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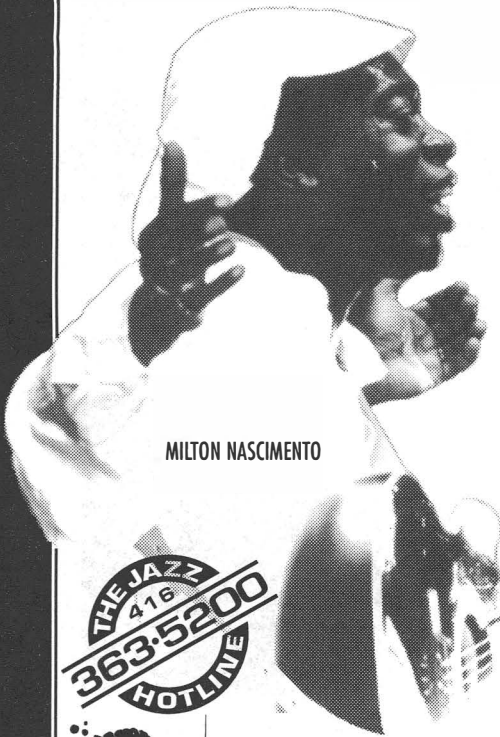
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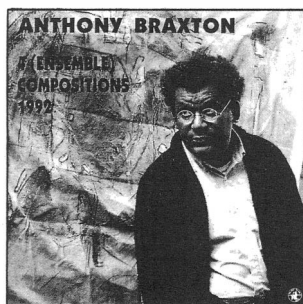
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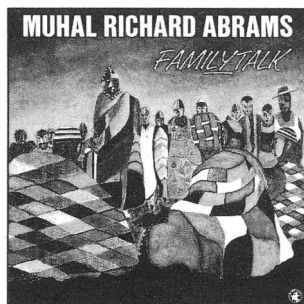
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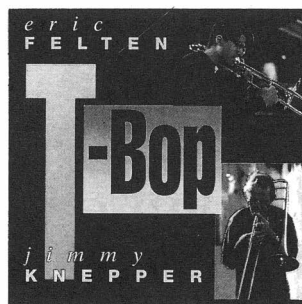
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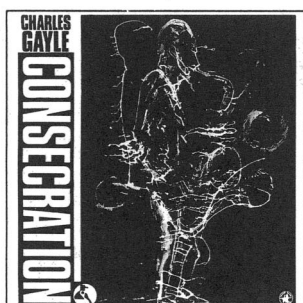
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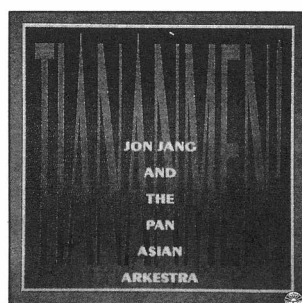
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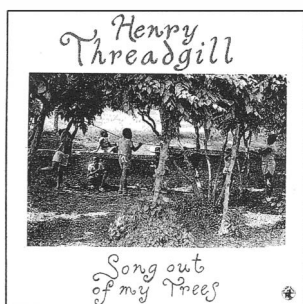
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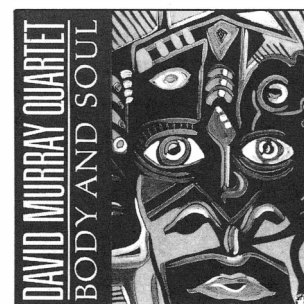
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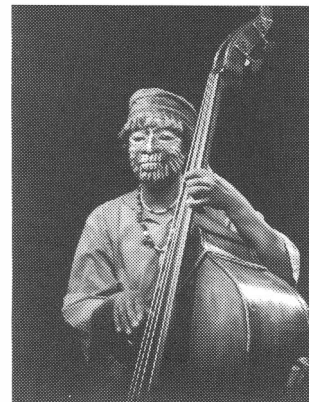
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MALACHI FAVORS MAGHOSTUT

FOR OVER TWENTY-FIVE YEARS, MALACHI FAVORS MAGHOSTUT'S ENERGETIC BASS LINES have been the pulse for the sound in space explorations of the Art Ensemble of Chicago. Providing a solid rhythmic foundation for the most notoriously free collective improvisers in jazz has always been a significant responsibility; Favors handles it with amazing dexterity. Also, he has innovated unconventional percussion—whistles, toys, kazoos, cans— to re-acquaint listeners to the deceptively primitive beginnings of modern music. But his Art Ensemble tenure is just one portion of his substantial, yet too often overlooked, oeuvre.



IN ANDREW HILL'S EARLY TRIO, Favors worked alongside the pianist as he developed away from bop in the 50s. An original member of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM), Favors has influenced, and is currently a part of, groups representing all generations of the cooperative. On the record *Sightsong* (Black Saint), a duet with Muhal Richard Abrams, Favors' melodic sensibilities beautifully complement the pianist's wide range of tonal colours. As a current member of The Ritual Trio, Favors' rhythmic command is a strong match to the multi-percussion excursions of group leader Kahil El'Zabar.

Two recent CD reissues mark pivotal points in Favors' development. The five CD set, *The Art Ensemble: 1967/1968* (Nessa Records, P. O. Box 394, Whitehall, MI 49461), includes the recordings from the formative years of the group, as well as over two and a half hours of unreleased material. Many of these compositions were structured along Favors' bass lines. His only solo recording, *Natural & The Spiritual* (AECO Records: PO Box 53429, Chicago, IL 60653), which

was originally released in the late 70s, has also been recently reissued on CD. This disc prominently indicates Favors' diverse tones and techniques. His trademark "little instruments"—those bells, whistles, kazoos—all provide a string of sharply shifting beats. He contrasts strident marches with beautifully haunting bow explorations recalling Ron Carter and Richard Davis. Low vocalized moans create a compelling sombre sound that permeates the disc.

FAVORS' VOICE and compositions often recall spirituals and sermons. Part of this influence comes from his father, a minister who moved to Chicago from Mississippi. Favors was born in the city in 1937, and lived on the South Side where he was surrounded by an inspiring musical mixture. A teenage attempt at performing was considerably different than the exploratory sounds that he would develop later.

"I was a bass singer in a street corner do-wop group that never got off the ground," Favors, who is constantly self-effacing, recalls.

NATURAL & SPIRITUAL

AN ARTICLE BY AARON COHEN

“When we broke up, my ace friend in the group started to play guitar. He said to me that if I didn’t want to work on regular jobs, I had better start doing something musical. So he kept after me, and I would also see the great artists at the Regal Theater—Duke Ellington, Lionel Hampton, Sarah Vaughan.”

“I became fascinated by the bass in the Duke Ellington band. I remember seeing them play ‘C-Jam Blues,’ everybody took a solo and during Oscar Pettiford’s solo, he became my man.”

These experiences led Favors to seek out this instrument.

“I went to church one Sunday, and a fellow had a bass in the church,” Favors says. “And I went to touch the strings, and it was so hard to push them down, I just said, ‘no, no, I’m not going to deal with this.’ Then, I went up to DuSable High School, which was *the* music centre on the South Side. And I saw Betty Dupree—who’s still playing today—practicing in the hallway. I said to myself, ‘if this *girl* can pull those strings, I know I can.’ And that encouraged me to get a bass.”

AFTER THIS INCENTIVE, Favors began practicing, and hearing the bassists who would influence his playing, especially Israel Crosby, Wilbur Ware, and Paul Chambers.

“Paul Chambers and I were good friends. I knew him before he was with Paul Quinichette. He was also one of my favourites. He told me that any sounds he heard, he wanted to do. I kept that in mind, and with that, I started playing around, and some sounds came to me that I liked.”

Favors began learning the more technical aspects of music, and then joined the Andrew Hill Trio just after he graduated from high school. Their mid-50s record, *So In Love* (Warwick), may seem more conventional than Favors’ more famous declarations, but there are plenty of early indications of where he would be taking his music. Unorthodox tempo changes, a delicate use of the bow, and small percussion—finger cymbals, castanets—reveal a link from these foundations of free-form to the explosion that would be recognized in the following decades.

“I was talking to Andrew Hill after I heard Abdul Malik,” Favors says. “I was also listening to Ornette Coleman and Sun Ra. So I told Andrew that I was hearing some other things and he permitted me to bring bells into the ensemble.”

“The reason why all this was coming upon me so heavily was because at this time there was a troupe that came through town called The African Ballet. This was the first time that I had seen the conga drums. Man, when I saw this group, it made me know that those sounds should be in my music.”

Although Favors proved himself at a young age by playing with Hill, King Fleming, and other notables, he desired more formal training. Favors enrolled at a city college in Chicago where he met another student who he says, “encouraged me to develop my own sound more.”

“I was going to Wilson Junior College [now Kennedy-King], and that’s where I met Roscoe Mitchell,” Favors says. “One day out of the clear blue, he came to me and said, ‘I’m starting a group, and I’d like for you to play in it.’ This was around 1963. I wasn’t too into it because I had a day job, and I was married, and was trying to get a music diploma. So I told him I wasn’t sure if I could join him. He came back a few days later, and took me to a practice room where we jammed for a little bit. He encouraged me to rehearse with his group. When I got there I saw that with his group I could do some things that I wanted to do—bells, whistles, and things. So I joined.”

“We had rehearsal one day, and I brought these bells and Roscoe asked me, ‘what are you going to do with all that?’ I said, ‘I’m going to use it in my music.’ That was the beginning of it and now Roscoe and the other Art Ensemble members, [trumpeter] Lester [Bowie], [saxophonist] Joseph [Jarman], and [percussionist] Don Moye are the premiere little instrument cats. Nobody can touch them.”

Aside from these little instruments, Favors’ tools included some strings that have not been frequently used in jazz. By playing the banjo, he took this essentially African invention away from minstrel show connotations. While the bow is more common, few bassists use it with Favors’ fervour. An example is his torrid solo on Mitchell’s mid-60s *Sound* (Delmark).

“I started to use the bow with King Fleming. It really hurts me to talk about it, because I had a real good bow, but I wasn’t into using it. When I came up, they guys didn’t use the bow that much, it was all pizzicato. I treated that bow real bad. Finally, it broke. If I could find a bow like that now, it would cost a thousand dollars. When I got with Roscoe, I started using the bow work that I heard. But I don’t think I use the bow too well, I do what I can. I wish I could do what Richard [Davis] does. I’m still working on it.”

IN THE MID-60S, Favors became an original member of the AACM. As one of the few veterans of the early days of the organization who has remained in Chicago, he has seen and been a part of the changes in the cooperative.

“I joined the AACM in 1965. Muhal called me and said that he was starting this group. Black musicians at that time, just like most Black aware people were all upset because of what was happening to us. We were left out of this, that, and the other. Back in the 50s, they used to have live bands on television. But in Chicago, and I think throughout the United States, Black musicians couldn’t get those jobs. This, and encouragement for musicians who wanted to do their own thing in composing, brought me into the AACM.”

“So many musicians in Chicago came into the AACM, but they didn’t stick. We used to have big jam sessions out on the Lakefront. We developed a relation with BAG [Black Artists Group] in St. Louis. We would go there, they would come here, it was happening.”

“I give all the credit in the world to the AACM for lasting so long. We have not had the support of other groups. Not gotten grants for one reason or another. But, even so, we’ve stuck together.”

Favors laments that those days of getting large groups of committed and innovative musicians together are over. But he is not surprised that this era has passed.

"Musicians go out, after a while, they get old, and they have to make some money. There's this unwritten law; you can't stop them from doing this, this is reality. You have to eat before your horn. If you don't eat, you can't play your horn. When we first started, we were high off the music. Every day. But there comes a time when you realize that you have a family. The musicians now are looking for financial help, and have to concentrate on this. So they don't have as much time to devote to their craft, like we did. During that time, you could get part-time jobs, but you can't do that anymore. On the other hand, these musicians know more about grants. I don't know how that affects their playing."

When the Art Ensemble began performing around the world, the way they looked attracted about as much attention as their sound. Appearing in African face paint and tribal garb, their performances were highly ritualistic. Favors had a hand in their theatrical approach.

"The costumes, makeup were my idea," Favors says. "The idea was from the African Ballet, and a photo I saw of Bird dressed as an African chief. I took a lot of beatings. People said, 'what is this, are you declaring war?' Oh man, people said everything. But it's a part of my culture. We, as a people, were cut off from our very selves. If you listen to African music, Africans have music for every occasion, and that's the way I see music."

THE MISCONCEPTION OF FAVORS, and his group, as a band of militants, rather than musicians who are proud of their heritage, has faded. Still, Favors maintains much resentment against the media in the United States.

"The American people are more controlled than the Europeans. Americans are almost totally controlled by the media. They listen to whatever is banged on them, and if you don't play that you ain't playing. The few listeners who want to hear something else sometimes are just discarded. You can hear any music in Europe on the radio. You can't do that here. It's terrible. When I first went to Europe in 1969, whenever somebody would go back to the States, we'd say 'oh, you going back to The World.' But we don't use that term anymore. As Lester says, 'The United States is becoming a Third World country' and most people over here don't realize it. In Europe, when you buy an apple, it tastes like an apple. In Chicago, 5 times out of 10, it doesn't. It's the same thing with the music. They have programmed us to eat this food, that they have stored up, pay high prices, and it don't taste like nothing. I hope we can get more of an audience in the States, because this is where the music developed. And I know that the people will hear the spirit of the music, but the media is keeping it from them."

Favors does not feel uncomfortable with the "avant garde," or "outside" labels, but also does not feel that they are important.

"I don't mind being considered an outsider. We don't make the distinction between inside, and outside. We call it Great Black Music. There's a whole lot of great inside musicians who I look up to. But they would go further if they had the mind to go out. But I

MALACHI FAVORS MAGHOSTUT

understand that they just can't do that. It isn't that easy. Insofar as being an outside musician, you have to go through a transformation. You can't just jump up and play out. Some musicians have said that but they are sadly mistaken. If they could do it, they would. My thing comes when I hit the stand. Until that time, I don't know what I might do."

THE ART ENSEMBLE still tours regularly, and has received a proper amount of attention. Favors expected the group to receive these accolades, and also anticipated the individual direction the members are taking today.

"I'm surprised as far as [the accolades for] myself, but not with the Art Ensemble. They can get into some music that can scare you. We practice, but when we start to play, we just let the music go. The problem with the Art Ensemble is we can't be like we were because we're not always together, like we used to be. Lester, Roscoe, Joseph, Don, and me all have outside projects that take up a lot of time."

Favors himself has been busy with a number of projects, including duets with Mitchell, The Ritual Trio, and plans for a group of his own. As Favors plans ahead, he keeps his experiences in mind.

"My plans for the future are to see if I can start this group and if my ideas say anything music wise. I'll have to see what becomes of this group before I can be proud of it. It takes time to get it together. A lot of my equipment got stolen five years ago. I miss my gong, it was really nice. I'd know it if I see it anywhere. That sort of stopped me. Maybe I'll get back to it if I get this group off the ground. I'm sort of optimistic. Most musicians are optimistic, but know that anything can happen. I still feel that I have something to offer." □



EARLY ART

A REVIEW BY **STUART BROOMER**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY **TERRY MARTIN**



THE ART ENSEMBLE (1967/68) is a five CD set of recordings of the group that eventually left Chicago for Europe and named itself the Art Ensemble of Chicago in Paris in early 1969. The music here belongs very strongly to its original milieu, and the group was still defining itself and its music. The groups heard here were sometimes without an official “name,” and were sometimes called the Roscoe Mitchell Art Ensemble. Including studio recordings produced by Chuck Nessa and home recordings made by Terry Martin during a ten month period from May of 1967 to March of 1968, the set contains the contents of three lps previously released on the Nessa label and supplements them with nearly three hours of alternate takes and other previously unissued material, ranging from studio recordings intended for 45 rpm singles to extended group improvisations. Together with Mitchell’s *Sound* record, from 1966 on Delmark, the present set makes up an important chapter in the development of that unnameable music that was coming into being throughout the 1960s.

LISTENING TO THIS MATERIAL some 26 years after it was performed, much of it for the first time, is a fascinating process. It was a year of growth and development, and there are moments here that retain the capacity to surprise. Although there is some five hours of music here, it is still an account of moments that happen to have occurred over a ten month period, rather than a straight forward march to the group and the music that was to become the AEC. The “original” personnel of the AEC that performed in Paris in 1969—Mitchell, Lester Bowie, Joseph Jarman, and Malachi Favors—comes together just past the midway point in these recordings, records two and a half takes of a single piece for some forty three minutes, then begins expanding and contracting again. The collective improvisations have an integrity that allows them to document only their individual time lengths. They hardly stand for “periods” within a temporal continuum. Placed together, one hears incidents in the early evolution of a remarkable and long lived musical unit.

What is most interesting here is the way Mitchell and the others were beginning to put together their language. The Chicago musicians were shaped by a strong sense of place, by the spirit of experiment and community for which Richard Abrams and the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians were responsible. They were also influenced by the particular mix of Chicago music. The city was a hot bed for both electronic music and blues, and those disparate currents would flow simultaneously through the band.

If Mitchell was, in effect, arriving at the end of a revolutionary period in the history of jazz, he was assembling some of the most important, and transposable, elements that had been generated in that period. Mitchell was concerned with a substantial goal, developing a flexible language of collective improvisation that was strongly in the tradition. What would most distinguish the group was its devotion to space and sound, and its struggles toward a collective art.

HIS BAND CONCEPT, and his alto style, owed much initially to Ornette Coleman, but his sense of larger and extended forms seems closest to Cecil Taylor in the way he would create multiple themes and shifting segments within a piece. The sense of structure is certainly more open than Coleman’s, there is far less attention paid to prevailing rhythmic and melodic patterns, and there is a far greater emphasis on group improvisation and exchange. The element of exchange becomes increasingly important. This is often collectively improvised music, which is distinct from music organized around the locus of a single titanic player like Taylor, Ayler, or Coltrane.

What is most exciting here is what hasn’t been available before, and it’s not merely the newness. It’s found in the “home” recordings of extended pieces on disks B and D, including twenty minute audition pieces by groups that represent the assemblage of two distinct bands. What makes this release exciting is the quality of this unknown material and the way it represents these musicians in their natural temporal environment.

One is reminded here of how much the freest of jazz surrendered in spontaneity in the trip to the recording studio, and how much it gave up in fitting itself to the time limits of the lp. But that much should

ROSCOE MITCHELL • LESTER BOWIE • PHILLIP WILSON

be apparent. What is still truer of the recording studio and the lp is the way they tended to favour the *finished* product. In a sense, this ten month long recording project follows a band from a basement to a recording studio and back and forth

DISKS A AND B

Disk A, the earliest material here, from May 18, 1967, is a basement recording of the quartet of Mitchell, Lester Bowie, Malachi Favors and drummer Phillip

Wilson. The material was previously released as *Old/Quartet* in 1975. Already apparent is the commitment to both improvisation and composition. The opening *Theme Statements* is an eight minute performance of four distinct themes by Mitchell, ranging through a slow dirge-like theme, a sequence of bells, a clipped "fast theme," and a "Chinese" theme. A set of structures for improvisation, it demonstrates Mitchell's interest in constructing pieces out

Quartet No. 2, nearly 37 minutes in length, is perhaps the finest single realization of this quartet's strengths, a piece of music that is already a long and powerful, tight-knit performance before it gradually opens into a spacious exploration of sound.

