

THE JOURNAL OF JAZZ AND IMPROVISED MUSIC

CODA MAGAZINE

MARCH/APRIL 1994

ISSUE 254 • \$3.95 CDN/\$3.50 US

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ART ELLEFSON

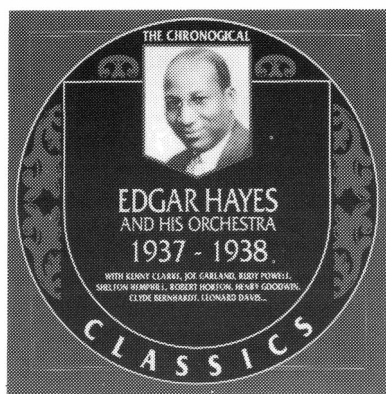
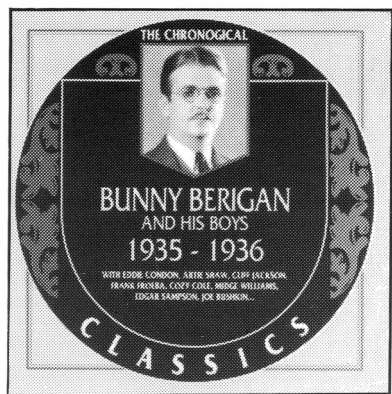
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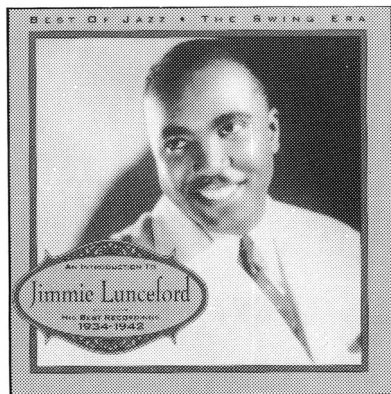
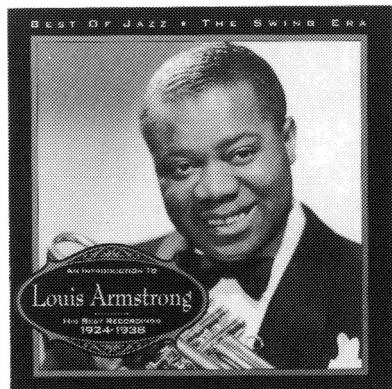


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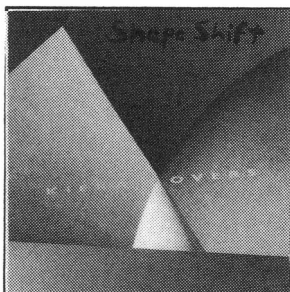
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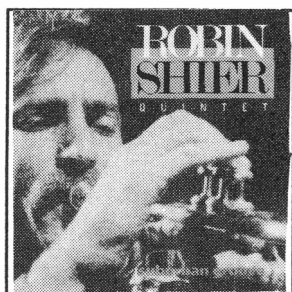


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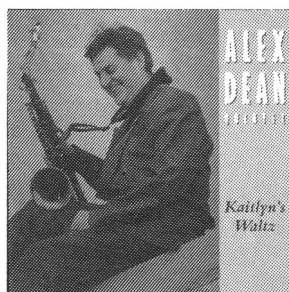
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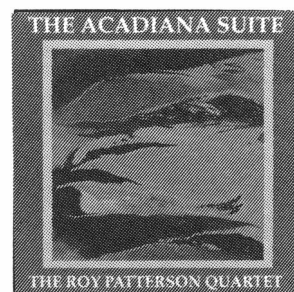
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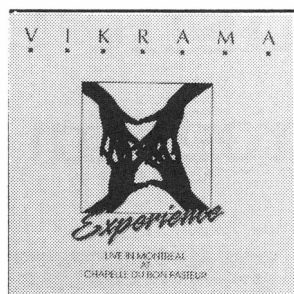
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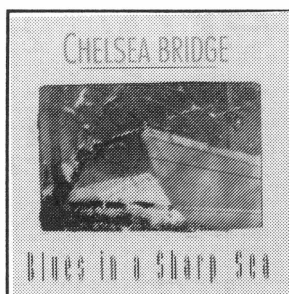
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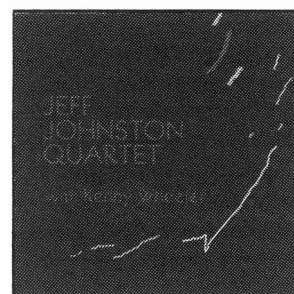
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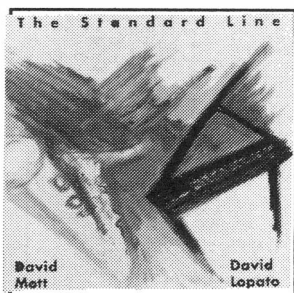
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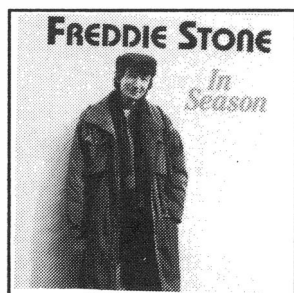
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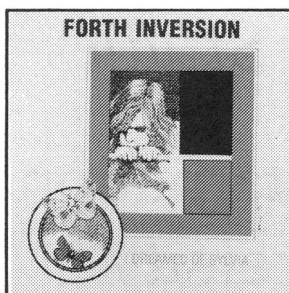
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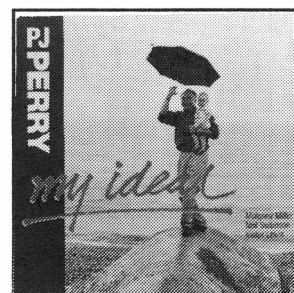
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CODA MAGAZINE

PUBLISHED CONTINUOUSLY SINCE 1958
ISSUE 254 • Published March 1st • 1994

CODA PUBLICATIONS
BOX 1002 • STATION "O" • TORONTO
ONTARIO • M4A 2N4 • CANADA
PHONE / FAX (416) 593-7230

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

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

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

U.S.A.
Regular mail (US funds) **\$24.00**
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ELSEWHERE (except U.K.)
Regular mail (Cdn. funds) **\$27.00**
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Subscriptions are to be made payable to our U K agent, **Miss Rae Wittrick**, 33 Winton Lodge, Imperial Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex, England
The yearly subscription rate is **£12.00** surface or **£19.00** air mail.

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

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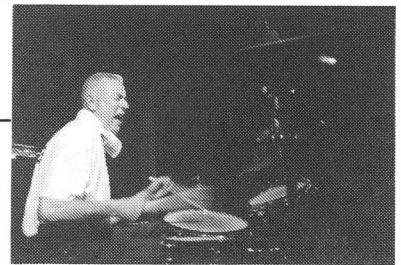
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AROUND THE WORLD CANADA, U.S.A., EUROPE
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COVER PHOTOGRAPH OF

HAN BENNINK BY BILL SMITH & **LOUIS MOHOLO** BY PETER SYMES



ART ELLEFSON

THE LIFE & TIMES OF A JAZZER

FROM A CONVERSATION WITH BILL SMITH

CONTE CONDOLI, WOODY HERMAN, BILL HARRIS, ART ELLEFSON & MILT JACKSON (CIRCA 1949) >>>>

IN A WORLD WHERE YOUNG MUSICIANS CAN GRADUATE FROM COLLEGE, PLAY SIDEMAN WITH A LEGEND OR TWO, AND INSTANTLY BECOME CORPORATE SUPERSTARS, THERE WOULD SEEM TO BE NO PLACE FOR A SIXTY-TWO YEAR OLD TENOR SAXOPHONE PLAYER LIVING IN A SMALL TOWN ON AN ISLAND OFF THE WEST COAST OF CANADA. THIS SCENARIO, HOWEVER, WOULD ONLY BE TRUE IF ONE BELIEVED IN THE POP ORIENTED PROPAGANDA PERPETUATED IN THE JAZZ GLOSSIES, BECAUSE FOR EVERY ONE OF THOSE CHILD PRODIGIES THERE IS A LEGION OF PLAYERS NOT AFFORDED THIS EXAGGERATED ACCLAIM, WHO ARE THE GENUINE DEDICATED FORCE THAT KEEPS THE TRADITIONS OF JAZZ MUSIC ALIVE. ART ELLEFSON IS ONE SUCH PERSON.

***HIS GRANDPARENTS**, all Norwegian homesteaders who had settled in the American mid-west, moved north to Canada with their families, when, in the height of the Depression (late 1920s) the severe drought turned the farmlands to dust, destroying their livelihood. Art was born April 17th, 1932, in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. His father, eventually realising the doubtful future of farming, took a job with the Canadian Pacific Railroad, which by the time Art was fourteen had taken them all two hundred miles west to the town of Swift Current, and Art's first taste of jazz music.*

At fifteen a euphonium player in the school orchestra, wishing it were a trombone. At sixteen the proud owner of a King Super 20 tenor saxophone and playing the Saturday night Elks Hall dances. His destiny in retrospect seems quite clear. Even his part time job in an instrument store, that fortuitously also sold records, opened yet another door. From the Flip Phillips/Illinois Jacquet tenor solos on Perdido - Ah! Jazz At The Philharmonic; the Birth Of The Cool Miles; Coleman Hawkins Body And Soul; Don Byas-Lucky Thompson-Wardell Gray-Al Cohn & Zoot Sims-Dexter Gordon, and the President Lester Young, came the wonderful music to excite and inspire his youthful innocence.

Like many eighteen year olds living in small towns, the promise of the big city called. The closest was Edmonton, and it was here that he was to turn professional. In 1952, only two years after leaving home he moved on to Toronto to study arranging and harmony with Gordon Delamont. But Art wanted to play jazz.

There were not so many venues in those days for the local players, and the popular jazz clubs mostly employed American musicians. Often at the Sunday night jam sessions there was a line up of horn players around the rhythm section. All waiting to play. Not a very

satisfactory situation for eager young jazzers. Art and his friend trumpeter Al Spooner, were desperate to play jazz, and when they saw how many jazz clubs were advertised on the back page of the British music paper, the Melody Maker, they decided to go check it out. For Art as a young musician, this was a most important decision, and he would spend the next seventeen years learning and playing with a great variety of performers in Britain. Popular vocalists of the day, big bands, and even Symphony Orchestras when they needed a tenor player.

I LEARNED TO PLAY IN ENGLAND. It was wonderful, the best thing I ever did, for experience, to get a chance to play. There were a lot of clubs there. I made a lot of money for a young single guy... well, to live according to the way I wanted to live. I didn't want to do much else but play .

Archer Street was where all the musicians used to hang out, every Monday, it was a small street behind the Windmill Theatre. And it was just packed with musicians. A small cafe on one side and the Orchestral Society on the other, the Melody Inn it was called... Of course it was inundated at five o'clock. Information and gossip about the music business, what's happening and all that. It was a wonderful time. It used to last until the pub shut, at eleven o'clock. You could get jobs if you kept your ear to the ground. It was the focal centre of all the news that went on in the business, so you knew when something was happening. It was mostly a social thing which was nice.

Being Canadian they seemed to think we lived close to the States so we should have an idea what is going on, which helped us a lot to get some work until I could learn to play properly and sustain it from a musical point as well. Maybe I'm exaggerating a point but there's no doubt it had an effect.



I was getting quite a lot of work, in London, after the first six months. I was never happy with what I was doing of course, so I don't know when I was really accepted. I guess the final test is when you get called for television work and stuff like that. It was the epitome of success in the business.

The radio orchestra was a bit old fashioned, nice as it was. Not a lot of jazz. A lot of good players in it. I was too young, I didn't really want that, it was the sort of thing older people went on to in the business when they wanted a pension. It was that sort of mentality in the business. It was OK, a respectable sort of way to make a living. But I just wanted to be a bebopper, a jazzer, I wanted to play this jazz stuff. I couldn't stand bands just for money. I had offers to go with some bands for really good money but I knew I wouldn't be happy, so why bother.

It was wonderful, running up and down the country, going to Europe. It was a great life. You have to be insane of course, mad to be on the road with a bunch of musicians in a bus. You learn to get along with people as well, you have to. But some things happen, untellable, you know, when I think of some of the things we used to get up to.

The people were great, very friendly. After Toronto it was a pleasant surprise. Toronto is fairly cold I think, it's just the way the people are. I don't want to slander them. They're more reserved let's put it that way. Oh yes, 1952, very reserved. It was almost impossible to get into the clique there. They didn't welcome anyone. But this is natural, you go to cities there are some tougher than others.

ALTHOUGH ART ONLY WANTED to play jazz, much of his life experience was gained from quite diverse situations. As a soloist and section player he performed with the orchestras of Vic Lewis, Johnny Dankworth and Ted Heath, all famous orchestras in Britain. Accompanying singers as stylistically different as Shirley Bassey, Petula Clark, Vera Lynn and the Beatles, illustrates another aspect of his ever enlarging musical world. And then there were the live variety shows.

LIVE. SCARY. You did it once and that was it. And the broadcast would be live as well. Boy I made some dandy ones. I can remember squeaking and squawking in the wrong place, in solo spots, just ghastly, very nerve wracking. Live radio is probably the most difficult to do because you can't see your audience and there's no taking it back.

ART ELLEFSON • THE LIFE AND TIMES OF A JAZZER

As they were phasing out the old gaslight people, there were some funny acts, good ones as well. Wilson-Keppel and Betty, soft shoe dance in a sandpit. Betty was the light relief who came on and handed them the props. These two old guys in fezes would shuffle around in this box of sand for fifteen minutes. It was an act. They were famous.

You can't play jazz all of the time. Some of the time you have to do things that don't particularly excite you but it was a good way to make a living. Good people to be with, learn an instrument, learn about music, it was an exciting way, it was great fun.

HE DIDN'T BECOME so English that he had to stay there though. He had always regarded himself as a Canadian and England his second home.

I ALWAYS WANTED TO COME BACK.

I don't know why I had that. I didn't like what was happening with England, the way it was going. The London I knew was gradually disappearing, the sort of romantic one was becoming dirtier, not quite such a safe place. You used to be able to walk anywhere in London at one time it was wonderful.

I became disenchanted with studio work about that time. I was starting to realize it wasn't what I wanted. The level of music was starting to get to me because most of it was pretty bad. Jingles and everything. I was working for the BBC which has a staff orchestra and most of the music was background. It was good money, nice life, but I wanted to play. It seemed to me, how I looked up the road, I saw myself doing this for twenty more years, and I wanted to play music. I didn't seem to see any future in it anymore so I thought I would come back to Canada.

BUT THAT WAS NOT TO BE the case, and for the next five years, because of a job offer from his old friend, drummer Alan Ganley, he played in a six piece hotel band in Bermuda.

WHEN I GOT TO BERMUDA it took me two years to unwind from London. I was so keyed up, so wound up. I had some tapes with me I'd made just before I left England and I played them after I'd been in Bermuda for awhile and I could not believe how hysterically I was playing. I was just gushing out without much thought, just streaming out any old thing. It wasn't cohesive, it had no meaning. I threw them all away I remember that. I realized that the pace of life was like that, you get yourself to the intensity, if you want to compete in the city you have to get up there and I was up there. But you don't realize until you leave it and try and slow down. I thought I like this pace of life and I want to keep it so I didn't want to live in the city after Bermuda.

ONCE AGAIN the yearning to return to Canada came upon him, and after briefly returning to England in 1974 to put his affairs in order, he picked from an atlas the town of Barrie, an hour drive north of Toronto, giving him, as he thought, work in the big city and the advantage of country living. Was this a good choice?

YEA, BUT A TYPICAL ONTARIO TOWN, you know, living north of Toronto not a hell of a lot happens. A very quiet people, they keep to themselves. I asked the guy across the street from me 'how long does it take to get accepted around here?' He said 'well, if you're lucky twenty years.' He was so right.

I did very well in fact until the first recession in 1980/81. That killed the business in Toronto completely. I was doing well at that time.



I never missed a gig due to weather. I was doing mostly things like the Royal York Hotel. I was also working with a group out of Muskoka (vacation area). We used to do a lot of work for good money two to three nights a week. We played Toronto as well, for society people, but we could play what we wanted. It wasn't bad. It was pretty open, I just had to stand back of the vocalist and play so that was great. I'd play a few tunes. I was making quite a bit of money that way, making a good living. And it just went boom like that.

Everything sort of split up at the same time. Our marriage split up at the same time, the kids all disappeared at the same time, they went off... they weren't grown up but they went off. So I wound up in Gravenhurst for eight years. Not good.

There wasn't much to play. I was doing various day jobs and a few gigs here and there. It got quite desperate towards the end and I

FROM A CONVERSATION WITH BILL SMITH

thought 'This is no good. I have to get out of here because I'm dying. Physically and mentally I was, it was a graveyard. You get north of Highway 7 in Toronto and you're entering a cultural desert.

THE 1986 EDITION OF EXPO, which took place in Vancouver, was the birthplace of the Vancouver Jazz Festival. One of its mandates was the presentation of Canadian jazz musicians, among them Art Ellefson. While he was on the west coast, he visited his family, with whom he had always kept in touch, in the town of Courtenay on Vancouver Island. He fell in love with small town British Columbia, and by the end of 1988 he had made his move.

1988. I JUST DROVE UP IN AN OLD WAGON with all my worldly belongings. I was quite desperate to get out of that situation back there. I wasn't working, I wasn't playing, it was not good at all. I was sitting around so much even my body was giving up. So I thought I have to get out of here, and I did. I was lucky of course. Luck is always a facet of these things. I had ten dollars in my pocket. I've taken chances like that in the past.

I stopped drinking. Of course you have to take yourself along with you that's one of the problems of life. You've got to be in shape of some kind, so yes, I did stop all of that stuff and that was a good idea. I feel a lot better for that. It takes a lot out of you. It surprised me. The effect it has on decisions that you think you are making but aren't. You think you're getting insight but you're lowering your level, your visions of thought. You think you're going the other way.

Well I heard my son Lee playing and I thought he had possibilities. Perhaps he and I could do something together. And it worked out fortunately. And its getting better and better all the time. We're just starting to get the group together. The last gig we did was in Prince George which really turned out well. The group played like a group for the first time. We don't do enough playing together of course to get that kind of feel so it was pleasant. So that was my hope, to get a few gigs and of course teaching out here is much better.

WITHIN A VERY SHORT DISTANCE of his home there are quite a few colleges, institutes and organizations which he could be part of as a teacher, but his experience of the institutionalised education system had already made his decision clear.

I DON'T WANT TO BECOME INVOLVED in a cut and dried system of a school. I don't want to be employed by a group of bureaucrats. I had enough of that with the BBC. They fired me, instant notice for something that was... the punishment did not fit the crime... in other words it was a political move on their part. After that, fighting that case, which I won, I really got sick of all that and I thought I don't want to work with these people anymore. They don't know what they're talking about. You're in the hands of people who have a lot of power in the type of music they're playing and they're just ignorant. They're just corporate lawyers.

It's a wonderful thing that students can get that amount of education and come out playing as they do, but it does turn people into robots.

They're all playing the same licks. The schools have this idolatry attitude as well that prevails in the system and there's usually only one style. I think it's good for a lot of people. It all depends on who you are. In general I'm for it because people should get a basic education and that's what they do teach. But people coming out of high school, to get them away from that kind of thinking... but that's a big subject...

I wouldn't say I do anything different except that I work by myself and don't have to deal with the politics of a school. I like the one on one business. You can get more across that way of course. You get much more to the person, because everyone is different. I try to get people to find the ways they want to do things. There are too many books involved in improvisation. How can you improvise from a book? There's not enough memorisation of things that's what I find. Everyone runs around with the same fakebook. As soon as I see a guy pull out the fakebook on the stand I say 'we've got a problem here.' If you don't know the tune in your head you don't know the tune.

IT HAS BEEN A LONG JOURNEY from Swift Current to Courtenay, a journey brim full with experiences that has made Art Ellefson the gentle, healthy and talented man that he is today. His life is now quite settled, you can see him often walking in the streets of this small town, and if you take lunch at the Dutch Deli on 4th you might even share the same table. There is one large detail however that remains from his history, something that he cannot shake off. Art is still a jazzer, still has that driving need to play his music. Still a curiosity, that will this year, take him back once again to England, to tour with his son Lee. If you see his name on the awning - check him out. □

DISCOGRAPHY

AS A LEADER: *The Art Of Ellefson* (Nixa) • *The Art Ellefson Trio* featuring Peter Leitch and Dave Young (CBC) • *The Art Ellefson Quartet* featuring Tommy Flanagan (Unisson) • *Art Ellefson & Jazz Modus - As If To Say* (Sackville)

AS A SIDEMAN: *Kenny Wheeler* Quintet (CBC) • *Phil Nimmons* 'N Nine + Six - *Atlantic Suite* (Sackville)/*Transformation* (CBC) • *John Dankworth* Orchestra - *Collaboration* with The London Philharmonic (Roulette)/*The Zodiac Variations* (Fontana)/*What The Dickens* (Fontana) • *Woody Herman* & the Anglo-American Herd (label unknown) • *Jazzmakers* with Ronnie Ross & Alan Ganley (Blue Note) • *Alan Ganley* Quartet - *High Priest* (Saga) • *Vic Lewis* Orchestra - *South African Suite* (Decca)

ART ELLEFSON can be reached at: 492 Fitzgerald, Courtenay, British Columbia, Canada V9N 5N3, and his CD - *As If To Say* with Lee Ellefson, Russell Botten and Buff Allen can be purchased from Sackville Recordings for \$20.00 postpaid.

Special thanks to P.R. Brown for transcribing the original tape, to Don Brown for research material, and Sheila Macpherson final editing.

MAINSTREAM JAZZ IN A CD WORLD

REVIEWS BY
DICK NEELD

MAINSTREAM, at the core of jazz, is in a good position in an eager CD market for getting its share of the action. From its early progenitors (avant-garde in their day) through to its contemporary descendants (a broad mixture of forward-thinkers and non-thinkers), it spans virtually the entire 20th century in its nearly limitless forms and variations.

