals "live on stage" without using an abundance of effects.

Ken McIntyre/Therry Bruneau 5tet featuring Richard Davis: Tribute (Serene Ser 02) was recorded live at the 1990 Tourcoing (France) Jazz Festival dedicated to Eric Dolphy. Ken McIntyre (alto saxophone, bassoon, flute and oboe) recorded with Dolphy in 1960 ("Looking Ahead"), but aside from several albums for Steeplechase in the 70s, has expended most of his energy on the pedagogical side of the fence. Bassist Richard Davis also recorded with Dolphy. The arranged meeting of Bruneau (alto saxophone, bassoon, bass clarinet), vibraphonist Severi Pyysalo and drummer Jean-Yves Colson with these two American musi-

cians transpired in hopes of inducing a creative musical rapport in the Dolphy vein.

Heard here in the form of six extended tunes, the results log in with mixed success. Grachan Moncur's *Frankenstein*, Dolphy's *G.W.*, and Bruneau's *The Cry* feature both multi-reedists on alto. The similarities in style point an obvious finger toward Dolphy, but it is also apparent that Bruneau has been listening to McIntyre. Scattered use of altissimo leaps to create contrast and heightened emotion is a hallmark of both men, but whereas Bruneau's lines wander aimlessly at times, McIntyre seems right on the money in a melodic sense and with a sound more defined and penetrating. As he gears up with a "sheets of sound," snake-like ascent, individual notes blur into a glissando that is impressive from both a technical and melodic standpoint.

As for woodwind doubles, Bruneau's bass clarinet (heard on McIntyre's *Tomorrow? Tonight!*) may well be his best axe, extremely controlled and capable of spinning a concise tale. On the same tune, McIntyre ignores the oboe's strident properties and falls short on pitch placement with an attempt at soloing with a controlled orchestral sound. McIntyre's flute sings sweetly on his 53-bar calypso *Smile*, and both men use bassoons in harmony for a reading of the melody on *Joyous Remembrance*. Finnish vibraphonist Pyysalo shows signs of an excellent developing talent, and despite Colson's restraining drumming, Davis conjures up several outstanding arco solos.

Between 1979 and 1988, the **George Adams/Don Pullen Quartet** consisted of four players who, as indicated by the sound of their music, could care less about who else was playing what and why. Here is a quartet of individuals who play hard. They probably also live hard, laugh too loud, and cry when they feel the urge. And they pay tribute, as three of the five titles on 1983's welcome reissue of *City Gates* (Timeless CD SJP 181) indicates (*Mingus Metamorphosis*, *Thank You Very Much Mr. Monk*, *Nobody Knows the*

Trouble I've Seen), but expressing a highly personalized brand of mainly rough-and-tumble jazz is their obvious attribute.

The opener, *Mingus Metamorphosis*, with its built-in, free flowing, comes apart at the seams "B" section, is indicative of the imaginative compositional faculties of the two leaders, eliciting a torrent of sound from Adams' full-bodied tenor. Pullen's pretty *Samba for Now* features Adams' sumptuous lower register flute playing. *Thank You Very Much Mr. Monk* is a blues that finds Pullen's right hand going through its various stylistic gyrations, only to come back sweet and slow with a piano-tenor duet on the traditional *Nobody Knows....* The title track closer goes back to pulling out the stops with hard, hard swinging by all. Bassist Cameron Brown fits the bill admirably with solid time, good lines and a fat bass sound, while the late drummer Dannie Richmond puts in one of his most inspired performances.

Your Neighborhood Saxophone Quartet: Plutonian Nights, The Music of Sun Ra (Coppens CCD 3006) serves to call attention to the compositional diversity of one of jazz's most prolific composers. Choosing from well over 300 recorded compositions on 125 albums, the proficient instrumentalists of YNSQ (Allan Chase, alto & soprano; Bob Zung, alto; Joel Springer, tenor; Tom Hall, baritone) have arranged 12 songs from the Arkestra's vast repertoire, covering material primarily from Ra's Chicago hard bop-inspired compositions of the late 50s, but stretching into the spacey 70s as well. Highlights include: *Light of a Satellite*, *Enlightenment*, *El Is a Sound of Joy*, and *Plutonian Nights*. The deployment of various inventive rhythmic techniques aids this group of fine players in their development of a truly buoyant (if not astral) swing feeling in spite of the absence of a rhythm section.