Another highlight is a trio piece built around *Oh Susanna*, played by Mitchell, Favors and Wilson. It recalls the period's frequent handling of simplified materials and the way in which those materials could be freighted with a complex historical and emotional significance. What emerges in the 31 minute performance is not particularly Mitchell's sense of the comic or the discordant worldview of Stephen Foster, but rather the group's really fine sense of shared musical architecture. One can literally hear the pattern of Mitchell's saxophone influences here (both key figures in the handling of folkloric materials), as he gradually shifts at one point from a strongly melodic approach that is very close in its speech-like phrasing to Coleman to a whirling upper register that's very close to Ayler.

There is a preoccupation with form here that is common to all the long pieces. Instead of the sometimes numbing intensity that was common in the period, Mitchell, Favors and Wilson develop an extended piece that revolves around space and near silence, a silence that is a key part of coming to terms with, even exorcizing, the legacy of American history as it might be specifically embodied in the music of Stephen Foster.

The members of the Art Ensemble were, by 1967, virtually third generation members of the jazz avant-garde. None of them had an especially novel approach to his instrument, in a period in which that had almost reached surfeit. In a sense, the emphases on timbre and group language were ways out of a certain tyranny of influence, even if the apparent influences, Ornette Coleman and, to a certain extent, Albert Ayler, were the best ones available. When playing head-based pieces, the quartet with Mitchell, Bowie, Favors, and



LESTER BOWIE

again, until they're in the studio reproducing the moment that had been reached ten months before. There is a sense in which Disks A and E, the first and last recordings, each of which has been largely released previously, have the most in common. E's studio recordings are in part a lookback, back to the group and sessions of A and even further. The Mitchell piece called *Old* appears on both, as does Bowie's *Tatas-matoes*.

It's not that a definite line of demarcation can be drawn between the basement tapes and studio recordings in terms of style. Rather, the studio recordings that produced the *Numbers* and *Congluptious* lps are different in distinct ways. They are either more traditional in a "jazz" sense, or more radical in a composed sense than anything from the less formal recordings.

of a sequence of distinct episodes. Another Mitchell piece, *Old*, is a more conventional head, suggesting traditional jazz funneled through Mingus, Monk and Coleman. Bowie's command of pinched, half-valve techniques is already arresting. In the long solo that opens the extended *Quartet No. 1*, he uses half-valves on long tones to get very close to the sound of a shakuhachi.

Disk B, more basement tapes, consists of the kind of music that had to wait for CD to find its appropriate form, two very long improvisations. Somehow this is the music that has benefited most from CD, insofar as it has been able to return listeners to the music's natural form. Given the very long, organically shaped pieces that characterized this period, the standard lp was almost a throwaway.

MALACHI FAVORS MAGHOSTUT • JOSEPH JARMAN

Wilson, both individually and collectively, “sounds like” the Ornette Coleman quartet with Don Cherry, Charlie Haden, and Ed Blackwell. The more spontaneous the premises, the less apparent the influence. Multiple-instrument playing, too—changing the sound of the group—helped the group define itself. The further Mitchell could get from the alto, and the further he could explore timbre and space, the less the influence would hold sway, and the closer the ensemble would come to making original music. The group developed its own language by pressing in several directions at once.

THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF THE BULB HORN

Improvised music is itself a ceremony of freedom, but the music of the Art Ensemble was becoming more openly ceremonial. It’s readily apparent in the use of gongs and bells. This sense of ceremony is implicit in Mitchell’s work from his first recording. It tends to treat musical space and time as ritual space and sacred time. This much it has in common with much that had gone before it, in the music of Ayler, Coltrane, and Taylor, but there was a particular emphasis on space in Mitchell’s work, akin in some regards to that of Sun Ra.

Space and timbre are complementary, and these emphases reshaped the music in several ways. Bowie pushed the sound spectrum of his trumpet and flugelhorn and then supplemented them with a steer horn and mouthpiece solos. Mitchell would play a host of reed instruments. Every member of the group would add small instruments, percussion and toy instruments.

To highlight some of those instruments and sounds, the music would begin to open up space to an ever greater degree. New principles of dialogue formed between traditional and novelty instruments, sometimes complementary, sometimes adversarial. This space would lead to more interest in timbral relations than tonal

ones, and a transformational sense of space would absorb the sounds of the trite and commonplace.

You can hear it in the Art Ensemble’s use of small instruments, like harmonica and recorder; toy instruments, like kazoo and slide whistle; or usually purely functional “instruments,” like the “bulb horns” usually found on bicycles, the police whistles, and sirens. These latter are almost purely semiotic instruments, sound signs as far from musical intention as possible. The ensemble’s use of them is often witty, but it never sounds simply comic. These sound signs take on new significances. If much of the new music of the sixties was about a state of *emergency*, the ensemble could take this literally, actually introducing the sounds of alarm. But these instruments aren’t simply programmatic. They suggest the possibility of a fully meaningful musical language. The bulb horns and police whistles speak in the same soundscape as the speech cadences derived from Coleman and Ayler, or, in Bowie’s case, Rex Stewart and Bubber Miley. This is very consciously a musical language, made up of all the elements that might be derived from the Afro-American traditions, from *musique concrete* and elsewhere, including the street.

DISKS C AND D

By the time the group arrived in the recording studio in August of 1967, Phillip Wilson had left the group for regular work with the Paul Butterfield Blues Band. Mitchell, Bowie and Favors took the radi-

cal step of working as a trio without a regular drummer. It was hardly the first group to do so, but it was unusual in that the essential affinities of the Art Ensemble were more strongly in the mainstream of jazz and other African-American musics than the Jimmy Giuffre Three or the contemporaneous Creative Construction Company.



MALACHI FAVORS

Disk C and part of D are from the studio sessions originally issued under Lester Bowie’s name as *Numbers 1 & 2*. The first of these sessions was held on August 11, 1967, with the trio of Mitchell, Bowie and Favors. The first item from the session is a two minute warm up for microphone levels, with the musicians playing long held notes in a style that is almost dirge-like. The first piece to be recorded is called *Number 2*, composed by Mitchell. The second piece, suggested by Nessa, is an extended improvisation on the long-note warm-up. This piece became *Number 1*.

The second session, held two weeks later on August 25, added Joseph Jarman for further recordings of the piece called



JOSEPH JARMAN

Number 2. There are three quartet takes of *Number 2* here, including two from which the originally issued version was spliced. It's at this session that the personnel of the later Art Ensemble of Chicago comes together, and one feels the immediate heating up that took place, not only from Jarman's individual input, but from the definition of the quartet with three horns, bass, and everyone contributing percussion and other supporting instruments. It's a real shift away from the relatively conventional instrumentation of the earlier ensembles, in which the soundscape is built around the presence of bass and drums.

The absence of a drummer emphasizes the group's more original directions. They're apparent in the long tones of *Number 1*, and they only become more apparent later. The sense of spaciousness and clarity increases, arising in the absence of the sharp cutting up of time and filling up of space that is created by all but the most radical of drumming. With this shift, the group became more concerned with architecture, with shifting phases in a composition, and with texture. It's as true of the improvised *Number 1* as it is of the composed *Number 2*, a piece that becomes more improvised in its contours with each performance.

THE ART ENSEMBLE (1967/68)

The particular richness of the Art Ensemble arose out of the devotion to the collective and to its unique blend of the exploratory and a consciousness of roots. The absence of a regular drummer was leading all of the players toward a more orchestral style of group play, with continuous interaction further displacing the usual strings of solos. One doesn't hear this as inconsistency, but there's a sense in which Mitchell was most particularly

concerned with a breadth of sound palette, while Bowie's tendency was to recapitulate the history of black music, emphasizing the vocal effects of early jazz trumpeters and rhythm 'n' blues phrases.

There is also a shift to the saxophone dominated ensembles that preceded it, and the extremes of intensity that characterized the Coltrane band with Pharoah Sanders, the Ayler band with Charles Tyler, and the Sun Ra band with John Gilmore, Marshall Allen and Pat Patrick. If general developments in the music of the ensemble were towards spaciousness, the presence of Jarman also contributed a corresponding density, another tension. The "blow out" is an immediate addition to the group's repertoire, apparent in a long collective improvisation, pitched at the edge of chaos, that is now used to open Mitchell's *Number 2*. The composed motifs of the piece are now set in far higher relief against the sheer heat and density that the three horns could generate, sometimes through and over the themes. The version that was originally released on record was an edit of two versions that have now been restored to their original form. One is the "neater" and shorter fifteen minute version of take six. A wilder, looser version, take seven, was originally pillaged for an in-

roduction to take six. The restoration is an improvement, both as a matter of principle and in terms of the genuinely audible integrity of the two different versions.

The remaining two pieces on Disk D were recorded in Bowie's basement by Terry Martin. One is a sextet with drummer Thurman Barker and bassist Charles Clark in addition to Favors; the other is a quintet with Barker. The tapes represent a literal fusion of the groups led by Mitchell and Jarman.

The sextet tape, recorded a week after the quartet sessions for *Number 2*, grew out of an audition piece sent to a Polish jazz festival in which Mitchell's Art Ensemble came together with members of Jarman's quartet for a single piece. The result, called *A to Erika*, is perhaps the most remarkable of the performances heard here for the first time. Perhaps inspired by Coleman's **Double Quartet**, it's a meeting of two distinct pieces of music as well as two groups. Favors and Mitchell begin with a fast rhythmic dance figure, played by bass and flute with shouted punctuations, that sounds middle eastern. It's eventually displaced by a keening lyrical figure from Jarman, that's picked up by the other horns in an impassioned ensemble.

The Art Ensemble could always generate heat, but what's more interesting is the way it could create form. There is frequently a quality of ritual in the improvised architecture itself. One of the strongest things one notices here is the different players' abilities to contribute structure to long improvisatory pieces. Favors and Bowie are standouts here, but Barker is very good at it too, as was Wilson before him, using rhythmic patterns and figures as reference points.

DISK E

The final disk includes the studio sessions from March of 1968 that produced the record *Congliptious* by the Roscoe Mitchell Art Ensemble. The original recording had

A REVIEW BY STUART BROOMER

a side of three solo pieces by Favors, Mitchell and Bowie. These are now supplemented by an earlier home recording of an additional Mitchell solo piece.

Solo, recorded in Mitchell's apartment in late November of 1967, has some rough edges, but it reveals just how far Mitchell was willing to take the constructivist approach to a solo music. After a thematic statement on alto he switches to several instruments—clarinet, bulb horns, harmonica and various percussion instruments—gradually building a piece out of thematic fragments and timbral contrasts. It's a kind of miniature of the same kind of thinking he was bringing to the group music.

What's most interesting now about the solo pieces is the relationship to the group formation of language. In effect, the solo pieces are made possible by the group's concentration on evolving structures and timbral contrasts, developing the habits sufficiently to sustain these unaccompanied improvisations. As unusual as the original recording was in devoting one side to three solos, the solos testify to the coherence of the group's approach, to its concentration on timbre and silence as compositional tools and the linear assemblage of contrasting segments. Mitchell's solo piece, *TKHKE*, is the most remarkable of these, building a whole music around shifts in voice and limited rhythmic and melodic materials.

A week later, Mitchell, Bowie, Favors and drummer Robert Crowder assembled in the recording studio to produce the second side of the *Congliptious* record and two short pieces for release as a 45 rpm "single." The major quartet piece from the session is the unseamed performance of *Congliptious* and *Old*. *Congliptious*, some of the most radical and original music heard here, is constantly shifting its instrumental groupings, moods, and tempos and setting different sounds in play, including bass saxophone, zither, marimba and siren. The increasing emphasis on shifting sounds and relations is part of a continu-

ing break with thematic improvising and even the traditional concept of the musical phrase. There are moments in *Congliptious* when the whole band—horns and bass included—manage to sound like an enormous and complex drum kit. After a fine stretch of group percussion and a short explosion of Ayler-like intensity, *Congliptious* resolves itself by shifting to the theme of *Old*, a piece that is now treated with far broader humour and greater confidence than it was a year earlier. The resolution is symptomatic of the Art Ensemble's place at the end of a revolution. Their work tends to move towards order, albeit ironically, rather than away from it.

The recordings for the proposed single (the sixties were nothing if not optimistic) are, like *Old*, a look backwards. There are three takes of a Mitchell piece called *Carefree* and a single take of Bowie's *Tomas-matoes*, his tribute to the James Brown band of the time. *Carefree*, written in the early sixties, strongly invokes Mitchell's source in Coleman, as *Ornette* had on the *Sound* record. It's engaging in a derivative way.

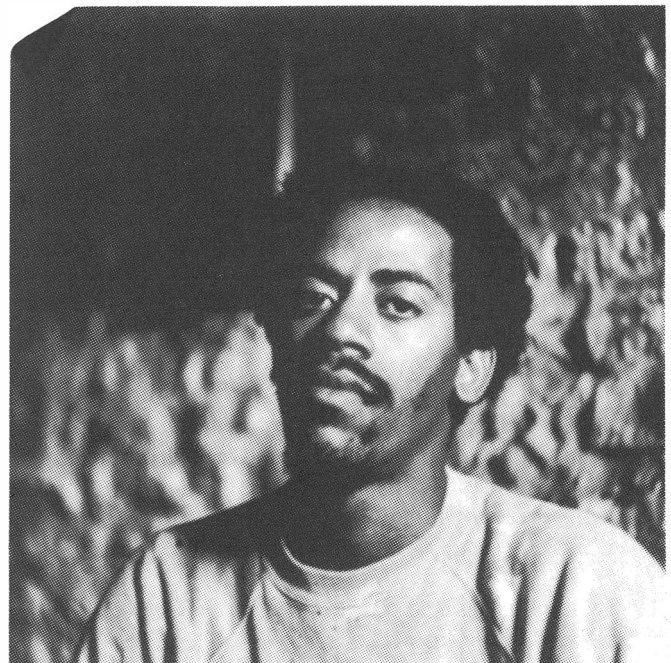
While these players would grow more fluent as soloists in later years, and their group forms would become more assured, the early music heard here is hardly immature. In some ways these recordings possess an exploratory spirit that could later only decline. While Art Ensemble performances tended to grow more mannered throughout the history of the group, here there's a sense of the music often being shaped in really improvisatory

ways, with a constant sense of evolving detail, and real friction and surprise among the elements. There isn't the kind of pervading irony that would sometimes come to dominate, nor is there the sometimes overwhelming sense of the elegy, though the elegiac is certainly present here. Here free improvisation is still seen as a possibility for liberation, an unhinging from the past. At times, Lester Bowie could later sound as if he only played with his tongue in his cheek, but here his play is continuously directed, more formal, more concerned with shaping a new music. The ceremonial character heard here, the sense of invocation, could later become merely theatrical.

These recordings provide a hearing of some fine music that has been hard to find, and much more that hasn't been heard at all. There's some strong, original thinking about how to make music, and it's heard here in its most vigorous and immediate form. □

The set is an edition of 2500 copies. Available from NESSA RECORDS, Box 394, Whitehall, MI, USA 49461. Phone (616) 894-4088.

PHILLIP WILSON



JOE WILDER: WHERE MUSIC BEGINS

ARTICLE BY PHILLIP D. ATTEBERRY

JOE WILDER LAUGHINGLY CREDITS HIS “REDISCOVERY” TO APPEARANCES ON THE COSBY SHOW. “I PORTRAYED A GRANDFATHER,” HE SAYS, “AND GRANDFATHERLY TYPES LOOK WISE AND DEEP.”

In truth, this “rediscovery” has more to do with the closing of Broadway’s **42nd Street**, where, for eight and a half years, Wilder held the lead trumpeter’s chair. Since then, he has recorded more, appeared more in clubs and at festivals, and attracted new interest.

At seventy, Wilder’s rich tone, for which he has always been noted, is well preserved, which he attributes to rigorous training and sustained practice habits. “My first serious musical studies were with Frederick Griffin, a classical cornetist in Philadelphia who taught my father. Mr. Griffin was from the old school. If you didn’t get it the first or second time, he beat it into you. He took me through every note of the Arvin books until I got them right, frightening me to death, but teaching me the importance of precision and self-discipline.

“Later, I got into Philadelphia’s Mastbaum High School, which was known for its music, and learned more varied practice techniques. From there I’ve never stopped. At age forty, I completed a B.A. at the Manhattan School of Music. Shortly thereafter, I studied advanced technique with Joseph Alessi, first trumpet with the NBC Symphony, and later orchestral repertoire with Bill Vacchiano, first trumpet with the Philharmonic.

“Good discipline has served me well as I’ve gotten older. I still practice two hours a day, constantly devising new challenges for myself. When I practice the flugelhorn, for instance, I often do so from french horn exercises and orchestral studies. Those force me to think of the instrument’s darker quality and clarify in my imagination the flugelhorn’s uniqueness from the brighter brass instruments. Such exercises also keep me sharp on my transpositions.

“At other times, I get scores from classical pieces—symphonies and smaller brass ensembles—put the recordings on my CD player, and follow along. I do that of an evening mostly. Then the next morning while the sounds and the structures are still in my head, I take a brass part and practice it.”

Yet despite his classical training and credentials, Wilder has always been better known as a jazz artist, a fact he modestly attributes to luck.

“The jazz gods, so to speak, have put me in good places at good times. My connections at the Mastbaum school, for example, led to a spot in Les Hite’s band when I was nineteen. That, in turn, led to a job with Lionel Hampton, whom I joined about the time *Flyin’ Home* became a hit. My tastes and style weren’t raucous enough for Lionel’s band, and I didn’t find playing for him a challenge, but my reputation benefited from the band’s popularity. Then in 1954 I landed with Basie just before his first European tour. Once again, the experience wasn’t challenging because we mainly played the blues, but the tour represented a big moment in jazz. It was like putting Basie on the world’s stage, and I was fortunate to have been there. And then of course I went to Russia with Benny Goodman in 1962, the first time jazz was taken behind the Iron Curtain to any significant degree. All of us received recognition for that.”

Wilder regards this Russian tour as particularly eventful. “It’s hard for us to remember what the world was like in 1962. The cold war was really cold. The Cuban Missile Crisis nearly got us all blown up. And amid that the State Department sent us to Russia to improve cultural relations. They were momentous times, and I was very caught up in them.

“In the end, I think our Russian tour was successful. We demonstrated in a small way that people here are the same as people there, that we enjoy music just like they do, and, by extension, that we are human beings just like they are.

“My only disappointment about the tour was Benny himself. He was so busy being the King of Swing that he seldom associated with the rest of us. When we went into restaurants, the band typically sat at a large table and Benny by himself. He carried an American flag with a little wooden base in his pocket and sat it on his table at every meal. It’s not that I personally minded, for everybody is entitled to some idiosyncrasies, but part of our mission was to show the Russians through example how democracy works—that our country doesn’t have such a chasm between the people and its leaders. Benny’s behaviour undermined the point, but even so, the tour accomplished a lot.”

Wilder pursues photography as well as music and sees the two as compatible art forms. “If I take a photograph which



PHOTOGRAPHY BY
ROSCOE ALLEN

captures a scene, person or object at a certain angle and in a certain light and context, that photograph conveys an impression to the viewer. Sometimes obviously, sometimes almost subliminally. Music is the same way, especially jazz. The solo I play one night will create one image, convey one impression. The next night, even if the song is the same, the musical phrases will be different, making the sound image different and the listener's impression different.