This means in any sampling of recent releases you can expect to find everything from the reissues of Duke Ellington and Red Allen to today's classic interpretations by Ruby Braff and Kenny Barron. Along with significant reissues and the new works there is an important third category: new issues by such old masters as Count Basie and Zoot Sims. *Caveat emptor* has never been more important as the inevitable natural law comes into play — when the quantity goes up, the quality goes down. While that may be true overall, a survey of some recent releases reassures us that good things still happen.

NOTHING MORE EPITOMIZES mainstream than the saxophone combo, and the new issues abound. One popular variant teams the saxophone and organ together, with rhythm. This kind of music, which thrives in the bar and nightclub environment, has managed to persist in this age of concerts and festivals. **Jimmy Smith**, after early exploration of piano and organ, settled on the Hammond organ in 1955 and has been busy ever since. While much of his playing is in a trio format with drums and guitar, it's not unusual for the three to be joined by a horn. Such is the case on **Formost** (Milestone MCD-9184-2), which finds Smith in the company of Kenny Burrell on guitar, Grady Tate on drums and Stanley Turrentine and his tenor sax recorded in the course of a 1990 gig at Fat Tuesday's in Manhattan. It's a distinguished foursome, fully equipped with experience as well as ability, earning the album's title. Smith's as dextrous as ever and both Burrell and Turrentine have assertive voices that help

to keep things happening. Essential to the album are a pair of original blues, Smith's *Midnight Special* and Burrell's *Soulful Brothers*. Beyond these, the program is a trip through standard fare — *Summertime*, *Main Stem*, *Things Ain't What They Used To Be*, *My Funny Valentine* and *Quiet Nights*. Everything is rewarding — a lively night out — except for *Funny Valentine*. Tate sings this one, sounding like a parody of Billy Eckstine and giving the song stretched emotions that Larry Hart never intended when he wrote it. But the group backs him up well, so you can follow the blockers instead of the ball carrier. Aside from this challenge to acquired tastes, everything works. A fine group on paper probed out as a fine group on the bandstand.

Echoing the sounds of the Smith CD is another out of the same stable, or label, **Portrait** (Milestone MCD-9192-2), that has an alto sax this time, belonging to **Hank Crawford**, and Johnny Hammond playing the guess-what, with Jimmy Pon-



der handling the guitar assignment and Vance Jones on drums. This is a 1991 studio date. The blues content is large here, with material drawn from Joe Liggins, Sonny Stitt, Crawford himself and others. There are also a couple of the ballad features he favours, including his own *To Love Again* and concluding with the Buddy Johnson hit, *Since I Fell For You*. Enhancing three of the eight tracks is the addition of David "Fathead" Newman, providing an added dimension of interest. All in all, this is a nicely varied blues oriented program played well, providing further assurance that the genre is alive and well. Its appeal to the buyer might have been even greater if the playing time had been extended beyond an lp length 43-plus minutes.

LEAVING THE SAX-ORGAN territory, there remains a profusion of tenor sax releases in varying contexts. Picking up on the preceding session's guest, David "Fathead" Newman, we find him recording in a two tenor tandem with fellow Texan **Marchel Ivery** on *Blue Greens and Beans* (Timeless CD SJP 351). The Texas tenor sound is always sturdy stuff, whether on blues or ballads, so it's easy to know what to expect here. Ringleader for the date is Dutch pianist and promoter Rein De Graaff, who provides backing for the

JIMMY SMITH • HANK CRAWFORD • MARCHEL IVERY DAVID "FATHEAD" NEWMAN • COLEMAN HAWKINS

two tenors with his trio. They boil along on *Good Bait*, *Night In Tunisia* and three more jazz-blues vehicles, and individually embrace a ballad apiece with a big muscular tone. The group drives, but not to any particular destination, creating the effect of a perpetual sax machine.

MEANWHILE, MOVING BACK IN TIME, we continue to find that some of our departed masters haven't departed at all. Whether everything should be drawn out into the daylight is a persistent question, raised again with the issue of **Coleman Hawkins' *Dali*** (Stash ST-CD-538). The seven tracks recorded in Brussels in 1962 have their moments, but not enough to match so many other Hawk recordings. Working with a trio that has Georges Arvanitas, Jimmy Woode and Kansas Fields providing piano-bass-drum support, plus guitarist Mickey Baker on two numbers, he labours hard but has little to say, sounding strained and shallow much of the time. He returns to *Disorder At The Border* and *Riff Tide*, along with some new explorations but simply doesn't equal what was he was doing on other recordings from the same period. On the other hand, three tracks taken from his 1959 appearance with Roy Eldridge at Washington's Bayou Club have the high quality established in earlier releases from this date. The pair play their way through *Birth Of The Blues*, *Bean And The Boys* and a gentle swinger titled *Bayou Atmosphere* with feeling and finesse. While Brussels doesn't add to the Hawk heritage, the Bayou does.

From the bottomless Norman Granz reservoir comes the voice of another departed tenor giant, **Zoot Sims**. Over a period of two days in 1978 he recorded a series of tunes for a concept album, ***For Lady Day*** (Pablo PACD-2310-942-2), that has only now arrived. Concept albums are risky, binding the selection into a format that can be restrictive. However, with so many tunes justly associated with Billie Holiday, there is no particular difficulty in this case. While Sims may have derived his approach from Lester Young, he matured into a paradigm of his own and displays his style and his soul to good advantage,

playing with taste and grace. Matching him at the piano is one of Billie's sometime accompanists, Jimmy Rowles, who plays exquisitely. As is his wont, he caroms his ideas off the side cushions in an inspiring, inventive way. Completing the group are George Mraz on bass and Jackie Williams on drums, both of whom are sympathetic accompanists dedicated to enhancing the soloist. There are eleven ballads covered in a span of 49 minutes that could only have been improved with greater variation in tempi, most everything being held to a medium pace. This doesn't allow Zoot enough opportunity to bring his propensity for propulsive swinging into play, only some low-key nudging. However, it's a selection of solid songs — *Easy Living*, *That Old Devil Called Love*, *Some Other Spring*, *Travelin' Light*, *You're My Thrill* and the like— that avoids the insubstantial Tin Pan Alley ditties that Billie miraculously immortalized. It all makes for a pleasing reminder of the talents of Billie, Zoot and a host of our best composers.

It's not surprising to find **Zoot Sims** also turning up with long-time partner **Al Cohn** in a live performance recorded in a Stockholm pub in 1982, ***Zoot Case*** (Sonet SNTCD1044). Working with a Swedish rhythm section that gets the job done, this performance shows that aging and familiarity had not dimmed their enthusiasm for playing together. All the intensity and drive they ever possessed is put to work as they deliver solo messages to each other and weave their modern baroque duo passages over five standards (*Do Nothin' Till You Hear from Me*, *Girl from Ipanema*, *Emily*, *Exactly Like You*, *After You've Gone*) and the original title tune. It's tenor-and-tenor all the way till the closing track when Zoot whips out his soprano sax before the event deflates with a final fade-out.

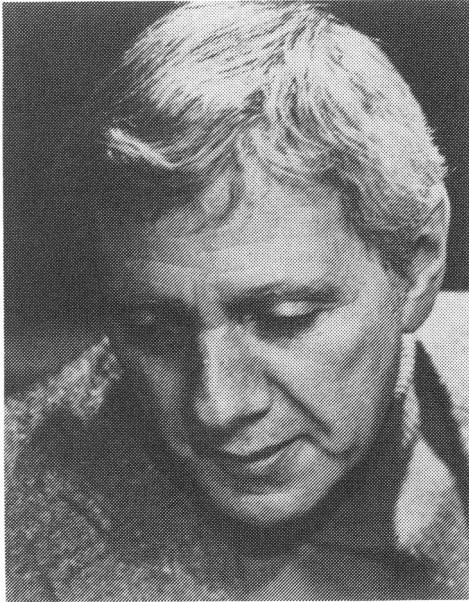
RETURNING TO THE PRESENT, there's an abundance of recordings emanating from jazz's chief classicists, the pianists. One who has distinguished the jazz scene ever since hooking up with Charlie Ventura and Woody Herman over forty years ago is

Dave McKenna. In that time he has evolved a very distinctive style that applies a strong sense of swing on top of a deep rolling bass. In recent years he has become addicted to playing long sequences of songs with related themes in their titles. This may be a concert medley or, as here, an entire album, ***Shadows 'N' Dreams*** (Concord CCD-4467). Devoted to the American popular songbook, he calls upon a battery of noted songwriters to weave a melodious fabric out of *Darn That Dream*, *Me and My Shadow*, Richard Rodgers' *We Kiss in a Shadow* and *I Have Dreamed* and eight more. To that he also adds a pair of his own compositions that merit a life of their own. McKenna's eminence is deserved; his is an understated art, grandly achieved, that fortunately is recognized and rewarded.

MUCH OF THE SAME can be said for **Kenny Barron**, invited to one of the noted Concord sessions, ***Live at Maybeck Recital Hall, Volume Ten*** (Concord CCD-4466). Barron is 13 years McKenna's junior, born in 1943, arriving on the scene in the early 1960s. This naturally thrust him in a different, more modern milieu, which has become a base for reaching in all directions and embracing much of the history of the jazz piano. This is reflected in his Maybeck concert, where he calls on what he's learned from Monk, Powell, Evans and others to play three originals plus *Witchcraft*, *Spring Is Here*, *I'm Getting Sentimental Over You*, *Skylark* and *Well You Needn't*, playing at varying distances from the original songs. Unlike the leaner and pinpointed involvement displayed in his numerous combo dates, he seizes the opportunity here to express himself expansively. The results are adventurous, opening wide his sackful of ideas and techniques. This works well at times, since he has much to say. At others, he misses out on enhancing the composer's ideas and letting the original composition show through. *Skylark* is expanded beautifully; *Spring Is Here* is converted into his own creation, altering it from a joyful spring to a solemn one. He's taken the solo recital challenge seriously and given the listener a lot to contemplate.

ZOOT SIMS • AL COHN • KENNY BARRON
TEDDY WILSON • RUBY BRAFF

RUBY BRAFF



Teddy Wilson, on the other hand, keeps his message clear and direct, albeit just as difficult to create. *Swedish Jazz My Way* (Sonet SNTCD 618) is a direct reissue of the lp album originally released in 1970. Wilson is justly recognized for his elegant, impeccable swinging style. The album is made up of two parts Sweden, one part Wilson. The songs are all Swedish themes from the 1940s and 50s, all pleasantly melodic and well-arranged. And Wilson's fellow musicians on the date are a group of five Swedes led by clarinetist Ove Lind and featuring vibist Lars Erstrand. While two tracks are solo piano, the remaining nine range from trio to sextet, with all hands displaying a feel for the music they're playing. It's a laid-back set: medium tempos, smooth arrangements, relaxing. It's not quite like any other Wilson disc and can be valued among his endless array of recordings for that reason. If time seems to go fast, it may be because the CD clocks in at 36:17, though the sustained high quality of the music helps to make up for the brief playing time.

There may be no better exemplar of mainstream jazz than **Ruby Braff**. The voices of classic jazz and the melodies of America's master composers constantly flow from his cornet. His manner of playing is distinctly his own and instantly recognizable.

MOST IMPORTANT is the expressive story he has to tell, kneading his notes into burnished brassiness and throaty exclamations. For decades he has pursued his own muse in full disregard of popular trends. But he has held on and, with the somewhat modest resurgence of his kind of jazz, has found the listening public catching up to the always supportive critical judgement. On *Ruby Braff and His New England Songhounds* (Concord CCD-4478) he offers a good display of what he's all about. On a dozen tracks he touches a lot of basic bases: Fats Waller for *Crazy 'Bout My Baby*, Mercer and Arlen for *My Shining Hour*, Count Basie for *Blue and Sentimental*, Billie Holiday for *Tell Me More*, Cole Porter for *Every Time We Say Good-bye*, and other choice material.

Helping to nail his point home is a crew that includes Scott Hamilton's sympathetic tenor, Howard Alden's perceptive guitar-playing, Dave McKenna making a rare return to combo playing and making the most of his piano solos, Frank Tate playing bass with a full and natural sound, and New England's most wanted drummer, Alan Dawson. The rhythm support is just what a swinging front line needs and Braff and Hamilton are in fine form.

A contemporary horn player with a different point of view is **Pete Minger**, best known for the decade he spent in the Basie trumpet section. Born into a more recent jazz environment than Braff, he plays in the evolved-bop mode but, in *Minger Painting* (Jazz Alliance TJA-10005) applies it to the same kinds of songs that appeal to Braff. He relies on the flugelhorn for all but two tracks, working with veterans Keeter Betts and Bobby Durham on bass and drums, with Dolph Castellano keeping him company at the piano. He also supplies a muted trumpet blues of his own that has a good line, resulting in his doing some of his best blowing. He makes good use of the warm tones of the flugelhorn on *Namely You*, *Easy Living* and *But Beautiful*, playing them with a becoming sense of structure, within each solo and in building the whole piece. When he shifts into

up tempo renditions of *When Lights Are Low*, *Just One of Those Things* and *Alone Together* it's less apparent. Sensitivity is traded in for speed and substance for style, as notes are dumped out furiously. This is a worthwhile trade-off for some tastes, and his overall mastery of horn and ideas make this CD a welcome exposure of Minger's talents.

WHEN IT COMES TO MASTERY of the idiom, few trumpet players can equal **Red Allen**. Like Louis Armstrong, he was an early generation New Orleans jazzman, but, in part because of Louis' prominence and influence, was destined for a career of under appreciation of his exceptional talents. Good evidence of what he could do is demonstrated in *World on a String* (Bluebird 2497-2-RB), a welcome and deserved reissue of three notable 1957 sessions for Victor, gathered into a single package for the first time. His was a very personal style, biting off notes, growling, smearing, slurring, maneuvering through a wide dynamic range, equally at home with clarion-clear high notes and rich cornet-like runs at the other end of his range. Included, of course, is his singing on four tracks, in his idiomatic instrumentalist manner. Enhancing these sessions is the compatible presence of a vigorous Coleman Hawkins. Long-time trombonist side-kick J.C. Higginbotham is also on hand, as is Buster Bailey with his curiously contained clarinet sound. Booting the music along is the requisite strong rhythm section, with Marty Napoleon at the piano, Everett Barksdale on guitar and Cozy Cole on drums, all providing valuable individual contributions. But it's really an Allen and Hawkins show as they romp through Red's own *Algiers Bounce* and *Let Me Miss You Baby*, his *Rid, Red, Ride* specialty, and mainstream staples such as *Love Me or Leave Me*, *Sweet Lorraine*, 'Swonderful and the truly magnificent version of the title piece. Listening to Red Allen, you hear extraordinary trumpet playing you'll encounter nowhere else.

Allen enriched several of the early big bands — Luis Russell, the Mills Blue

PETE MINGER • RED ALLEN • DUKE ELLINGTON FRANKIE CAPP & NAT PIERCE

Rhythm Band and Lucky Millinder, Louis Armstrong and others for shorter stays, including some work briefly with **Duke Ellington**. The reissue, and new issue, of Ellington material continues to pour out into the market steadily with no end in sight and, sometimes, with too little regard for logic. *Jungle Nights in Harlem 1927-1932* (Bluebird 2499-2-RB) tells you on the outside of the package the dates and the identification of the Cotton Club Orchestra. It's only by inspection of the compact booklet inside the package, however, that the plot is revealed. There they inform you that this is the second of three CD sessions covering RCA's Ellingtons from 1927 to 1934. Inevitably, it's good Ellington, but if someone is looking for certain titles — such as *Rockin' in Rhythm*, *Ring Dem Bells* or *Black Beauty* beware! This set has only a fraction of the Victor library and a much smaller part of the band's total output in the period for sundry labels. The logic of splitting the recordings in three assorted sets, rather than chronologically, is not explained. So much for logistics. Musically, it's over an hour of typically worthwhile early Ellington, in RCA's widely recognized superior sound of that time. The chosen titles hardly matter, unless they duplicate other reissues already on ones shelf,



PETE MINGER

though stand-out cuts include Teddy Bunn's guitar on *Haunted Nights*, the lovely *Sweet Jazz O' Mine* and the Duke's stride piano workout on *Lot O' Fingers*. Listening to Cootie, Tricky Sam, Bubber, Barney, Whetsel, Hodges, Jenkins, Carney and the Duke himself, as they discover the range of jazz expression is to enjoy one of the seven wonders of the jazz world. The collector just has to make sure this fits into his or her Ellington scheme without excessive duplication.

THE TWENTIES GAVE BIRTH to the big band, a combination dance and jazz orchestra, a phenomenon that has persisted through the century. A major deviation that has arisen in the last several decades leaves out the dance aspect. The big band has not only grown bigger, it sits on a concert stage or in a recording studio and, for better or worse, confines itself to its own concept of jazz. One of the better ones on the scene began on the West Coast in 1977, the **Frankie Capp/ Nat Pierce Orchestra**. Taking cognizance of the CD phenomenon, Concord has now reissued their first lp, with two new tracks added, *Juggernaut* (Concord CCD 4040). It was a very solid band, one that could have been sent on the road as the Count Basie orchestra. Nat Pierce rolls out his Basie piano style, Al Hendrickson's acoustic guitar provides convincing Freddie Greene rhythm, the arrangements are in the Basie band mode and Frankie Capp's drums drive the band hard. What with *Avenue C*, *Moten Swing*, *Dickie's Dream* and *It's Sand, Man* setting the model for another half-dozen tracks, it's a Basie event all the way, even with a pair from Billy Strayhorn included. *All Heart* gets a rich alto rendering by Marshall Royal and *Take the A Train* is a vehicle for Ernie Andrews, who also sings on *Wee Baby Blues* and *Roll 'Em Pete*. A good singer not too often recorded, his delivery leads the music a bit away from the Basie atmosphere. Others on hand, lending class to the enterprise, include Bill Berry, Blue Mitchell, Buster Cooper, Britt Woodman, Plas Johnson and Richie Kamuca. No wonder everything works.

ALONGSIDE SUCH A CELEBRATION we have a new recording from — who else?— **Count Basie** himself. There may be an endless storehouse of Basie tapes in the vaults, and if they're like *Fun Time* (Pablo PACD-2310-945) they should all be released in time. It recounts the band's July 1975 appearance at the Montreux Festival, covering nine tunes plus a taste of *One O'Clock Jump* going out. This band was a well-oiled machine, and sometimes sounded too much that way. But they were up on this particular day, playing with lots of spirit and conviction, whether they were roaring and stomping through *Whirly Bird*, greasing the rails for *Li'l Darlin'* or digging into a ballad (Jimmy Forest with *Body and Soul*) or blues (*Good Time Blues*). Sonny Cohn, Al Grey, Eric Dixon, Charlie Fowlkes and Freddy Greene were all at work, but the primary credit goes to the leader, who shows no reticence in his piano soloing, and Butch Miles, whose drumming drove the band mightily all during his days with the band. Some credit should go to the crowd, too, which also drove the band with its enthusiastic reception, creating the kind of exchange that produces so much of the best jazz. The only minor flaw is the two blues numbers sung by Bill Caffey, who expectedly can't match such predecessors as Jimmy Rushing and Joe Williams. Perhaps no better collection of this edition of the Count Basie orchestra exists — not necessarily for the tune selection, not necessarily for the solos, though both are good — but for the exuberance that enables the band to show its best.

This array of CDs pounds in the signposts that point to the many directions of jazz. No destinations, only directions. And if you listen carefully, you'll hear the sounds of the future. □

DICK NEELD has contributed to Coda since 1973. Has presented a jazz radio show in the New York area for the past 20 years, is a former president of the New Jersey Jazz Society, and currently a director of the New Hampshire Library of Traditional Jazz (Univ. of NH). Lives in Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts.

HAN BENNINK

IN CONVERSATION WITH JOHN CORBETT

DUTCH DRUMMER HAN BENNINK HAS AN AGELESSNESS ABOUT HIM THAT OFTEN CONFUSES PEOPLE. WITH BOUNDLESS ENERGY AND CHILDLIKE CURIOSITY, HE CAN AT TIMES APPEAR MUCH YOUNGER THAN HE IS. ON THE OTHER HAND, HIS PLAYING HAS THE BRILLIANCE AND SOPHISTICATION OF A GREAT ELDER-STATESMAN OF FREE IMPROVISATION, BOP, SWING, OR WHATEVER STYLE HE CHOOSES TO PLAY.

THOUGH HE'S PERHAPS BEST KNOWN FOR HIS APPEARANCE ON ERIC DOLPHY'S *LAST DATE* RECORD, BENNINK HAS PLAYED AND RECORDED WITH A CROSS-SECTION OF MUSICIANS ALMOST AS WIDE AS HIS SIMULTANEOUSLY ECLECTIC AND HIGHLY-SPECIALIZED TASTES — FROM DEXTER GORDON, J. R. MONTEROSE, AND BEN WEBSTER TO DEREK BAILEY, CECIL TAYLOR, AND MARION BROWN. HE'S EVEN PLAYED WITH ANARCHIST PUNK ROCKERS THE EX. ALONG WITH PIANIST MISHA MENGELBERG, BENNINK FOUNDED THE IMPORTANT IMPROVISORS' COOPERATIVE INSTANT COMPOSER'S POOL (ICP), AND HE HAS HAD AN ONGOING MUSICAL DIALOGUE WITH MENGELBERG FOR MORE THAN 30 YEARS. WITH DUTCH SAXOPHONIST WILLEM BREUKER, BENNINK SOMETIMES PERFORMS AS THE NEW ACOUSTIC SWING DUO. HE HAS WORKED IN A DUO WITH GUITARIST DEREK BAILEY SINCE THE MID-60S, AND HE HAS RECORDED A WONDERFUL RECORD OF DUETS WITH PIANIST/ECLECTICIST STEVE BERESFORD CALLED *DIRECTLY TO PYJAMAS* (NATO RECORDS), AMONG COUNTLESS OTHER RECORDS.