On a historical note, it is generally agreed upon that Ra's departure from Chicago in the mid-60s induced the efforts of the local avant-garde (i.e. Joseph Jarman), inviting a flourish of experimental, politically minded groups.

GEORGE ADAMS • DON PULLEN • ABDULLAH IBRAHIM

Upon pianist Abdullah Ibrahim's return to Capetown after years of self-imposed political exile, *Mantra Mode* (Enja R2 79671), a recording consisting of much familiar South African material, was produced with the well-chosen personnel of Basil "Mannenberg" Coetzee, tenor saxophone; Robbie Jansen, alto & baritone saxophones, flute; Johnny Mekoa, trumpet; Monty Weber, drums; Spencer Mbadu, bass; and Errol Dyers, guitar.

Although lacking some of the fire inherent in his American band of hard-blowers (which included saxophonist Ricky Ford, drummer Ben Riley, et al.), plenty can be said for this South African unit, mainly that each player has a sound of his own that defies the standard American jazz musicians' overemphasis on the upper

harmonics, regardless of the instrument or context in which it is performed. "Dark" is a key adjective here, not in the music, which is most often joyous and optimistic, but in these musicians' approaches to their instruments. Not since Duke Ellington's band has such an assemblage of "covered" and gritty sounds been heard together as one voice.

In terms of repertoire, traditional and popular South African songs such as *Bayi Lam* and *Tafelberg Samba* are mixed with Ibrahim's originals, the most notable being the title track, which consists of nearly ten minutes of sublimely sensitive solos over a meditative harmonic progression.

Horn (Spiral Scratch 0003) is a simple enough title from a band of competent Australian musicians (Mike Nock, piano; Lloyd Swanton, bass; Alan Turnbull, drums; plus Peter O'Mara, guitar; Jose Marquez, percussion; James Greening, trombone) under the leadership of tenor saxophonist Dale Barlow, who cut his teeth in Cedar Walton's Quartet, then nestled into the comfortable surroundings of that incubator band of hard bop: The Jazz Messengers. The problem is that the Head Drum, Art Blakey hatched many a horn player like Barlow. Sure, he's got an incredibly beautiful tone, very controlled and rich in hues. Certainly he can twist a line of hard bop with the best of them, making it all sound so easy. It's not easy.

Really. But while giving a serious nod to Coltrane, why does Barlow stop at J.C. vintage 1959? Much has happened since then. Even if he were to take Coltrane only into the early 60s, he'd open up many more possibilities for himself in terms of the expressive capabilities of his horn.

At the risk of sounding ethnocentric, the scope of this reviewer's knowledge does not encompass the overall climate of life in Australia. Perhaps this music appropriately reflects the tenor of the times there, circa 1990? Of interest (and perhaps in answer to this question) is the acknowledgement in the liner that "This project was assisted by the Australian Council, the Federal Government's arts funding and advisory body." On the plus side, crafty compositions abound in this thoroughly well-played set.

A recording session by a two-tenor band blowing over original hard bop tunes based on twisted standards is a normal occurrence when both tenor men are in their fifties. It also helps that they were among the few not inspired during their formative years to imitate Stan Getz. **Summit Meeting: Full of Life** (Dragon DRC 205) is the second recording by the famed Swedish front line of Bernt Rosengren (tenor, alto on one cut), and Nils Sandstrom (strictly tenor), this time backed by their working rhythm section of Goran Strandberg (piano), Sture Nordin (bass), and Bengt Stark (drums).

The history of the two-tenor band is a long one: Hawkins & Byas, Gordon & Gray, Ammons & Stitt, all musical muscle men who loved to flex, chase, overcome and subdue their partners. But Rosengren and Nordin are more peaceful types who never seem to spar, even for the fun of it. There is a noticeable lack of trading choruses or fours throughout this 70 minutes of music. If they were more lyrical players with marshmallow tones, it wouldn't seem so odd, but both lean to the burly, bashing side of the jazz horn. What they do offer is good, solid, swinging jazz. Perhaps next time. □



NAT KING COLE

A VIDEO REVIEW
BY SCOTT YANOW

1991 WAS THE MOST SUCCESSFUL YEAR FOR Nat King Cole's music since the pianist-singer's death in 1965. From Natalie Cole's hit album to an impressive series of reissues, climaxing in Mosaic's remarkable 18-CD set *The Complete Capitol Recordings Of The Nat King Cole Trio*, it seemed that Cole's music was everywhere. The trend has happily continued with the release of *The Incomparable Nat King Cole* (Warner Reprise Video), filmed performances from 1956-57 that are taken from Cole's short-lived television series. The first black entertainer to have his own show, Cole was unfortunately never able to secure a sponsor in segregated America so, despite the popularity of his music, the program was eventually cancelled.