"The other similarity, which applies to all art, is that the impression I try to convey in a song or a photograph will not be precisely the impression the viewers or the listeners receive. But that's OK. It simply means that pictures and music mean different things to different people—or different things to the same person at different times. And that's good. It's what makes us all different."

Surprisingly, when Wilder considers his enduring musical accomplishments, he thinks not of jazz but of Broadway, where he opened doors for subsequent black musicians.

"Before the 1950s, hardly any black musicians played on Broadway. But in 1950 I was asked to do **Alive and Kicking** with Carl Reiner and Jack Guilford. The producers needed me immediately, however, and I was obliged to give Noble Sissle, with whom I was playing at the Diamond Horseshoe, two weeks notice. So I explained the offer to Noble, and he let me go. 'It's time we get some black musicians on Broadway,' he said, 'so go ahead. If the show closes within five weeks, I'll give you your job back.' Well the show ran seven weeks, but Noble still took me back. A short time later, he let me go under similar conditions to play in **Guys and Dolls**, but that show ran three years.

"And they were important years. If nothing else, my presence demonstrated that black musicians can be talented and disciplined enough to perform week after week in a show. Anybody who knew music or human nature already knew that, but when long-standing barriers are coming down, it's good to have a constant example at hand. During the three years I played **Guys and Dolls**, several black musicians procured jobs on Broadway.

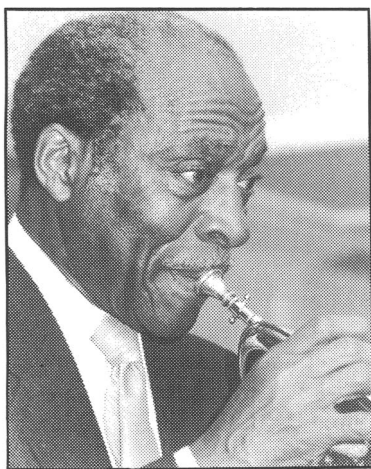
"Another barrier came down later while I was doing **Silk Stockings**. As the play was closing and the road show being organized, the conductor wanted me to stay on as lead trumpet. Up until then, how-

ever, black musicians hadn't gone with road shows because travelling with blacks was still sometimes difficult. So the producers faced a dilemma: they wanted to be fair to me, but they were also concerned about the show's welfare. So they went to Cole Porter himself. Cole said, 'Can he play?' Everybody said, 'Sure, he can play.' Cole said, 'That's what matters.' And I went on the road; we had a good tour, and before long blacks were routinely doing road shows."

Wilder doesn't agree with jazzmen who regard Broadway orchestras as pits of tedium. "I've played in a couple of shows that died after a few weeks. And I suppose if I had to play those scores for months or years, I would get bored with them. But a good show is a joy forever. **Most Happy Fella**, **Silk Stockings**, **Guys and Dolls**, and of course **42nd Street** ran for years. And I enjoyed them as much at the end as at the beginning. How can one complain if his job is to sit down every night and play the music of Cole Porter, Harry Warren, or Frank Loesser?

"The other joy about playing on Broadway is the quality of musicians one encounters. Broadway musicians are extraordinarily conscientious about giving every performance the precision and energy of opening night. One becomes a better musician by working with such people."

Wilder's reflective nature leads to particularly thoughtful assessments of jazz today. About experimental jazz he is cautious. "I'm not sure these experimental forms really are jazz, but that leads us to the biggest question of all: what is jazz? And I'm not articulate enough to get into that. Maybe no one is. Maybe jazz begins where words leave off. Maybe music begins where words leave off.



"It does seem to me, however, that these newer forms are anchored in technique rather than taste—if I may use such an old fashioned word. And even though 'taste' to one person can be 'trash' to another, 'taste' to me involves some fidelity to the music as it was originally conceived. That's what I don't see in experimental 'jazz.'

"But don't misunderstand me. Experimental 'jazz' is being pursued by talented musicians, and I don't question their innovative impulses. Nor do I doubt that in the long run jazz specifically and music generally will benefit from them. But that's the long run. In the short run, some confusion and aimlessness has resulted. And yet innovators are risk takers, and risk takers never know where or how they will end up. That's true in sports and medicine and industry—and it's true in music. The first attempts to fly were pitiful, but look what they've led to. And I see experimental 'jazz' the same way. Future generations will assess these forms better because they will have more of a context for them."

As for traditional and mainstream jazz, Wilder sees some hazards. "Their long-term survival will depend largely upon exposure. People's tastes are influenced by what they hear. My fear for mainstream jazz is that it won't get enough exposure to survive in an increasingly competitive musical marketplace. Or, what is more likely, it will receive enough exposure to survive, but not enough to flourish."

Joe Wilder and I spoke more than a year ago on a blistering July afternoon in Indianapolis. I asked him about his future plans, and he said only that "there is still plenty to do." And indeed there seems to be. Some months later, Evening Star released his CD, *Alone with Just My Dreams*, his first solo album in thirty years. The following December, a night or two after I received this recording in the mail, I sat by the fire perusing the liner notes and listening to Garrison Keillor's *A Prairie Home Companion*. The "Coffee Club Orchestra" had been particularly good that evening on a series of Ellington standards, and after their final number, Keillor noted, "for the folks at home," that the orchestra had that evening been featuring the trumpet of Joe Wilder.

Indeed there is still plenty to do.

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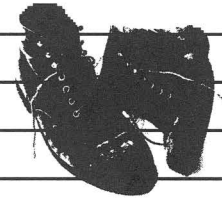
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JAHZZ WADADA LEO SMITH

ARTICLE BY ROBERT HICKS

TRUMPETER WADADA LEO SMITH IS A GREAT LYRICIST

ON HIS HORN. HIS SOUND EXPRESSES THE INNERMOST SANCTUM OF JAZZ, A LIBERATING FORCE WHICH SPANS THE AFRICAN SAVANNAH TO ASIA ONTO THE DELTA WHERE SMITH GREW UP IN LELAND, MISSISSIPPI, ONWARD TO EUROPE WHERE MANY OF ITS INSTRUMENTS AND MUSICAL STRUCTURES ORIGINATED. THE ONLY IMPORTANT DEFINING QUALITY OF JAZZ, FOR SMITH, LIES IN ITS SPONTANEITY, IN THAT MOMENT WHEN THE MUSICIAN COMMUNICATES DIRECTLY TO THE LISTENER AS A DIRECT LINK TO GOD.

"Jazz is a spiritual music," says Smith. "Its expression, identity, goal and aim is to liberate people from bondage. It takes place in the act of living. It's not something hidden away in the mountains, in the trees, or in some monastery. It's activated inside one's life with a direct link to God. Through the music, it's directed straight to the listener without any intermediary."

Smith's latest solo effort, *Kulture Of Jazz* (ECM) marks his return to the European label which helped spawn critical attention to him in the early eighties with the release of *Divine Love*, an all-star outing of sorts for its time, featuring bassist Charlie Haden, vibist Bobbie Naughton, flutist Dwight Andrews, and trumpeters Lester Bowie and Kenny Wheeler. In 1981, Smith won the 28th annual Down Beat magazine critics poll as trumpeter deserving wider recognition.

WITH HIS LOW-PROFILE DEMEANOUR, aversion to the press and independent spirit, especially in terms of recording on his own Kabell label, Smith fell into relative obscurity despite excellent recordings throughout the eighties. The hard-to-find *Procession Of The Great Ancestry* on the British Chief label was Smith's only recording on CD until recently. Black Saint recently reissued *Go In Numbers*, originally done in 1982 with Smith's group New Delta Ahkri. His duo CD, *Cosmos Has Spirit*, with Japanese percussionist Sabu Toyozumi, is available from Scissors, 2-12-17 Atago Ageo-City, Saitama, Japan, recorded live at the Hair Salon Fuji in 1992.

In the mid-eighties, Smith began to study Rastafari and now integrates its spiritual principles into his thinking about jazz and into his music, as can be seen from his essay/poem, *Kulture Of Jahzz*, enclosed in the *Kulture Of Jazz* CD. Smith's first recording to reflect these new insights and direction was *Rastafari* (Sackville) in 1983. With *Human Rights* (Gramm/Kabell) in 1986, Smith began to incorporate reggae's deep structures into a more electric sound. His cassette, *Jah Music* (Kabell) continued in this vein, but with greater political awareness of injustices occurring throughout the African diaspora.

Humanism in a positive light of freedom and spontaneity envelopes Smith's thinking not only about jazz but concerning life.

"Spirituality is how humans cultivate themselves in the highest realm," says Smith. "The religious content has to do with returning to the source. It's a realignment. In the African American tradition, you can't separate the two. One realigns you to the homebase which is God, to return to the source. The spiritual centre is a system of cultivation where this return is enhanced by certain principles. The religious, spiritual and even the mundane in our tradition can't be dissected. It's all one experience. The human is the centre of the universe in its spiritual context."

Smith, 52, grew up in Leland, Mississippi, where he played trumpet with his stepfather, Alex "Little Bill" Wallace, a blues guitarist and singer. Many a bluesman would come over to the Smith's house to jam, including B.B. King, Son Thomas and Little Milton, the latter whom Smith later giggered with in Chicago. Charlie Patton's gospel-inflected blues later became the structural principle underlying Smith's rhythm-unit theory, which dealt with duration of

sound, its compound elements and silence. Each musician in Smith's New Delta Ahkri would take his own measure on the progressive units of sound and rhythm, so that no two musicians were ever playing in the same way. Each player was also free to embellish his line of measurement with improvisation at any point.

Leo started on mellophone, but soon switched to trumpet, preferring its warmer sound. Between working in a local marching band and stage band at school, Smith found time to interpret Ellington's *Mood Indigo* and *Satin Doll* in an orchestra. Smith got his first professional gig though in a blues band led by Smokey Joe.

From his early years to today, jazz has always been a universal musical vibration for Smith, encompassing the recorded sounds he heard as a youth by the likes of Louis Armstrong, King Oliver, Miles Davis, Clifford Brown, Fats Navarro, Harry James, Benny Goodman, Duke Ellington, Coltrane, Monk and Nat "King" Cole, to traditional African and Asian string music, Indonesian gamelan and Haitian and Brazilian percussion, all of which he later studied at Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut.

AS A MEMBER of Chicago's Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians, Smith appeared on landmark recordings by Anthony Braxton, with the Creative Construction Company, a band that included Muhal Richard Abrams, Braxton, Steve McCall, Richard Davis, and Leroy Jenkins, to his solo and group work with New Delta Ahkri and tours with Abrams' Experimental Orchestra, which in the summer of 1993 reunited at the Verona Jazz Festival in Italy.

During his AACM years, Smith began increasingly to draw on the European classical tradition in his compositions, a trend he continued during his early years in Connecticut from 1971 to the mid-eighties under the auspices of his Creative Musicians Improvisors Forum. Their pivotal recording as a unit came in 1981 on CMIF Records. Smith regards Stravinsky, Bartok, Debussy, Schoenberg and Webern as composers who looked to other cultures for their inspiration. That type of multicultural approach shows not only in the timbre and textural qualities of Smith's music, but in his embrace of diverse instrumentation and structural principles. Central to it all though is his spirituality.

"SPIRITUALITY IS HOW HUMANS CULTIVATE THEMSELVES IN THE HIGHEST REALM

In St. George, a French composer who was a contemporary of Mozart and Haydn, Smith sees a link between an African culture and European thought. St. George, born of African and French parents in the 18th century, was the first Frenchman to compose string quartets. On American terrain, Smith sees Scott Joplin and Charles Ives as compatriots in a tradition that points to a world music. Black composers William Grant Still, who composed the first symphonies based on the blues, Ulysses Kay, Olly Wilson, Hale Smith, T.J. Anderson and Talib Rasul Hakim (contemporaries of Smith) all draw on other cultures to produce their vision of an African diaspora.

Smith notes that in jazz and world music inventive uses of traditional group instruments and the creation of new percussive devices are the hallmarks of creation and originality in jazz. They're the backbone of a musician's forward-looking improvisations. They're what creates the tradition anew without depending solely on technical replications of another era's innovations.

LEO SMITH'S SELECTION OF INSTRUMENTS is a vehicle to present his expression of the jazz idiom. In the history of jazz, many turning points have come with the development of a variety of instruments from Jelly Roll Morton's use of saxophone to replace the clarinet as the main instrument in his bands, to Duke Ellington's introduction of baritone saxophone, bass clarinet and harp into his orchestra, according to Smith. Coltrane used the African mbira on "Om." Gillespie brought Latin sounds to the fore in jazz with his use of Chano Pozo's conga. The AACM invented their own percussion instruments and humorously evoked their creative flair with toy instruments. Trumpeter Marvin Hannibal Peterson used a Japanese koto.

"People have been able to introduce new dimensions of sound and new concepts through instruments," says Smith.

On *Kulture Of Jazz*," Smith uses trumpet, flugelhorn, bamboo flute, koto, mbira, harmonica, percussion and the human voice imaginatively. Not since *Creative Music-1* (Kabell) and *Solo Music: Ahkreation* (Kabell) in the early seventies has Smith explored the quietly meditative soundscapes of his lyricism. With the added instrumentation on this new release, that spiritual realm becomes even more profoundly beautiful.

"I use these instruments in a different way, not as background or texture, but as main instruments," he says. "What's important is how something's being said and the direction it takes."

THE REGENERATIVE CAMP of Wynton Marsalis and the so-called young lions who employ New Orleans, bebop and sometimes Coltrane, Miles Davis and Ornette Coleman as their source material, Smith regards as a bastardization of the history of jazz. What stands at the forefront of great musicianship for Smith is not only technique and a mastery of tradition, but an ability to create innovative, new music without having to depend upon tradition as a mold.

"The young lions are emulating frozen moments in the master's history," says Smith. "The real history of jazz is not about a frozen moment, but about being born into creation and taking on their shoulders a fresh view of that creation. These so-called young lions have only looked at the technical side of music which gives them the ability to copy or emulate frozen moments in the history."

"Wynton Marsalis is an excellent trumpet player and he can emulate technical things. But he cannot create a musical idea without first hearing a musical idea from someone else like Miles Davis or Clifford Brown among others. His method in jazz is opposed to that tradition. The universal power upon which jazz is built has been usurped by the commercial and economic industry. As a result, it's given us paper tigers that really don't bite."

Last fall, Smith was selected by committee to assume the newly established Dizzy Gillespie Chair at Cal Arts, where he now teaches courses in music after previously being on faculty at Bard, and the University of New Haven. Before moving to California with his new wife, Harumi, Smith performed last summer in Japan and Korea with shamisen player, Sato Michihiro, bassist Motoharu Yoshizawa, Korean drummer Daehwan Kim, pianist Yosuke Yamashita and percussionist Sabu Toyozumi on a Asian Cultural Council Fellowship.

Just before our conversation, Smith had returned from Europe, where he performed at the Berlin Jazz Festival with Peter Kowald's Global Village. He was preparing for two major concerts at Cal Arts to celebrate the creation of the Gillespie Chair, endowed by Herb Alpert. He expects a summer 1994 tour of Europe with Sabu Toyozumi and bassist Leonard Jones, an early AACM member. Smith also anticipates an ECM sponsored tour in the States and Europe to promote *Kulture Of Jazz*. And he plans to record next summer with a 10-piece ensemble, consisting of rotating players. He also appears on saxist David Bindman and poet Tyrone Henderson's forthcoming *Strawman's Dance*. □

New York City based writer **Robert Hicks**, writes a weekly music column for the *Villager*, and contributes to *Coda*, *Downbeat*, *Jazziz*, *Bass Player*, *Guitar Player* and *Jazz Critique* (Japan). He also reviews dance for *Attitude* and *The Village Voice*.



ADOLPHE SAX'S DREAM

ADOLPHE SAX INVENTED THE SAXOPHONE IN 1846 BEFORE JAZZ MUSIC EXISTED. HE DIDN'T INVENT WHAT IS GENERICALLY KNOWN AS JAZZ BUT HIS INSTRUMENT BECAME ITS LEADING VOICE, THE BUTT OF CONTEMPTUOUS CRITICISM IN EARLY DAYS AND THE GLORY OF SOME OF ITS MOST SUBLIME DEVELOPMENTS AS THE MUSIC EVOLVED INTO GLOBAL ACCEPTANCE.

Born 58 years after Sax's prototype, **COLEMAN HAWKINS** became the first grand master of the instrument. His 50-year career as a musician took the saxophone from something of a joke in its burling, stumbling, jerky role in early bands like Fletcher Henderson's in the 1920s through the heyday of swing, in that very same band, a decade later, to the edge of innovation in the 1940s, settling into a groove known as mainstream, then darting out into tributaries of modal and chordal novelties before the master's death in 1969. Many followed, and there have been other masters of his and different styles, but most owe something to the Bean who lasted longer and covered wider musical territory than any of them.

Good fortune and Bob Koester have brought us a vivid portrait of the tenor saxophonist at a vital time, a musical crossroads, when his palette contained old and new colours, in the form of the CD *Rainbow Mist*, Delmark DD459. Actually Hawkins was breaking revolutionary ground as early as 1933 in *Queer Notions*, a weird (for its time) experiment by Henderson's band. But he went much farther in the 1940s after his return to the U.S. from Europe with the imperishable 1939 Victor recording of *Body And Soul*. But there is another *Body And Soul*, lesser known and heard, yet an equal tour de force, namely *Rainbow Mist*, recorded for the Apollo label on Feb.22, 1944. The piece is a masterpiece of controlled passion, taken a little faster than the famous *Body And Soul*, technically flawless, bolder and bigger in tone, though not as dynamically shaded as its predecessor. Which is better? If the 1939 version didn't exist or you never heard it, *Rainbow* (named after a Harlem music store but essentially the same tune) would be hailed as Hawkins' seminal recording. On the first one, the final chorus is a little more passionate, but the coda is better on *Rainbow*. I'll return to the rest of the disc later, as it moves away from the mainstream theme Hawkins had established up to that date. Many of his and Adolph Sax's followers have been content to stay in that groove, as a clutch of recent CD releases demonstrates.

Closest among these to the mainstream Hawkins sound is that of **EDDIE LOCKJAW DAVIS**, whose impassioned, highly vocal style on tenor is truly sexy - Lockjaw made love on his instrument. On Storyville STCD 5009 Davis is featured with a small group led by the French alto saxophonist Michel Attenoux. The menu is chiefly standard fare but be prepared for some surprising cooking. Not only is Davis on top form, warmly caressing ballads, thrusting lustily at faster tempos, but the accompanying group plays superbly. The ensemble work is unusually crisp, driven by the tough drumming of Teddy Martin. Who he? Whoever, he's great. Attenoux himself does a straight but moving *Lush Life*, and joins Davis in a rollicking *Flying Home*. Davis is tender on *What's New*, throatily aggressive on *Splanky*. This reissue from a 1975 lp session is highly recommended.

The most beautiful tone of any saxophonist was surely that of altoist **JOHNNY HODGES**, a consummate musician in the orchestra of Duke Ellington, not always so successful on his own. Johnny Hodges at *Sportspalast, Berlin*, on Pablo 2PACD 2620-102-2 contains just about the worst recordings he ever made. It's not all his fault. He is only mediocre. Others, including Ellington sidemen Ray Nance, Lawrence Brown, Aaron Bell and Sam Woodyard, just can't get it together and pianist Al Williams doesn't help them. They are careless, out of tune, and out of sorts through almost all the numbers on the first of the two discs in this 1961 concert set. The only one who is consistent is Harry Carney, that ultimate pro, on baritone sax, and he leads the group into better, though predictable, things on the second disc (did these numbers come after intermission and a lot of black coffee?) which has nice Brown, and Hodges sounding more as if he cared what was happening. But I can't help wondering why Fantasy reissued this one when there is so much other great stuff available in the Norman Granz archives.