STARTING IN THE LATE-60S, HAN WAS PART OF A SEMINAL TRIO WITH GERMAN SAXOPHONE COLOSSUS PETER BRÖTZMANN AND BELGIAN PIANIST FRED VAN HOVE. EVENTUALLY VAN HOVE LEFT THE GROUP. BENNINK AND BRÖTZMANN CONTINUED TO WORK AS A DUO UNTIL THE MID-80S, WHEN THEY PARTED WAYS. IN VANCOUVER, ON THE DAY AFTER BENNINK HAD MADE HIMSELF A HERO AT THE 1993 DU MAURIER INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL, PLAYING WITH PIANISTS MYRA MELFORD AND PAUL PLIMLEY AND WITH THE CLUSONE TRIO (FEATURING CELLIST ERNST REIJSEGER AND REEDSMAN MICHAEL MOORE), HE STARTED OUR INTERVIEW.

I'M WORKING ON BEING MORE BASIC, MORE CONCRETE. Clarity. A clear story, no bullshit. When I like to rattle around, I can do that. I don't need any more enormous drum kit or bells or gongs or whatever sort of shit. I find something here and there behind stage. Canadian stages are very clean, so there's nothing to find, but yesterday I found some strings, a cardboard box, and a piece of wood. They are more interesting to me sound-wise than many other things because sounds are everywhere and it depends on what context you put them in. When I play on something, it's still playing with two sticks, so I just let the audience hear the difference between how the drum kit sounds or a garbage can, piece of junk, or whatever. That's the idea. I have to work myself up to a sort of level in a concert where I feel free to do that. It has to come spontaneous to me.

There has to be a *hole* that I can think "Wow! Oh yeah..." There must be sort of tension. I can pick up some sticks and play with them, but that sort of opening or hole is not always there for other material. To speak about music is always very difficult, because if I could say in words, what I am playing, then I'd rather write a book. But it's music, so you have to do it each time again.

SWING SOFTLY & PLAY WITH A BIG STICK

HAN BENNINK • MAARTEN ALTENA • PETER BENNINK • WILLEM VAN MANEN • WILLEM BREUKER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY KORS VAN BENNEKOM

I've seen references associating you and Misha Mengelberg with the art movement Fluxus, though it's not widely talked about. I think it's interesting because I see real connections between what you do and that whole milieu and sensibility.

ABSOLUTELY TRUE. I never was in Fluxus, though Misha was. He's older than me, seven years older. So he was in Fluxus, but I was in third class of art school in Amsterdam. I was already very interested in Dada: Kurt Schwitters, Marcel Duchamp, Max Ernst, Picabia, Man Ray, all those guys. I still am. My work has reflections from Fluxus. But at that particular period, with the "happenings," I was too young.

I was already involved in jazz, because my father was a percussion player in the symphony orchestra. For his hobby he played clarinet in the Benny Goodman style and tenor saxophone in the Coleman Hawkins style. He really could play very, very well. I used to do gigs with my dad when I was about 17. My father could play all instruments; he played violin, accordion, everything. He could read fantastic, and he always forced me to try to read music. I can't read a note. I am so surprised to see Tom Rainey, Joey Baron, Gerry Hemingway — they really can read like ravens. I'm not interested at all. I shut my eyes and let myself go; I like to play each tune different. I gigged with my dad's dance bands, we played with acrobats, we did shows for the army. By a certain age, 17, 18, there is a certain music, like my son, he's into rap music now. He's 17. And I was into jazz music, because jazz music, west coast style, was very "in" in Holland. My first record was *Dave Brubeck Goes To College*. But then I heard a record of Charlie Parker and Charlie Parker played *Kim*. That record, Jesus Christ! I was buying everything, following everything, as best I could.

I went to America in 1960, playing on a boat of the Holland-America line. I played with a trio and a singer, just to go and see New York. [he recites, in rapid-fire succession...] I went to the old Five Spot at Cooper Square,

I saw Ornette (Coleman), I went to Bleecker Street where John Coltrane played *My Favorite Things*, I saw Aretha Franklin just herself playing piano with a drummer, I went to Café Ruffio on Bleecker Street, I saw Billy Higgins, saw Sonny Clark playing with Lacy, I went to the Half Note, I saw Bob Cunningham and all sort of guys. Really, I was there very early.

I was there with the ship for 10 days. On the ship we had a sort of jazz trio. We were the speciality, and there was also another band for real entertainment like waltzes. My drumming completely changed. I saw Elvin (Jones) and... Misha Mengelberg is always saying "When you went to New York you learned so much, seeing those guys." And it's of course true, because we were aping, in a way, listening to the records. The first time I saw Art Blakey, I fell off my chair. And I caught Kenny Clarke in 1957, at the Concertgebouw, with Phineas Newborn and Oscar Pettiford. Later on I saw Lucky Thompson, Oscar Pettiford, and Kenny Clarke — I still have recordings from that. Oscar Pettiford was playing with a broken hand because he had a car accident in Vienna. He was always pissed; he used to fall asleep on the toilets. Great rhythm section, though. Fantastic! Watching those guys helps a lot, when you're young.

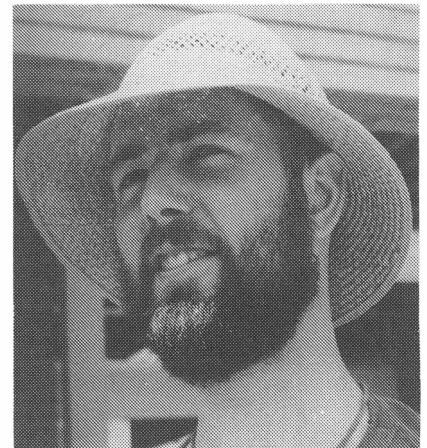
I think you mentioned once that your favourite rhythm section was Kenny Clarke and Ray Brown.

WELL YEAH, THAT'S MY FAVOURITE. The first Modern Jazz Quartet, that's my favourite rhythm section. Of course, the famous rhythm section is Philly Joe Jones and Paul Chambers, and I like also Louis Hayes and Sam Jones very, very much. I like also the rhythm sections that Erroll Garner used to play with, like Harold "Doc" West and Eddie Calhoun. Vernell Fournier and Israel Crosby playing with Ahmad Jamal. Those rhythm sections are so tight. It's the swing and how tight and how precise the bass and drums are playing. It has to walk. Some rhythm sections are so sloppy you could put a whole elephant in the holes. I like it real tight. Nowadays I don't play too often with bass players; I play with [cellist] Ernst Reijseger now. With the ICP Orchestra we play with Ernst Glerum, he's very good, can play fantastic bowed chords. He was also in the Amsterdam String Trio.

I think I can play very, very well and I once did with Dave Holland. I love playing with him. I recently did a duo with Jaamaldeen Tacuma in Amsterdam, and all the hip bass players are talking about him. I like how he plays four-on-the-beat, really tight, really heavy into it. We played a fantastic duet. [drummer] Cornell Rochester I also like. [a sparrow comes up to Han's foot] Oh, a young one, nice one. I was also very close with Ed Blackwell. He was one of my heroes. I miss him very, very, very much. Beautiful person, beautiful player.

I want to ask about your philosophy and approach to the use of humour in music.

THE HUMOUR THING IS VERY DELICATE. It's a particular humour, it's another frame. People laugh already when you come onstage with shorts on. I think that's really normal because I sweat my ass off. It's the way you do it. When I do something and the others in the Clusone Trio are just going on, that makes a real strange tension. I can work with that. I do it to make room in the music, and I do it for myself, because I actually come from that art school. It's not only the musical input, you can do more. Like Claes Oldenberg did, for example. (Ed note: Oldenberg



was associated with the Pop art movement and was known for his giant soft sculptures of everyday objects, including a drum kit). You can play with an enormous drumstick, two very long ones, but *really try* to play with them, not only show them. What I often do is play very fast, break a stick, grab another stick — and I know what I'm doing — I grab a big Aboriginal stick, hold it, you see the difference, and I throw it away. That might be very funny, but it's just to let them see the difference. Or sometimes I go with that big stick and simply play with it. That's a very delicate point: if it was *only* humour, that would disturb the music. And I *play* what I am and I *do* what I am because I am like that, and it never disturbs the music, it helps the music. Otherwise I couldn't do it for that long. Sometimes when there are holes into the music you can hear people laugh, they are into the whole context, they fill that with their laugh like an opera. But how it exactly works? That is pure shamanism. I really don't know. It's daily life, all differences, and all rules, and you can fight with the rules at the same time.

Do you see it as being related to vaudeville?

YEAH, OF COURSE. But I learned that from my dad. I was playing parties when I was 17. And a drummer always had chances to play with a cuckoo whistle — that belonged to the drum material, so it already was in that sound-effect world. I've seen Gene Krupa live on Broadway at the Metropole, or there's a movie with Big Sid Catlett and Jo Jones, *Jammin' The Blues*. It's one of my favourite movies, unbelievable, and they play just snare drum and when they have a rim shot eyebrows are going high. (Ed. Note: This is a sequence in the film where Joe Jones replaces Big Sid Catlett at the drums in the middle of a tune, with not even a break in the rhythm). I think that it was there already, and of course it's vaudeville. Of course when Misha and me are playing in Italy, they understand it because they understand *commedia del l'arte*. It's instant composing. You sit there, you do the music, you improvise, and that's what it is. It's very basic, very clear.

I got to thinking about this issue because one of the evenings that I saw you, it seemed that some of the tricks weren't falling right. What happens then? I mean, those tricks seem like they can be a way of kick-starting things.

WHEN THEY DON'T FALL, it's like the music sometimes; you hit here and there and it doesn't fall either. And then you have to improvise yourself out of that in order to come into the right context. But it belongs to my musical baggage and my musical language, and that's all I can say about it. And of course not each concert is the same concert, and I'm glad. Otherwise I'd give up. I still have the urge to do it better and more intense and so on, and that keeps me up all the time. I do my best and that's all I can.

Well, things fall right a phenomenal amount of the time.

I KNOW, I KNOW. [laughs] I've been playing and a stick has broken and flew and took the cigarette out of Misha's mouth, just the ashes. A broken stick flew into a lady's eye in Fiorenza and broke her glasses. I had to pay 60,000 *lira* in order to repair the glasses, but she was not hurt, thank goodness. They were all falling right, in a way.

When you played in Providence, Rhode Island, you did something incredible. You put your foot on the snare drum like you sometimes do, to change its tone, and someone in the audience laughed. You knew that would happen again, put your foot on the snare again, someone laughed, and you stopped cold, marched angrily out of the theatre, and came back in dragging a huge cardboard foot, which you'd obviously seen earlier backstage. Incredibly quick connection. It was clear at that point that the humour has a conceptual base as well.

THAT WAS A NICE EXAMPLE. That steps into the right context. On the other hand sometimes it also bothers me, because I like to be taken very, very seriously. And as soon as the word "humour" comes, everybody gets a sort of strange idea. But I like to be taken very seriously. It has that feeling: "Oh, that guy Bennink is a bit crazy, and for that reason they give him attention as a drummer." They've been writing about how I look and what faces I make. I have books full of that. [laughter]

You have a magical way of taking things that could easily become schtick and making them not schtick. It seems to be a question of taking sounds and putting them into different contexts, sometimes in a very decalish sort of way. But there is also a lot of variation in terms of the way you can interact with any kind of other players or ensembles.

I WOULD LIKE TO PLAY with as much variety in my life as I can. I'm not interested to play with heavy metal bands, but I did play with a punk band, just for one night. And they



asked me to play a solo concert in a punk club. In the last year there are things I've been doing that are weird. I played with Art Hodes, who is dead now. Then I had four gigs with Percy Sledge. And I did a record with Cecil Taylor. [laughter]

Could you just describe your practice routine?

MY PRACTICING IS SORT OF RIDICULOUS NOW, because I have sticks all the time on my bed and I come in the hotel, switch the television on as a cushion, and I start practicing doing something. It's not a particular roll or a single stroke. It's all there, I just let my fingers move, the sticks move, and train all the time. I knocked this off playing on strange drum kits [points at a scab on his hand]. I train like a maniac. I like it. And when I'm not training I write in my diary, I write letters home, I bike.

I have a house-boat on a small dike in a gorgeous neighbourhood 20 kilometres from Amsterdam, and I have a stable for myself, in a meadow where I go. It's really dark, there's no light, I have a bit of electricity but it's very dark. For painting it's bad. But it's enormously quiet. My only neighbours are cows, and they love music. When I go in the meadow and practice — because I play a bit of saxophone, but since I play with Michael [Moore] who's so good, I more or less gave up! I've messed around on lots of instruments; I had a trombone, a violin, Ernst gave me a really beautiful violin from France. When I play in the meadow, the cows come and make a half a circle and they listen. Very, very nice.

How do you find things in the music now, both in terms of the infrastructure — money, places to play — and in terms of new players?

FIRST OF ALL, I AM GLAD THAT I STILL AM ABLE TO PLAY and that people appreciate it. The situation in Holland is not that bad at all. I more or less play for the same salary as a new member of the BIM [the BIM is a co-op of musicians]. That's just the money we get from the government and we like to spread it as good as we can, so we give everybody a chance. But it doesn't help me financial-wise, so I have to go out. In order to go out of Holland, they have to ask me, or there must be a need for the music. I worked for 15 years very intensely with Peter [Brötzmann] in Germany. And Germany is much bigger; they have more relations, for example, with Japan. So I went to Japan. Now I work all over the world except the United States. They don't want me there, they don't give me a work permit when we come, you have to play for the door. South America, I haven't been. But for the rest, I've been playing almost everywhere, most of it in Europe itself. For instance, we have to do the Clusone festival, because we took the name Clusone Trio. So they gave me *carte blanche*. This year, we're gonna be the Clusone Trio plus Bill Frisell — sounds not bad to me — and there's a young tenor player, Tobias Delius. He's my dearest friend; we have a quartet with Larry Fishkind, and Tristan Honsinger. Tobias is also playing in Michael [Moore]'s band. The first guest we asked was Jaki Byard, but he couldn't make it.

Are there any drummers around these days that really knock your socks off?

ABSOLUTELY. You can learn from everybody, also how *not* to play. I heard a record of Gerry Hemingway playing with a blues singer, and he was playing on the off-beat all the time, so the high came on the one and the three...and he was still swinging! Those sort of things knock my socks off. There are incredible drummers around — I've heard some drummers from Burundi recently. I'm scared of that shit, absolutely. Very good. And I've seen a Scottish drummer, John McPatrick, he's playing the shit out of the snare drum. There are many good players, man. Elvin (Jones). I saw Roy Haynes on a good night in the BIMhuis, Jesus Christ!

There are a lot of drummers who are visual artists as well as yourself.

YES, WEIRD, THAT IS. Tony Oxley, Daniel Humair — he's actually getting more money from painting than from playing. Sven-Ake Johansson, Jamie Muir. I met my old school colleague, Rob van der Broek, he's playing with the European Jazz Quartet. He was with me

in art school. Phil Minton came from the art school. There was a particular time in England that many of the improvisors came more from the art schools than music schools. Maybe the art schools were more open than the music schools or conservatories. There is Wim Janssen, brother of Guus Janssen, he is a drummer and a painter. It's very weird. I met a drummer in Montreal, John Heward, he's also a painter. It's so open in Canada, such big space. I'm jealous of that, I must say. I'm gonna miss that as soon as I'm in Europe. But I love to go back to Amsterdam. [chuckles to himself knowingly]. The speciality, the humour is all there. It's a very, very open mentality, that's what I like.

How important was organizing and running the record company, ICP Records, with Misha?

COMPARED TO DEREK BAILEY, Misha and I are amateurs. Compared to Incus, compared to FMP, we are amateurs, and we like to keep it that way. First of all, Misha and me, we are no businessmen. We do the music and make a choice what to do, which is most of the time our own material because we are too poor to pay others. Then I have to make the cover — always very cheap. One time through the press, not two colours. And that's not good when you want to do business. The record business, well you really have to make a hit or it's not interesting. It's just for you guys [critics] and the people we play for, but money-wise it's nothing. We were losing money all the time. It was sucking time, that's all. And my time's too short. I like to practice for myself and do something for myself, and leave that for someone else. □

[VANCOUVER, JULY 1993]

Recordings of the **CLUSONE TRIO**, and many other European artists referred to in this interview, are distributed by **BVHAAST RECORDS**, 303 Priseneland, 1013LN Amsterdam, Holland. Tel. 020-623-9799/Fax 020-624-3534.

ABOUT THE WRITER: John Corbett is a freelance writer living in Chicago. A regular contributor to *Downbeat*, *The Wire*, *Option*, and *Butt Rag*, and is the editor of the Time Arts section of the *New Examiner*. He also hosts a weekly radio program on *WHPK* and *WNUR FM*.

APPLE SOURCE

NEW YORK NOTES BY KEVIN WHITEHEAD

To judge by the number of concerts the organization sponsors, the AACM in New York registers few blips: just three in '93. Things look deceptively bleak. Three decades after Chicago musicians banded into a power stronger than itself, the advances of the '60s and '70s are discredited habitually (if selectively: no '80s without '60s Miles). *The Penguin Guide to Jazz* (see Abrams) spectacularly garbles the name Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians, mayhaps conflating it with the NAACP. [ED: in Penguin the 'C' = COLORED.]

YET THE VALUES THE AACM propagated permeate the scene. Even Lincoln Center put on a night of unaccompanied solos (Monk tunes) two years ago. Shows by three Chicagoans last fall showed how many ways those values are manifest. At a (mostly) solo percussion concert at the Alternative Museum October 13, **WARREN SMITH** used a distinct combination of instruments for each piece (excepting two "drum solos"), examining a different component of percussion/rhythm language on each. Performing one composition he moved unhurriedly between two mallet instruments, his gait dictating the dialogue's rhythm; he did a Chopin-Joe Chambers medley; he surprised hell out of you, deftly singing the Mingus-Jackie Paris *Paris in Blue*, comping on vibes.

For a November 11-12 gig at the Thread Waxing Space, a lower Broadway loft, altoist/flutist **HENRY THREADGILL** assembled another unlikely but cohesive band, with trumpeter Ted Daniel; Amina Claudine Myers on mock-B3, hands and feet; Brandon Ross on electric and acoustic guitars; Wu Man on pipa—a Chinese lute with raised frets for superior string-bending; Reggie Nicholson, drums. Who but Threadgill makes an organ group with Chinese tinge sound natural? He hears what the pipa has in common with mandolin, but wants it for its own idiomatic properties. (Wu Man sounded equally confident playing in that tradition, improvising in the collective, and reading the scores.) The encore *Encore* was very striking and beautifully simple. It began with an organ wash, chorus on chorus of plain chords, a bare progression. As it repeated, the structure accumulated more detail as other players entered, em-

bellished. Finally it built to a full boil, powerhouse drums overflowing. The basic form never changed, but what began as pure harmony ended in pure rhythm.

At the first of the AACM's autumn shows at the Ethical Culture Society (October 21), **LEROY JENKINS'** violin, trumpet, bass clarinet trio recalled the old CCC co-op with Leo Smith and Anthony Braxton, for its unplaceable air more than anything. Stephen Haynes' half-cocked bucket-muted peals evoked Ives-on-a-mountaintop as much as Bill Dixon; J.D. Parran was rhythm section, glue, keeper of the text, dispensing vamps, a pulse, arpeggios and rhythmic figures. He still found time to improvise in the thick of it: a freak register solo showed off his Armstrong-Eldridge roots. With Parran on clarinet, they played *Mood Indigo*: ignored the bridge till the gently reharmonized main theme hypnotized you, then distorted it fun-house mirror style—part double-time, part half-time, the rests stretched out of shape—before ending oddly straight. (Amina played piano solos on the same program.)

From the start the AACM stood for the totality of the music: not just Armstrong to Ayler and march to mambo, but a social/ritual music connected all the way back and sideways. (Roscoe Mitchell's African face paint and Lester Bowie playing Patsy Cline make that same point as an organ-pipa combo or a trio sharing Ives and Ellington as ancestors.) A desire to experience different vibrational spaces within jazz or Great Black Music (AACMers used both terms) led to the most enduringly controversial aspect: a concept of time not limited to playing time. The idea that the music might sometimes swing and sometimes not,

that swing is a wonderful condition but not the sole rhythmic state, bugs hell out of some people.

The AACM neglects neither swinging nor the swinger. The organization's third fall concert on November 18 offered the only opportunity this fall to hear **MUHAL RICHARD ABRAMS** with his handpicked crew, but co-headliner **REGGIE NICHOLSON** stole the show. Bowie aside, AACM musicians can be pretty serious. Nicholson's trap solo *Interstate 80* took a transparent premise—an audio portrayal of a drive from New York to Chicago, sans radio. Some you expected: he began shaking keys, and had trouble turning the engine over. Once on the road he pulled you in with a wealth of detail, sketched with sticks and brushes: changes in road surface, the hiss of passing traffic, windshield wipers, relief from claustrophobia at a rest area, long-range drivers' trance. When the rhythm picked up a whiff of a south side shuffle, you knew he was close to home. It was funny, evocative, clear as a newly cleaned windshield. Nicholson swings very hard and listens very attentively; he is easily one of the best drummers in town. On the second half an octet played a swinging odd-meter Nicholson piece, and Abrams' *Prism*. It's vintage Muhal, in its cross-sectional doublings and alliances, progress through recombination, and the inspiration it offers soloists, the brass especially: Chancey, trombonist Al Patterson, seriously underrated trumpeter Eddie Allen.

Locally, Muhal has been keeping a low profile even by his standards. Last April he played a Friday at the Knitting Factory: quartet with Nicholson, bass Belden Bullock, Patience Higgins on tenor. The William Paterson College band played a program of Muhal's music on the New Jersey campus November 14. He conducted three blues-oriented compositions at the encouraging debut of the Discovery Orchestra (Turtle Bay Music School, December 5)—an idealistic band mixing vets (trombones include Britt Woodman, Art Baron and Dave Taylor) and lesser knowns like co-leaders Neal Kirkwood and Grisha Alexiev, to play charts from all over.

As pianist, Abrams sat in with clarinetist/flutist/altoist **MARTY EHRLICH's** Emergency Peace Ensemble (Vincent Chancey, Erik Friedlander, Lindsey Horner) at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie, October 5. Muhal played his own *Charlie in the Parker*, stuck around for Ehrlich's *Dust*. Muhal's prints were all over it—in the doubling and trebling of the bass clarinet melody by strings or piano, in a quasi-improvised french horn countermelody, in the proportional balance of vamping and out-of-tempo sections.