OSCAR MOORE • NAT KING COLE • WESLEY PRINCE (CIRCA 1939)

AT THAT TIME, Cole had been a big-selling ballad vocalist in the pop field for six years, and few of his newer fans realized that he had once been one of the great swing pianists. Nat by then generally just used his piano as a prop or as an interlude between vocals although, as his rare piano solos showed, he never lost his jazz talents.

NAT COLE PERFORMS 22 SONGS during this 50 minute tape, so he covers quite a bit of material in renditions that are generally about two minutes long. There is no added-on narration (none is needed), just pure music. On the majority of the tracks Cole is accompanied

by the unseen Nelson Riddle orchestra with arrangements provided by Riddle and Gordon Jenkins. The middle-of-the-road music emphasizes his hits, such as *Ballerina*, *Pretend* and *The Christmas Song*; and other ballads, *But Not For Me*, *I've Grown Accustomed To Her Face* and *Where Or When*. It also includes a few swingers, an overarranged feature for Riddle's big band, *Diga Diga Doo* and a guest appearance by Ella Fitzgerald on a slightly humorous *Dancing On The Ceiling* (which culminates with Ella and Nat doing a soft shoe upside down!), and a charming *Too Close For Comfort*.

COLE PLAYS A LITTLE PIANO on the ballad *That Reminds Me* and jams *Just You, Just Me* with a quartet. Best of all from the jazz standpoint

is the inclusion of five of the seven songs performed on a show that featured the Jazz At The Philharmonic All-Stars as Cole's guests. *It's Only A Paper Moon* has quite a band in back of Nat's vocal, including tenors Stan Getz, Illinois Jacquet and Coleman Hawkins, trumpeter Roy Eldridge, pianist Oscar Peterson, guitarist Herb Ellis, bassist Ray Brown and drummer Jo Jones, but only tenorman Flip Phillips gets a short solo. *Sweet Lorraine* lets Hawkins and Peterson split a chorus and on *I Want To Be Happy* Cole joins the group on piano; a muted Eldridge and a very cool Getz are also heard during this hot but brief (just three chorus) version. For the then-current country tune *With You On My Mind*, Cole had Phillips and Jacquet trading fours behind his vocal; very sweet with no honking. Finally *Stompin'*

At The Savoy lets Getz and Hawkins take short spots before a heated closing ensemble led by Little Jazz. *C Jam Blues* and *Tenderly* from that particular show are all that is missing.

TWO MORE TAPES from the Nat King Cole Show are reportedly planned in the future. If they are on the same high level as the initial offering, they will also be well worth acquiring. From these films, one can fully understand Nat King Cole's appeal as a vocalist, with perfect enunciation, a relaxed accessible style and a friendly personality, while still regretting his decision to de-emphasize his brilliant skills as a pianist. □

SWEET THUNDER R·E·C·O·R·D·S



... for jazz

Searching for acoustic jazz audiophile LPs? Tired of mediocre music on "name" labels?

Let **Sweet Thunder** help you discover superb recordings on vinyl by jazz greats like Evans, Monk, Baker and others! Our many years as acoustic jazz lovers and audiophiles combined with access to hundreds of jazz labels worldwide - including limited edition Japanese Blue Notes - enable us to unearth those special recordings for you.

We are committed to serving jazz lovers with their requirements and special orders in any format, especially vinyl for as long as LPs are available. Ask for our free catalog.

575 Johnson Street,
Victoria, B.C. Canada V8W 1M2
Tel / Fax: (604) 381-4042



CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

THIS SECTION IS FOR INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS TO ADVERTISE NON-DISPLAY ITEMS. COST IS 75 CENTS PER WORD (\$15.00 MINIMUM); PAYMENT IS TO BE MADE WHEN COPY IS SUBMITTED. NAME, STREET ADDRESS, CITY, PROVINCE/STATE, ZIP CODE AND PHONE OR FAX NUMBER COUNT AS FIVE WORDS. THERE IS A 10% DISCOUNT ON ADS RUN FOR 6 CONSECUTIVE ISSUES.