Another passionate performer is **BUDDY TATE**, whose tenor style is rooted in a slightly

different tradition, that of Texas and the Midwest. Tate is the nominal leader of an all star group including Johnny Guarneri, Vic Dickenson and Doc Cheatham on *Jive at Five*, Storyville STCD 5010, with two extra takes that did not appear on the original issue, a Mahogany lp recorded in 1975. Trumpeter Cheatham, as almost always when he gets into a small group, is a delight of taste and filigree brass, Dickenson a burry thistle on trombone. Tate sighs and rocks his way through a program of standards; all is held together by the terrific drumming of Oliver Jackson. Particularly enjoyable is a tricky version of *Sweethearts on Parade* and Tate's ballad, *There Goes My Heart*.

Tate shows up again, and to even better effect, on Sackville SKCD2 3028, *Saturday Night Function*, along with Canadian multi-saxophonist Jim Galloway and his KayCee buddy Jay McShann on piano. **THE SACKVILLE ALL STARS** are rounded out by Don Thompson on bass and Terry Clarke on drums. This 1981 session in Toronto was always one of my favourite mainstream lps (and disc jockey Clyde Gilmour's, too, as he picked the title track for his signature tune) and here it is, resplendent with new, updated sleeve notes but, regrettably, no more music than the 43 minutes that appeared on the original issue. Weren't there any extra takes? Although short measure for the money, it's a delightful session, with everyone on top form. Tate and Galloway seem to have a natural symbiosis, and one of the highlights is the two of them on tenor doing *Arkansas Blues*. Galloway also plays baritone (*on Rosalie*) and soprano, and Tate picks up his clarinet with delectable results on three tracks. McShann has several fine, rolling solos, notably on *Trouble in Mind*. *Saturday Night Function*, an old Ellington number that featured Barney Bigard and growling brass, is given a most attractive and refined treatment by all concerned. Very highly recommended for any night of the week.

All-CANADIAN ALL STARS appear on another Sackville disc, *European Concert*, SKCD2-3055, recorded at Baden in Switzer-

**COLEMAN HAWKINS • EDDIE LOCKJAW DAVIS • JOHNNY HODGES
JIM GALLOWAY • FRASER MACPHERSON • WOODY HERMAN**

REVIEWS BY FRANK RUTTER

land in 1992. This time Galloway and Clarke are joined by Ed Bickert, guitar, Dave Young, bass, Oliver Jones, piano, and tenor saxophonist Fraser MacPherson, and we get our 60 minutes' worth on this disc. Sadly, it serves as MacPherson's recorded epitaph: the Vancouver saxophonist died of cancer last fall at the age of 65. Although he was suffering when he went on this European tour, his performance is gutsy as well as charming. A master of melody, beautifully relaxed, he comes off better than the ebullient Galloway on tunes like *There Is No Greater Love* and the jaunty *Sideways*, a Leroy Levett number written for Johnny Hodges. Several times he drags the group back on track when Galloway or Jones become a bit wayward (Jones' solo on *Judy* can only be described as eccentric) although the Scottish-Canadian reedman shines on soprano on *The Jeep Is Jumpin'* and *Things Ain't What They Used To Be*, the latter with a fiery solo by Bickert. Galloway sounds if anything more at ease when he picks up the baritone, booting the band along on *P-Town*. The repertoire is heavily Ellingtonian, which always suited MacPherson, though he could, and did, play anything - in fact it was probably impossible to stump him on any tune you could call. Although he preferred to spend most of his time on the West Coast, he was never out of his league in any company, anywhere, and his warm, honeyed tone lives on thanks to this disc. His solo ballad, *All My Life*, abetted ably by Bickert, is a fitting personal coda.

What the two preceding discs prove, if anyone any longer remains in the slightest doubt, is that Canadian saxophonists can hold their own in master company. Their rhythm sections don't slouch, either.

Four tenor saxophone stars - Al Cohn, Sal Nistico, Bill Perkins and Flip Phillips - appear on **WOODY HERMAN's** *Four Others*, Concord CCD 4180, a program of standard fare with Herman on alto and an excellent rhythm section of John Bunch, George Duvivier and Don Lamond, recorded in 1981. What can one say? They all play well and sail through their repertoire with ease and the advantage of excellent recorded sound. But it's all just a bit predictable, and the short measure of 43 minutes this time is about enough, even though these guys explore regions beyond mainstream.

Which brings us back to **COLEMAN HAWKINS** and his 1944 recordings for Apollo on the Delmark disc. If *Rainbow Mist* is a classic of mainstream, the other tracks are bold experiments, for their time, and an extension of the master saxophonist's art into the bebop era. *Woody'n You*, of Feb. 16, 1944, is in fact, often called the first bop recording, on which Hawkins is joined by Dizzy Gillespie, Clyde Hart and Max Roach. There are four more compelling tracks by this group, *Yesterdays*, *Feeling Zero*, *Bu Dee Daht*, and *Disorder at the Border*. Less adventurous despite the exalted company, in which Ben Webster and Georgie Auld join Hawkins, are three sextet tracks; yet they serve only to demonstrate again that Hawkins was the master - as on *Porgy*. The disc is rounded out with three numbers by Auld's big band, good music by any standard, but a bit of an anti-climax after the earlier treats. Although modern noise reduction systems don't always enhance material issued on often scratchy small-label 78s like these Apollo sides of the mid-1940s, in this case the results are extremely good. More Apollos, please.

This, then, has been a celebration of the joy of sax. Adolphe never dreamed his invention would be put to such use. But he would surely have approved if he could have heard this music.

PHOTOGRAPHS: **COLEMAN HAWKINS** (Top) • Len Dobbin
BUDDY TATE • Gerard Futrick

ABOUT THE WRITER: FRANK RUTTER has been a journalist for forty years, in Canada, the United States & Europe. He resides in Vancouver, and in the eighties wrote a regular jazz column for the *Vancouver Sun*.



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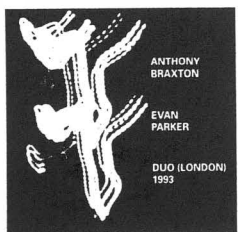
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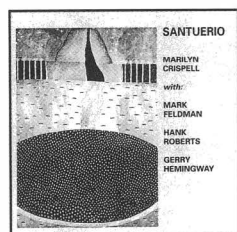
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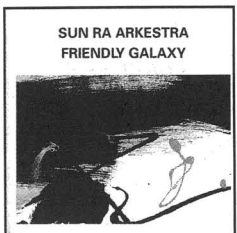
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MosaicTM
RECORDS

A COMPLETE UPDATE BY JOHN NORRIS

MOSAIC RECORDS IS A COLLECTOR'S DREAM COME TRUE. THEIR STATE OF THE ART REISSUES ARE A BLESSING TO THE SERIOUS LISTENER WHO IS CONTINUALLY FRUSTRATED BY THE HAPHAZARD HANDLING OF JAZZ CLASSICS BY THE MAJOR RECORD COMPANIES. WHEN MOSAIC WAS LAUNCHED TEN YEARS AGO JAZZ RECORDINGS WERE IN THE DOLDRUMS IN THE U.S. AND FEW CLASSICS WERE AVAILABLE DOMESTICALLY. COLLECTORS WERE BUSY BUYING EUROPEAN AND JAPANESE REISSUES - THEY WERE INTELLIGENTLY ASSEMBLED AND THE PRESSINGS WERE BETTER.

Mosaic was the brain child of Michael Cuscuna and Charlie Lourie. Their mutual love of the the "Blue Note Sound" had resulted in them both working for United Artists - the then owners of that catalogue. They managed to squeeze out of the company a series of two-lp sets which included sessions unreleased by Blue Note's original owners. Cuscuna was also compiling releases for the Japanese licensees of Blue Note.

Their frustration, as committed jazz afficianadoes, led to them launching Mosaic. Through their association with EMI they were able to lease classics of the **Blue Note** and **Pacific Jazz** catalogues, and issue them in complete chronological order, and with the addition of many previously unissued titles.

Box sets by Thelonious Monk, Gerry Mulligan, Albert Ammons/Meade Lux Lewis, Chet Baker and Clifford Brown were the foundation upon which Mosaic built its unique concept. Each production began with a search for the best source material in the vaults. Meticulous care in all phases of production has been coupled with extensive commentary on the music, which is then attractively packaged in well designed boxes.

Every Mosaic production is a genuine "limited edition". Their agreements with the companies limit the quantities worldwide in most cases to between five and eight thousand copies. The time span of these agreements varies, however. As Charlie Lourie explained "Initially we were given lengthy leases - which gave us a good shot at selling out of an item. Many of the early titles in the catalogue are now sold out. Today the situation has changed dramatically. Most companies are now less willing to give us a long sell off period. Consequently we will be forced to withdraw titles before they have reached their cut off mark. Another factor affecting the continued availability of Mosaic titles is the big cost of the packaging. We are now in a position where we have to look closely when trying to decide whether we should make another print run of a title which has been in the catalogue for a while and is only moving slowly.

The Mosaic catalogue has drawn upon masters controlled by EMI, Polygram, CBS/Sony, DA Music (Candid), MCA, Master Jazz, RCA and Commodore. The only music Mosaic actually owns is the Charlie Parker/Dean Benedetti material.

The music covers the entire spectrum of jazz ranging, as it does, from the New Orleans music of George Lewis to the innovations of the 1960s by Don Cherry, Charles Mingus and Cecil Taylor.

Major accomplishments of Mosaic include their issuing, in various packages, the entire pre-bop Blue Note catalogue and massive sets of Nat King Cole's Capitol Trio recordings and The Complete Commodore Recordings.

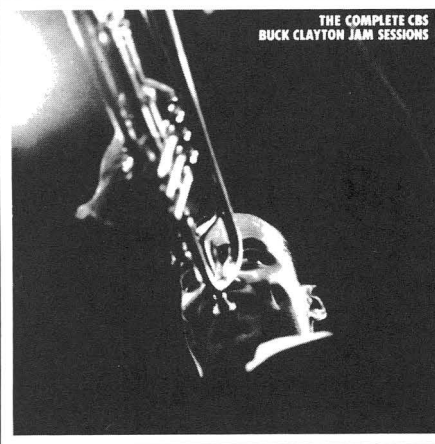
The company's headquarters is a modern warehouse building tucked away on a small street in a mixed residential and commercial section of Stamford, Connecticut, sandwiched between the expressway and the ocean. Can it really be a coincidence that Mosaic is located on Melrose Place - even though it is a continent away from the former home of Contemporary/Good Time Jazz Records where Lester Koenig had the same high standards as Mosaic!

The two owners share an office which seems far too small. Most of the space is devoted to the ever expanding inventory. A small but dedicated staff is on hand to process orders. It can be a hive of activity once newly prepared items are available or it can be on the quiet side between releases.

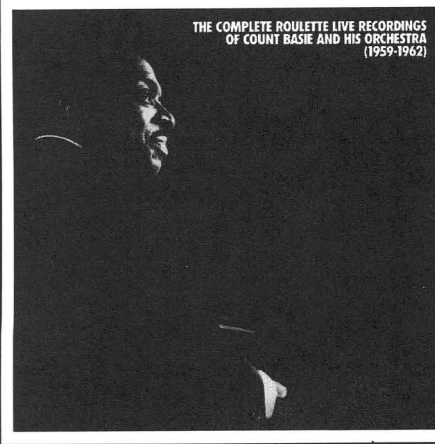
MOSAIC BEGAN LIFE as an lp only company. Several of their productions have never been converted to CD (because of the terms of their licences) and this includes the monumental *Complete Commodore Recordings*. There are 66 lps in three very large boxes. Never before has this material sounded so good but equally exciting is the large amount of unissued material by such



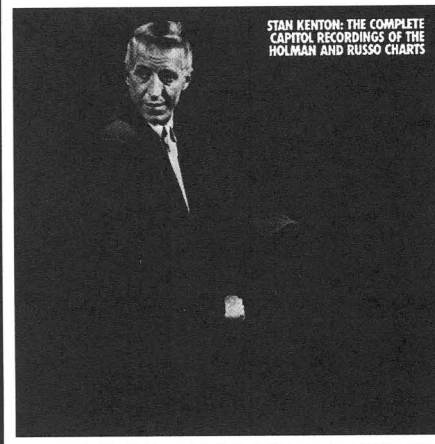
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CHARLES MINGUS SESSIONS



THE COMPLETE CBS
BUCK CLAYTON JAM SESSIONS



THE COMPLETE ROULETTE LIVE RECORDINGS
OF COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA
(1959-1962)



STAN KENTON: THE COMPLETE
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HOLMAN AND RUSSO CHARTS

JOHNNY HODGES • CHARLES MINGUS

pianists as Jess Stacy, Joe Bushkin, Joe Sullivan, Mel Powell and George Zack. The label is best known, of course, for its many Eddie Condon and satellite sessions under the leadership of such artists as Wild Bill Davison, Max Kaminsky, Bobby Hackett, Muggsy Spanier, George Brunies and others. Equally important are the landmark sessions featuring such Swing masters as Chu Berry, Coleman Hawkins and Lester Young. Willie the Lion Smith's definitive recordings are on Commodore and so, too, are Edmond Hall's sessions with Teddy Wilson and the early solo recordings of Ralph Sutton. Nearly all the Commodore sessions were produced by Milt Gabler who began slowly in 1938. Volume Two, which only covers 15 months (1944-1945) is the most concentrated period of recording activity for the label.

ANOTHER LP ONLY RELEASE is *The Complete Johnny Hodges Sessions 1951-1955*. This music, recorded by Norman Granz, covers the period when Hodges left the Ellington band. There are six lps and this set mirrors those issued in France in the 1970s. Mosaic has fine-tuned both the documentation and sequencing for this reissue. Hodges, the most individual and soulful of jazz alto saxophonists, is front and centre in these recordings. He and trombonist Lawrence Brown share much of the solo space with occasional moments for trumpeters Emmett Berry and Harold Baker. It's ironic that the band's only "hit" was *Castle Rock* - a feature for tenor saxophonist Al Sears! Flip Phillips and Ben Webster were recruited for some of the sessions which helps give the music a distinctive sound. Only *Used To Be Duke* from these sessions has been reissued on CD by Polygram.

Mosaic continue to offer lp editions of their releases. In 1993 they introduced an analog audiophile lp which is thicker than the conventional vinyl record. True believers assert that these lps sound better than CDs. In the case of *The Complete 1959 CBS Charles Mingus Sessions* they might be right because the Mosaic lps sound more natural than the titles issued by CBS on CD. Mosaic, of course, went back to the original tapes in preparing this release where they found four unissued alternative performances of *Better Git It In Your Soul*, *Bird Calls*, *Jelly Roll* and *New Know How*. Their set also uses the unedited performances first issued on "Nostalgia in Times Square".

The changes from the originally released performances are noted but fail to explain whether the editing was Mingus' choice or that of producer Teo Macero. While it is always nice to hear the full performances it gives some of these tunes a less focused view. This is classic Mingus and he had the ability (like Ellington) to coax superior performances from such musicians as John Handy, Booker Ervin, Jimmy Knepper, Horace Parlan and Roland Hanna. It's good to have this material back together in one place.

George Avakian was the early king of tape editing. CBS has already given us a look at how he went about this in the classic Louis Armstrong albums of W. C. Handy and Fats Waller material. In that case the edited performances are superior but remain unissued on CD outside of Japan.

GEORGE AVAKIAN PRODUCED the Buck Clayton Jam Sessions which were issued as five 12" lps. Mosaic, as far as possible, went back to the original tapes for their *Complete CBS Buck Clayton Jam Sessions*. This was sensational stuff when first issued - here were performances which took advantage of the then new long playing record. (Actually Decca's Jazz Studio One was recorded slightly ahead of the first of these sessions). Avakian aimed to recreate in the studio the loose give and take of a jam session and the performances are built around jammed riff statements and the solo work of the all star casts under the nominal leadership of Buck Clayton. The original session tapes of *Robbins Nest* and *The Hucklebuck* were still intact but many of the others have disappeared. It was impossible, for instance, to separate the two performances of *Jumpin' At The Woodside*, recorded on different dates and edited together for release! Regardless of the post-performance manipulation (now an

BUCK CLAYTON • COUNT BASIE • STAN KENTON

integral part of most recording) this is superb music by some of the great jazz masters. Both Joe Newman and Ruby Braff are in superb form and respond positively to the challenges of their leader. Julian Dash, Coleman Hawkins and Buddy Tate are the tenor soloists. Lem Davis seems a curious choice on alto but solos effectively. While one might have expected trombonists of the stature of Vic Dickenson, Benny Morton and Dicky Wells to be at such sessions it is nice to hear the much underrated playing of Henderson Chambers and the vigorous drive of Trummy Young and Bennie Green. Sir Charles Thompson, Billy Kyle and Ken Kersey are all under represented on record so it is valuable to have their contributions to these sessions available again.

COUNT BASIE WAS THE SPIRITUAL GODFATHER of the Buck Clayton sessions and much of the same electricity was captured in the TV production of *The Sound Of Jazz*. His own band, by that time, was more tightly structured although some of the same spirit is evident in *The Complete Roulette Live Recordings of Count Basie and His Orchestra (1959-1962)*. The eight CDs cover one night in Miami, two nights at New York's Birdland, and four nights in Stockholm. Roulette issued three lps from all this material. The repertoire, of course, is reworked many times and some of the tunes were also recorded in the studio. Basie's Roulette contract sparked a resurgence in the band's musical fortunes with its principal arrangers (Neal Hefti, Quincy Jones, Frank Foster, Frank Wess) contributing a steady flow of new material. What separates the sessions are the changes in the band's personnel. Joe Newman and Joe Williams were still part of the band in 1959 in Miami. Budd Johnson is in the band at Birdland. By 1962, in Sweden, Eric Dixon had replaced Johnson, but the biggest difference was Louis Bellson sitting in the drum chair for that tour. Lovers of the Basie band will be enthused over the chance to hear six hours of new versions of familiar tunes as well as a number of charts which never made it to record before.

But it is the studio sessions which really define the skills of the band and their judiciously packaged lps made a dramatic impact when first issued. *The Atomic Basie, Chairman Of The Board, Basie - One More Time, Kansas City Suite* and *The Legend* (with scores by Benny Carter) and *Easin' It* (Frank Foster charts) are a summation of the band's brilliance but there's much more to listen to in Mosaic's restoration of *The Complete Roulette Studio Recordings of Count Basie and His Orchestra*. The 10 CD/15 lp set includes 21 previously unreleased tunes as well as seven which only appeared originally as singles. The material has been reassembled in recorded sequence and is a scintillating document of this band at the peak of its creative powers. Teddy Reig was an astute A&R man - he let the talent within the band express itself, provided a congenial studio environment and ensured that the music was well recorded. These recordings, while sounding totally different, have the same cachet as those made by Duke Ellington for Victor in 1940. By the end of the five year contract in 1962 the creative force had expended itself and the band's most individual voices had become prominent enough to do better on their own. Basie hung in for another twenty years but outside economic pressures prevented any continued level of musical consistency in the studio similar to what we have here. Many of these charts were to remain part of the band's repertoire as recognisable favourites for an audience who appreciated the brilliance of their original performances. The music has been lovingly restored and the sound quality matches the excellence of the music.