Muhal's name crops up remarkably often in print here, as prime example of the seasoned jazz composers denied high-profile uptown concerts. My wish is that some club give him a traditional every Monday orchestra gig, a better way to build an audience and satisfy fans.

Alas, the season's second AACM concert—Frank Gordon trio, Thurman Barker solo—conflicted with **SONNY ROLLINS** at Carnegie, November 3. On *Falling in Love with Love* he took one key interval from the melody as text, and spun off chorus after chorus, like Rollins of old. But curiously enough he didn't really interact with anyone on stage—not Tommy Flanagan, nor Terence Blanchard, nor drummer Greg Williams. Having five rhythm players ensures they're so busy trying to stay out of each other's way they stay out of his. On the exchanges, Sonny would play four bars, wait four, and pick up where he left off. What happened in between was immaterial. (The brass ensemble Jimmy Heath arranged and conducted for two tunes was mere backdrop too.) Was Sonny's tone all cold, cracked, copper, or was that just lousy Carnegie acoustics? Need I mention the fans cheered and cheered?

In truth the best saxophone playing I heard that week was alto **GREG OSBY** with **ANDREW HILL** at the Vanguard. Hill likes to pull the rug out from under rhythm players (bassist Calvin Jones, drummer Gene Jackson) by screwing with the form, but Osby's been playing his music so long, and can start and end phrases anywhere around the dial, Hill can't shake him: 4-D Tristano-Konitz. □

IN EXILE: Louis Moholo

MUSIC AS A REVOLUTIONARY ART FORM ALWAYS EXISTS BY TRANSFORMATION;

the work triggering the audience on more levels than just sound. A spirit connection is forged. The sound language of drummer/composer Louis Moholo surrounds the listener with an energy field, a sound current radiating out to refocus the senses. "We are close to life, close to earth" remarks Moholo, "the music that we do is so honest it makes them jealous". Celebrated for his work with the South Africa meets U.K. jazz/kwela all-star unit, the Brotherhood of Breath, Moholo today still fights to create a new music free from the bounds of the old patterns, the old language. The drummer has in the last period collaborated with many other innovators, including sessions/concerts with Cecil Taylor, Irene Schweizer, Evan Parker, Peter Brotzmann, and Derek Bailey. That evening in London, at a small theatre near Kings Cross station, the Company Week festival was host to a revolutionary music created by the trio of Moholo, Derek Bailey, and percussionist Thebe Lapere, a set of improvisation crackling with energy. The intensity of this music also consumes like a fire, with the deaths of Moholo's close friends, altoist Dudu Pukwana and pianist Chris MacGregor that season (1990) having a tremendous impact on the master drummer. After his trio set on the closing night of Company Week, we sat down backstage and Moholo graciously agreed to talk about the current scene.



PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER SYMES

AN INTERVIEW WITH STEVE VICKERY

Louis Moholo: Well, the music that I play comes from African historical music, classical African music. The music that we play in this festival (Company Week) here in London is very avant-garde, yet it is natural for us. The things that the people here were doing, we were doing that before, way before, another band that just fell apart by the roadside, as we say in Africa. Soldiers always will die by the roadside, so we have always done this before.

I just go with my heart, I just follow the path of my heart, to where my vision takes me, then I apply that. Most fortunately, these visions are always musical anyway because that is the way I think.

Is it possible to capture the experience of this music in a recording?

You can't put everything into a recording, a lot of things are missed, there is so much space that you have to travel within. As well, you're on a tightrope because always in the back of your head you're thinking, Christ, I have to live with it now, with what I am doing now because it will be on a record. So if you sound good after making the record, you are very very lucky. It's really hard to put everything together in a record. There are a lot of conditions as I said, you're travelling in a certain space of time, you must watch when the red light comes on and when it switches off. The producer has control and you must follow that.

Does the recording process make the music less free?

Maybe not less free, but it tampers a lot with the inner feelings, the finer parts. The knowledge that you have in the back of your head. It's not something that you spend time worrying about, it's not going to kill you, you just go ahead and play anyway. I've done a lot of records, with different cats from mbaquaga to kwela, reggae, pop, to Cecil Taylor. All the music has been exuberant to me. I approach it and I serve it accordingly. This is what I think a professional musician should be like. This is what a professional musician should be able to do, to be versatile, to be able to understand the geography of it, the love of it, put some experience in it. All these other things, if you could capture them, make it easy to deal with any music that is put in front of you. I've played with American people, yes, of course, their music is different from our music but it reminds me somehow that the music comes from the same fountain. I would quote Andrew Cyrille. He was saying that of all the nations in the world, South Africans seem to fit like a golden glove with Americans. He said this to me, and a lot of other Americans have said the same thing to me. We, the Black South Africans, seem to have a better relationship musically than most of the other nations in the world.

Is the music symbolic of the South African struggle? We were speaking earlier about exile and I wonder how that influences the music?

Yes. The struggle is still happening here, still happening in South Africa as well, but now, having to be over here, your body is here but your mind is in South Africa, and this is a stress. You find a lot of other musicians that are coming from South Africa, they come here and they get disappointed because maybe the push is not so much here, you see, the work is not so much here. Here, you don't play from your heart, you always will play to pay your rent. Even if you started in the beginning to play from your heart, here it will kill your heart to play that way, because you have to deal with the rent, you have to deal with the manager, you have to deal with the poll tax or something else, so the music stops. It just stops, somehow, the innocence of just picking up your horn and playing, because you have to, as they say over here, "take care of business, baby". Don't you forget that.



If you could play the music in another setting, would you remain in the U.K.?

Home, I would be working at home, in South Africa. Given the chance to do so, I would gladly return to work in South Africa, let my people at least touch me and be with me, I know I would play and give them the real stuff.

Does the music reach them from these shores?

No, it's suppressed because of the war that is happening in South Africa, the people are not stable. They are disturbed in their hearts by the war, to open up their hearts to let this music come in is very difficult because they are being shot at! These people in power are shooting to kill in South Africa, so the music is being suppressed that way. As we become liberated, then maybe it would take just a short time, because in South Africa in the real sense, the South African people are a very progressive people, they are a very healthy people in the mind. It is the regime, the regime that's happening in South Africa that stops the people from thinking healthily, otherwise the South African black people are ready. We will win the war.

Is there a possibility that you see for the music to be presented to a worldwide audience?

There aren't many promoters in our music. We do have papers and magazines that write about our music, but somehow they get swallowed by the capitalism, the machine. They say, make it commercial, they report on the commercial stuff, maybe they get subsidies from the richer firms that are their friends. Maybe they tend to go that way, making reviews and press for these people who are working with the established firms. This spoils our chances with smaller companies and the projects we are trying to present. If there could be more magazines talking about the music that we are making, if we could win the battle of getting the music on television, maybe the war will be finished, the struggle. It makes it very slow for the people to catch up to it when the music is bottled up like that. I don't have the wisdom of knowing what the people who control the media think about our music, the people who could present our music. Maybe the music that we do is so honest that it makes them jealous. We are close to life, close to earth with the music that we do, more than these pop lies and all other nonsense.

Has media interest in jazz here and in the States affected you at all, has it given you more opportunities to play?

It's given me more opportunity to play over here, more than in South Africa, as I've said. In South Africa, you have to deal with apartheid, you have to deal with the pass laws, you have to deal with conditions on everything, the way you sleep, the way you eat, the way you walk, the way you run, the way you breath, the environment, the killings, the frustration...(shouts) they shoot to kill! Yes, killing brains, minds, hearts, everything! Kill even the beauty of the music, look how beautiful South Africa is, look how happy those people are. NO, NO, NO! They shoot to kill. Little kids lifting up their hands, making the peace sign, V for victory, they're being shot at. (pause) I wish the ANC (African National Congress) and the Pan African Congress would get together. Yes, I would like them all to get together and rule South Africa, because all of them are my government. (long pause) To be in exile is a motherfucker. (silence, Moholo stares at the tape recorder) Heavy! Heavy manners! If I were to be born again, I would never be in exile, never, ever. But now I am here, in exile, and the brothers whom I came up with, you know, like Dudu Pukwana, he's dead, he's gone, passed on. Mongezi Feza, passed on. Nick Moyoke, passed on. Johnny Dyani, passed on. Chris MacGregor, passed on. The six, we were a six-piece, now I'm just left, one piece. Ahh, I don't know. I'll attempt to keep going until one day maybe I'll join the band. I hope they play with Big Sid Catlett. (long silence. Moholo relights his smoke and continues) Anyway, I'm working here with Evan Parker and again with Cecil Taylor. We're going to be doing some things in October, and I'm looking forward to that. (laughs and rubs his hands together) Yes, I'm always looking forward. I'd like to work with Ornette (Coleman), yeah I would like to have a trio with Ornette.

(talking quietly) I would like to announce that having played with and shared my life with Dudu Pukwana, Mongezi Feza, Nick Moyoke, Johnny Dyani, and Chris MacGregor, I've been very much privileged. Thank you, Johnny. Thank you, Mongezi. Thank you, Nick. Thank you, Chris. Thank you, Dudu. For looking after me, thank you very much, man. □

Although the preceding conversation took place in the fall of 1990, the conditions discussed have not changed, despite what the popular media report. A film entitled *Musicians In Exile*, available from Rhapsody films, and featuring Dudu Pukwana among others, is recommended for further enlightenment.

Steve Vickery wishes to thank, Derek Bailey and the Company organization, and the Ontario Arts Council for their support of this project.

THE DEDICATION ORCHESTRA

Spirits Rejoice • Ogun OGC101

Traumatic Experience • *Ithi Gqi* • *B My Dear* • *Dancing Damon* • *Hug Pine* • *Andromeda* • *Manje* • *Sonia* • *You Ain't Gonna Know Me* 'Cause *You Think You Know Me* • *Woza*

Volce: Phil Minton, Maggie Nichols, Julie Tippetts • **Trumpet:** Guy Barker, Harry Beckett, Claude Deppa, Jim Dvorak, Kenny Wheeler • **Eb Peckhorn:** Django Bates • **Trombone:** Dave Amis, Malcolm Griffiths, Radu Malfatti, Paul Rutherford • **Tuba:** Dave Powell • **Flute:** Neil Metcalfe • **Saxophone:** Lol Coxhill, Ray Warleigh, Elton Dean, Evan Parker, Alan Skidmore, Chris Biscoe • **Piano:** Keith Tippett • **Bass:** Paul Rogers • **Drums:** Louis Moholo

Shuffle-repeat all through the day, and the spirits rejoice, flooding my very self with memories. Just imagine arriving in London in the early summer of 1966, already primed by Ornette, Trane and C.T., to find John Stevens and the Spontaneous Music Ensemble creating the beginnings of yet another original music. Just imagine in a space called the Little Theatre Club I would hear live for the first time Trevor Watts, Paul Rutherford, Evan Parker, Kenny Wheeler...

...The **Dedication Orchestra**, shuffle-repeat, has arrived once more at the beautiful Dudu Pukwana song *B My Dear*. A romantic sadness reaches in, that otherworldly feeling, and there we are back down in the cellar on Gerrard Street; Ronnie Scott's Old Place. For one and a half years (1966-68) this basement was home to the emerging younger players; John Surman, Mike Westbrook, Graham Collier, John McLaughlin, Tony Oxley, Harry Beckett and numerous others used this as a place to develop and present their new ideas. But my mind is full of the Blue Notes: Chris McGregor, Dudu Pukwana, Mongezi Feza, Ronnie Beer, Johnny Dyani and Louis Moholo. South African Jazz.

Chris McGregor: Letters From A Friend (Coda - March/April 1968) *I had been listening to records and had an idea of what Charlie Parker's music meant and I was deeply involved with Duke Ellington's music but somehow what was on the scene was always enough, was always enough to carry you. There was enough inspiration around to make records not very important, at least in the way I find they are here in England. In South Africa they are like letters, letters from friends.*

In South Africa, too, it must be understood, the situation is not the same. People do not categorize like they do in Western civilizations and the whole spectrum from folk music to the big bands is continuous, in the same time. You may have musicians who play on a Friday night with a kwela band and on Saturday night in a jazz club and Monday entertain their friends with a guitar. The scene is not so categorical and not so much in a bag, not so much professional, too.

I always had the feeling, I had a deep wish, that by setting some kind of example perhaps we could improve the atmosphere and prove to people that black people and white people could cooperate, work together and build something good and beautiful. But it started coming to me that a man does not feel like being some kind of example, or some kind of difficulty or some kind of proof. A man likes to feel like a man doing his thing and doing it as well as he can and making a living at doing the thing he does best. So those kind of philosophical reasons for holding us there eventually started looking very thin, especially after we got an offer to play at the Antibes Jazz Festival. I thought, here we are, a good opening, good bread so why should we hold ourselves back.

Arriving in England in 1965 to join their friend bassist Harry Miller, the Blue Notes had an immediate impact on the London scene. The rhythmic and melodic structure of their music, based as it was in the South African folk music kwela, was at once both dancing in and challenging to the minds of not only the audiences, but also the then current generation of London players. There was an infectious joy to them. Dudu's rumbustious personality shouting, Mongezi's petite trumpet splatter, Johnny Dyani's bass the homeland song, Chris always there, collecting it all together into the grand piano, and Louis Moholo, the only one still with us, a genius of rhythmic perception and power. It is no surprise that over the ensuing years, leading to the formation of the Brotherhood Of Breath in 1970, that their music would entice the cream of the British creative players to join them.

Here are some of them again, shuffle-repeat. The sun has come out and changed this grey wintery day. Music such as this has the power to do that. But the **Dedication Orchestra** is more than a reflection of a fond memory, even though it has brought back thoughts of a wonderful period of my life, **Spirits Rejoice** is not a reproduction of the music from a quarter of a century ago, not the Blue Notes or the Brotherhood, but clearly music played by twenty-four musicians whose lives were, in one way or another, touched by those beautiful South Africans.

Richard Williams (in the liner notes.)

Love is what the Blue Notes played, in all their guises. What survives them is that love, preserved both in their own work and in the playing of the many significant figures with whom they came in contact. And it is in every note of this music.

Spirits Rejoice is indeed wonderful music because it is formed out of the same love. All the compositions are from the Blue Notes and arranged by; Mike Westbrook, Kenny Wheeler, Django Bates, Eddie Parker, Jim Dvorak, John Warren, Radu Malfatti and Keith Tippett, who like a number of people gave their services for the cause. All monies raised will go toward establishing a bursary enabling young South African musicians to study and develop their music in London or Europe. □

REFLECTIONS BY BILL SMITH

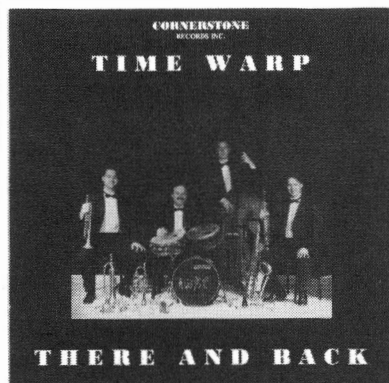
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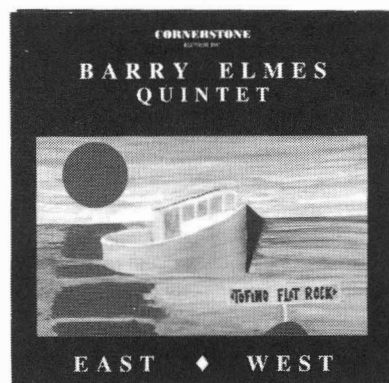
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THE ART OF NOISE NOISE OF ART

REVIEWS BY RANDAL McILROY

CONSISTENCY IS ALL WE SEEK. WELL, THAT AND A THEME TO LINK NINE DISPARATE CDS. THE ANSWER CAME IN A PACKET OF COLOURED PENCILS. EACH OF THESE BANDS IN ITS OWN WAY CARVED MORE THAN A FEW BRIGHT STREAKS INTO THE GREY OF LATE WINTER.

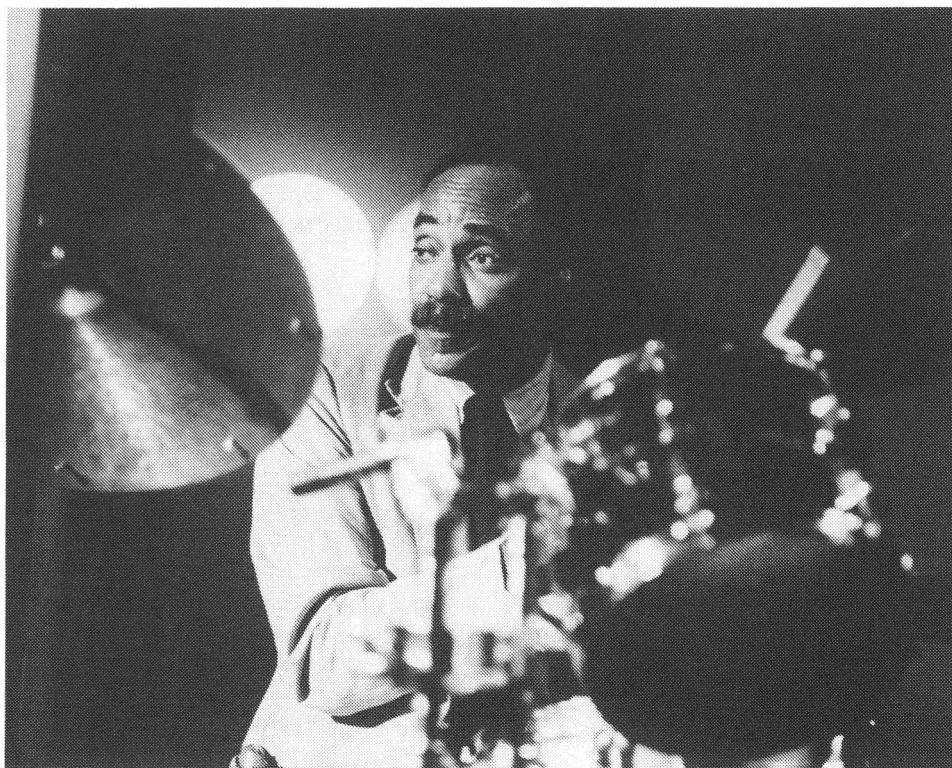
SUN RA is the gleeful rascal at this, splash-ing his interstellar journeys with buckets of primary colours from the keyboards. Yet *Love in Outer Space/Live in Utrecht* is little more than a set of briefly exciting diversions — footnotes to the good captain's space log rather than the map, as it were.

Although this culling from a 1983 Dutch date appears on the estimable Leo label it has the rough cut of a bootleg. There are no musician credits. The sound level is variable, playing hell with the percussion ranks, and the halo of scratches about the horns suggests the disc was mastered from timeworn vinyl.

Ra completists will buy it anyway, but they'll find some rewards. There's plenty of Ra's earthbound piano, from the sparing, almost Paul Bley investigations of *Blues Ra* to the more languid expressions of *Fate in a Pleasant Mood* and the romping introduction to *Big John's Special*. A messy 'Round Midnight shows more affection for Monk's pluck, less for the reverential embalming of that overplayed tune, and there's a good tenor solo, presumably by John Gilmore. The long closing medley of *Love in Outer Space/Space is the Place* calls out the massed percussion and chanting, plus some surprisingly salsa-ish horns.

In *Souvenir*, **NEW AND USED** employs the chiaroscuro of jazz and the bold swaths of rock with the intensity of a chamber ensemble. Reference points are helpful, so let's say first of all that this American band could be the heir to high-period Material, when Bill Laswell matched unfused jazz players to expand rock's electric groove. The difference is that New and Used looks to rock music for the details of arrangement. This isn't blowing music, although Dave Douglas (trumpet), Kermit Driscoll (bass, bass guitar), Mark Feldman (violin), Andy Laster (baritone, alto) and Tom Rainey (drums) could cut it that way too.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY GERARD FUTRICK

The opening *Slow Boat to Mechanicsville* is packed tight as a resume. The tradeoffs between the swooning violin and pecking trumpet, the skitterish rimshots, the baritone/violin hook and the easy slides into rock and blues combine for a statement of ambition and then some.

It could be showing off, but the integrity of the music belies that. They have an affinity for the blues, albeit in a restless way, with Feldman's violin invoking a non-specific folk melancholy a la Albert Ayler. Space is revered for all their attention to tart instrumental combinations, and tension has room to gather. The tick-tock pulse of *Red Letter* is irresistible for that. *Souvenir* proves they can keep their hands off a pretty tune.

TAMBASTICS takes a different turn in the paintbox, exploring tonal colour to the point where instrumentation is best considered as an index of sound sources, intensively catalogued and scientifically applied. That might sound dry but the music definitely isn't. Tambastics reaches back to the primordial, but without electronic instruments their music equally recalls the sonic research of the futurists—the art of noise, the noise of art.

THE ART OF NOISE/THE NOISE OF ART

Percussionist Gerry Hemingway and bassist Mark Dresser are veterans of the Anthony Braxton laboratory, which is telling, while flautist Robert Dick and pianist Denman Maroney have worked tirelessly to get beyond the accepted voices and limitations of their respective instruments. All four contribute compositions, and all of these blend well with the three group improvisations; notation itself seems intuitive.

Interestingly, although this music demands virtuosity of the players it doesn't parade virtuosity in the music. Prepared piano, bowed percussion, scraped strings and percussive flute obscure the familiar timbres and encourage a new way of listening. Rhythm and solos? Irrelevant.

Helpfully, Tambastics provides a few signposts without condescension. Maroney's *Chthonia* hints at swing before being subsumed by calming eddies of sound. Dresser's *Tambrage Rose* is a vivid illustration conjuring a piccolo leaping inches ahead of the grinding robot jaws of death (here and in Hemingway's *Not Having 2* they build some wild marching rhythms). Yet in this microworld it's best to forget expectations and trust to the conjurers.

29TH STREET SAXOPHONE QUARTET's conjuring creates a rhythm section where there isn't one. It's the same trick the cappella saxophone groups Rova and World Saxophone Quartet have mastered, and while 29th Street is more conservative than either, *Your Move* is swinging music that lacks nothing save a little more fire.