INSTRUCTION

LLOYD GARBER Improvising Guitarist Teaches privately in Toronto. New cassette (1992) "Scratch 006" with Lloyd Garber (guitar) and Herb Bayley (trombone). \$12.00 postpaid. New book, "Slab of Stone." Seven improvising compositions. (\$20 postpaid) Lloyd Garber, Box 7020, Stn. A, Toronto, Canada M5W 1X7. Telephone (416) 594-6838.

WANTED

WANTED: JAZZ RECORDS from the 1950's - 1960's (Original 10" & 12"). Such as Blue Note, Prestige, Riverside etc. Out-Of-Print & Hard-To-Find items. Highest Prices Paid. Please send me your disposal lists. Write or FAX. JAZZ RECORD MART, 6182 Goi Ichihara City, Chiba-Ken 290, JAPAN. FAX 81-436-21-2837

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

TO PURCHASE OR RENT music related photographs, posters, magazines. (Blues, R&B, Country, Pop etc.), and vintage (30's through 90's). We also rent out music related items including photographs and vintage record players. Also provide photocopies of our extensive music research material to writers, researchers and record labels. Showtime Music Archives, 191 Concord Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6H 2P2. Tel. (416) 532-4145 or Fax (416) 532-1849.

RECORDINGS

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

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

SOCIETIES

COUNT BASIE SOCIETY - founded in 1980 and now the international society for the Count and his music. Journal (4 times a year) with news and record reviews. Join now by sending \$25.00(US) cash or IMO to Dept C, Eileen Dunford, 33 Barrington Road, Southgate, Crawley, W. Sussex RH10 6DQ, England.

MAGAZINES

THE JAZZ REPORT - Voice Of The Artist - is an informative guide to contemporary improvisational music featuring interviews, profiles, historical anecdotes, columns, record reviews, book reviews, compositions, club listings, radio listings and much more... 4 issues per year - \$12.00 Can. Sub. and \$17 US or Foreign Sub. Start your subscription today by mailing a cheque or money order to: The Jazz Report, 22 Helena Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6G 2H2.

W I R E - Send for a sample copy & subscription details (overseas subscribers, including Europe: surface mail £30 for 12 issues; airmail £45 for 12 issues, UK £25 for 12 issues, US \$50.00 for 12 issues) to THE WIRE, 45/46 Poland Street, London W1V 3DF, UK.

CODA MAGAZINE IS AVAILABLE IN MICROFORM. For further information write to UNIVERSITY MICROFILMS INTERNATIONAL 200 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 U.S.A. / 30-32 Mortimer Street, Dept. P.R. London W1N 7RA England / MICROMEDIA LIMITED, 20 Victoria St. Toronto, Ontario, CANADA M5C 2N8

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

RECORD SHOPS

VORTEX RECORDS - 2309 Yonge Street, 2nd Floor, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. (416) 483-7437. Used CDs, Records & Cassettes bought & traded.

WEARABLE ART

SONNY ROLLINS - The first in a series of wearable art from Bill Smith's original photographs. Large performance photograph of Sonny Rollins from the 1960s. Printed on BLACK 100% COTTON T-SHIRT. LARGE & EXTRA LARGE ONLY. Send \$25.00 (includes postage) to BILL SMITH, THE SHIRE, HORNBY ISLAND, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA V0R 1Z0.

BOOKS

UNFINISHED DREAM - THE MUSICAL WORLD OF RED CALLENDER - A book by Red Callender & Elaine Cohen. Published by Quartet Books. Selected discography & 16 pages of photographs. \$25.00 (US), from Elaine Cohen, 1270 Pine, Apt #38, San Francisco, CA 94109, USA

SEND COPY AND PAYMENT TO BILL SMITH, CODA PUBLICATIONS, THE SHIRE, HORNBY ISLAND, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA V0R 1Z0.

acorn MUSIC STORE (Est. 1959)

incorporating
**PETER RUSSELL'S
HOT RECORD
STORE**

THE FRIENDLY MAIL ORDER SPECIALISTS

Large stocks of Jazz, Blues, Dance & Big Bands, Nostalgia, Vocalists, Stage/Screen etc., on CD, LP and Cassette.

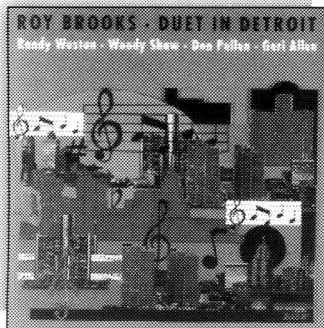
Lots of Secondhand, rare and deleted vinyl
BUY NOW WHILE THE STOCKS LAST!