BENNY GOODMAN, unlike Basie and Ellington, discontinued running a full time band once the Swing Era was over. His career splintered into many different parts: periodic tours in front of big bands whose members were reading the old charts, small combo engagements and classical chamber performances. Through it all Goodman maintained the excellent standards he had established as a clarinetist. This is readily apparent in *The Complete Capitol Small Group Recordings 1944-1954* - a collection of less familiar Goodman performances which are now rescued from obscurity. Best known are the few 1948 titles with Wardell Gray when Goodman was flirting with

the unison lines of bebop although he had already explored similar horizons a decade earlier with Charlie Christian. Goodman's clarinet is best showcased in trio settings with Mel Powell, Jimmy Rowles and Teddy Wilson and some 1944 sessions with Jess Stacy the pianist. Capitol's ambivalent feelings about jazz surface a few times in this set but it is musically very satisfying. The high point is the two dates with Wilson and Jimmy Crawford. The drummer's brushwork ignites in Goodman tremendous fire. Only in the 1954 quintet sessions (which also feature Charlie Shavers or Ruby Braff) does one sense that Goodman is reworking his past. Mosaic dug up 12 unissued performances for this set and 14 more never made it to 12 inch lp let alone CD!

STAN KENTON'S BIG BAND covers much the same time span as Basie's but the music is quite different. The basic premise of Basie's band never changed while Kenton's band reflected the divergent musical ideas of its many arrangers. *The Complete Capitol Recordings of the Holman and Russo Charts* is widely considered to be one of the most innovative and exciting phases of the Kenton Band. While Russo's charts tended to be overloaded with Wagnerian complexity Bill Holman's charts were more firmly rooted in the Swing tradition and their contributions overlap - both as players and writers. This collection captures the Kenton band at its best for it features such stellar soloists as Art Pepper, Lee Konitz, Zoot Sims, Bill Perkins, Frank Rosolino, Conte Candoli, Sam Noto and Buddy Childers. As Kenton once proudly proclaimed: "This is an Orchestra".

On the other hand the solo pianist is an orchestra unto himself. This is especially true of pianists influenced by the early stride tradition or those who followed behind Cecil Taylor. *The Complete Master Jazz Piano Series* brings together all the sessions organized by the New York based company between 1969 and 1974 except for Earl Hines' *Duke Ellington* sessions (now reissued on a two CD set on New World 361/362-2). Hines is also present in this Mosaic set with twelve performances - two of which are issued for the first time (*No Blues Today, Panama*). Hines and Jay McShann are the most spontaneous (and most exciting) of the pianists represented here. At the other end of the spectrum are Claude Hopkins, Cliff Jackson and Teddy Wilson whose performances are full of

NAT KING COLE • LOUIS ARMSTRONG • SERGE CHALOFF

charm while sounding totally organized. Master Jazz (following an antiquated union system from the days of 78s) usually recorded four titles at a session. Sir Charles Thompson only managed two songs at his date. He and Sonny White were hopelessly under-recorded at that time. In fact this is the only session Sonny White ever made under his own name. Filling up this set are dates with still unknown pianists Keith Dunham and Gloria Hearn and two lengthy sessions by Ram Ramirez - who is best known as the composer of *Lover Man*. These recordings were scattered originally over five lps. It's nice to have them reorganized in this manner.

EARL HINES INFLUENCED a whole generation of pianists and you can hear this in the playing of Nat Cole. One of Mosaic's major projects was assembling *The Complete Capitol Recordings of the Nat King Cole Trio*. The set (27 lps or 25 CDs) includes his 1942/43 Excelsior and Premier recordings as well as the many transcription titles he made for Capitol.

Unless you are completely under Cole's spell you might want to sample it selectively or simply pick up one of the Capitol single CDs focusing on a particular aspect of his music. By the time this highly stylized trio began recording for Capitol the novelties were being replaced by quality songs (with good lyrics) and jazz flavoured instrumentals (many drawn from the Basie band's repertoire) which emphasize Cole's talents as a pianist as well as demonstrating the tight control of the trio. Also included within this set is the justly famous **After Midnight** session with guest instrumentalists Harry Edison, Stuff Smith, Willie Smith and Juan Tizol.

Both Nat Cole and Louis Armstrong were extraordinary musicians who were equally gifted entertainers. Both aspects of Armstrong's world are represented in *The Complete Decca Studio Recordings of Louis Armstrong and the All Stars*. Major Armstrong recordings (which make up most of the set) frame some innocuous trifles aimed for the popular market. The set opens with the lengthy 1950 dates with Bigard, Teagarden, Hines and Cole which produced the classic *New Orleans Function*, the after hours version of *Bucket's Got A Hole In It* and good features for the sidemen. Four out of the six CDs (it's also on 8 lps) reissue in recording sequence the music which was issued originally as the **Louis Armstrong Autobiography**.

Omitted from this issue are Armstrong's spoken introductions. These sessions reprise some of the trumpeter's greatest recordings from the 1920s. Dan Morgenstern's comments are right on the money. It is true that some of these versions are greater than the originals. The sound quality equals the brilliance of the music. Unfortunately it also reinforces the monotony of Barrett Deems' drumming. Either Gus or Osie Johnson, for example, would have made a world of difference. Sy Oliver and Bob Haggart, who created the frameworks for these sessions, both drew on the original recordings but they are not carbon copies. Ed Hall and Trummy Young are superb and the reed players fill out the band's sound in the orchestral tunes.

Mosaic issues are often a surprise. *The Complete Candid Otis Spann/Lightnin' Hopkins Sessions* is their second excursion into the blues (T-Bone Walker was the subject on an earlier package). While most jazz musicians incorporate the language of the blues into their performances blues musicians are rarely skilled in other structures. This is certainly true of Spann and Hopkins - two of the most spontaneous of blues musicians. Otis Spann was part of the Muddy Waters band for much of his life and he made few recordings on his own. This was his first and the impact was immediate when the original Candid lp was issued in 1961 but the complete session is far less focused. A second lp was issued years later and another thirteen titles are issued here for the first time. Spann shares the date with guitarist Robert Lockwood and St. Louis Jimmy who also sing on some selections without the same emotional pull. Spann's formidable blues piano is a bedrock example of the genre.

Lightnin' Hopkins, besides being an eloquent songster, was a superb blues guitarist. He also plays some primitive piano on this date. His songs draw upon a lifetime of experiences, are highly personal, and he is in a particularly expansive frame of mind at this session. Five additional titles are issued here for the first time.

SERGE CHALOFF IS A NAME from the past today except for the diminishing number of Woody Herman fans. In his day he was a premier baritone saxophonist. Mosaic has reassembled his recordings as a leader in *The Complete Serge Chaloff Sessions*. There are obscure mid 1940s dates for Dial, Savoy, Futurama and Motif but the bulk of this reissue is taken up with his Storyville sessions (also on Black Lion CDs) and the two Capitol dates - **Blowup In Boston** and **Blue Serge**. These are the key ones to hear the fullest realisation of his playing. He's out front in Blue Serge with terrific support from Sonny Clark, Leroy Vinnegar and Philly Joe Jones and you can fully appreciate his dexterity on the horn while his tone is as huge as Coleman Hawkins. Boston Blow Up is a sextet session with neat arrangements - the band sounds more fluid on the second day with Ray Santisi's piano work particularly satisfying.

Sonny Clark became part of the Blue Note roster once he moved to New York. All of the material on *The Complete Blue Note Recordings of Grant Green with Sonny Clark* was unissued for many years except for one tune *Count Every Star* - which was on an Ike Quebec lp. The four sessions have since come out on Japanese lps and the short lived Blue Note LT series. This issue contains one new tune - *Nancy* - and alternates of *Airegin* and *Oleo*. Grant Green, like Sonny Greenwich, approached the guitar in a hornlike fashion. His lines are more evocative of a saxophonist than a stringed player. These are pleasant performances by excellent musicians but lack the edge one has come to expect from Blue Note dates. Perhaps that is why they remained on the shelf for so long.

Jackie McLean, on the other hand always played with intense vitality and his many Blue Note sessions are a capsule cross section of the label's activity in the 1960s. McLean's earlier dates used pianists like Sonny Clark and their blues flavoured bop lines caught the flavour of the times. He startled listeners with **Let Freedom Ring** (1962) and took them further out with **Destination Out** and **One Step Beyond**. He was also to record with Ornette Coleman in 1967. Sandwiched in between this

JACKIE MCLEAN • DON CHERRY

activity is the music on Mosaic's *The Complete 1964-66 Jackie McLean Sessions*. The four CD/six lp set contains *It's Time*, *Right Now* and *Action* (all released in the 1960s) and three more dates which were released much later as *Jackknife* and *Consequences*. When first issued this music seemed more conservative than the new frontiers which McLean had embraced but time has given them a fresh allure. Showcased here are Charles Tolliver and Larry Willis - two musicians who would make a permanent mark on the music, as well as Bobby Hutcherson (*Right Now*) and Herbie Hancock (*It's Time*). This set contains two quartet dates with Larry Willis at the piano, two quintet dates with Charles Tolliver (one with Herbie Hancock and one with vibist Bobby Hutcherson) as well as two sessions with Lee Morgan. There's a uniformity to this music that should help refocus attention on an overlooked period of McLean's career.

FINALLY, there's more from the Blue Note vaults in the three lp/two CD set, *The Complete Blue Note Recordings of Don Cherry*. These sessions marked a high point in Don Cherry's career and are the next step beyond his association with Ornette Coleman. Ed Blackwell's drumming, unlike anyone else of his generation, is a key link in this music and Cherry sounds stronger on his own dates than playing with Ornette. This is music which sweeps you along on an emotional high. Each of these three sessions are masterpieces of what was once known as Free Jazz. However, this music is fully structured, and its direction fully determined by its leader and composer. Both Gato Barbieri and Pharoah Sanders fully contribute to this music's success. Don Cherry's music, like other sessions produced by Blue Note in the 1960s, represents some of the best music from that decade.

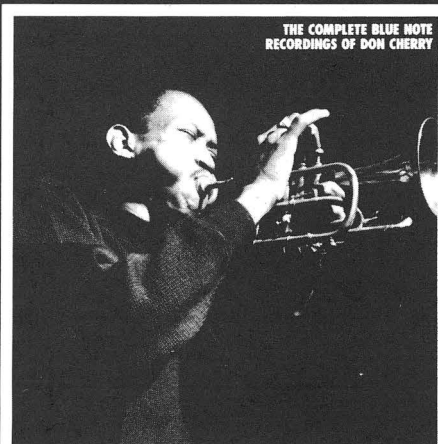
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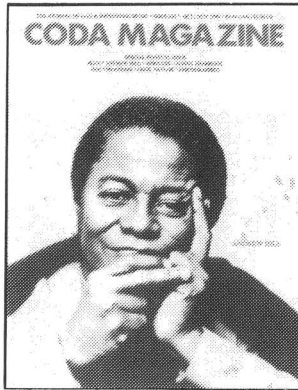
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PRINCE OF WAILS

PEE-WEE RUSSELL

REVIEWED BY TREVOR TOLLEY

Pee-Wee Russell: The Life of a Jazzman

by Robert Hilbert • (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993)
pp. x + 300. \$25.00 US

Pee-Wee Speaks: A Discography of Pee-Wee Russell

by Robert Hilbert and David Niven (Metuchen, N.J.:
The Scarecrow Press, 1992) pp. xii + 371. \$45.00 US

PHOTOGRAPH BY SIEGFRIED H. MOHR

JAZZ MORE OR LESS BEGAN FOR ME WITH PEE-WEE RUSSELL. My first record was *One Hour and Hello Lola* by the Mound City Blue Blowers, with Coleman Hawkins and Russell the stars. In the fifty-one intervening years I haven't heard clarinet playing much better than Russell's, with its softly croaking intonation, its broken notes, and its plaintive phrases that seemed to dribble down in defiance of the beat: ahead of its time in its sense of how the clarinet should be played; out in front in its conception of what the jazz solo should be. Others more famous than I, recall the place he had in their lives. The British poet, Philip Larkin, speaking of his war-time days with Kingsley Amis at Oxford, called Pee-Wee "our Swinburne and our Byron". Nicholas Moore, a near contemporary of Larkin, wrote a sonnet for him, entitled "Prince of Wails".

"One of the great eccentrics of jazz," a balding chartered accountant once told me. Only someone brought up to believe that Benny Goodman was a great jazz clarinet player would feel it necessary to apologise for Russell, or argue that the noises that he made were the result of not being able to play the clarinet properly; though it has to be admitted that technicians as distinguished as Barney Bigard have made such criticisms. From the beginning, there is a fine control of tone, pitch and intonation throughout the range of his instrument - something difficult to achieve in the higher register, as the recorded performances of many jazz clarinetists show. His rich vocalisation of his instrument is in the main stream of jazz.

One has only to listen to Russell's first recorded solos on *Feelin' No Pain* and *Eccentric* with Red Nichols in 1927 to recognise the

presence of a master in their controlled fluency. On *Riverboat Shuffle* he draws the tone to create a whimsical, sad effect; while, on the best-selling *Ida, Sweet as Apple Cider*, we hear the characteristic croak in embryo. By the time of the session with the Louisiana Rhythm Kings in 1929, the style has changed. Gunther Schuller has remarked on the solo on *Basin Street Blues*, where Russell forces the tone so that his instrument could almost be mistaken for a cornet. On *That Da-Da Strain* from the same session the intonation is harsher than on his earlier recordings and the melodic line is highly fragmented, with notes placed in a rhythmically surprising manner. Much of Russell's later style is forming here: he frequently gave to the clarinet a role parallel to the lead trumpet, rather than a role fluidly subsidiary to it. Though Russell denied that he was influenced by Frank Teschemacher, like many other clarinet players in 1928 and 1929 he seems

to have been impressed by the great acclaim given to the first Chicagoan recordings and by Teschemacher's conception of the role of the clarinet.

Russell frequently played with Bix Beiderbecke and Frankie Trumbauer in the late twenties, and recorded extensively with many of the emerging great players of jazz in those years. He recorded very little after 1929 until the series of sessions with vocalist Billy Banks in 1932. On these records, the characteristic "vocalised" style, with the full, hard tone and the "asthmatic croaking", is encountered in its developed form. He plays alongside Henry Allen in a partnership that evinces a superb rapport. *Oh Peter*, of which four takes have survived, finds him developing a breathtaking counterpoint with Allen, utilizing a line that again parallels rather than follows Allen's trumpet. We hear too the thick, reedy tone in the lower register

PEE-WEE RUSSELL • THE PRINCE OF WAILS

that he was to employ throughout his life. He also plays tenor saxophone on these recordings, in the dry-toned Chicago manner; so well that, on the second session, he is replaced on clarinet by the minor Chicagoan, Jimmy Lord. On both takes of *Who Stole the Lock* from the third session, where he is back on clarinet, we hear that off-beat placing of notes, where he seems to slide over the beat - something that was to be a feature of his mature style.



The thirties were lean years for jazzmen who did not play with the big swing bands. Russell was with Louis Prima from 1935 to 1937. In 1938 he joined Bobby Hackett's little band at Nicks - a club that Russell was to be associated with for many years. The band marked the beginning of the Chicago revival; and from it Milt Gabler drew the players for his first Commodore recordings. The Hackett band grew, and in the next year we hear Russell soloing for the only time with a big band on *Sunrise Serenade*. With Bud Freeman and Eddie Condon, Russell became a member of the cooperative Summa Cum Laude Orchestra; and these were to be the players with whom he was to find himself playing off and on for the rest of his life. This was one of his finest and most prolific periods. It is hard to pick exemplary performances from the many he made with the band or with units drawn from the band; though he contributes masterfully to the recreation of Wolverine tunes on the Wolverine Jazz album

for Decca. Throughout these years, he was an integral part of this neo-dixieland music; yet his work stands out as something that transcends its setting. Muggsy Spanier's *You're Lucky to Me*, recorded for club-owner Nick Rongetti's Manhattan label, is a superb example. Baritonist Ernie Caceres turns in an exciting, driving solo, in which, like the other players on the session, he works to bring out the beat. Russell's solo begins with a long, descending phrase that runs

over the bar lines and in which he again seems to slide over the beat rather than emphasise it. The solo fits its setting, yet in conception is far ahead of the music that surrounds it.

That music was to degenerate in the musically cosmopolitan jam sessions of the Eddie Condon's war-time Town Hall Concerts; and Russell made no secret of his weariness with the repertoire, from which he was never fully to escape for the remainder of his life. Yet, in the years that followed the war, he was lucky to find recording opportunities at all. In the fifties he began playing with trumpeter Ruby Braff; and, at the session of February 1958, issued under his own name, we find him playing material to which he can bring a fresh treatment: *Out of Nowhere*, *That Old Feeling*, *Exactly Like You*. His tone is thinner, his intonation piquant, the placing of notes again unexpected. Bud Freeman plays wonderfully beside him; but Russell, though not out of place, is playing

to a different conception. He again showed what he can do in the right setting and with the right repertoire on *Swingin' with Pee-Wee* from 1960, where he teamed with Buck Clayton much as he had with Henry Allen nearly thirty years before.

In the early months of 1962, Russell started to work with valve trombonist Marshall Brown, playing material far outside the "Nicksieland" canon. With drums and bass, they recorded two albums, *New Groove* for Columbia and *Ask Me Now* for Impulse. The tunes included *Moten Swing*, *Chelsea Bridge*, *Prelude to A Kiss* and Thelonious Monk's *Round Midnight* and *Hackensack*. It was an adventurous move for Russell, and one that he clearly enjoyed. The albums received wide critical acclaim; though the performances, on tunes such as *Round Midnight*, were less adventurous than one might have expected, in part owing to Marshall Brown's arrangements. Brown and the rhythm section were not in Russell's class. Nonetheless, it is a joy to hear Russell on *Good Bait*, for instance, moving creatively through the new harmonies, while sliding over the natural rhythmic pattern and making unexpected pauses as he had done in the past. At the 1963 Newport Jazz Festival, he played with the Thelonious Monk Quartet for two numbers, *Nutty* and *Blue Monk*, and seemed quite at home. Later that year, at the Monterey Jazz Festival, he played with a group that included the Teagarden brothers, Joe Sullivan and Gerry Mulligan. On one number, *New Blues*, Russell and Mulligan are alone with the rhythm section, and we get the sense of what might have been if Russell could have played regularly with a modern player as congenial as Mulligan, as Bob Hilbert suggests in his book.

Russell's life is not an easy one out of which to make a book. He did very little except drink, stay at home or play engagements. He seldom moved his place of residence. His personal life was uneventful, except for the time when he nearly died of malnutrition. Later in life, he took up painting, to notable acclaim when he exhibited his work. The result is that the changes in his life consist in playing here rather than there - for many years with much the same people and performing much the same repertoire, though in different places. This inevitably leads to a stringing of event after event; and this is the sense that Hilbert's book leaves one with. Not that he makes up the book

BOOK REVIEWS BY TREVOR TOLLEY

with a series of inane anecdotes of outrageous behaviour, as some jazz biographers do. Nonetheless, I feel that the book could have given greater focus, so that a better sense of Russell's music - what it means to us and how it developed - might have emerged.