The dovetailing of altos (Bobby Watson, Ed Jackson), tenor (Rich Rothenberg) and baritone (Jim Hartog) is as elegant as Ellington. In Watson's *Pamela* that richness enjoys a Cadillac drive (and, without disruption, a quote from *I'm Popeye the Sailor Man*). In Rothenberg's *Forecast* it tolls like foghorns. In *Jimmy Kay* it's the blues, gracefully disassembled to find the beauty of the construction.

They have tunes you can hum, which is something, and some great hooks, including Hartog's walking baritone in Rothenberg's *Just One More Thing*. Next time, though, a little urban squall would not go amiss.

The French quartet **FOUR IN ONE** works without a piano. Nothing shocking there except *TM* is a tribute to Thelonious Monk, for which a piano could be seen to be useful. There again, they don't play *'Round Midnight* (but sadly they don't play *Four In One* either).

Take away the comping and there's more space to explore. They do. Matthieu Tric is immediately the arresting fourth, his soprano curling like Steve Lacy's in *Monk's Mood* until he finds his own voice. His solo opening to *Pannonica* is metallic but lithe, true to the straight horn's soul as much as it is true to Monk, and he plays cool flute on *Skippy*.

This is group music, however. Michael Attias is assured on baritone and alto, Denis Chauvet's trenchant bassist and drummer David Guil lifts the music even as he drives it. *Played Twice* validates the band's name as much more than a quoted Monk title, with the old hierarchy of front line/rhythm section cheerily and skilfully ignored. For a live recording the dynamics are framed extremely well.

It's fun too. Playing Monk's music means searching for the spirit winking between the notes. Whether musing in *Misterioso* or chuckling in *Epistrophy*, Four In One gets it more right than most, making *TM* so much more interesting than your usual repertory disc.

A brisk take of Monk's *Bemsha Swing* salts *Nutville*, cut by Chicago vibraphonist **JIM COOPER** with a band that features Ira Sullivan on trumpet, tenor and soprano. *Nutville* is the kind of varied set that invites description by contents, yet whether the subject is blues, swing or salsa, Cooper rings consistently good on the mallets. Sullivan is a good foil on tenor and trumpet, though his snake-charmer soprano is less readily embraceable.

Indeed, the most valuable player is pianist Bob Dogan. As a composer he's responsible for the most distinctive original tunes, notable the slow salsa *Mija* and the driving *Sui Fumi*, where Cooper plays harder than usual. As a pianist, Dogan finds inspiration in the brittle end on the title track, where he emerges from the dense cross hatching of vibes and balaphon. In Ivan Lins's ruminative *Cantor Da Noite* he slyly defines his own slower time.



Brass and mallets meet again in *New Kingdom*, the second album by rising New York horn **ROY CAMPBELL**. A liner blurb placing him in the arc of tough trumpets through Fats Navarro, Clifford Brown and Booker Little is premature, but probably not for long.

He's certainly a forceful trumpeter, and doesn't exactly coast on cornet and flugelhorn either, but what's more inspiring about *New Kingdom* is his ear for relative density.

The three trios with just bassist William Parker and drummer Zen Matsoura cut to the meat of the music. *Angel* is a scouring blues with the mute. Campbell plays open on the long *For C.T.*, and revels in the slurs of *Frankenstein & Igor*.

Three tracks add tenorist Zane Massey, who rides the rhythm changes of *I Remember Lee* with authority and feels the blues in *Peace*. Young vibraphonist Bryan Carrott builds on the reputation made with Ralph Peterson's group. With altoist/flautist Ricardo Strobert they give Campbell more colours to play with, and more directions as well.

RANDAL McILROY

There's a breeziness to Californian guitarist **MICHAEL MUSILLAMI's** *The Young Child* that's refreshing even when the music hews to the pleasant and safe. Echoes of John Scofield (*The Young Child*) and Wes Montgomery (*I Still do it for the Music*) turn a neat twist on pretty tunes. The descending march of *Archives* adds a slight but welcome edge.

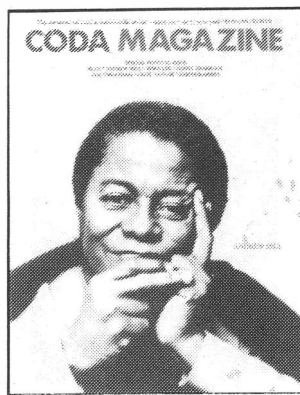
Occasionally the music threatens to be as cute as the cartoon cover art of moppets at play, but there is intelligence at work, and the energy rises appreciably whenever Thomas Chapin swaps his flute for alto. Kent Hewitt (piano), Nat Reeves (bass) and Steve Johns (drums) provide flexible support.

The best drummers tend to be the sly ones, so canny their skill registers almost subliminally. Hundreds of sessions taught **ARTHUR TAYLOR** how to describe detail in motion without forgetting his function or outstaging the front line. *Mr. A.T.*, cut with tenorist Willie Williams, altoist Abraham Burton, pianist Marc Cary and bassist Tyler Mitchell—collectively, Taylor's Wailers—is self-effacing in the best way, with Taylor and his fellows observing the power of the groove.

Although Walter Bolden contributes some engaging tunes, the programming hews to the familiar—Randy Weston's *Hi-Fly*, Jimmy Heath's *Gingerbread Boy*, Mal Waldron's *Soul Eyes*. The approach is anything but lazy. Stretched across 14 minutes, *Soul Eyes* skips through several tempo changes and turns tough or tidy depending on who's in the spotlight. Behind it all, Taylor is working hard and clever; check those depth charges and clamping high-hat in the first take of the title track (there's also a short reprise) behind Williams' rolling tenor, or the way he directs the brief free debate in *It Doesn't Matter*, billed in Taylor's charming liner notes as a piece the band used on stage to loosen up.

It's a good band. Burton's rather thin and citric tone on alto is distracting at first—lying back and thinking of Jackie McLean seems to help—but it cuts well with the tenor in the buzzsaw sax riff to *Hi-Fly*.

RANDAL MCILROY is a resident of Winnipeg, Manitoba. He writes a weekly jazz column for the *Winnipeg Free Press*, and a monthly column on jazz and new music for *Uptown*.



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ARCHIE SHEPP

FLORIDA BORN, PHILADELPHIA-BRED, SAXOPHONIST ARCHIE

SHEPP HAS ALWAYS HAD A POST-INDUSTRIAL SOUND ON THE HORN, AND A POST-MODERN TONE IN HIS VOICE. TAKEN EITHER SEPARATELY OR TOGETHER, THEY HAVEN'T MADE SHEPP THE HOUSEHOLD NAME HE SHOULD BE, and while he's not complaining, there is a regret or two that shadows his words as he speaks. Shepp, of course, makes no apologies for who and what he is and has been, but in our two long conversations (one after a hard-nosed but elegant concert and the other in his hometown of the last twenty plus years), there was present, at the edges of his words and in the answers to questions that had obviously been thoroughly considered over many years, a bittersweet bite. But, he is thankfully still Archie Shepp, and he knows that he knows what he knows, and that lets him relax in the swirling world of 1993. I would guess that there isn't a person reading this who wouldn't want to have been Archie Shepp for at least one night, and probably a lot longer than that. What you couldn't know is just how tough you'd have to be to make it.



"What a lot of people forget is that I was always playing. They say I was really into drama but turned to the horn to make some bread. Look, in my neighbourhood, Brickyard, nobody else went away to college. But I would come home and be playing with Lee (Morgan) and everyone. It's just I was away most of the time so these stories grow up around it."

AS A MATTER OF FACT, Shepp played his first gig on piano with Morgan, a date in Providence, Rhode Island. Shepp recalls the early influences, the things that opened sound up for him, and first there was his father.

"My father played banjo all the time and that's what I grew up hearing. Guys like Hartley Toots, who was really the man on banjo. But I remember like it was yesterday, walking down the street in Philly and hearing a tenor sax coming out of this club. It was this white cat, Billy Root, and he was playing *Georgia*, and it was beautiful. I think that really did it to me."

I mentioned that I had seen Burrell Crohn's new video *Tenor Titans* just the night before and spoke about Shepp's place in jazz history. I asked him to write the history of jazz since 1966 for me, and he spoke briefly and with conviction.

"Jazz history stopped when Coltrane died."

I was stunned by such a pronouncement and threw out Ornette, the Art Ensemble, Mingus, Miles, David Murray and more as examples. Shepp explained.

"There's been a lot of music played, but has it moved on? Not only hasn't it moved on, it still hasn't caught up to Coltrane - what he was doing before he passed, what he would have done had he stayed. All the music since, is what it is, but it's not writing history. Look, form follows function and what exactly is the music about? What is its function? Answer that, then ask whether or not it has succeeded. History isn't made up of decorations, it's made up of declarations."

SHEPP WAS VERY INVOLVED in the discussion now and I threw out another name at him - Albert Ayler. His eyes opened wide, he sat back and spoke quietly.

"The first time I met Albert was on the street on the lower East Side, and I didn't know him at all. Sunny Murray had told me about him but it was Albert who introduced himself on the street one day. He was a very intense looking man, had the stature, the bearing of a preacher, and his beard - this little guy in a green leather suit and a beard that was white on one side and black on the other - he was a powerful presence. I didn't get to hear him for a time, until we did a gig together at, I think, it was the Jazz Gallery. It was a Monday night and I think it was some kind of benefit.

I remember LeRoi Jones was there and it was my trio, with Edgar Bateman on drums, and Albert's trio with Gary Peacock and Sunny Murray on drums. We went on first and then I remember going to the bar and hanging out with the writers and players and painters. All of a sudden, there's this sound like Gasoline Alley, you wouldn't believe it. The place came to a stand-still, we thought the place was going to collapse. We never heard anything like it before.

There are times in a player's life when he loses a little sleep. Well, I lost a lot of sleep that night trying to deal with Albert's music."

Shepp spoke warmly of Ayler. "He played *Chasin' the Trane*, I think. Man, he was an ancient presence in the world. He had qualities of other dimensions. It was in his eyes, in his voice and in his horn. Actually, Art Blakey was the same way."

CONVERSATIONS WITH SHEPP go like this. There are allusions and illusions that make you make connections. They challenge you as much as so much of his music does. So, what about his music now? I mention the fact that a lot of people think he's playing old stuff now, not pushing things the way he once did.

"Look, I only know about things like classicism, expressionism, romanticism, impressionism, baroque-ism and such. Maybe it's recidivism, I don't know. I explore the material my way. I answer to my muse. Art has consistently reverted. Why is that? You tell me."

AN ARTICLE BY JOE GIARDULLO

I'M NOT SURE I CAN, and I'm not sure I want to try. Shepp makes his point and we leave it at that. At the concert some time before, Shepp played two versions of *Sophisticated Lady*, one at the sound check and one during the second set. They were as different as night and Tunisia, and as I recall them I begin to understand him more. That melt-down sound was right there and so was his heart and his brain. I ask him about that, about life inside the university at Amherst, Massachusetts.

"I had the opportunity to put my children into good schools and I took it. Being at Amherst all these years is like being in a million dollar think tank; there's a quality of thought and mind here, and it is stimulating in many ways." What about the classes he teaches, and his students?

"It varies greatly. This culture of ours produces a lot of educated and ignorant people. I had a young woman in one of my classes who decided to do her final paper on Miles Davis. In telling me that, she remarked, 'he was a trumpet player, wasn't he?' So there you have it. I take them with what they know and try to increase it. Sometimes it's not very much, coming or going."

These twenty plus years tucked away in the north country have had their affect on Shepp, although he doesn't talk about it during our second meeting. However, during a long night in a Poughkeepsie, New York hotel room, he is looser and more open about what is gained and what is lost.

"I haven't kept a steady band together for quite a while and that I miss." His ancient eyes stare at the ceiling. "I've got a lot of trouble with my jaw, which makes it hard to play a lot; that's one reason I sing more now, although I always sang, even years ago."

WHEN I TELL HIM I heard a connection between him and Louis Armstrong during that night's performance, his eyes sparkle. Like Pops, Shepp phrases his vocal and instrumental lines the same - the tone is the same and the melodic line is the same.

"Well, yeah. Nobody really picks up on that about Pops or me. It is the same, it comes from the same place and it would be jive if it was real different. Yeah, I'm glad you heard that."

I heard that and more, but I sense that Shepp is getting tired and I wrap it up with a tough question: what's your biggest regret in life? I wasn't prepared for the answer I got.

"Back in the late 60's, I had eyes to work out a long term deal with Columbia Records. The history of the music was there, from Bessie Smith to Miles, and I thought that would be the greatest for my music and

its development. I had an on-again, off-again relationship with John Hammond, and I ran into him one night, and we made an appointment to talk it over.

Well, the appointment was for 10 o'clock one day and, in those days, I would be late a lot. So I arrive at his office and it's a quarter to eleven. John greets me at the door and says, 'Archie, I set aside an hour for us, but now I've only got 15 minutes, so come in.' By the time we exchange some small talk, he stands up and says, 'I've got someone waiting now, Archie. I'm sorry but we'll have to speak some other time.'

"Well, there never was another time and I know if I was on time for that meeting, we would have reached some understanding. That's a big hole in my life, man." From the tone in his voice, I can tell this is one moment that he's relived a thousand times, and I press him on it just a bit. Does he remember why he was late that day?

"Oh, yeah, man. It was nothin', absolutely nothin'."

RECIDIVIST OR NOT, Archie Shepp helped to shape the music that is played now, from David Murray to Pearl Jam. It's all still there for the listening, just don't expect him to apologize for any of it just because you think you know what he should be doing.

JOE GIARDULLO is a soprano sax/ bass clarinetist who teaches and writes on the music and the arts in the New York area.



CANADIAN MUSICIANS

PAUL PLIMLEY
LISLE ELLIS
JANE BUNNETT
NELSON SYMONDS
ROY/LERNER GROUP
OSCAR PETERSON
ROB McCONNELL
FRASER MacPHERSON
P.J. PERRY
JACEK KOCHRAN
KEIRAN OVERS
STEVE HOLT
FRANCOIS HOULE

CANADA'S IMPORTANCE
IN JAZZ HISTORY IS EASILY
OVERLOOKED. NATURALLY
EVERY JAZZ COLLECTOR HAS
HEARD OF OSCAR PETERSON,
MAYNARD FERGUSON, GIL
EVANS, PAUL BLEY AND ROB
McCONNELL, BUT EACH OF
THOSE PLAYERS (McCONNELL

LESS THAN THE OTHERS) HAD TO GO TO THE UNITED STATES TO RECEIVE THE RECOGNITION THEY DESERVED. PREJUDICES ASIDE, A LARGE AMOUNT OF THE BLAME FOR THIS TREND RESTS WITH CANADA ITSELF AND A RECORDING INDUSTRY THAT, AT LEAST UNTIL THE 1960'S, PRETTY MUCH IGNORED DOMESTIC JAZZ. HAPPILY THIS SITUATION HAS SINCE CHANGED, WITH SUCH LABELS AS UNITY, JUSTIN TIME AND SACKVILLE AMONG OTHERS DOCUMENTING THE MUSIC OF THE PAST 30 YEARS, BUT ONE CAN ONLY LOOK BACK WITH REGRET AT THE LOST YEARS (1920-60) OF CANADIAN JAZZ AND THE VALUABLE MUSIC THAT WE WILL NEVER GET TO HEAR. EVEN NOW IN THE UNITED STATES THERE IS SCANT LITTLE PUBLICITY ABOUT CANADIAN ARTISTS. AS CLOSE AS I FOLLOW JAZZ, THE FIRST TIME I EVERY HEARD SUCH PLAYERS AS PAUL PLIMLEY, LISLE ELLIS, JANE BUNNETT AND EVEN VETERAN P.J. PERRY WAS WHEN I ATTENDED THE 1989 VANCOUVER JAZZ FESTIVAL. IT WAS QUITE A HAPPY REVELATION!



This article covers thirteen recent CDs by a wide variety of Canadians. Pianist **PAUL PLIMLEY** and bassist **LISLE ELLIS** democratically share *When Silence Pulls* (Music & Arts 692) with drummer Andrew Cyrille, but it is the longtime Plimley-Ellis musical partnership that really makes this dynamic session special. Although it could be classified as "free jazz," there is nothing random about these nine group explorations for these musicians never stop listening to each other. Their swift reactions lead to quite a few surprising twists as they stretch and expand sparse melodic phrases. Unlike Cecil Taylor, to whom most lazy reviewers compare him, Plimley is not shy to leave space, to play quiet with lyricism and to be somewhat accessible while still unpredictable; check out his unusual ballad *Inheritance*. Among the many highlights of this extremely

interesting release is Cyrille's witty and rhythmic *Babalooobop*, the hypnotic mood set during *Moon Over Sand* (which is reminiscent of Chico Hamilton's *Blue Sands*), the somewhat violent (but humorous) tradeoff on *Involution In Rounds* and the wandering but oddly enjoyable *F.U.N.* *When Silence Pulls* (which rewards repeated listenings) is a perfect "free jazz" session for those who mistakenly feel that practitioners of the more advanced styles take themselves too seriously. (Available from Music and Arts, P.O. Box 771, Berkeley, CA 94701, U.S.A.)

JANE BUNNETT's *Spirits of Havana* (Denon CAN 9011) is a most unusual release. In the autumn of 1991, Bunnett travelled to Cuba and recorded with some of the top musicians still stuck in that isolated world. Rather than simply playing bebop with some percussion-

ists tacked on, Bunnett took the Cuban rhythms and melodies on their own terms and, without losing her own strong musical personality, she created some truly memorable music. Surrounded by some of Cuba's top musicians (including the mighty pianist Gonzalo Rubalcaba on some selections, as many as nine percussionists, singer Merceditas Valdes and the vocal ensemble Grupo Yoruba Andabo), Bunnett utilizes a different combination of players on each performance. Whether it be the pretty folk melody of *Quirino*, the explosive *La Luna Arriba* or a passionate rendition of *Epistrophe*, Bunnett not only pays respect to a wide variety of Cuban styles but confirms that she is today one of the major voices on both soprano and flute. Her partner-trumpeter Larry Cramer also takes some smoking solos. Highly recommended.

COMPACT DISC REVIEWS BY SCOTT YANOW

It seems like every city has a few musicians who are local legends and, for one reason or another, they never became major names. However guitarist **NELSON SYMONDS'** obscurity is even more puzzling than most. Despite being a superlative bop-based guitarist whose tone reminds one of Jim Hall and, on the lower notes, Wes Montgomery, the 58-year old Symonds (who has lived in Montreal since the mid-50's) had only recorded twice in his entire career (a session in 1961 backing singer Billy Horne and Bernard Primeau's *Reunion* in 1990) before finally getting a date as a leader. *Getting Personal* (Justin Time 44) at last gives one an opportunity to hear just how good a player Symonds has been all of these years; certainly he is at least on the level of a Herb Ellis or a Barney Kessel. Whether swinging hard on his blues with a bridge *CB Blues*, or playing a beautiful unaccompanied version of his ballad *Jean*, Nelson Symonds takes full advantage of this rather rare opportunity. The other members of the quartet are also quite excellent (pianist Jean Beaudet, bassist Norman Guibault and drummer Wali Muhammad) and their presence clearly inspires the guitarist. In fact, if Symonds had had an off day, this set would have been worth acquiring for the trio alone. Of the many fine performances, the extended versions of *Yours Is My Heart Alone* and Miles Davis' *Swing Spring* take honours. Although 30 years overdue, Nelson Symonds' debut on records as a leader is very welcome and overshadows the tragedy of his former absence from the studios.

Also from Justin Time is *Quarter To Three* (Just JTR 843) by the **ROY/LERNER GROUP**, an acoustic quartet/quintet comprised of guitarist Lary Roy, pianist Marilyn Lerner, bassist Mike Downes, drummer Peter Erskine and, on two selections, vibraphonist Stefan Bauer. The music (which includes four group originals among the seven numbers) is essentially modern mainstream, chordal-based improvising but not ignoring the innovations of the past 30 years. Guitarist Roy is the main soloist and he sounds quite comfortable throughout, whether it be Juan Tizol's *Caravan* or the challenging chord changes of *Gridlock*. Pianist Lerner is actually the more adventurous soloist (her multi-tempoed *Domestic Giant and Jazz Player* is most memorable) and she is well deserving of a trio date of her own. Vibraphonist Bauer

constantly reminds one of Gary Burton (his tone is virtually identical) while bassist Downes and Erskine keep the rhythms stimulating. The music explores a variety of moods and, although no one on this set is a true original yet, there is plenty of potential in this fairly young group.

Has any jazz pianist other than Duke Ellington recorded more records than **OSCAR PETERSON**? Hard as it is to believe, Oscar Peterson (whose earliest recording is a broadcast from late 1944) has now been on records 49 years (as of late 1993), only one less than Ellington's 50! Somehow Peterson, whose style has not really changed all that much during the past 40 years as much as it has continued to grow, seems quite ageless. He is very easy to take for granted because of the huge volume of records, the consistency of his style and a virtuosity and strong sense of swing that exhausted virtually every possible adjective decades ago. Critics love to carp that O.P. plays twenty notes when two will do but, in most cases, all twenty fit!

Time After Time (Pablo 2310-947) is taken from the same 1986 concert that previously spawned *Oscar Peterson Live*. Although joined by the brilliant guitarist Joe Pass, bassist Dave Young and drummer Martin Drew, Peterson completely dominates this CD and his sidemen play comparatively minor roles. The pianist is in fine form on *Cool Walk*, his lyrical *Love Ballade*, an often-witty version of *Soft Winds*, a medley that includes the title cut and a typically stunning (if somewhat excessive) version of *On the Trail*. Since it is silly to call any Oscar Peterson record definitive, suffice it to say that *Time After Time* ranks somewhere in his top hundred!