Also Books & Discographies including the incomparable **BIELEFELDER JAZZ KATALOG** over 1100 pages of small but legible print (in English) - completely cross references hundreds of current US & European labels, thousands of musicians and track titles on LP, CD and Cassette: \$16.00 surface, £20.00 airmail (Sterling please!).

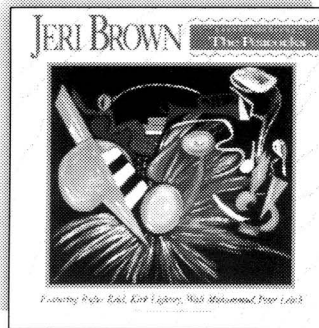
Our CD & LP catalogues 6 IRCs each, Airmail. Goods exported to all countries.
PAYMENT ACCEPTED BY VISA, MASTERCARD
(Not Amex or Diners - Sorry)

**PO BOX 17, SIDMOUTH, DEVON
EX10 9EH, ENGLAND
PHONE OR FAX
011-44-395-578-145**

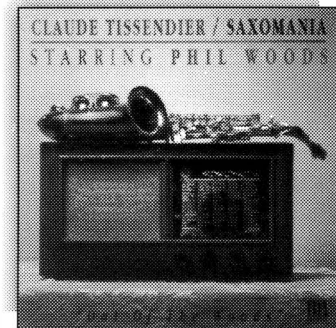
New Releases - Spring 1993



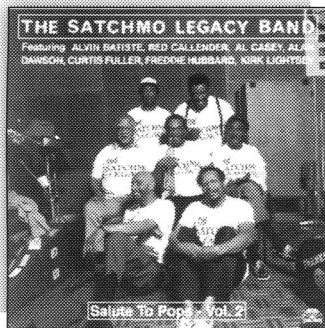
ROY BROOKS Duet in Detroit
with Randy Weston - Woody Shaw
- Don Pullen - Geri Allen



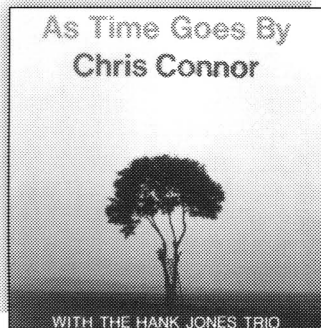
JERI BROWN featuring
Rufus Reid, Kirk Lightsey, Wall
Muhammad, Peter Leitch
"Unfolding" - The Peacocks



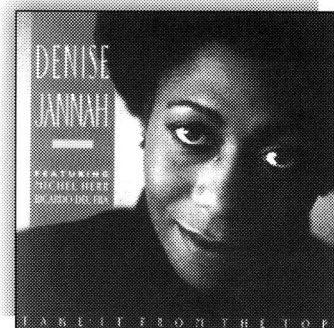
CLAUDE TISSEUDIER
featuring **PHIL WOODS**
"Out Of The Woods"



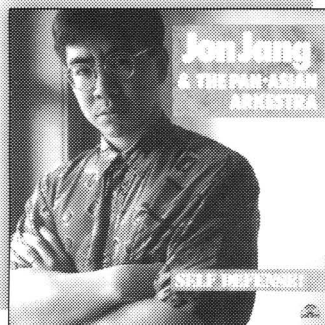
**THE SATCHMO LEGACY
BAND** Salute To Pops - Vol.2



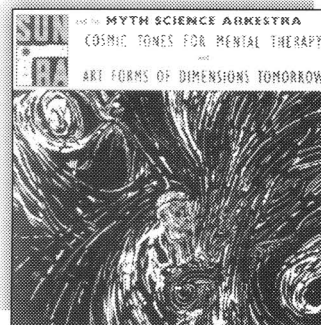
CHRIS CONNOR with
THE HANK JONES TRIO
As Time Goes By



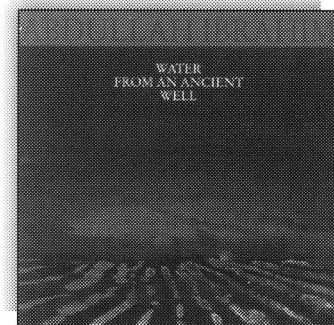
DENISE JANNAH
Take It From The Top



**JON JANG &
The Pan-Asian Arkestra**
Self Defense!



SUN RA & his Myth Science Arkestra
Cosmic Tones for Mental Therapy and
Art Forms of Dimensions Tomorrow