There are some parts of the book where the handling of fact is sloppy, in that the book contradicts the almost always accurate discography. Concerning the first of the famous Condon sessions that produced *Home Cooking*, *The Eel*, *Tennessee Twilight* and *Madame Dynamite*, Hilbert writes: "Nothing of that session was issued at the time...The boys came back a few weeks later and re-made *The Eel* ... and another take of *Home Cooking*, with composer Alex Hill replacing Sullivan on piano." As the discography correctly indicates - and as anyone with the remotest interest in this type of jazz knows - Sullivan played on the second session, at which the original issued versions were made. In addition, *Tennessee Twilight* and *Madame Dynamite* and (by accident) the version of *The Eel* from the first session were issued at the time in England.

A similar confusion seems to arise concerning Russell's association with Red Nichols in 1929. Hilbert writes: "Pee-Wee's next Broadway job with Red Nichols was the pit band of... Strike Up the Band... the show moved to the Times Square Theatre on January 14, 1930... and closed on June 28... But his career as one of the "Pennies" was ending... Nichols booked a four-week summer tour of New England ballrooms and colleges. The band included Max Kaminsky... Bud Freeman... the band was on the verge of quitting when Nichols fired them... None of the members of the band appear to have performed with Nichols again." In fact, the New England tour took place in the summer of 1929, when Nichols had the "Chicagoan" band pictured in Chilton's Who's Who of Jazz, and preceded the run of Strike Up the Band. It is quite untrue that none of the members of the band ever recorded with Nichols again: Freeman and Sullivan both recorded more than once with Nichols in the latter part of 1930.

Hilbert is also infelicitous concerning the Louisiana Rhythm Kings *Basin Street Blues*, *Last Cent* and *That Da-Da Strain*, made by a group from the band that did the New England tour. He says "Red Nichols was

brought in on cornet" - odd, in so far as the group was drawn from Nichols band, and every Louisiana Rhythm Kings session after 1928 is a Nichols session. He goes on to call *Last Cent* "a blues", though it has the A/A/B/A form of the popular tunes of the day.

In contrast, the 350 page discography is what Dan Morganstern, in its preface, claims it to be: "state of the art". In it Hilbert had the collaboration of David Niven. The only reservations I have concern format. The discography appeared in draft in the IAJRC Journal. There have inevitably been changes. Some entries, such as Red Nichols' *Avalon* and *Nobody's Sweetheart* have been dropped. Some discussion of such changes would have been welcome; as would discussion of controversial entries, such as giving Al Morgan (rather than Pops Foster) as the bass player on the Mound City Blue Blowers *One Hour* or Zutty Singleton (rather than Gene Krupa) on the first Billy Banks session. Rust, and many other discographers, indicate dubbed issues of 78 r.p.m. records by underlining the numbers of such issues; and this provides valuable information for collectors. Hilbert and Niven do not do this. In some cases (as for the session by Red and Miff's Stompers of October 12, 1927) Hilbert and Niven indicate the number of takes made of each title; but in other cases (such as the sessions made by Miff Mole or the Charleston Chasers, where the information is readily available) they do not.

It is perhaps appropriate in reviewing any discography, even as excellent as this one, to note what seem to be errors or omissions. Hilbert and Niven distinguish between American and Canadian issues, noting both, even when they have the same number. Despite assistance from noted Canadian discographers, there are some errors in this matter concerning quite common issues. From the Bud Freeman session of November 18, 1939, all the American Decca issues appeared on Canadian Decca, with the probable exception of the rare "B" take of *Sailfish*. Decca 23718, from December 13, 1944, also appeared on Canadian Decca; and the Canadian title of the album in which it appeared is Jazz Concert at Eddie Condon's, not A Night at Eddie Condon's - at least on my set. From the widely issued "Dixieland All Stars" session of June 1959, an enormous number of issues are listed, with album title. "Synthetic Blues" is noted

as appearing as "Mason-Dixon Line Blues" on Universal MS 171; though, in Canada, at least, the record is Masterseal MS 171, produced by Universal Records. The discography does not give the title of this record, which is Jimmy McPartland Volume 1 - a title that has little to do with the mixed bag of music on the record.

Concerning the Condon 1933 sessions already discussed, the discography rightly does not follow Rust in listing the alternate take of *Madame Dynamite* as appearing as a 78 r.p.m issue (on Columbia 36009); but it states that only the "A" take of *Home Cooking* appeared on Columbia 35680, as was evidently intended. Quite a few copies in fact have the originally issued "B" take, as I noted some years ago in Storyville. There is a failure to list the well-known accidental appearance on a few copies of English Brunswick O2006 of the "A" take of *The Eel* (a fact noted in Rust).

Two typographical errors conclude the errors I noted: *Ain't Misbehavin'* from February 17, 1945 is on Spook Jazz SPJ 6607 and not 6007; and, while it is clear that the authors know that the six tracks from the "First Annual Prestige Swing Festival" of May 19, 1961 are distributed (with products of another session) over two LPs, Swingville SVLP 2024 and 2025, they give SVLP 2024 for all tracks, which is wrong for *So Glad* and *Years Ago*.

Having noted all that, I can say that this is a discography that I would not want to be without. It sums up the career of an artist condemned by his own fame to be asked to perform year after year in the Condon Nixieland style; and lamentably given too little chance to explore the more advanced and adventurous musical conceptions to which he was later drawn. Was he the greatest jazz clarinetist? With a few others, like Dodds and Teschemacher, I'd say he was in the running. □

ABOUT THE WRITER

TREVOR TOLLEY has been active in the jazz world since the early forties. He is a much published writer, with articles appearing in *Jazz Journal*, *Jazz Monthly*, *Storyville*, *The New Review*, *ARC* and *Aquarius*. He has published numerous books including two volumes: *The Poetry of the Thirties* (1975) and *The Poetry of the Forties* (1985).

JAZZ FUTURES

REVIEWS BY JERRY D'SOUZA

JAZZ FUTURES

Live In Concert • Novus 63158-2

RODNEY KENDRICK

The Secrets Of • Verve 517 558-20

ITCHY FINGERS

Full English Breakfast • ENJA ENJ70852

CHUCK FLORENCE

Home On The Range • Cadence CJR 1052

BENNIE WALLACE

The Old Songs • Audio Quest AQ-Cd 1017

RICHARD TABNIK

Solo Journey • New Artists NA 1011

THE JAZZ MENTALITY

Maxwell's Torment • VAI Audio VAI A 2002

RICKEY WOODWARD

The Tokyo Express • Candid CCD 79527

ERIC ALEXANDER

Straight Up • Delmark DE461



DESPITE THE INFLUX OF SOUNDS IN VARIOUS SHAPES INTO THE TRADITIONAL NOTIONS OF JAZZ, THERE IS STILL A CROP OF PLAYERS WHO HOLD ON TO THE OLD. HOLD WOULD PERHAPS BE A RESTRICTIVE TERM, FOR SOME OF THEM HAVE SHOWN A HEARTWARMING ABILITY TO ENRICH THE VOCABULARY OF JAZZ WITH THEIR APPROACH. THE INFLUENCES ARE DISCERNIBLE - PARKER, COLTRANE, MILES, DIZZY - BUT WOULD ART BE AS GLORIOUS AND COMPLETE WITHOUT THE BENEFICE OF THE MASTERS. THE INFLUENCE IS THE BEGINNING OF THE JOURNEY, THE PATH THAT IS NEGOTIATED SHOULD OPEN NEW VISTAS AND POINT TO DIFFERENT HORIZONS.

MANY OF THE ARTISTS have been termed the wunderkind of jazz and there can be no argument with that. Roy Hargrove who shaped his chops and polished his ideas under Gillespie has found a voice of his own as his album *Of Kindred Souls* solidly testifies (his next album finds him trading licks with Joe Henderson, Stanley Turrentine, Joshua Redman, Branford Marsalis and Johnny Griffin), Christian McBride lent his supple bass to Henderson's *Lush Life*, Bennie Wallace growled and whooped in the New York loft scene before making his presence felt on Blue Note. The angle was a tad different for Rodney Kendrick. His father, Jimmy Kay, played with Illinois Jacquet and Sam Rivers. The son who was drawn to the music and gleaned his ware in the company of Frank Morgan and Freddie Hubbard among others, is best known for his work with Abbey Lincoln.

ROY HARGROVE comes along with a band of men that can, quite simply, be termed brilliant. Comprising some of the best young musicians that have emerged in recent times, the **Jazz Futures** display talent which is not burnt by the short fuse of contemporary

idioms that tend to scathe the character of mainstream jazz. Their spirit lies in the heartland, the bloodlines of the music course through their veins. George Wein who "conceived and realized" the group, had them recorded at the JVC Newport Festival in Rhode Island and at the Festival de Jazz de Vitoria in Gasteiz, Spain and documented the performances on *Live In Concert* (Novus 63158-2). The harmonic strength of the band comes into crisp evidence right from the word go as they whip into McCoy Tyner's *Mode For John* a fertile playground for the trio of pianist Benny Green, the riding-on-the-bone accents of drummer Carl Allen and the slicing phrases of Hargrove. Standards are essayed with delectable emotion. Tim Warfield comes in breathy before dipping into a deeper voicing and then moving into the upper registers to give *Blue Moon* its depths and its peaks. Antonio Hart whose liquid tones add lustre to several of the selections brings in a sterling turn to *Bewitched, Bothered & Bewildered* while Michael Jordan lets his trumpet instil a restrained urgency into *Stardust*. The language of bop is expressed through incendiary squawks and squeals as the Futures get into the *Public Eye* a composition marked by the

acute interplay between the horns, a rollercoaster of a ride! This Hargrove original is complemented by Allen's *Picadilly Square* where guitarist Mark Whitfield's elan transposes a gentle swing into the song and Christian McBride's blues for *Sterling Sylvia* which as it turns out is just that. As they toss ideas across and build on them, the Jazz Futures parley their musical abilities into an absorbing and unforgettable experience.

Hargrove surfaces once again on *The Secrets Of Rodney Kendrick* (Verve 517 558-20) where he joins the pianist for an outing that melds tradition with modernist colours and shoos in a hankering blend where cogent imagination washes formalism with swirling tempos to give the songs a rich hue. Kendrick shows remarkable consistency, a compact use of space and technical virtuosity that spawns the cache of ideas. Tradition is rooted in Miles Davis' *Dig* which coruscates from Hargrove's pungent thrust and Kenny Garrett's languorous alto and on *Sharon* a beautiful, tender ballad with its luminous permutations. The music moves into other realms when Kendrick slips in and explores African rhythms. Percussion embellishes the mood on *Ganawa In Paris* lifting it into a happy buoyant sphere. Turbulent, intense, sentimental — this is a winner any way you look at it.

The saxophone is the dominant instrument for **ITCHY FINGERS** and their *Full English Breakfast* (Enja ENJ7085 2). Mike Mower who founded the quartet in 1986 was inspired by

saxophone bands, in particular the World Saxophone Quartet. To digress a little - their stage show owes its zany disposition to the Willem Breuker Kollektief. The band's antics lend panache to the visual appeal but in no way detract from the high level of their craftsmanship. The music here travels several terrains. The atonal *The Easter Islander* which sparkles with humour as each player opens the theme and expresses his impressions is juxtaposed against the classical allure of *Svea Rike* and its pastoral air. The diverse time signatures that give *The Dome* a craggy crispness as David O'Higgins on tenor dives and swoops in weaving patterns before giving Mower's baritone sax space to underline the tempestuous stir with placid sentences, contrasts the latin-american devolution that adds its distinct silhouette to *A Night In Tunisia* as Mower counterpoints Mike Watts alto and O'Higgins' tenor. Get your fill of this, it's sumptuous!

There is an all - pervading joy in listening to **CHUCK FLORENCE** and *Home On The Range* (Cadence CJR 1052) as the sax man and Jaki Byard delineate various styles. The road to a highly satisfying experience is strewn with the soft wash of the samba, the exultation of bop, the dynamics of a ballad - blend that testifies to the virtuosity of the band and its flawless ability to make a statement that goes soul deep. The elements coalesce into an effervescent whole thanks to the chemistry that crackles between the musicians. Ideas are formulated, expanded, picked up to weave textures that are rich yet never gaudy. Florence sways with agile key changes while Byard's subtle shades and fluid runs are imbued with a sensitive lyricism. His technique is as compelling as ever. The churning is as deep and lovely as the moods it creates!

New York is where it's at as **BENNIE WALLACE** takes on *The Old Songs* (Audio Quest AQ-CD1017). Wallace revels in the compact setting of a quartet (at times pared to a trio) with Lou Levy on piano, Bill Huntington on bass and Alvin Queen on drums. Wallace is exceptionally well served by his sidemen as they empathise with him in expression that ignites each of the selections with fiery splendour. Wallace delves into the tunes taking the listener up a trail only to scoot away to explore the terrain with his mind's eye before scampering back again as the sonic strengths of the tenor sax craft passages of potent emotional depth. The blues are seared *At Lulu White's* with some interesting and energetic chord changes, a sense of well being is evoked

on the beautifully shaded *My One And Only Love* with *Skylark* winging its way on Levy's piano melodicism that paves the way for Wallace to flesh the song with some warm, shimmering lines. Perhaps the song that works best is *I Hear A Rhapsody*, where Wallace setting up a compelling soundscape turns into a whirling dervish as he propels the rhythm. Wallace's passion is underlined by an adventurous creative impulse.

RICHARD TABNIK makes a brave move as he embarks on a *Solo Journey* (New Artists NA 1011). A player who chooses this setting to exhibit his prowess should have the ability to grab and hold the attention of the listener while exploring the curves and angles of improvisation. Tabnik lacks the inventiveness to do so. He descends on ideas and scurries off before he gains a feel and begins to generate any degree of heat. Had he to settle down, focus and then explore, he might have been evocative of a player who not only had the determination to parley his craft but had the required grit as well. There are an astounding 40 tunes stuffed into 61 minutes. Fewer title ideas, more space and a well of inspiration are what Tabnik could have used - to his advantage and ours.

A debut album that filters the essence of bebop and gives it a burnished sheen comes from **THE JAZZ MENTALITY Maxwell's Torment** (VAI Audio VAIA 2002). The quartet which comes out of New York, was formed by percussionist Myles Weinstein and pianist Steve Elmer and is rounded off by saxophonist Chris Potter who has played with Red Rodney and the Mingus Big Band and bassist Ralph Hamperian who has been with Jaki Byard since 1981. The band has a compact sense of harmony, their playing inveigling its way into the core of the melody before erudite textures are woven in. Potter manifests the influence of Charlie Parker with his brash vigour on *Bloomdido* and *Mooseman* a direct tip of the sax that says as much for Parker as it does for Potter who turns in elaborate, ornate lines. He can also dip into a sleek yet graceful mood with delectable ease as on *Breath* where the almost whispered urgency of his playing elevates the Hamperian composition. This isn't a one man show, Elmer coruscates in incandescent brilliance, while Hamperian's scampering bass flexes the rhythm. As for Weinstein, this tasteful drummer let's a pounding tension propel Maxwell's Torment onto the cutting edge. A sound bop mentality never did torment.

The Birdland Club in New York city catches saxophonist **RICKEY WOODWARD** in a less than inspired mood on *The Tokyo Express* (Candid CCD 79527). He attacks some well known tunes and in doing so lays asunder the inherent feel and atmosphere that have given them a distinct place in the history of jazz. What behoves his approach to *Groovy Samba* which Cannonball Adderley turned into a memorable event when he recorded it with Sergio Mendes? Woodward dispenses with the lilt and the attitude of the tune leaving it without the catchy groove and the palpitating mosaic of the roots rhythm. *Easy Living* comes up strained on the excesses of a convoluted loop and an over-heated approach that trips over its own weight. As for *Polka Dots And Moonbeams* a romantic aura is shunned for a lethargic nod to a song of shimmering beauty. On the plus side which is on the low end of this outing is the illuminating tint of a gentle sax line which envelops *The Very Thought Of You* in the soft folds of a night filled with stars and on *Just Friends* where Christian McBride's lissome bass and James Williams' colourful piano create a well behaved radiance. This is one ride that gets nowhere.

ERIC ALEXANDER shifts in with a bag of originals and standards on *Straight Up* (Delmark DE461). An alumni of the William Patterson college in New Jersey (where he counted pianist Harold Mabern among his teachers), Alexander moved to Chicago where he worked the clubs among them the New Apartment Lounge. Von Freeman who performed there accentuated Gene Ammons dictum—If you don't have a big sound, get out of town—for Alexander who took the advice as is well evident on the album. Alexander has the ability to capture the essence of a melody, dissect it and lend it his own imaginative flair. The explorations are eclectic from the swished up bossa nova of *Love Is A Many Splendored Thing*, to the honky phrases that vibrate through *Straight Up*, to the nice over easy permutations that filter *Laura*. The band which consists of Jim Rotondi on trumpet, John Webber on bass, George Fludes on drums and Mabern on piano jells in harmony. Mabern is a real delight as he lights up songs with his scintillating play especially on *Be My Love*, or sublime ruminations that dance in the imagination. An impressive debut that heralds a worthy talent. □

ABOUT THE WRITER: *JERRY D'SOUZA* resides in Toronto. Before emigrating to Canada, he was the correspondent for *Billboard* in India, and wrote for *Jazz Forum*.



NOW ORCHESTRA HISTORY • By Laurence Svirchev

NOW is 1977 and NOW is 1994. If you think that NOW can't be two different times at once, then consider that NOW stands for New Orchestra Workshop and this year it is celebrating its seventeenth birthday, one of the longest lasting innovative new music collectives in North America.

Longevity and innovation may be at a premium in the music world, but NOW has a proven track record with a documented history of recording, workshops given by its own members and guest artists, and creative music festivals.

The New Orchestra Workshop was set up to provide a focal point for the creation of an original West Coast Canadian musical idiom by seven musicians, all of whom are still active in that music: Paul Cram, Lisle Ellis, Gregg Simpson, Clyde Reed, Paul Plimley, Ralph Eppel and Coat Cooke.

Ellis and Cram were the main initial organizers of NOW, with Ellis doing the writing of the Canada Council Explorations grant for funding their first initiatives, including their first studio at 1616 (Rear) West 3rd Ave. Ellis had visited the Creative Music Studio in Woodstock, New York in 1975 and came back not only amazed by the extent of the creative music scene across the continent, but also dissatisfied with the lack of new approaches to music in Vancouver. This was a period of time when musicians were being kicked wholesale out of clubs in favour of canned music for dancers. A space controlled by musicians was desperately needed.

Ellis says, "We met up with Paul Plimley and Gregg Simpson and wanted to organize ourselves, get people interested in this music, and start to play it. One way to do that was to sponsor a series of workshops, so we brought in Karl Berger, who had experience in doing these things."

The invitation to the first workshop, Explorations in Creative Music, reads: "In the workshop sessions, we will explore the elements basic to any style or form in music, the nature of sound, rhythm, timing, tuning, basic natural harmonies and rhythmic cycles, all of which are the building stones of all the music on earth."

The concept of the workshop has stuck through all the years. Among the long list of international collaborators have been: Sam Rivers, Muhal Richard Abrams, Joe McPhee (1978), Ran Blake, Charlie Haden (1987), Steve Lacy, Jay Clayton (1988), Vinny Golia (1989).