Few will remember that the original version of **ROB MCCONNELL's** Boss Brass consisted of four trumpets, five trombones, three french horns, vibes, two guitars, bass and drums. It could be argued that the combination of instruments was the last thing truly innovative about the orchestra but, even with the more conventional instrumentation that McConnell has adopted since then and his arrangements' emphasis on swinging bebop, the Boss Brass' music is full of subtle surprises and unpredictable twists. *Brassy & Sassy* (Concord CCD-4508), a set of jazz standards and blues, is highlighted by long versions of

Strike Up the Band (concluding with a three-way trumpet tradeoff between John MacLeod, Steve McDade and Guido Basso), *Scrapple From The Apple* (giving altoist Moe Koffman, tenorman Eugene Amaro, trumpeter MacLeod and guitarist Ed Bickert chances to stretch out) and Ian McDougall's three-part *Blue Serge Suit(e)*. There are many strong soloists on this date (including the leader's distinctive valve trombone) and the ballads (particularly Bill Evans' *Very Early* which has a taste of McConnell's famous brass choir voicings) are no less enjoyable. Still, despite the many individual moments, it is the colourful charts of Rob McConnell (filled with tricky ensembles, key changes and shifts in moods) that are the real stars of this excellent session.

It is logical to think of the late **FRASER MACPHERSON** as the Canadian Zoot Sims for, along with Bob Cooper and Spike Robinson, he kept the "Four Brothers" sound alive. *In the Tradition* (Concord CCD-4506) lives up to its name for this collection is comprised mostly of tunes from the 1920's and 30's (such as *Struttin' With Some Barbecue*, *You're Lucky To Me* and *Dream of You* along with three original blues. MacPherson, who is joined by his longtime guitarist Oliver Gannon, trombonist Ian McDougall, bassist Steve Wallace and drummer John Sumner, sounds perfectly at home in this 1950's-type cool jazz setting. A relaxed easy-listening session (even during the faster performances), little unexpected occurs but the consistent excellence of the music is not as easy to achieve as it sounds (although I would have preferred some more heat). A tasty date.

Like Nelson Symonds, veteran **P. J. PERRY** has not exactly been a major force on records up until now. His *Worth Waiting For* CD recently came out on the Jazz Alliance label while the disc in question, *My Ideal* (Unity 128), was actually recorded back in October 1989. Teamed with an all-star rhythm section (pianist Mulgrew Miller, bassist Neil Swainson and drummer Victor Lewis), Perry's alto solos are not all that dissimilar to what one would expect from Phil Woods, fiery improvisations in the bebop tradition on the uptempo pieces and lyrical ballad statements during the quieter numbers; Sonny Stitt is also hinted at in spots. Perry switches to soprano during two numbers (*Doodle*, one of his three originals on the date, and the

CANADIAN JAZZ ON COMPACT DISC

ballad *Helsingborg*) but, no matter what the horn, his solos are quite coherent, move logically from one melodic idea to the next and he certainly keeps up with the superlative rhythm section. I would have preferred some more cookers on this generally relaxed date, (*Easy To Love* has the most intense moments) but otherwise *My Ideal* is an excellent introduction to this formerly obscure bebop master.



Drummer **JACEK KOCHRAN** was born in Poland but, after a period of studies in the United States, he settled in Canada in the mid-80's. More than just a drummer on *Visitor* (Unity 126), Kochran composed all but one of the nine originals, also arranging these songs for a topnotch quintet and, on some selections, as many as four additional horns, cello and a second bass. Pat LaBarbera (who first came to fame with Buddy Rich and Elvin Jones) quickly emerges as the lead voice, often quite Coltraneish on tenor. However altoist Jean Pierre Zanella (who doubles on soprano) is close behind him, combining a soulful tone with some complex ideas. Pianist George McFetridge and bassist Mike Downes round out the fine core group which is heard investigating a wide variety of music. These originals feature concise solos, moody melodies and tight ensembles, very contemporary without being avant-garde or fusionish. Kochran is tasteful in support of the soloists, just taking a few drum breaks. Based on this album, he seems to have a strong future as an arranger-composer.

Bassist **KEIRAN OVERS**, who accompanied Jane Bunnett on her Cuban visit and recording, is a key player in the next two CDs. In fact, *Gateway* (Unity 124) is *Overs'* first recording as a leader, featuring him driving a quartet that includes trumpeter Kevin Turcotte, pianist Brian Dickinson and drum-

mer Bob McLaren; in addition he plays two quiet duets with guitarist Lorne Lofsky (who wrote both the tunes). Actually the real star of this CD is Kevin Turcotte, whose quiet tone and relaxed phrasing make him seem like a modernized Chet Baker. Turcotte has no trouble with any of the tricky chord progressions utilized on this set of mostly new music, eating up the killer tempo of Jane Fair's *Spaceman Spiff* and doing a close impression of a muted Miles on *Twilight*. Pianist Dickinson proves to be a strong asset and drummer McLaren is quite supportive throughout *Overs'* date, but it will be chiefly remembered for Turcotte.

Kieran Overs gets second billing on *Just Duet* (Sackville 2-2025) behind pianist **STEVE HOLT**. The duo explores the modern mainstream with apparent ease; the melody statement of Monk's once-impossible *Criss*

Cross sounds so improbably relaxed. Although not a possessor of an instantly recognizable style (being an interpreter rather than an innovator), Holt has impressive technique, a creative imagination and knows this material backwards, whether it be *Dear Old Stockholm*, *Bouncin' With Bud*, a speedier than usual *Beautiful Love* or one of his three contributions. *Just Duet* is easily recommended.

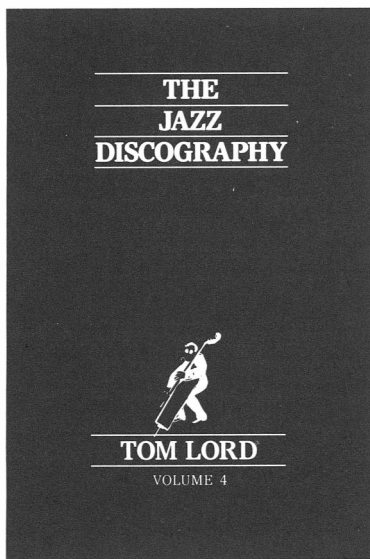
It is often wondered by veteran jazz collectors why there are so few jazz singers around today. Although it is true that there is a shortage of pure jazz male vocalists, *Songposts Vol. 1* (Word of Mouth 1004) proves that indeed there are many strong if little publicized jazz singers around today. The fourteen selections on this CD feature eleven singers in intimate settings covering quite a bit of ground and, although a bit uneven, it is mostly very interesting. Georgia Ambros sings the charming long song *Pardon The Old Cliche*, Sheila Jordan (who today is arguably Betty Carter's closest competitor) collaborates with her long-time musical partner Harvie Swartz on a happy *Waltz for Debby* and an atmospheric *I've Grown Accustomed To Your Bass* and the clear-voiced Paula Owen shows much irony (a la Billie Holiday) on a haunting song of jealousy (*Does She Know*) during which she gives the impression that she'll be stealing

someone's boyfriend soon. After Jeannette Lambert sings a new song based on the old plot of *Someday You'll Be Sorry*, Irene Aebi staggers through a pair of rather dark and dreary pieces backed by Steve Lacy on piano! Corry Sobol (in a duet with bassist David Young) cannot help sounding lighthearted in comparison, showing nostalgia on *Western Trilogy* for an Old West she never saw. The remainder of *Songposts Vol. 1* (most of which was recorded in Canada) features Garbo's Hat with Kate Hammett-Vaughan interpreting a poem by Robert Frost, Jay Clayton adding her wide range and expert wordless vocalizing to a Walt Whitman poem, a very expressive Jeanne Lee on the unaccompanied *Journey to Edaneres*, an excerpt from an electric blues opera with Louise Cloutier and Hugh Panaro and a rather lightweight and musically suspect *Photocopy Song* by David Drazin. Kudos to Word of Mouth (P.O. Box 429, Station P, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2S9, Canada) for putting this often-esoteric music on disc; I'd like to hear longer sets by many of these singers in the future.

Last and possibly most is **FRANCOIS HOULE** Et Cetera's *Hacienda* (Songlines 1501). Featuring some of Vancouver's best (particularly the soprano and clarinet of Francois Houle) this septet (caught live at the Glass Slipper) not only boasts distinctive soloists and colourful ensembles but mixes together perfectly both the improvised and the arranged; one often has trouble telling which is which. From free bop to eccentric swing, this septet's music has Mingus-like intensity, plenty of passion and a generous amount of wit; check out the tuba-euphonium "battle" on *LeRoy's Tune*. In addition to Houle, altoist Saul Berson and bass trombonist Brad Muirhead, the guitar-tuba-bass-drums rhythm section is quite alert and there are no weak links to this fascinating unit. The performances take plenty of chances (mistakes were not edited out) and there are periods of rambling, but better that than playing it safe with predictable music. This highly recommended CD (available from Songlines, P.O. Box 33977, Station D, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 4L7) is happy proof that in the 1990's (unlike say the 1950's), much of the best in jazz from Canada is being saved on record for future generations to enjoy. □

SCOTT YANOW is a resident of Los Angeles who is published internationally in nine music magazines

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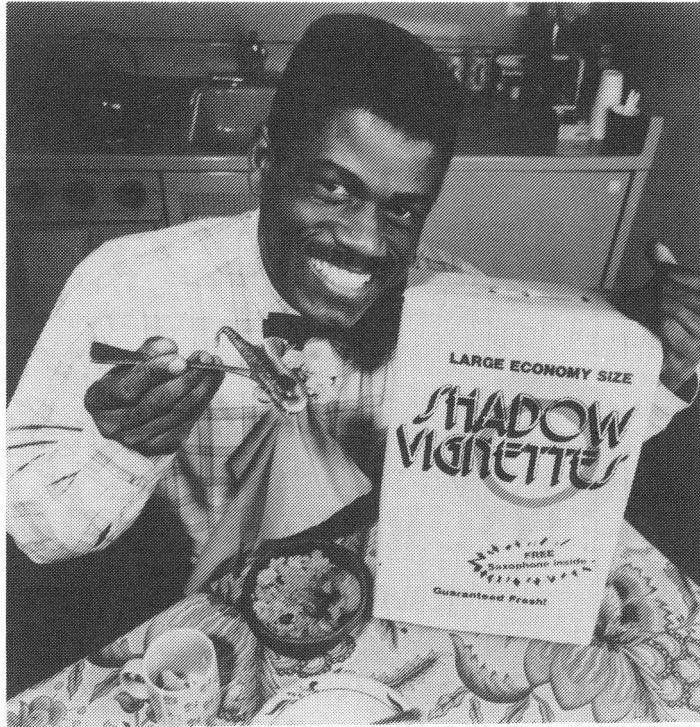
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EDWARD WILKERSON, JR. ONE BOLD SOUL

EDWARD WILKERSON, JR. OFTEN USES THE WORD "CHALLENGE" WHEN HE'S DISCUSSING MUSIC. AND IT'S NO SURPRISE. FOR NEARLY TWENTY YEARS, THE COMPOSER, SAXOPHONIST AND BAND LEADER HAS BEEN CHALLENGING HIS FELLOW MUSICIANS, HIS AUDIENCE AND HIMSELF TO EXPLORE UNCHARTED AREAS OF MUSIC AND TO RETHINK HANDED-DOWN NOTIONS OF MUSICAL FORM AND STYLE. HE'S ALSO DEDICATED HIMSELF TO TEACHING AND TO PROMOTING HIS COLLEAGUES, AND AS THE OWNER OF HIS OWN SESSOMS RECORDS, HE'S EVEN BECOME A MUSICAL ENTREPRENEUR. LAST FALL, WILKERSON TOOK SOME TIME TO DISCUSS HIS CURRENT DIRECTIONS, THE WORK THAT HAS BROUGHT THEM TO FRUITION, AND HIS MANY PLANS FOR THE FUTURE.



OUR INTERVIEW TOOK PLACE OVER LUNCH AT THE BERGHOFF RESTAURANT IN CHICAGO, THE CITY WILKERSON HAS CALLED HOME SINCE 1971. THAT YEAR BROUGHT HIM FROM THE CLEVELAND SUBURB OF SHAKER HEIGHTS TO THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO. THERE HE EARNED A DEGREE IN COMPOSITION AND ANALYSIS, STUDYING WITH RECENT PULITZER PRIZE-WINNER SHULAMIT RAN. BUT HIS LIFE CHANGED FOREVER WHEN A FRIEND GUIDED HIM TO THE FREE WEEK-END CLASSES GIVEN BY MUHAL RICHARD ABRAMS AT THE THEN-NEW ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF

CREATIVE MUSICIANS (AACM). ABRAMS' CLASSES INTRODUCED HIM TO "ALTERNATE WAYS OF ARRANGING SOUNDS AND LOOKING AT MUSIC," AS WELL AS MANY FELLOW STUDENTS WHO REMAIN CLOSE FRIENDS AND MUSICAL COLLEAGUES TO THIS DAY.

PHOTOGRAPH OF ED WILKERSON, JR. BY TERRI GARDNER

FOLLOWING HIS UNIVERSITY STUDIES, Wilkerson toured with blues giant Albert King, honed his arranging skills writing big-band charts, and did occasional studio and theatre work. But most of his wide-ranging musical energy has been devoted to his work with the AACM. Wilkerson joined the organization in 1975 and has served as its President, taught composition at its school, and primarily made music with fellow members of the Association.

Although Wilkerson likes to be involved with several musical projects at once, his career has centred around a few long-term groups. Most often he is occupied with 8 Bold Souls, the octet of two wind players, trumpet, trombone, tuba, bass, cello and drums he has led since the early eighties. Like his mentor Abrams and many of his AACM colleagues, he is deeply concerned with the problem of balancing his own ambitions as a composer with the desire to provoke a creative alchemy among the ensemble's members.

"The challenge in this group," he explains, "is to balance the written music with the improvised music. I think in any kind of group where you're doing a lot of composing, that to me is a major challenge you're facing, because guys in their careers really establish themselves as improvisers. In this type of music that's a big weight on yourself as a player and your identity, and they want to have opportunities to show that. And they should, that's a big part of what makes the music happen. So I'm trying to find different areas for them to express things that they might not ordinarily have an opportunity to express or might not be used to expressing."

SIDESHOW, THE BAND'S 1992 RELEASE, offers a look at many of the strengths that have emerged through their years together. With Wilkerson's arrangements blending the instrumental colours of the ensemble, he seems able to write with an orchestra in mind, and the Souls often achieve an Ellingtonian richness that belies

ARTICLE BY BENJAMIN FRANDZEL

their small number. But the personality of each musician has as much to do with the ensemble's uniqueness as its inherent timbral variety. A listener discovers Aaron Dodd's fondness for the tuba's upper range, for example, and on the album's title track Robert Griffin displays his incredible ability to solo on the trumpet and flugelhorn simultaneously. You'll also hear cellist Naomi Millender and bassist Harrison Bankhead doing an unusual amount of arco playing, a choice shared by Wilkerson. He explains the band's share in the compositional process:

"Usually I'll present a sketch to the musicians, and I'll ask them to play around certain lines or ideas, and they'll develop it, especially Harrison and Naomi and [drummer] Dushun [Mosley] and [trombonist] Isaiah [Jackson]. They'll really develop these pieces from the bottom up, and that has a lot to do with the sound of the ensemble. I like to give them as much leeway as possible, and usually the pieces, by the time we're ready to record, are much different from when I presented them. They're usually more interesting, 'cause when you get people to really put their own contribution into the music, it brings a little more life to it, than if I were to try to compose all the pieces in a real strict format and not deviate from that.

"What I do is not that unconventional, maybe the structure of the pieces or the instrumentation, but there are certain elements that are common to all music, and I try to make sure that we have real solid foundations and certain elements of proportion. I've thrown sections out that I didn't feel were working, so I might take one of those and develop it into another piece.

"The challenge is to have a good idea of what you want but also be flexible if somebody has a better idea, and we're getting pretty good at that process, since we've been playing together a long time. It's not easy to maintain that kind of equilibrium where you encourage people to contribute but you still have to direct the idea, and at some point you have to say this is the direction we're gonna go in, and let's continue with this direction."

WILKERSON THE COMPOSER seems to be taking a freer hand with the ensemble these days. The relationship between Wilkerson's writing and his bandmates' abilities is evident on several tunes where a new section signals a new soloist, and in performance a piece might even end with a solo, with no recap necessary. As Wilkerson explains, the switch to CD allows for more expansive writing, and the group's current emphasis is on mood as much as structure. There's a feeling of slowly unfolding mystery to several tunes, particularly *Black Herman*, named for a legendary Harlem illusionist of the twenties. The new format's extra space also benefits soloists like clarinetist Mwata Bowden, who is rare among improvisers; the longer he goes on, the more interesting he gets.

The CD also includes a rare cover, Ornette Coleman's *Lonely Woman*. Introduced by Millender's eloquent solo cello, the elegiac theme is given a treatment as reminiscent of a New Orleans brass band as of Ornette's original. Wilkerson's rethinking of the piece began when Dewey Redman commissioned an arrangement: "I had

always enjoyed the piece, but having to do that sparked my interest, 'cause I had to really sit down and evaluate it. I wanted the Souls to do an interpretation that would be unique for us, and not necessarily play it exactly like Ornette Coleman or Dewey Redman has."

Whenever possible, Wilkerson turns his band leading and composing skills to Shadow Vignettes, his 27-piece, bigger-than-big band. With this group he acts solely as conductor, leading the group's expanded brass and wind sections, several percussionists and four string players. He frequently adds vocalists to the lineup, and the band's concert appearances allow Wilkerson to add some theatrical flair to the music. Along with some dramatic entrances and exits, there's *Honky-Tonk Bud*, a sort of crime thriller written and performed by actor John Toles-Bey. This piece also became the basis for a short film by director Scott Laster.

Although Shadow Vignettes have toured Japan and played several major festivals, the band's size and the inherent economic and scheduling difficulties have precluded a steady series of performances. "The Vignettes have been dormant the last year," Wilkerson admits, "so we're trying to crank them up. We're trying to work on an opportunity to tour and get them out of town."

WHEN WILKERSON ISN'T LEADING either of his own groups, he's often lending his tenor and pen to the Ethnic Heritage Ensemble, his long-running trio with percussionist Kahil El'Zabar and trombonist Joseph Bowie, best known as the leader of Defunkt. El'Zabar is the group's principal composer, weaving thorny horn lines over his fiery, African-inspired drumming and soulful vocalizing. The spare trio format lets Wilkerson stretch instrumentally, with several horns and percussion instruments in his corner. There's also the Australian *didjeridu*, a recent interest, and even an unlikely turn at the piano.

Although most of the solo space in 8 Bold Souls is given over to his colleagues, the Ethnic Heritage Ensemble brings out Wilkerson the soloist, showcasing his formidable tenor skills. His sound is warm and focused, informed by a wide variety of dynamic and colouristic touches. A Wilkerson solo often begins with one or two notes, carefully chosen, then steadily built into longer and longer lines with the same driving logic that fuels his compositions. As a solo reaches its midpoint, it will grow more dense and dissonant, seeking the jagged edges of its melodic foundations. Wilkerson will stretch the saxophone's tonal bounds into overblown harmonics, growing more primal in sound just as a solo's structure reaches its most complex juncture; or he may gracefully wind down, finishing with some lighter, more consonant flourishes.

"That group," he says of the trio, "it's fun, it's a real pleasure to play with those dudes. Sometimes it's not easy, but I really think it's important music that we do, and we have to keep it going. I really like Joe and Kahil a lot, it's always interesting, they keep things happening. The idea of three people in a triangle, it's a real basic format in music, and it's really challenging, especially with an improvised setting where you're really depending on people a lot,

and there's a lot of trust and love and dependency between you all. And I think it's a real transparent relationship, when we perform. It translates real well on stage, that people can kind of sense what goes on, and they can see the energy flow."

THE INTEGRITY OF THESE ENSEMBLES has been built largely on their members' long-term commitment. Many of Wilkerson's collaborators have been friends since the days of Abrams' classes, particularly Mwata Bowden, El'Zabar, and woodwind player Douglas Ewart. Multi-instrumentalist Light Henry Huff even receives a tribute in the buoyant *Light on the Path*. 8 Bold Souls' longevity is apparent in the group's relaxed but tight playing, the musicians' sensitivity to each other, and their ability to groove, even in odd meters. But Wilkerson is wary of becoming formulaic in his approach, or in letting his colleagues do the same.

"With a group like the Souls," he explains, "where we've been together a long time, it's a challenge to constantly push us in new directions. The next things we do are gonna be a little different, and I'm gonna make more demands on them to contribute to the music more. That basic core rapport between the members has been established and I think it allows us to do a lot of things now that maybe we couldn't have done four years ago. It takes a long time for people to trust each other, and we have a certain concern for each other, and I think that comes across in the music.

"With the groups that I direct, I prefer having it where everybody's real comfortable and confident of their own strengths, so people don't intimidate each other. But some groups are almost like jam sessions, where guys are trying to cut each other all the time. I like going to those, and it always brings out something different in the music, so I enjoy that too. There's something to be said for getting people together who are real sensitive and very good at what they do. The dynamics are real different and it can be exciting in a different way, in that you really don't know what you're gonna get. That's something I miss a little bit here, and there's some projects in the future that involve some musicians I don't normally get a chance to play with that much. With Douglas I'm gonna do the Clarinet Choir in New York with Henry Threadgill and Roscoe Mitchell and Mwata, and projects like that, where we've done it once before, but not too often."

WILKERSON'S OWN LABEL, SESSOMS, released the first 8 Bold Souls and Shadow Vignettes albums, but he has welcomed the move to Arabesque, a distinguished classical label that includes Sideshow among its initial jazz releases. "The timing was really right," Wilkerson says, "because I wanted to do a recording on an American label, and it's great for me. They actually let me produce the record, so I was very grateful. When I started up my label, we had done some recording, and I took the tapes around to all these different labels, and I couldn't really get any interest, so I was able to put together some money and produce the records myself. I'm really thankful that I did it, but I like having some of the weight taken off me and the effort done by someone else. I would like to have the best of both worlds, where I produce things myself and also do things on other labels, 'cause financially I just can't afford to do all the projects myself. And when you do a record for someone else, especially a label that's respected, it's just good for your credentials, but it also offers another kind of visibility."