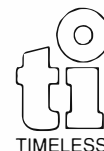
ABDULLAH IBRAHIM
Water From An Ancient Well

IDA
RECORDS



Justin Time Records

EVIDENCE



enja

For a complete catalogue, send \$5.00 (cheque or money order) to:

D I S T R I B U T I O N F U S I O N I I I

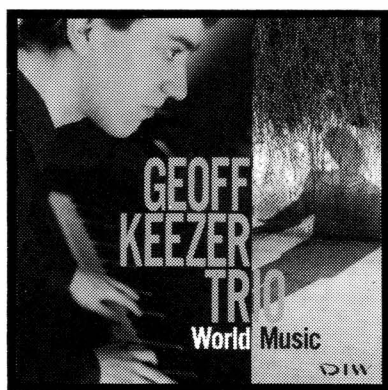
5455, rue Paré, suite 101, Montreal, Que. H4P 1P7 • Tél.: (514) 738-4600 • Fax: (514) 737-9780



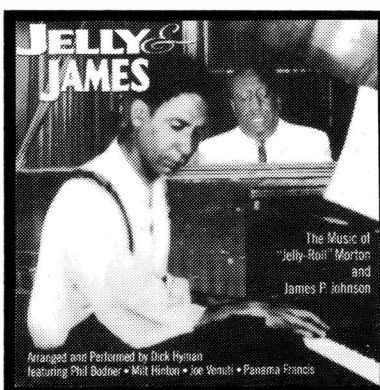
L'ATELIER GRIGORIAN

THE JAZZ MUSIC SPECIALISTS

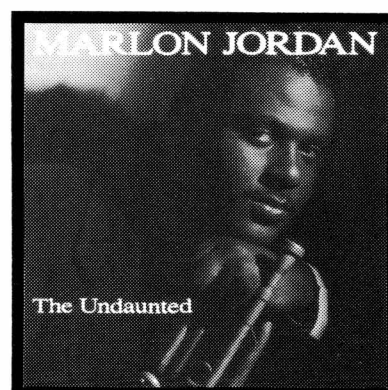
WE CARRY THE COMPLETE LINE OF
SONY MUSIC RECORDINGS
COLUMBIA • DIW • RED BARON



GEOFF KEEZER
WORLD MUSIC
DIW/COLUMBIA CK 52958



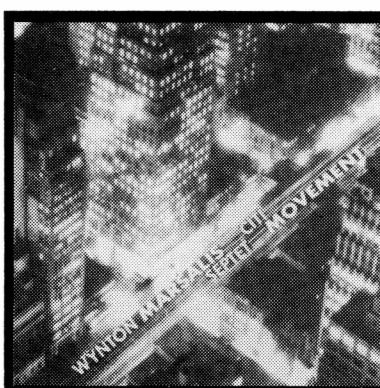
DICK HYMAN
JELLY & JAMES
COLUMBIA MDK 52552



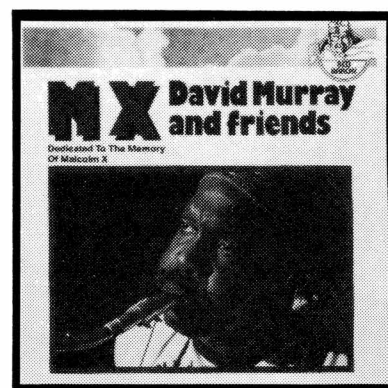
MARLON JORDAN
THE UNDAUNTED
COLUMBIA CK 52409



TOSHIKO AKIYOSHI ORCHESTRA
CARNEGIE HALL CONCERT
COLUMBIA CK 48805



WYNTON MARSALIS
CITI MOVEMENT
COLUMBIA C2K 53324



DAVID MURRAY & FRIENDS
MX
RED BARON CK 53224

ORDER BY MAIL OR PHONE

MAIN STORE (TORONTO) L'ATELIER GRIGORIAN • 70 Yorkville Avenue, Toronto, Ontario
Canada M5R 1B9 • PHONE (416) 922-6477 • FAX (416) 922-4879

(OAKVILLE) L'ATELIER GRIGORIAN • The Town Square, 210 Lakeshore Road East,
Oakville, Ontario, Canada L6J 1H8 • PHONE (416) 338-2360