But NOW has not simply been a vehicle for bringing in non-Vancouverites. The idea of the community of Vancouver musicians has always been the anchor. Throughout 1979-80, Lisle Ellis held "Basic Practice" every Tuesday. There were workshops preceding Friday, Saturday and Sunday performances each weekend by Vancouver musical ensembles. In those pre-inflation days, Basic Practice was free, Workshops \$5.00 and performances \$2.00. The groundwork of those early workshops has continued with each generation of NOW. For example, Kate Hammett-Vaughan and Ron Samworth conducted a workshop at the Vancouver Community College during the 1988 Time Flies Series, Weekly Workshops were held in the Glass Slipper in 1991, as well as at Vancouver Community College by Coat Cooke and Samworth in the fall of 1993.

NOW has always had an interesting structure. There has usually been a group of core musicians who were members of NOW and they in turn belonged to bands that revolved around NOW. There has almost always been a large ensemble under the direction of NOW.

In the beginning, there was the New Orchestra Quintet, composed of all the founding members except Clyde Reed. At a time when acronyms flourished and community experimentation was officially encouraged by government, the large ensemble was CORD (Community Orchestra Research and Development). Some of the satellite groups were Sessione Milano and the Resident String Quartet. In 1986, new groups, such as Lunar Adventures (Cooke, Samworth, Simpson, Reed), the Paul Plimley

AN ARTICLE/REVIEW BY LAURENCE SVIRCHEV & BILL SMITH

Octet and the Vancouver Art Trio (Bruce Freedman, Simpson, Reed) sprang up. Of the currently active bands, the Paul Plimley/Lisle Ellis Duo, and Garbo's Hat have recorded compact discs, and the NOW Orchestra recorded with bassist Barry Guy.

Once they were on a roll, the original NOW was able to set up Music Festivals and special events that were first thought of as yearly. Things didn't turn out to be quite as cyclic, but the first Festival, held in 1979, featured guitarist Bob Bell, the NOW Quintet, and the CORD Orchestra. In 1980, the CORD Orchestra played the Vancouver Museum of Anthropology. Derek Bailey and Evan Parker were presented in duo. During the 2nd Vancouver Creative Music Festival, NOW sponsored a concert by Al Neil at the Western Front, and the Art Ensemble of Chicago played the Queen Elizabeth Playhouse. They also presented the Steve Lacy Quintet in their first North American Tour.

The discography of NOW also reveals intense activity for the first few years, including Paul Cram's *Blue Tales in Time* and New Orchestra Quintet's *Up 'til NOW*. But like many adventurous things, NOW's original energy dissipated with lifestyle changes; Ellis, Cram and Simpson all moved from Vancouver. Only Simpson has returned to make Vancouver his home.

After a period of non-activity, Plimley, Simpson, Cooke and Reed of the old direction formed a new incarnation of NOW with Samworth and Bruce Freedman in 1986. Kate Hammett-Vaughan, Roger Baird and Graham Ord later joined the Board of Directors.

The result was leap of activity in the Vancouver creative music scene. The grunt gallery series has now run for seven years, providing a home for experimentation. NOW co-produced four creative music series with Vancouver's Centre Culturel Columbien, including the 12 gigs spread over four weeks of sold-out houses that formed the 1988 Hear It NOW! series. During 1988-89, NOW co-produced the Time Flies series. The NOW Orchestra performed concerts at the Vancouver East Cultural Centre including a piece written for Marilyn Crispell as guest pianist in 1988.

The Glass Slipper, which has become internationally known as a creative music space, was operated by NOW from 1988 to 1992 for rehearsal and performance. In 1990, NOW groups were show-cased at New York's Knitting Factory. Two NOW compilation compact discs were released on the 9 Winds label: *Now You Hear It* and *The Future Is NOW*.

The latest recording initiative of NOW was the concert and recording session with British bassist and composer Barry Guy held in February of this year. The compact disc is being issued in Britain on the Maya label with international distribution. An application for a Canada Council Recording Grant was turned down, making a Canadian release financially prohibitive, but the grant funding agencies saw fit to provide funds for the concert. NOW will also be performing with Guy at the summer du Maurier, Ltd. International Jazz Festival Vancouver.

If there is one latest project that sums up the spirit of NOW, it is their recent organization of Al Neil's 70th birthday party this March. In his younger years, Neil was the premier west-coast improvising pianist, a co-founder of the legendary Cellar Jazz Club, and a source of inspiration to several generations of visual artists, musicians, and poets. Ron Samworth, Coat Cooke, current artistic directors of NOW, and Hank Bull of the Western Front organized a morning surprise birthday parade, with flags waving and horns and percussion playing Now's the Time. That afternoon, a mammoth party was held at the Western Front with Al's many collaborators and friends, as well as new emerging artists.

NOW has always been a community organization, mindful of the past, but always with a clear vision of the direction of the music. □

The **NEW ORCHESTRA WORKSHOP** can be reached at 435 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, British Columbia V6B 1L4

HEAR IT NOW • By Bill Smith

The proof of the pudding is in the eating, a quaint old saying, but so true. And the feast that was provided by the New Orchestra Workshop to begin its series of events for 1994, was a treat for sure. For a week in February NOW presented to the Vancouver public, bassist **Barry Guy**; solo at Western Front, in duet with **Paul Plimley** at the Glass Slipper, and a week-long rehearsal, workshop, performance, recording with the NOW Orchestra. This would seem to be enough, but of course there is more. **Myra Melford** with bassist **Mark Helias**, drummer **Reggie Nicholson**, and special guest, local clarinetist superb, **François Houle**. A wonderful party at the grunt gallery, with **Garbo's Hat** (Kate Hammett-Vaughan, Paul Blaney, Graham Ord); music for three evenings at the Glass Slipper, which featured, apart from the Guy/Plimley Duo, a duet of drummer **Gregg Simpson** and transplanted Toronto pianist **George McFetridge**, and the culmination of the Orchestra's week long intensive with Barry Guy, with a wonderful performance of his compositions *Study* and *Witchong Game II /10*.

As often happens, it was a gathering of old friends, a brief encounter full of the joy that such projects exude. The solo bass concert that kicked it all off set a new standard as to what can be achieved with one instrument. Barry theatrical and in costume for Jacob Druckman's *Valentine*; explaining in a humorously serious and informative manner the structure of composers Iannis Xenakis, John Anthony Celona and Bernard Rands written forms, and the brilliance of his own pieces which had such charming and self explicit titles as *She Took The Sacred Rattle And Used It* and *Hilibili Meets The Brush*. A serious man for sure, a master musician in fact, but also a performer in the complete sense of the word.

Myra Melford's quartet was full of the energy that she has become known for, the grunt party just that, and the Simpson/McFetridge duo just what was needed on a Saturday night. But the centrepiece of it all was the NOW Orchestra performance.

NEW ORCHESTRA WORKSHOP

I have over the years become addicted to rehearsals, my own and others, and great moments remain in my memory of Leo Smith's and Roscoe Mitchell's Creative Music Orchestras at the Moers Festival in the seventies. The Anthony Braxton Creative Music Orchestra Arista project; Globe Unity and King Ubu, the 1992 Vancouver presentation of the London Jazz Composers Orchestra, and eventually participating myself in projects under the direction of bassist Lisle Ellis, trombonist Gunter Christmann and clarinetist Gene Coleman. All great moments. This however, was more, for this was a special step forward for everyone concerned, intense studies, new and often unknown concepts being learned, and a week to get it all together.

The result was superb. The compact disc which will be released on Maya Records, in conjunction with a repeat performance at this year's Vancouver festival, will serve as an example that music in Canada has come of age. This was such wondrous, spirited music, and although it carries the mark of Barry Guy upon it, the players, because of their expansive and intimate musical knowledge of each other, have given the composer unique renditions of his compositions. Even for them, with so much gone before, this was an extraordinary project. □

THE ORCHESTRA: Ron Samworth (*guitar*), Coat Cooke, Graham Ord, Saul Berson and Bruce Freedman (*saxophones*), John Korsrud (*trumpet*), Ralph Eppel (*trombone*), Clyde Reed, Paul Blaney and Barry Guy (*basses*), Kate Hamett-Vaughan (*voice*), Dylan Van Der Schyff (*drums*), Peggy Lee (*cello*) and Paul Plimley (*piano*).

You may not be fortunate enough to attend this year's Vancouver festival, so just send off £11.00 (US\$20.00) TO **BARRY GUY** at **MAYA RECORDINGS, BRAMLEYS HOUSE, SHUDY CAMPS, CAMBRIDGE CB1 6RA, ENGLAND**, and I know he will be delighted to send you a copy of the CD. Really!

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1993 JAZZ REPORT
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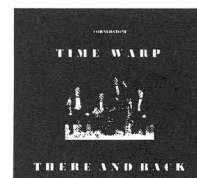
Saskatoon - June 24
Winnipeg - June 25
Toronto - June 26
Vancouver - June 27
Victoria - June 28
Calgary - June 29
Quebec City - June 30-July 2
Montreal - July 3
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PHOTOGRAPH OF RENEE ROSNES BY PHOEBE FERGUSON

CANADA

Latent nationalism, economic depression and changing attitudes have helped alter Canadian attitudes towards their own musicians. An increasing pool of players now have a sufficiently high profile that they can attract large enough audiences to satisfy the needs of club owners and concert promoters.

Take **Free Trade** for instance. This specially assembled quintet of expatriate musicians toured across Canada in March to enthusiastic crowds and also recorded a CD for Justin Time. Renee Rosnes, Peter Leitch, Ralph Bowen and Terry Clarke all now live in the New York area. Bassist Neil Swainson is often in the U. S. (and elsewhere) as the other half of the George Shearing Duo.

The **Top O' The Senator** and **The Montreal Bistro** in Toronto used to rely heavily on the U. S. performers. This is less so today and their present bookings reflect a healthier following for home grown talent.

P. J. Perry was back in Toronto for 10 days at the end of March - this included a CBC concert and a week at The Senator. U. S. based

pianist John Stetch was on tour across Canada in April in support of his newly issued Terra Nova CD (now distributed in Canada by Sony). The quartet ended its trip with a week in Toronto at the Top O' The Senator.

Trumpet legend Doc Cheatham was in fine form for a Montreal Bistro engagement in partnership with his pianist Chuck Folds and Jim and Rosemary Galloway. The club also showcased the piano stylings of Red Richards.

Terence Blanchard seems to have a different hook each year. 1994 is the year for Billie Holiday. Vanessa Rubin handled the vocal parts during his Senator engagement. Jazz also returned to Massey Hall April 16 with a concert by McCoy Tyner's Big Band.

As we head into summer many Canadian cities are gearing up for the festival season. Many lesser known groups will criss cross the country - often thanks to financial support from Arts Foundations or national agencies. This year Canadians will have a chance to hear such widely diverse sounds as those created by Irakere, The

Catholics, Trevor Watts Moire Music, Dick de Graaf's Septet, the George Robert Quintet and News From The Shed.

Toronto's Festival got the jump on the other cities by holding its press conference in mid April. Among the featured artists to be heard at widely varying venues will be Bheki Mseleku, Rodney Kendrick/Arthur Blythe, Joe Lovano, Marilyn Crispell, The Clusone Trio, Pharoah Sanders, Bill Frisell, Joshua Redman, **The Boss Brass**, Vincent Herring, Geoff Keezer, Marian McPartland, the Ray Brown Trio, **Time Warp** and Bob Berg.

Jay McShann performs in Toronto at Harbourfront (as part of an all star band which also includes Doc Cheatham and Carl Fontana) as well as two concerts with **Jim Galloway's Wee Big Band**. The pianist then heads west and performs in Victoria (June 30), Vancouver (July 1) and Saskatoon (July 2) with Rosemary Galloway and Jake Hanna.

At opposite ends of the spectrum are Toronto's Beaches Festival taking place on July 23 & 24 and the Sound Symposium in St. John's Newfoundland July 15-23.

Further Edmonton venues offering live jazz are **Teddy's Palace** and **The Sawmill**.

Newly launched in Calgary is **Jazz Focus Records** (2217 23rd Street SW, Calgary, AB T2T 5H6) the brainchild of Philip Barker. The initial release showcased local pianist **Brian Buchanan** with Phil Dwyer, Bob Tildesley, Dave Young and Michel Lambert and a solo piano set by Jessica Williams. Canadian distribution is through Trend.

Counterpoint has new releases from guitarist **Sean Bray** (with Pat LaBarbera, Brian Dickinson, Jim Vivian, Mike McClelland), alto saxophonist **Roy Styffe** (with Sean Bray, Jim Vivian, Barry Romberg) and pianist **Richard Whiteman** (with Perry White, Mike Downes, John Obercian)... Baritone saxophonist **Charles Pappasoff** has a CD on **Red Toucan Records** with Baikida Carroll, Santi Debriano, Pheeroan Aklafl and Jean Beaudet... The Mother Of The Book, saxophonist **Glenn Hall's** project from nine years ago with Gil Evans and a 14 piece band, has finally been issued on Germany's **INRespect** label... **Sackville** has ready for release the 1993 recording of Jim Galloway's Wee Big Band at the Montreal Bistro with special guests Jake Hanna, Fraser MacPherson and Jay McShann under the title **Kansas City Nights** as well as More Ralph Sutton from Cafe Des Copains - 1988/89 performances recorded originally for CJRT radio.

UNITED STATES

AWARDS/HONOURS AND TRIBUTES

Arts Midwest presented Jazz Master Awards to pianist Jodie Christian, saxophonist Norris Turney and composer Herman Mwata Bowden... **Bob Haggart's** 89th Birthday Bash included an attractive souvenir program. Both the tribute party and the brochure were prepared by Arbors Records...

Steve Lacy was in residence at Harvard University April 14-16 where his music was explored by student musicians, Lacy himself and Roswell Rudd, and Don Byron... Chuck Folds produced a moving Memorial program March 9 at New York's Saint Peter's Church for trombonist/pianist Bobby Pratt.

FESTIVAL UPDATES

Tal Farlow and Pete Sprague represent the jazz community at *Hawaii's Guitar Festival* June 15-21... Bobby Watson is artist in residence at the 8th *Glasgow International Jazz Festival* July 1-10... Janet Lawson and Judy Niemack are part of the faculty at the Janice Borla Vocal Jazz Camp July 17-22 at *Illinois Benedictine College* in Lisle, Illinois... Joe Pass (July 19/20) and the Toshiko Akiyoshi-Lew Tabackin Quartet (July 26/27) are the jazz content of *Santa Fe's Chamber Music Festival*... Toronto's Time Warp group will be the pre-festival attraction at *Art Park's Jazz Festival* opener Friday September 2. After hours sessions at Art Park will feature Native Colours (Ralph Moore, Renee Rosnes, Larry Grenadier, Billy Drummond) and the Terell Stafford-Tim Warfield Quintet... August 12-14 are the dates of this year's *Long Beach Jazz Festival*.

OVERSEAS

Dingwall's Jazz Factory, Camden Lock, London was the venue for **Evan Parker's** 50th Birthday Concert on April 10... Jazzpar winner Roy Haynes was in Denmark in March for concerts with Thomas Clausen, Tomas Franck and Niels

Henning Orsted Pedersen. Nominations for the 1995 prize are Carla Bley, Tony Coe, Tom Harrell, Jackie McLean and Michel Petrucciani. The winner gets to take home \$30,000

Mike Hennessey was at the 25th anniversary edition of *Germany's Burghausen Jazz Week* and the following is extracted from his report.

It was in April 1970 that Joe Viera and Helmut Viertl staged the first jazz festival of Burghausen - a small Bavarian town on the Austrian border with a population of just 19,000 people. It was a modest, unpretentious affair which had a budget of only 5,000 DM and managed to attract just a thousand jazz fans. But, thanks to the enthusiasm and dedication of its two key organizers, the Burghausen International Jazz Festival has since become one of Germany's most attractive and successful jazz events.

This year it celebrated its 25th anniversary, its budget boosted to 450,000 DM - of which 70% has to come from ticket sales - and its six days of concert performances attracting a total audience of more than 10,000.

"We have had three basic rules since the festival began" says Joe Viera, the Munich-born jazz saxophonist and writer who is the festival's artistic director. "No open-air events - they are not good for ballad-playing or listening; a range of music which is as wide as possible and the presentation of musicians from all parts of the world." Jazz musicians from a dozen different countries took part in this year's event.

The festival's concerts are presented in two halls - the 1400 seater Wacker Hall, which is provided free by the local Wacker Chemical Company, and the 800-seat Stadtsaal. "But one of the most vital and characteristic elements of the Burghausen Festival" says

Viera, "is the nightly jam session in the jazz keller located in the picturesque old part of the town, where you can listen while enjoying the traditional Bavarian combination of weisswurst and weiss bier." The jam sessions in the jazz keller were of a high order, with the Joe Haider Trio plus Conte Candoli and British tenor saxophonist Danny Moss forming the nucleus group.

A special feature of this year's festival was the avant-premiere of a German production of the street play, *Dr Ratte*, adapted by Thomas Koerner from the original version by American writer, William Kotzwinkle. It featured some atmospheric and often Weill-like music specially written by **Lester Bowie**.

There were fine sets, too, from the colourful Manu Dibango group, the B. B. King Blues Band, the Newport Festival All Stars (with Clark Terry in sparkling form), the Louis Sclavis Quartet, the ever-swinging Count Basie Orchestra led by Frank Foster, the Paquito D'Rivera group and the Al Porcino Big Band, featuring Conte Candoli. And one of the revelations of the festival was the versatile and accomplished singing of Torita Quick.

Celebrations are also in order for the *Hong Kong Jazz Club* which marked its fifth anniversary in February. Roving columnist **Roger Parry** offers these observations:

It thrives today, due not least to the commitment of the owners and the doggedness of Ric Halstead, its proprietor, musician-booker, saxophonist house musician; then, there is his family of Manager and waiters/waitresses who always make us regulars welcome. There are different groupings drawn from the house musicians, lead by Ric, by the first-class guitarist, Eugene Pao, and pianist Dave Packer. And currently, there is a great afro-reggae band led by

a native of Madagascar, one Robison Randriaharimalala, singer and guitarist: It's called NOGABE and which has recently released its first CD. As a contrast, there is also the traditional jazz of the Victoria Jazz Band, a long-standing band of dedicated amateurs. Of course, we have - over these years - had many international jazz and blues artists performing here. Regulars include Georgie Fame, (here in February, together with his guitarist and drummer sons, Tristan and James), Guy Barker - always a brilliant trumpeter, Stan Tracey - vintage piano, great blues guitarist and singer, John Hammond, Junior. The list of visitors is very long; it includes, in no particular order - Terumasa Hino, Elvin Bishop, the British jazz singer, Claire Martin; another singer from Britain, Tina May - with her drummer husband, Clark Tracey, son of Stan; Cleo Laine's daughter - Jackie, another Brit singer - and Johnny Dankworth's son - Alec, a bassist - with their quartet; Ray Bryant, Archie Shepp, Ray Anderson with Mark Dresser and Pheeroan ak Laff (a tremendous trio), Eileen Reid, Jon Hendricks and Co., pianist Lonnie Smith, Billy Bang, James Moody, James Morrison, Eric Marienthal, Iain Bellamy, Tommy Smith, Ronnie Scott, Red Rodney, Art Barron... and many, many more from all over.