ALTHOUGH A REGULAR SCHEDULE of recording will continue for him, Wilkerson still emphasizes the primacy of live performance over the recorded document: "I would like to record a little bit more, but not a whole bunch. It's not a definitive presentation of the group, it's just a snapshot of what the group can do. I look at it mainly as a way to entice people to come out and hear the group and to really experience them in a live setting. That's really experiencing the music, but the CD is just like a brochure (laughs). People hear that and they say, 'Oh, yeah,' and hopefully we'll be able to tour enough where people can actually come out and hear the group. For a lot of people that'll be the only time they hear it, on the CD, so if people like the music on the CD and can appreciate it for itself, that's fine, you know, that's great, but that's not my intention so much as presenting something that just will be a representation of the group."

Wilkerson's ensembles regularly make the rounds of international festivals, and have enjoyed the exposure brought by these appearances. But, he says, "I tend to like the smaller places better, the interaction with the audience. In the festivals you spend half the performance trying to get the sound right, and it's really hard to focus on the music. At least for me, unless you're doing festival after festival after festival, where you can really get the group acclimated to that, the festival is really disruptive to the feel of the group. A group like the Souls, or the Ethnics, really needs that coming together type of thing in order to function, and the festivals offer the opposite of that in every way.

"The festivals are a good chance to hang out and see a lot of musicians you don't normally see, and it's fun. In Verona, Wynton was there, Cecil Taylor was there, Bill Dixon, and I got a chance to meet Cab Calloway. But you get up there and you play for forty-five minutes, and half the time you're waving at the monitor man, and the audience could be hearing something completely different. Festivals are exciting, but if I just wanted to play somewhere, it's definitely a club, or a smaller setting with nice acoustics. I wish we could play with no mics; I think soundwise, that's the ideal."

Wilkerson has made his home in Chicago for more than two decades now, and sees the expansiveness of his own career as a signal of the city's potential role in the American music scene. Like anyone who has spent some time playing music in Chicago, he's aware of the incredibly rich mix of musicians that the city hosts, and the unfortunate lack of attention for many of its talents. "I had so many problems trying to get labels in New York interested," he says, "and they don't really feel if you're in the Midwest that you can garner enough press and recognition to sell records, so it's been a slow process. The Souls record, I think, did a little better than [Arabesque] expected, so we're getting good reviews and good press, and they want to do another record with the Souls next year. So maybe people are a little more open now. And maybe that whole stigma about New York being the centre of the universe has changed a little bit."

THIS IS STILL THE CITY that nurtured Wilkerson's talents and gave him much of his musical language. Typically, he still looks to the AACM colleagues who first opened his eyes to a new world of music for inspiration. Of Lester Bowie, he says, "What he does is amazing, 'cause he can basically be himself and play with groups

from Brass Fantasy to the Art Ensemble to the Leaders to Latin bands to a classical orchestra to anything. I was talking to Kahil and he had seen a movie on TV with Jason Robards, what was it called? The Meeting, or the Reunion, something like that. This took place in pre-Nazi Germany and there were all these brass bands, and then he heard this trumpet, like someone in town, and he said that's Lester! And he talked to him the other day, and Lester said, 'that was me, I was there.' What he does, it's kind of like Ornette Coleman, that the sound of the instrument is so human, it's just a human condition. It's a real universal type of appeal."

WILKERSON STILL FINDS TIME TO TEACH at the AACM school, which offers free musical education to young people in its surrounding South Side community. His composition class draws an older contingent of students, and I was lucky enough to spend a semester in the class.

In the same way he draws out the personalities of his band members, Wilkerson approaches every member of the class individually, using each student's work to illustrate a different musical aspect.

EDWARD WILKERSON JR. & 8 BOLD SOULS
SIDESHOW • Arabesque Recordings AJ0103
 Recorded Chicago November 1991

In *Sideshow*, as in Edward Wilkerson's music in general, one hears elements of Ellington, Henry Threadgill, and perhaps even Carla Bley. Wilkerson in particular knows how to create drama, building ensemble passages from a hush to controlled climax. Although he enjoys writing his own material, Wilkerson can take a classic piece such as Ornette Coleman's *Lonely Woman* and develop it.

Like any good teacher, he knows the value of metaphor, and the most memorable were certainly his hitherto unimagined connections between music and food. Explaining the importance of building a composition from a small number of elements, he'd say, "Now, you don't want to write music the way I cook, 'cause I'll throw in some spices and say, if a little bit of this tastes good, a lot of it'll taste *real* good.' So I throw it all in a crock pot, and in four hours I'll smell the whole thing burning over anyway."

I'll accept that disclaimer on his cooking, and instead look for nourishment in Edward Wilkerson's music. I think he's getting the recipe right. □

For further information write: Ed Wilkerson, PO Box 6812, Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A. 60680. Fax (312) 536-2222

ABOUT THE WRITER: Benjamin Frandzel is a musician and writer who has recently moved from Chicago to Los Angeles. His background includes experience in theatre and radio, and he is currently at work on a screenplay.

Wilkerson creates varied backgrounds for soloists to play over. Rhythms, meters, and instrumental combinations shift delightfully. Wilkerson well understands the kind of support soloists enjoy, as he himself is one, here and with the Ethnic Heritage Ensemble and the 25-piece Shadow Vignettes.

The cello and tuba add variety and remind us that jazz can work with almost any instruments. Cellist Naomi Millender establishes many of the tune's moods on this disc, and during *Light on the Path* she and trumpeter Robert Griffin play the melody in unison (pizzicato and mute, respectively). Aaron Dodd's tuba keeps time, freeing the string bass to play a melodic counterline.

Reminding one simultaneously of Rahsaan Roland Kirk and Clark Terry, trumpeter Robert Griffin alternates trumpet and flugelhorn, then plays them simultaneously, in unison and different tones.

The only shortcoming I notice in Wilkerson's writing is that he sometimes relies on extended two-bar or four-bar vamps as soloists' backgrounds, and they tend to get stale.

I'd recommend this album, though, as well as Wilkerson's 1986 album, *8 Bold Souls*, which was hailed by Chicago Sun-Times writer Lloyd Sachs as "the best thing to happen to Chicago Jazz in years."

REVIEWED BY PAUL BAKER

8 BOLD SOULS LEFT TO RIGHT: Naomi Millender, Mwata Bowsen, Dushun Mosley, Robert Griffin, Edward Wilkerson, Jr., Harrison Bankhead, Isaiah Jackson and Aaron Dodd.

PHOTOGRAPH BY FLOYD WEBB



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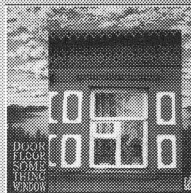
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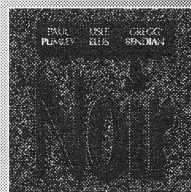
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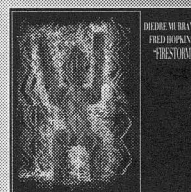
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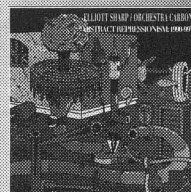
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enr. 10/92(studio)



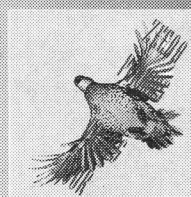
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"ABSTRACT REPRESSIONISM : 1990-99"
enr. 04/92 (studio)



VICTO cd 018
ZEENA PARKINS
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enr. 01/92 (studio)

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BETTER LATE THAN ...

MORE WRITERS' CHOICES FOR 1993

ANNIE LANDREVILLE (*Montreal, Quebec*)
Klaus Konig • The Song Of Songs • *Enja*
Joe Henderson • So Near, So Far • *Verve*
Klaus Ignatzec Trio • Air Balloon • *Nabel*
Carlo Actis Dato Quartet

Bagdad Boogie • *Splasc(h)*

Garbo's Hat • Face The Music
Word Of Mouth

Rabih-Abou Khalil • Blue Camel • *Enja*
Denis Colin Trio • Trois • *Adda*

Pirly Zurstrassen-Daniel Stockart Trio
Carbon

Marcus Roberts • If I Could Be With You
Novus

Diana Krall • Stepping Out • *Justin Time*

RANDAL MCILROY (*Winnipeg, Manitoba*)
Cassandra Wilson • Blue Light 'til Dawn
Blue Note

Steve Coleman & Five Elements • The Tao
of Mad Phat-Fringe Zones • *Novus*
Maarten Altena • Code • *hat ART*

Joshua Redman • Warner Brothers
Tony Williams • Tokyo Live • *Blue Note*
Vienna Art Orchestra • Standing...What?
Amadeo

John Surman • Adventure Playground
ECM

New & Used • Souvenir
Knitting Factory Works

Jeff Johnston Quartet
With Kenny Wheeler • *Unity*
Jimmy Giuffre 3 • 1961 • *ECM*

LAURENCE M. SVIRCHEV
(*Vancouver, British Columbia*)

Paul Plimley & Lisle Ellis
Kaleidoscopes • *hat ART*

Randy Weston/Melba Liston
Volcano Blues • *Antilles*

Myra Melford • Alive In The House
Of Saints • *hat ART*

Charles Mingus • Changes One & Two
Rhino

Buck Clayton • Complete CBS
Jam Sessions • *Mosaic*

Rahsaan Roland Kirk • Volunteered Slavery
Rhino

Ry Cooder/V.M. Bhatt • A Meeting By
The River • *Water Lily Acoustics*

Tim Berne • Diminutive Mysteries
(Mostly Hemphill) • *JMT*

Joe Lovano • Universal Language
Blue Note

Steve Lacy • Vespers • *Soul Note*

ELLIOT BRATTON (*Brooklyn, New York*)

Eddie Allen • Another Point Of View
Enja

Art Blakey • Complete 1960 Jazz
Messengers On *Blue Note* • *Mosaic*

Joe Henderson • So Near, So Far • *Verve*
Shirley Horn • Light Out Of Darkness
Verve

Elvin Jones • Very Rare • *Evidence*

Elvin Jones • Youngblood • *Enja*

Thelonious Monk & John Coltrane

Live At The Five Spot • *Blue Note*

Bern Nix • Alarms & Excursions
New World

Art Taylor • Wailin' At The Vanguard
Verve

Randy Weston/Melba Liston

Volcano Blues • *Antilles*

GARY PARKER CHAPIN

(*Bella Vista, Arizona*)

Tim Berne • Diminutive Mysteries
(Mostly Hemphill) • *JMT*

Marilyn Crispell Trio • Summer Of 1992

American Tour • *Music & Arts*

Henry Threadgill Very Very Circus
Too Much Sugar For A Dime • *Axiom*

Tom Waits • Bone Machine • *Island*

Serge Chaloff • The Complete
Serge Chaloff Sessions • *Mosaic*

Jane Ira Bloom • Art & Aviation
Arabesque

Roy Nathanson & Anthony Coleman
Lobster & Friend • *Knitting Factory Works*

Rova Saxophone Quartet • From The
Bureau Of Both • *Black Saint*

Mario Bauza • My Time Is Now • *Messidor*
Ned Rothenberg • The Crux • *Leo*

AARON COHEN (*Chicago, Illinois*)

Don Byron • Plays The Music Of
Mickey Katz • *Electra/Nonesuch*

Marilyn Crispell Trio • Summer Of 1992
American Tour • *Music & Arts*

Charles Gayle/William Parker/Rashied Ali
Touchin' On Trane • *FMP*

Barry Guy • Fizzles • *Maya*

Joe Henderson • So Near, So Far • *Verve*
Jon Jang & The Pan Asian Arkestra

Tianamen! • *Soul Note*

Evan Parker • Conic Sections • *ah um*
Rova Saxophone Quartet • From The
Bureau Of Both • *Black Saint*

Henry Threadgill Very Very Circus
Too Much Sugar For A Dime • *Axiom*

Randy Weston/Melba Liston
Volcano Blues • *Antilles*

JOHN CORBETT (*Chicago, Illinois*)
King Übü Örchestrü • Binaurality • *FMP*
Loos • Fundamental • *Geestgronden*
Rova Saxophone Quartet • From The
Bureau Of Both • *Black Saint*
Evan Parker • Conic Sections • *ah um*
Sun Ra • Other Planes Of There • *Evidence*

Barry Guy • Fizzles • *Maya*

Anthony Braxton • 4 (Ensemble)
Compositions 1992 • *Black Saint*

Derek Bailey/John Stevens

Playing • *Incus*

Radu Malfatti • Ohrkiste • *ITM*

Tim Berne • Diminutive Mysteries
(Mostly Hemphill) • *JMT*

BEN RATLIFF (*New York City, New York*)

Henry Threadgill • Too Much Sugar
For A Dime • *Axiom*

Borah Bergman/Andrew Cyrille
The Human Factor • *Soul Note*

Mario Pavone • Toulon Days • *New World*
Rob Brown/Joe Morris/Whit Dickey

Youniverse • *Riti*

Greejte Bijma • Tales Of Voice • *Enja*

Richard Galliano/Jean-Charles Capon
Blues Sur Seine • *Sacem*

Steve Lacy • Vespers • *Soul Note*

Terence Blanchard • Malcolm X
Jazz Suite • *Columbia*

Bern Nix • Alarms & Excursions
New World

Cecil Taylor • Double Holy House • *FMP*

JAMES ROZZI (*Orlando, Florida*)

Charles Gayle/William Parker/Rashied Ali
Touchin' On Trane • *FMP*

The Jon Lloyd Quartet • Head • *Leo*

John Scofield • What We Do • *Blue Note*

Kenny Barron • Sambao • *Verve*

Garrison Fewell • A Blue Deeper
Than Blue • *Accurate*

Tony Williams • Tokyo Live • *Blue Note*
Danilo Pérez • Danilo Pérez • *Novus*

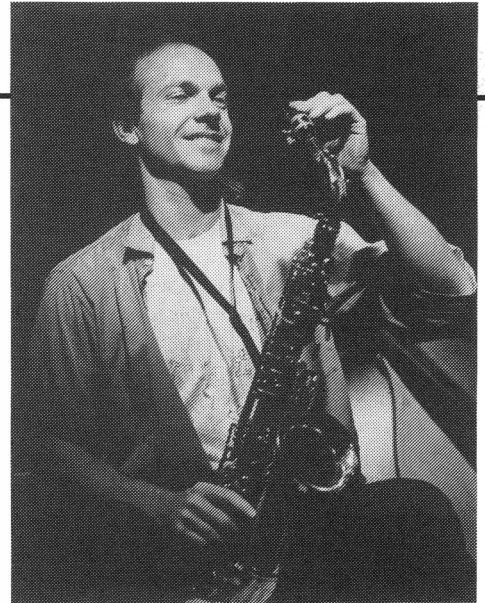
Byron Olson • Sketches Of Miles • *Angel*
Miles Davis + 19 • Miles Ahead

Columbia

Billie Holiday • The Complete
Billie Holiday On Verve • *Verve*

AROUND THE WORLD

Congratulations to **JOHN OSWALD** and **MOE KOFFMAN** winners, respectively of the Sound Symposium's Freddie Stone Award and SOCAN's Jazz Award.



JOHN OSWALD • Photograph by Mark Miller

CANADIAN NOTES

Around Town/Music In Bloom Despite Economic Gloom

The reality of today's economic climate has meant new challenges for musicians to present their work to the public. Two events in Toronto point toward solutions to the dilemma of drawing an audience in an over-heated entertainment market. The **Shuffle Demons**, a quintet led by altoist Richard Underhill, presented two successful nights at the Bathurst Street Theatre to introduce their new CD, *Extra Crispy*, and a video, *Dirty Money*. Underhill joined forces with tenors Perry White and Dave Parker for some bluesy wailing over a strong rhythm section of drummer Stitch Wynston and new bassist Mike Milligan. Milligan lost no time in making his presence felt with a bass solo feature that stopped the show, a risk-taking exploration. The band mixed it up with reggae grooves, "out" saxophonics (White and Underhill put the blues into space) and a sense of the music that spanned Mingus-wise section riffs to rap vocals. Stayed tuned for the mainstream reaction to the cover art on their new CD.

Proving that corporate sponsorship need not be a negative influence, the Zildjian cymbal company presented a free weekend of teaching clinics capped by a concert featuring drumming legend **Louis Bellson** that was a revelation. Bellson swung like crazy through an octet performance, conducted by Robin Engelman of Nexus, of John Beck's Concerto For Percussion, a twenty minute composition echoing both Igor Stravinsky and Charlie Parker. His exciting playing scorched the mostly young jazz audience, there to see fusion star Steve Smith. A Jazz Personality of the old school, he delighted the crowd while taking a curtain call by performing an impromptu soft-shoe, a nod in the direction of the West African drumming and dance ensemble that opened the evening. Many thanks to the enlightened directors at Zildjian for presenting this living master musician, all for free. *A Guest column by musician/writer Steve Vickery.*

• • •

Dave McMurdo's Jazz Orchestra, who played to capacity crowds at Toronto's **Montreal Bistro** in November, were a showcase presentation at the National Association of Jazz Educators in Boston in January. The Montreal Bistro also hosted a scintillating week of

music with Geoff Keezer, Steve Nelson and **Neil Swainson** before giving way to another swinging week of music from the **Oliver Jones** Trio. Dave Young and Barry Elmes worked with the Montreal pianist.

Time Warp, Joe Sealy, Don Thompson (featured on vibes), Bob Brough and Phil Nimmons are among the upcoming attractions at **George's Spaghetti House**.

The **Hemispheres** showcase concerts planned originally for early December at the Music Gallery (179 Richmond Street West) have been rescheduled for April 28th and 29th.

Regular jazz concerts take place at Walter Hall in the **Edward Johnson Building** with faculty and student ensembles featuring such directors as Mike Murley, Kevin Turcotte, Alex Dean, Paul Read and Carol Welsman.

The Toronto chapter of the **Duke Ellington Society** is expanding its activities and now holds monthly meetings at Montgomery's Inn (Dundas West & Islington). Information is available from Eileen Ward, 95 Thorncliffe Park Drive, Suite 2906, Toronto, ON M4H 1L7.

The Mohawk Jazz Faculty Septet performed in Hamilton for a building fund benefit November 22 for St. Cuthbert's - venue of the highly successful Jazz at St. C's concerts. Producer Phil Barrette is also involved in the "Jazz, Wine & Romance II" presentation February 13 at the DuMaurier Centre. The Niagara Brass Ensemble, Hamilton All Star Jazz Band, Lynne Arriale Quartet and vocalist Jeanie Bryson are the headliners.

TV-Ontario's French language arts series **Dimanche Classique** began a Sunday evening jazz series January 7 with videos of Sonny Rollins and Dizzy Gillespie/Max Roach. McCoy Tyner, Sarah Vaughan, Charlie Haden and Oliver Jones were seen later in the month. Pat Metheny and Stephane Grappelli are among those scheduled for February... CBC Radio begins a six week profile of **Oscar Peterson** on March 13. The Sunday afternoon/early evening program includes rare 1940s transcriptions, new interview material and many recordings.

The **Toronto Downtown Jazz Society** is now at Suite 230, 366 Adelaide Street East, Toronto, ON M5A 3X9. By becoming a friend of the society you receive a monthly

newsletter, discounts to events and other goodies.

The **Ottawa Jazz Festival** has begun publishing "Resonance". The newsletter helps keep together the many people involved in the support of that city's jazz activity. Their address is P.O. Box 3104, Station D, Ottawa, ON K1P 6H7.

The **Edmonton Jazz Society** runs on a yearly basis the Yardbird Suite as well as programming the Edmonton Jazz Festival. Dewey Redman, John Reid, Paul McCandless, Trudy Desmond, Francois Bourassa, Sue Moss, Robin Shier and Bruce Nielsen were among the year end attractions at the club. 10203 - 86 Ave., Edmonton, AB T6E 2M2 is the address of the society.

Although Vancouver has a number of clubs the three main venues for creative music, local and international, are the Glass Slipper, Western Front and the Vancouver East Cultural Centre. It has been a busy winter with the Charles Gayle Trio, **Bill Clark's** Sextet, **Lee Pui Ming**, Steve Lacy & Irene Aebi, and **Bruce Nielson's** Quartet completing 1993. The new year looks exciting with Joe Pass (January 16), Myra Melford Trio with Reggie

NEWS COMPILED BY PUBLISHER JOHN NORRIS

Nicholson and Lindsey Horner + guest **François Houle** (February 20), John Zorn's **Cobra** (March 10) and **Free Trade** featuring Ralph Bowen, Peter Leitch, Renee Rosnes, Neil Swainson and Terry Clark in what must be considered an all star Canadian mainstream band. Ironically half of them are American residents. All these events taking place at the East Cultural Centre. British bassist Barry Guy, visiting Vancouver for **Hear It Now**, a six day long event which will be reviewed in the next issue, also presented a solo concert at Western Front (February 20). The Coastal Jazz & Blues Society has a **JAZZ HOTLINE** at (604) 682-0706.

Cornerstone Records is a newly formed jazz record company under the control of Barry Elmes, Al Henderson and Mike Murley. A full time commitment to performing jazz was a motivating force in the establishment of the new outlet for their musical activities. Already available are new CDs by Time Warp ("There and Back") and The Barry Elmes Quintet ("East-West"). The groups performed at a CD launch for the label in Toronto on January 7... **Justin Time Records** rush released "Fables and Dreams" by the Dave Young/Phil Dwyer Quartet in time for the group's Fall tour of Canada. Rob Piltch and Michel Lambert complete the group... Montreal guitarist Harold Faustin's debut recording "Paralellisme" is available now on the **CMP Amplitude** label... **Terra Nova Records** is to release John Stetch's second CD in February. Featured with the pianist are Seamus Blake (tenor sax), Jesse Murphy (bass), and Jorge Rossi (drums) and this quartet tours Canada in April.

AWARDS, COMPETITIONS, EXHIBITIONS

Karl Berger received the 1993 Jazz Award from the German Radio Network SWF... Composer/vibra-

phonist Tommy Vig was awarded the 1993 Emerton Prize in Hungary... Patrick Zimmerli was winner of the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz Composers Competition.

The Jazz Composer's Alliance (Box 491, Allston, MA 02134) is holding its second annual JCA Composition Contest. Deadline for submissions is March 15.