EDUCATION & COMPETITIONS

The Cultural Jazz Summit is **Wendell Harrison's** project to reach out to young people in the Detroit area and teach them the various techniques in the art of jazz. It's an ongoing project and more detailed information is available from Rebirth Inc., 81 Chandler, Detroit, MI 48202.

The University of Ulster's 3rd International Jazz Summer School takes place August 22-26 at Jordanstown, Northern Ireland... **Michael Garrick** is director of the 7 Day Classic Jazz Course for musicians, to be held August 14-21 at London's Royal Academy of Music.

Octo-Bass is presenting an International Double Bass Performance Competition in Avignon, France August 5-12 (Octo-Bass, atelier de lutherie, 4 rue des Escaliers Sainte-Anne)... August 26 is the deadline for submissions to this year's **Thelonious Monk Competition**. Jazz vocalists this is your chance. If you're under the age of 33 you're eligible and application forms are available from 5225 Wisconsin Avenue NW, Suite 605, Washington, DC 20016... The Jacksonville Jazz Festival **Great American Jazz Piano Competition** deadline is August 5. Forms are available from the festival at 100 Festival Park Avenue, Jacksonville, FL 32202-1397.

LITERATURE

New York Hot is the latest in the series of lp cover art collections. Prestige, Riverside and Atlantic are the focus of this book which will appeal to those who have replaced their ageing lps with CDs but still enjoy the graphics of the original 12" records... **The Sun Ra Book** is the work of Hartmut Geerken. The 220 page limited edition book includes a detailed discography of Ra's recordings, colour reproductions of album jackets and photographs by Val Wilmer. It's available by mail for US\$65.00 (including surface mail) from S. Geerken, Wartaweil Str. 37, D-82211 Herrsching, Germany... Kenny Harris has been authorised to write the **Don Lamond Biography** and it will be published, upon completion by Harris, Rose & Hart in the UK... **Piano** is a delightful two page sheet which comes out monthly. It often concerns itself with jazz and is always provocative in its views. The U. S. subscription is \$10.00 a year from 871 H Street, Port Townsend, WA 98368, USA.

RECORDINGS

Xanadu has finally bowed to the inevitable. It is to issue CDs but they will only be available indirectly through Artistic Music Distribution in Millburn, NJ. Don Schlitten will still be happy to sell

you lps... If you like Brazilian music you may wish to contact **Brazil CDs** for a catalogue at P. O. Box 382282, Cambridge, MA 02238.

Blue Note, the sleeping giant, has reawakened with a flurry of issues old and new. Brand new are CDs by Kevin Hays, Stan Tracey, Ralph Peterson and Lena Horne. There are double CD packages of Stanley Turrentine's **Up at Minton's** and Art Blakey's **At The Jazz Corner of the Universe**. **Port of Harlem Jazzmen** and **Reminiscing at Blue Note** are CDs containing material last issued on lp only by Mosaic. Included in the second CD are the Blue Note dates by Pete Johnson, Earl Hines and James P. Johnson (piano sides). They also have a Sidney Bechet sampler. In Europe you can pick up CD reissues of the original Blue Note lps (1201, 1202). Also promised but now on the back burner is Andrew Hill's **Judgment**.

Trio Sketches is an interactive session by Rob McConnell, Ed Bickert and Neil Swainson for Concord. Also worth checking out on the California label is Frank Wess' **Tryin To Make My Blues Turn Green** with Greg Gisbert and Scott Robinson among the featured players.

The second of Denon's new **Savoy** sessions features Ralph Moore, Benny Green, Peter Washington and Billy Higgins in **Who It Is You Are**.

Now released are **Gramavision's** showcase for Ray Anderson with the **George Gruntz Concert Jazz Band** and Bob Moses' **Time Stood Stitt**.

Mapleshade is a quality jazz label from Maryland which has new and repackaged recordings available. Featured artists include Chris Anderson, Raphe Malik, Walter Davis Jr., Jack Walrath, Gary Bartz and Clifford Jordan. You can obtain a mail order catalogue from Mapleshade Productions, 2301 Crain Highway, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772.

Vincent Herring's **Folklore** is his third for **MusicMasters**. This Village Vanguard session also features Scott Wendholt, Cyrus Chestnut, Ira Coleman and Carl Allen.

Joe Carter's Empathy lps are being reissued on CD by **Stash**. Already out is Don Friedman's **I Hear a Rhapsody** and sessions with Art Farmer, Cecil Payne, Rufus Reid and Harvie Swartz.

Hafez Modirzadeh, an Iranian-American, has issued his first CD on **Asian/Improv Records**... Kenny Burrell and LaMont Johnson collaborated in a recording session March 17 and 18 and the music is expected to be issued later this year by **Masterscore**... Joe Bonner, Elyn Rucker and Richie Chiaraluce are the featured guests on jazz singer Barbara Paris' **Where Butterflies Play** on her Perea label... Mick Goodrick and Joe Diorio collaborate on **Rare Birds** and Hal Crook is **Only Human** on CDs from

RAM Records... **So Dig This Big Crux** is a quartet recording by Randy McKean which features Paul Smoker, Drew Gress and Phil Haynes... **Diggin In** is a new **Sea Breeze** CD from Chicago's Jazz Members Band.

The Cool Trance Quartet features Belgium's Nathalie Lorier (piano) with Lee Konitz and Al Levitt in a CD called **Discoveries on Jazz CD**. A more recent recording with her working quartet was produced for **Igloo Records** and is called **Dance or Die**... The Spontaneous Music Ensemble's **Karyobin** is now reissued on CD by **Chronoscope Records** (BCM Box 1079 London WCIN 3XX)... The Mosaic Sextet has been issued on CD titled **Today This Moment on Konnex**. It features violinist Mark Feldman, trumpeter Dave Douglas and pianist Michael Jefry Stevens... Urs Leimgruber and Fritz Hauser's second duet recording is to be found on Switzerland's **Unit Records**. □

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by Louise Dompierre

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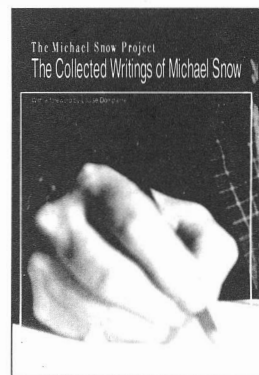
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THE JANUS PERSPECTIVE

PIANO REVIEWS BY JOHN SUTHERLAND

PRIOR TO LAUNCHING INTO THIS

REVIEW, I took a brief step back in recorded time - to a six piece group called Skeets Tolbert's Gentlemen of Swing and the year 1940. The number was a lively jump tune (*I Can't Go For You*) featuring pianist/vocalist Charles Red Richards. Now, half a century later, on a Sackville CD (*Dreamy* - 2-3053), I am listening to that same **RED RICHARDS**, now an octogenarian, rattling off a bevy of familiar melodies that I'm sure sound as fresh and entertaining as they must have on their first airing, numbers originally given life by a diversity of well known musicians and composers: Bechet, Berlin, Strayhorn, Redman, Porter, Garner. Red exemplifies that axiom that the passage of time is no deterrent to a good melody. Having witnessed the incursion of bop, rock and roll, fusion, free jazz and a host of other modifications to the idiom, he continues to look both forward and back, reshaping familiar lyrical lines in new and exciting ways. Everything that was once new is made new once more in the hands of a capable jazz artist who brings to it an experience forged over many years.

Indeed, when **THELONIOUS MONK** released those first recordings under his own name for Blue Note records in the late forties, many must have believed that jazz was destined for extinction. The complex journey that jazz was to take in order to arrive at fresh plateaux of development, in retrospect, is now well charted, itself classic in scope. The boundaries of jazz had been stretched, broadened, re-solidified. A concert performance, recently released on a two CD set (*Thelonious Monk: Live in Europe 1965 - Distart LLS2-903*), offers extended quartet renditions (featuring Monk, Charlie Rouse, Larry Gale, Ben Riley) of an array of many, by then readily identifiable Monk compositions: *Evidence*, *Blue Monk*, *Rhythm-a-ning*, *Epistrophy*, *Well you Needn't*; ironically, at the time, some were already questioning Monk's role as composer, accusing him of having become merely the piano player rather than



RAY BRYANT (Villigen 1987) PHOTOGRAPH BY ROGER KAYSEL

the creator of new and original works. However, the performances here remain explorations of infinite possibilities rather than imitative restatements. This, again, is one of the joys of jazz, the discovery of an element of surprise hidden in the anticipated.

THE TITLE of **RAY BRYANT**'s 1992 two volume CD release, *Through the Years*, (Emarcy 512764-2/512933-2) in celebration of his sixtieth birthday, gives some credence to the assignation of Ray Bryant by one critic as a 'conservative modernist'. Steeped in the music of the church during his youth, active during the hard bop period of the early 50's, he began to turn out his own recordings as early as 1955, both as performer and composer. This retrospective serves as a welcomed tribute to that compendium of musical gems from those years. Bryant is a pianist who favours the working of blocked left hand chords against the stylistic intricacies of the right in a swinging, lyrical outpouring of standards (*Django*, *St. Thomas*, *Moanin'*, *Round Midnight*, *Satin Doll*) and proven originals (*Little Susie*, *Cold Turkey*, *Cubano Chant*, *Shake a Lady*). The trio format is his strength aptly demonstrated here with bassist Rufus Reid and drummer Grady Tate. Despite a backward glance at a glowing career, it remains music for the 90's, - or any era, for that matter.

It is not surprising that on **HAROLD MABERN**'s recent CD (*Philadelphia Bound* - Sackville 3051) he should feature a 1956 composition by Philadelphia-born Ray Bryant both as an opener and album title. In fact, almost the entire disc is given over to works by Philadelphia jazz notables who flourished during the 50's and 60's as new voices in jazz - Bobby Timmons, Benny Golson, Jimmy Heath, Lee Morgan, Cal Massey, and John Coltrane, the latter having spent his formative years in that city. It's an imaginative journey back in time by pianist Mabern and the exciting bass player, Kieran Overs, a duo that truly revitalizes such compositions as *Ceora*, *Lazybird*, *Are You Real?*, *Six Steps*, *The Gigolo*, and honours both the city and those musicians who trace their roots to it. Only the closer *Edward Lee* is an original by Memphis native Mabern, who, over the years, has shared his own talents with many of them.

CONTEMPORARIES ROSS TOMPKINS (AKA *The Phantom* - Progressive 7090) and **HOD O'BRIEN** (*Hod and Cole* - Jazzmania 6005) bear several similarities. Both are seasoned jazz performers dating from the mid-50's, having shared the musical spotlight over the years with some of the giants of jazz such as Dolphy, Eldridge, Cohn-Sims, Silver, Farmer, Pettiford, to name a few. Each has

suffered the inevitable comparison to others, Tompkins as “Tristano playing stride” (check out *Charade, What is This Thing Called Love, I’ll Take Romance* here), O’Brien as a “1940’s Bud Powell throwback”. Neither, perhaps, has achieved the prominence which is his respective due, in part, the result of lengthy periods tucked away in the pursuit of other endeavours. Hence, it is rewarding to have both active on recently released CD’s. Interestingly, each draws inspiration from the past; Tompkins from films and musicals, O’Brien from the Cole Porter songbook. The former has chosen a diverse collection of upbeat and restrained solo performances, while the latter is joined by reedman Mark Kirk, bassist Steve Gilmore, guitarist Tony Purone and drummer Jeff Brillinger in a jaunty quintet tribute to Porter, with a few originals tossed in as “a pleasing contrast to the Porter standards”, numbers which “hold their own in this otherwise Porter milieu”, as O’Brien puts it. Both discs are worthy additions to the jazz repertoire of the 90’s.

IMPROVISATION IS THE LIFE BLOOD and appeal of jazz. It feeds and grows on experimentation, ever seeking to expand the scope of its musical boundaries. Hence, to draw only from that stock of the proven and popular would be, in the end, counter-productive to its very essence; yet, to ignore totally the roots of what has shaped its being would be equally insensitive to its unique identity. A comfortable balance between these diverse options dictates what most jazz musicians appear to pursue and what most devotees of jazz demand. The Star Trek journeys into the unknown of some are gambles that provide, perhaps, personal satisfaction and freedom, but, as the history of jazz informs us, often fail over a period of time to satisfy or capture public awareness. No musician wishes, surely, to operate in a vacuum. There are few Ellingtons, Monks or Gillespies - men who have gambled, endured and succeeded - among the many talented musician/composers on the scene today. But then, the challenge is always there, isn’t it?

CARLA BLEY (*Go Together - Watt 24*) and **HOWARD RILEY** (*The Heat of Moments - Wondrous 103*) seem to have made that quantum leap into another dimension successfully. Drawn early to the sparse economy of music by Miles Davis and Monk, gravitating to the innovative JCOA in the 60’s, Carla Bley since has turned her attention to large scale composition-arranging for such gems as Gary Burton’s *A Genuine Tong Funeral* and Charlie Haden’s *Liberation*

Music, as well as her own orchestral endeavours, notably *Dinner Music (Ad Infinitum, Sing Me Softly of the Blues)*, *Live*, and *Fleur Carnivore*. This gave way to smaller group sessions in the 80’s. In 1988, she cut her first duet album with bassist Steve Swallow, a wry, Satie-like journey into all that the duet format might imply. This recent CD, a second set with Swallow, is an extension of that mood; replete with Bley/Swallow originals, it offers shreds of familiar melodies (listen to *Copyright Royalties* especially) floating loosely (or perversely) in what must have been a fun session to make. Certainly Bley’s improvisational/compositional skills are evident throughout despite the often tongue-in-cheek touches. Swallow, as always, remains adaptable to this or any challenge.

Howard Riley looks upon himself as an improviser who, after “many years of playing with bands of varying sizes (Evan Parker/Barry Guy/Tony Oxley - to name a few)... felt able to play solo piano.” From contemporary European music influences and the spontaneity engendered by American jazz, Riley has appended his own pianistic extensions to the melodic lines, harmonies and textures that govern those sources from which he drew early inspiration, chiefly in response to a personal dissatisfaction with the limitations he felt they imposed upon him as a solo performer. Hence, in his playing here (all original compositions), we discover a powerful display of pianistic inventiveness, a utilization of the entire keyboard in a balanced two-handed approach that is almost orchestral in effect. Even the strings of the instrument do not escape the performer’s attention (*Zig Zag*) as a means of enhancing the range of musical possibilities. Nevertheless, there remain, to this ear, strong elements of structuring present, and certainly, stretches of melodic line (*Changing Times*) suggesting that Riley has not totally cut all ties of that heritage from which the music springs. “This recording represents where I’ve got to right now,” states the pianist. One can only conjecture what further revelations will be forthcoming.

RECENTLY ISSUED CD’s by **RICHARD GROSSMAN** (*In the Air - 9 Winds 0146*) and **MIKE CAIN** (*What Means This? - Candid 79529*) make for an intriguing listening experience. Grossman and friends (including clarinetist John Carter and reedman Vinny Golia), recorded during two 1989 concert sessions, provide us especially with freely improvised performances by the talented Carter who passed away in 1991.

It’s “a document of some living music... without benefit of recording technology”, states leader/pianist Grossman. Some portions of Golia’s *A Hard Act to Follow* afford the players a preconceived text to work from, and, of the remaining three numbers, only Grossman’s *Henny Youngman’s Bird Imitation*, a satiric look at doing a crowd-pleasing closer (yet the freest-sounding of all four works) provides any explicit direction to the performers. It’s music that demands much from the musicians and a giant leap of faith for many listeners who, though recognizing the sincerity and talent of the players, must applaud the moment yet wonder where it has taken them. Grossman and his rhythm partners (bassist Ken Filiano and percussionist Alex Cline) allow the reedmen ample space to reach out to a receptive audience. The album is fittingly cited as a tribute to the late John Carter, and for being able to share in that experience we should be truly grateful.

RELATIVE NEWCOMER Mike Cain has already shared the spotlight with bassists Lonnie Plaxico and Jack DeJohnette. On this recording, he has put together a trio in order to fulfil “an older desire relating to an older time period for me... (not)... current to my immediate musical interests”, he concludes. A devotee of world music in its broadest sense, he seems to be caught up in a musical time warp, searching for that special niche that will provide both satisfaction and meaning (in answer to his own composition and the album’s title). His liner notes raise many questions. Any concern about the selection of suitable musicians has been dispelled with his choice of Anthony Cox (bass) and Marvin ‘Smitty’ Smith (drums), two proven players who lay down a pleasant, workable group dynamic. “I’m at least a decent piano player aren’t I?”, he queries. Yes, you are, though one might wish to hear more than eight Cain originals before making further judgements. Do they alone give you the scope to respond to any self-doubts you may have? “Maybe I just can’t play the way I want to yet...or write the way I want to?” In facing such issues openly, Mike Cain may indeed be a pianist to watch for should he resolve his directional dilemmas. There’s evidence enough here.

Jazz has two faces, one peering back to the exciting roots that spawned its existence, the other scanning horizons for untrodden paths, perhaps to jazz immortality. As long as it continues to foster this dichotomy, we shall be treated to a bountiful outpouring of wonderful music. □

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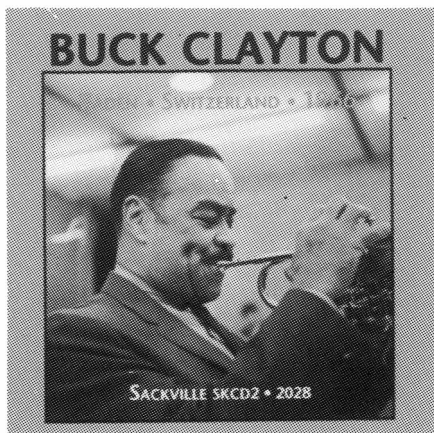
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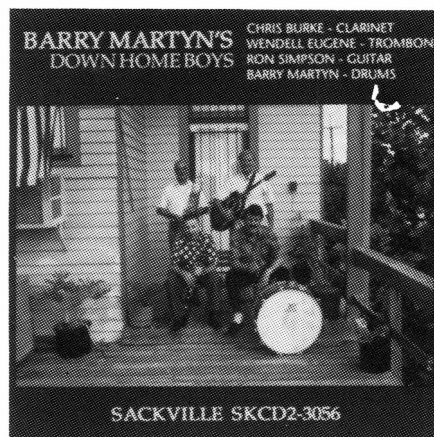
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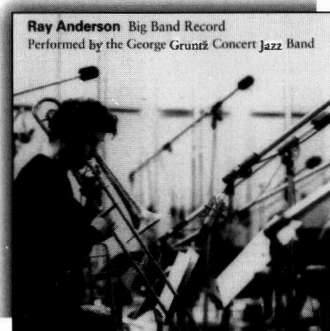
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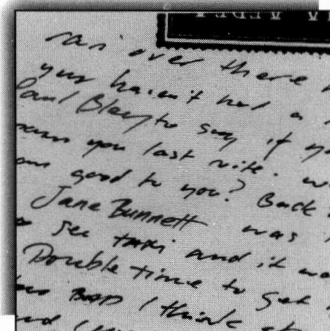
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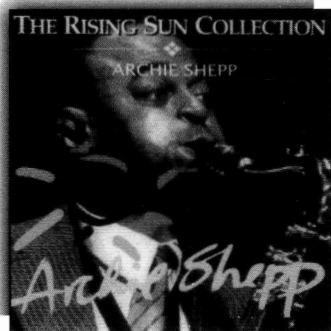
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