The graphic art and photography of **Burt Goldblatt** was on view recently at Harvard University. Over 100 artworks by **Miles Davis** were on view in December at Ambassador Galleries in New York.

JAZZ GIGS

The **Jackie McLean** Sextet was on the road in January for the New England Foundation of the Arts... Multi instrumentalist Scott Robinson was in the Czech Republic for workshops and concerts. On his return he took part in a weekend concert series in Meadville, PA with the cornet/trombone doubling duo of Dan Barrett and Randy Reinhard, pianist Keith Ingham and guitarist Marty Grosz... **Phil Woods** will be featured guest with the Sonny Costanzo Big Band March 2 at Quinnipiac College, Hamden, CT... The **Joshua Redman** Quintet perform for the Central Pennsylvania Friends of Jazz April 24 in Harrisburg with the **Roy Haynes** Quintet preceding them (March 27) into the Harrisburg Hilton venue.

Jazz is becoming firmly established as part of the attractions designed to draw people to tropical resorts. You've already missed the 1994 **Barbados Festival**. Their late arriving publicity for the January 14-16 event was headlined by Wynton Marsalis and Cassandra Wilson... July 28-31 are the dates for the 1994 **Hawaii International Jazz Festival** in Honolulu, Cleo Laine, Buddy Guy, James Moody, Arturo

Sandoval, Lalo Schiffrin, Milt Hinton are among the artists set for this event. Further information is available by calling the festival office at (808) 941-9974.

Artpark located in Lewiston, NY, has a jazz festival which runs September 2/3. Lined up so far are Betty Carter, Chico Hamilton, Clark Terry, Charlie Haden's Quartet West, Bobby Watson and Poncho Sanchez.

Stan Kenton followers will be assembling at "Rendezvous '94" on May 1 and 2 at the Resort Hotel, Daventry, England. Fuller information is available from Murray Patterson, 9 Western Avenue, New Milton, England BH25 7PY... The 19th annual **Bern Jazz Festival** takes place May 4 to 8 and a package tour is available through Coda Publications...

MUSICIAN CONTACT

"Cadenzas" is the quarterly newsletter of trumpeter Marvin Stamm and is available from 15 Butler Rd N Row, Somers, NY 10589... The Nordic Jazz Shop is a mail order outlet for the recordings of bassist Red Mitchell. It's being run by his wife Diane and a catalogue can be obtained by writing 1255 Oakhill Ave SE., Salem, OR 97302.

ON THE ROAD

SWITZERLAND

Venues small and large receive generous financial support in Switzerland from several banking institutions. One of those involved is Schweizerische Kreditanstalt (SKA). A traveller visiting the bank's head office in Zurich recently would have been startled to find a generous display of jazz artifacts tracing the evolving nature of the Zurich jazz scene (in particular and the Swiss scene less fully documented). There are photographs, instruments and audio visual devices (including a playable juke-

box). A handsome booklet (in German only) enables the visitor to take home a souvenir of many of the visual images experienced during the exhibit. The bank also sponsored a number of concerts reflecting the diversity of jazz styles to be heard today in Switzerland. On December 3 the **Henri Chaix** Trio made the trip from Geneva and performed before an appreciative audience. A follow-up to their earlier Sackville CD was recorded in August and will be released in March.

Not much more than fifty people can squeeze into the cellar jazz club at Rheinfelden but it consistently features out of country groups on tour in Switzerland. Zurich based saxophonist **Daviel Schnyder** surrounded himself with American musicians for a three week German/Swiss tour which included a stop at Rheinfelden on November 28. Multi brass instrumentalist Michael Mossman shared the front line duties but it was the energy and swing of the rhythm team which elevated the music beyond the ordinary. Kenny Drew Jr., Michael Formanek and Marvin "Smitty" Smith were burnin'.

Bern's Innere Enge Hotel (Engestrasse 54) is a luxury establishment on the outskirts of Switzerland's capital city. It houses **Marian's Room** - a venue for the presentation of jazz and blues artists. Milt Hinton was leader of a trio which featured Richard Wyands and Clyde Lucas for the first two weeks of December. Gene "Mighty Flea" Conners and Maxine Weldon completed the month's programming.

Central European CD collectors will want to be on the mailing list of **JazzTime**, Hardstrasse 47, 5430 Wettingen, Switzerland. Their monthly bulletins offer many recordings not easily found in most stores.

CANADA • UNITED STATES • SWITZERLAND • FRANCE

PARIS

Both **Jazz Hot** and **Jazz Magazine** publish monthly lists of Paris jazz attractions. The names of the performers can be as bewilderingly unrecognisable as they are everywhere today since jazz was absorbed into pop music's mainstream and thousands of students graduate annually from jazz programs. Still St. Germain continues to offer jazz. Three clubs are clustered together on rue St. Benoit so it's possible to check them out before venturing inside. The music starts late (10:30 p.m.) and continues into the early AM hours. Tucked close together on a minuscule stage at the far end of Le Montana on November 30 was the **Rene Urtreger** Trio. A handful of fans were clustered below the piano and beyond that there was seating where the visual difficulties of the club were helped by a variety of mirrors. The amplified sound was OK but the small upright was an inadequate instrument for a pianist of Urtreger's stature. He's there frequently so he must enjoy the ambience. He's a brilliant interpreter of the bebop piano and has long been a favourite accompanist for visiting American soloists. His mature style puts him among the best in the world. It was a pleasure to hear him.

RECORDINGS

CRITICS CHOICE

A fax from **Musica Jazz** (Italy) was a reminder that everyone compiles lists of the best recordings of the previous year. Their jury of 68 voted, in two sections, for the best Italian recordings (Enrico Rava's "L'Opera Va" (label Bleu), Giovanni Tommaso's "Over the Ocean" (Red) and Gianni Coscia's "Il Bandino" (DDD) and, internationally, for Bill Frisell's "Have A Little Faith", Joe Henderson's "So Near So Far" and Thelonious Monk's "Live at the Five Spot-Discovery". Reissue awards went to the Complete Billie Holiday on Verve, Complete Dial Charlie Parker

(Spotlite/Stash) and Webster/Blanton Years by Duke Ellington.

In contrast the 3 person jury at Toronto radio station **CJRT** voted for new releases by Saxomania/Phil Woods: "Out of the Woods" (IDA), Keith Ingham's Trio "Music from the Mauve Decades" (Sackville) and Randy Weston's "Volcano Blues" (Verve). Unanimous reissue selections were Jo Jones Special (Vanguard), Lucky Thompson's "Tricotism" (Impulse), Coleman Hawkins' "Rainbow Mist" (Delmark), Dizzy Gillespie's "Gillespiana/Carnegie Hall" (Verve) and Buck Clayton Jam Sessions (Mosaic).

NEW ISSUES

"No More No Les" is tenor saxophonist Les Arbutckle's long overdue debut recording. Kenny Barron shares the spotlight and it's a winner. Also from **Audioquest** is Rob Mullins Band "One Night in Houston"... The T.S. Monk band's second **Blue Note** release "Changing of the Guard" continues to define the direction that this music should take... "Shake Down the Stars" by Vic Lewis' West Coast All Stars includes the late Bob Cooper and Bill Perkins on reeds with Andy Martin on trombone. "American-African Blues" is Ricky Ford's most recent release and this **Candid** date found him in the company of Jaki Byard, Milt Hinton and Ben Riley. Due out in March on **Candid** is Dave Liebman's "Big Band Coltrane".

John Campbell and Ralph Sutton are the latest Maybeck Recital Hall soloists on **Concord**. There are still more Dave McKenna and Scott Hamilton releases and a third collaboration between guitarists Howard Alden and George Van Eps. Gene Harris' quartet was captured in concert and the results are available as "A Little Piece of Heaven".

Guitarist Anthony Michael Peterson is showcased in "The Book

of Days" on **Gazell**... Pianist Pete Jolly has a new trio recording titled "Truly Yours" on **Quartet Records**... Tommy Flanagan, Bob Cranshaw and Jack DeJohnette are featured on Sonny Rollins' latest **Milestone** CD "Old Flames"... **Mothlight Music** (P.O. Box 273, Irvington, NY 10533) has new CDs under the leadership of Stephen Roane, Tom Kohl, Carmen Leggio, Frank Tate and Eddie Bert... The Jim Hall Trio's latest **Musicmasters** release is "Something Special" and features Larry Goldings and Steve LaSpina... "Human Hands" is a jazz quintet of performers from Washington, Alaska and British Columbia and features the playing of John Damberg, Paul Lucas and Jon Alberts and the group's CD is issued on **Ace in the Hole Productions**, P.O. Box 9489, Seattle, WA 98109... "Regards" is the title of the debut recording by the Franck Amsallem/Tim Ries Quartet on **Freelance Records**. The co-leaders, on piano and saxophones respectively perform with bassist Scott Collet and drummer Bill Stewart... "The Oakland Duets" comes from a November 1992 concert by Julius Hemphill and Abdul Wadud and is available on **Music & Arts**... New on **Ogun** is a duet session by Evan Parker and John Stevens titled "Corner to Corner"... Smaller Italian labels now have wider circulation internationally through a distribution connection with **Sphere Marketing**. Drummer Ettore Fioravanti leads a trio in his MM Records release "Canzoni Non Cantate" and from RAM Records comes new sessions with saxophonist Claudio Fasoli and pianist Guido Manusardi. "Cities" also features Mick Goodrick, Paolino Dalla Porta and Bill Elgart. Manusardi's "Coloured Passages" includes George Garzone, John Lockwood and Bob Gullotti in the group.

TRADITIONAL

Jelly Roll Morton's Library of Congress recordings are a fasci-

nating documentation of an early jazz pioneer. His reminiscences, observations and assertions blend seamlessly with his demonstrations at the piano of his various points of view. **Rounder Records**, through their affiliation with the Smithsonian and the Folkways Records catalogue, has now issued four CDs of the music from these recordings. All previous issues used the 1946 Circle 78 issues as their source but Rounder had access to the original acetates and there is a dramatic improvement in the sound. John R. T. Davies used pitch correction in his 1970 tapes which were used for the CJM/Swaggie issues of the Circle collection but Rounder have refined the adjustment even more. But to only issue the musical segments destroys the impact of this document. In the meantime George Buck's **Solo Art** label has reissued on CD the first volume of the earlier lp issues which contains Morton's narration.

Storyville Records is issuing a series of CDs drawn from New York radio broadcasts from the early 1950s at various locations. Groups led by Eddie Condon, Bobby Hackett, Buck Clayton and Jimmy Archey are now available... **Timeless Records** continue their historical reissue program with a Johnny Dodds/Jimmy Blythe collection and 1937/40 sides featuring vocalist Teddy Grade... Sweden's **Ambassador Records** has released volume five of its Louis Armstrong in the 1930s series and **Kenneth Records** has issued (on CD) a fifth volume of Maxine Sullivan recordings with her Swedish band.

England's **Cadillac Records** has gathered together all the 1951/52 Christie Brothers Stompers Melodisc sessions which also featured Ken Colyer, Dickie Hawdon and Pat Hawes... **Lake Records** has reissued on CD the rare 1962 Society lp of Ken Colyer's Jazzmen and added some unissued performances from January 1963...

AWARDS • ON THE ROAD • RECORDINGS • LITERATURE

Denmark's **Music Mecca** label has also issued some Colyer material. This time it is previously unreleased concert performances from 1976 with clarinetist Butch Thompson and Holland's Storyville Jazz Band.

REISSUES

The **Kenny Clarke-Francy Boland Big Band** was a major attraction in the 1960s. Its all star personnel developed a superb unity and were frequently recorded through the auspices of Gigi Campi - the band's manager and sponsor. Now, after too long a wait, the band's music is to be made available on CD. To inaugurate this program and to celebrate his 65th birthday Gigi Campi has issued a special limited edition two disc overview of the band's career. This set is available by mail from **ECCM**, Am Frankenturm 5, D50667 Cologne, Germany at a price of 140 DM plus postage. Further CD reissues of the band's recordings will be issued on a regular basis.

"Beauty Is A Rare Thing" collates all of **Ornette Coleman's** Atlantic recordings in a deluxe package well worthy of the glorious music contained on the six CDs... An overview of **Joe Henderson's** early work is available in "The Blue Note Years" - a four CD package.

BLUES NOTES

"Damn Right I've Got The Blues" is a book about **Buddy Guy** and the blues roots of rock and roll by Donald E. Wilcock... From Miller Freeman Books are "Blues Guitar" - a collection of articles from the pages of *Guitar Player Magazine* and "The Gibson Les Paul Book", a complete illustrated history of these instruments... A new **B.B. King** Biography by Sebastian Danchin has been published in France (in French) by Mood Indigo/editions du limon, 230 rue Saint Charles, 75015 Paris.

Ace Records four CD box set of **Elmore James** recording comple-

ments the Capricorn set. Once you have both sets only a handful of other titles on Chess, Checker and Chief are needed to complete a collection of his recordings.

Arhoolie continue to reissue gems from their lp catalogue as well as unearthing previously unissued tapes. Clifton Chenier and Mance Lipscomb have further collections available along with CDs by Juke Boy Bonner and Piano Red. From Folk Lyric comes an expanded version of the "Country Negro Jam Sessions" and two volumes from the June 1969 Memphis Blues Festival.

"Ruff Stuff" is a sixteen song collection of regional blues performances from the 1960s in Texas. Best known of the musicians are Lightnin' Hopkins and Mance Lipscomb. This **Catfish** CD issue shows that the early styles were still very much alive at that time.

The Jimmy and Jeannie Cheatham Sweet Baby Blues Band is today's continuation of the California blues tradition. "Blues and the Boogie Masters" is their seventh release on **Concord...** **Delmark's** new blues releases run the gamut from 1920s style vocals from Edith Wilson to the searing harp playing of Little Walter in a reissue drawn from small label 78s of the early 1950s. Rounding out the release is a Black and Blue date "Kidney Stew is Fine" and Yank Rachell's 1979 date "Chicago".

LITERATURE

Stan Kenton: The Early Years 1941-1947 by Edward F. Gabel is the inside story of the

band's activities by Kenton's personal assistant in those years. It's published by Balboa Books, P.O. Box 493, Lake Geneva, WI 53147.

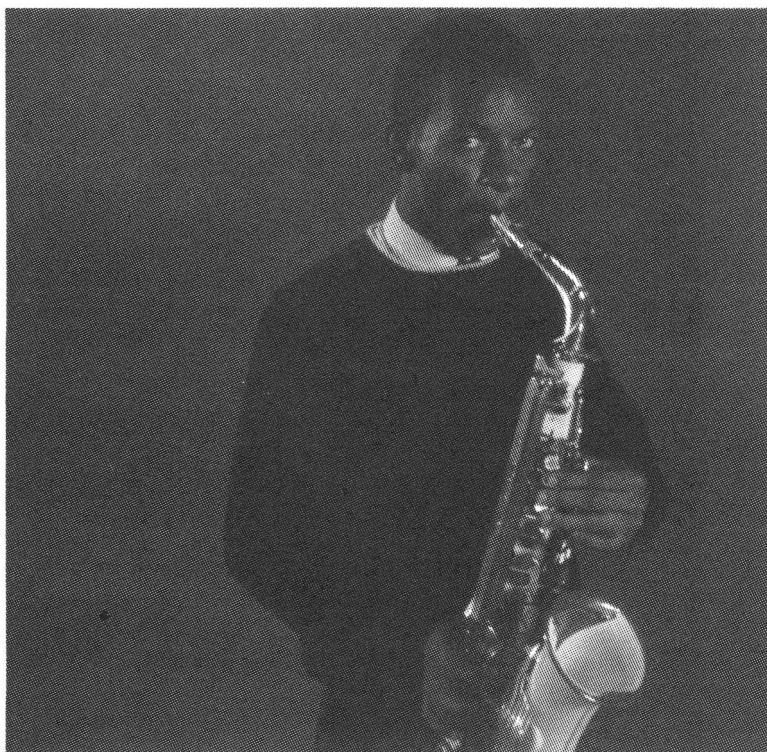
Ascension" - John Coltrane and His Quest by Eric Nisenson is a new examination of the life and music of the trend setting saxophonist. It's published by St. Martin's Press.

Research reference books about jazz continue to proliferate. Chet Baker, one of the music's most mystical figures, has a special aura for Europeans - within whose countries he spent much of his life. **Chet Baker In Europe** is a photographic document of the trumpeter's years there between 1975 and 1988. Ingo Wulf has assembled the visual images taken by many photographers, gathered the thoughts and observations of many musicians who worked with Baker (in German and English text) and compiled yearly listings of recordings. This book, like the earlier **Chet Baker in Concert**, is published by Nieswand Verlag, in Kiel, Germany and also contains a CD. Jazz Media has published a hard cover, expanded edition of **CHET: The discography of Chet Baker** by Thordjorn Sjogren. The 300 page book includes a similar set of photographs to those which formed part of the earlier edition, a lengthy interview and biography.

A Guide to Pseudonyms on American Records 1892-1942, compiled by Allan Sutton for Greenwood Press, is a useful tool for determining the real names of many early recording artists. However, jazz is only a small part of the coverage within this book.

A new updated edition of John Fordham's **Jazz on CD** still has a long way to go to if it is to be considered an Essential Guide. It's published in the UK by Kyle Cathie Limited. □

ORNETTE COLEMAN • Photograph by Lee Freidlander



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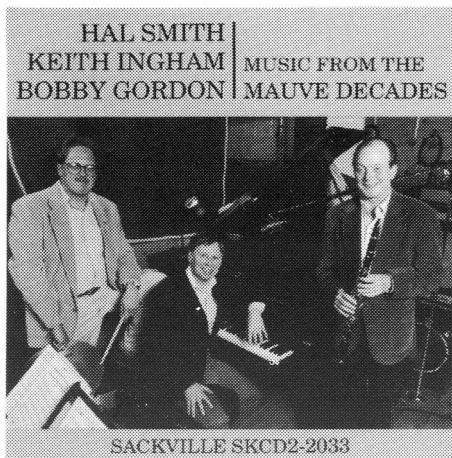
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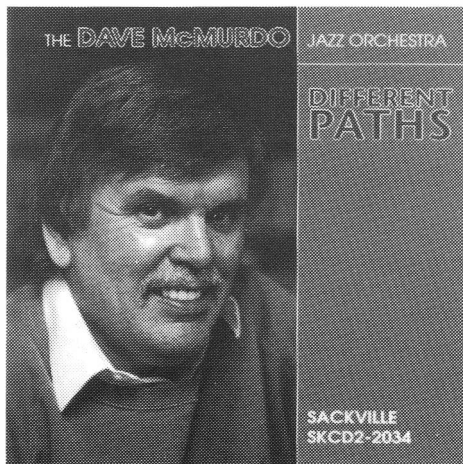
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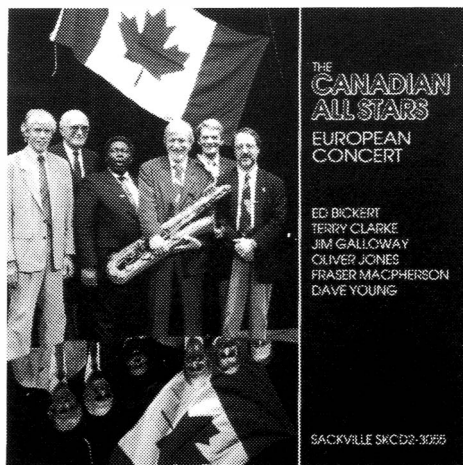
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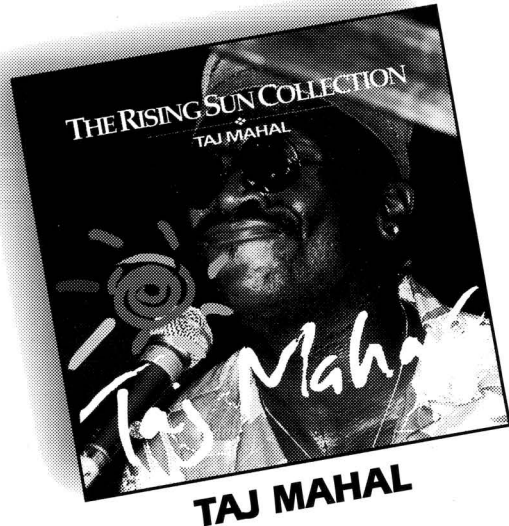
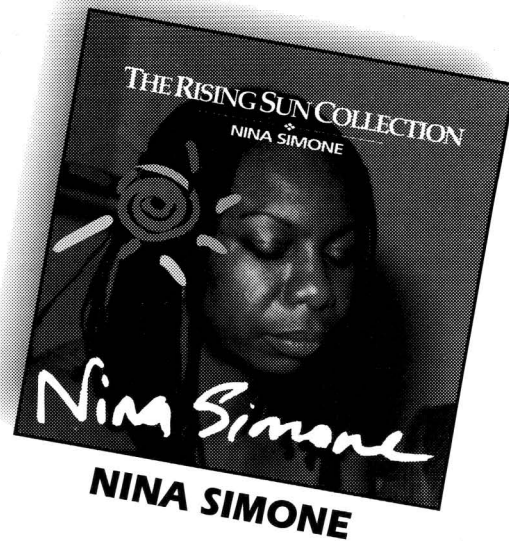
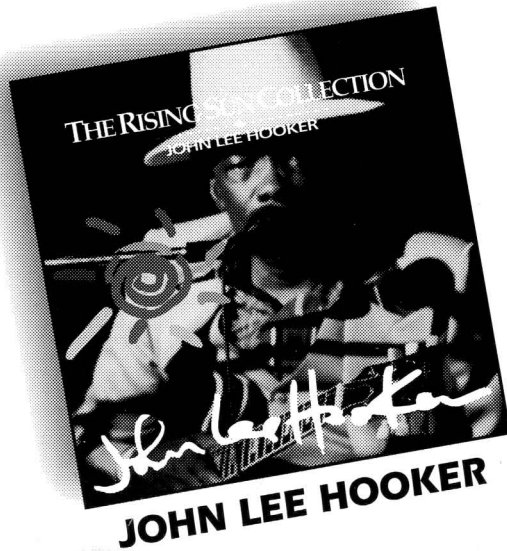
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