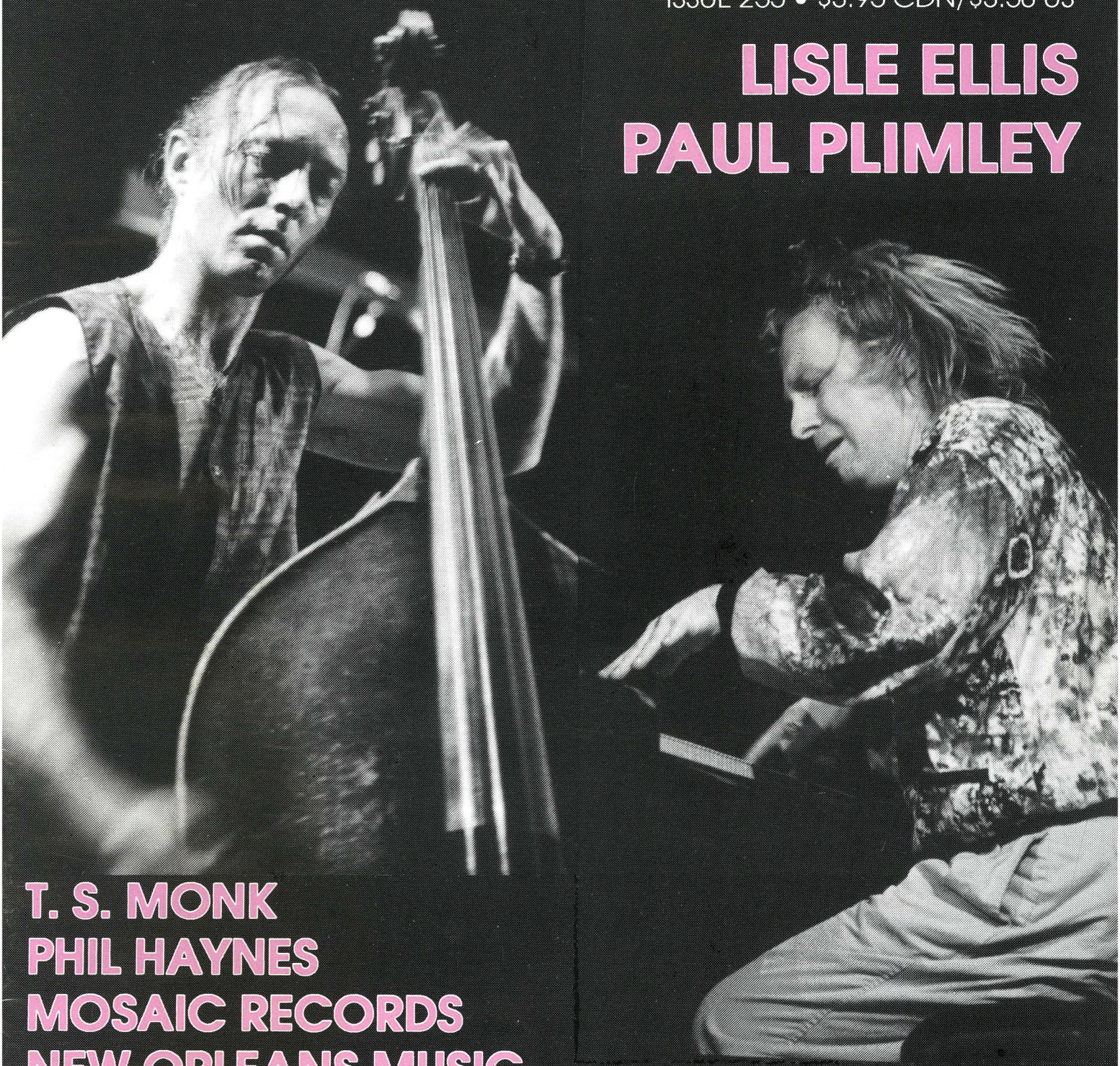
THE JOURNAL OF JAZZ AND IMPROVISED MUSIC

CODA MAGAZINE

MAY/JUNE 1994
ISSUE 255 • $3.95 CDN/$3.50 US

LISLE ELLIS
PAUL PLIMLEY



T. S. MONK
PHIL HAYNES
MOSAIC RECORDS
NEW ORLEANS MUSIC
LADY DAY & FRIENDS

03010 06
7 72006 03010 6

RSR CD 110

Buddy Tate/Al Grey

JUST JAZZ

Buddy Tate, tenor sax and clarinet;
Al Grey, trombone;
Richard Wyands, piano;
Major Holley, bass; Al Harewood, drums

RSR CD 113

Pepper Adams

CONJURATION

FAT TUESDAY'S SESSION

Pepper Adams, baritone saxophone;
Kenny Wheeler, trumpet; Hank Jones, piano;
Clint Houston, bass; Louis Hayes, drums

RSR CD 121

Kenny Barron

THE MOMENT

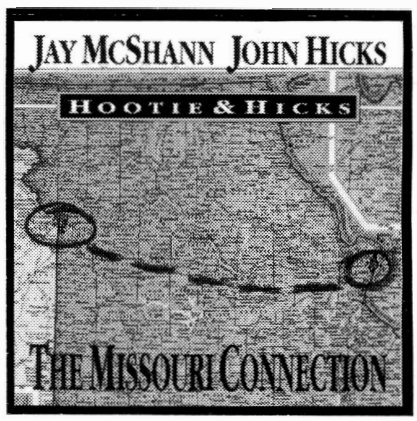
Kenny Barron, piano;
Rufus Reid, bass; Victor Lewis, drums

RSR CD 124

Jay McShann/John Hicks

THE MISSOURI CONNECTION

Jay McShann, piano and vocals; John Hicks, piano

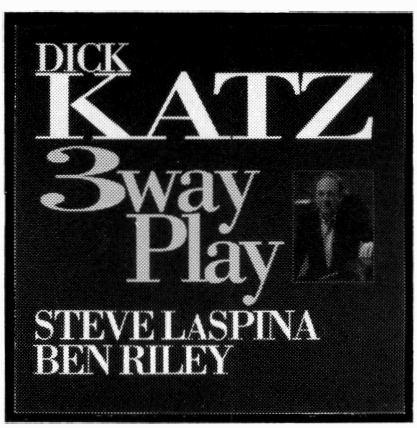


RSR CD 127

Dick Katz

3 WAY PLAY

Dick Katz, piano;
Steve LaSpina, bass; Ben Riley, drums



RSR CD 129

Peter Leitch

SPECIAL RAPPORT

Peter Leitch, guitar;
John Hicks, piano; Ray Drummond, bass;
Marvin "Smitty" Smith, drums

DISTRIBUTED BY

THE TREND MUSIC GROUP

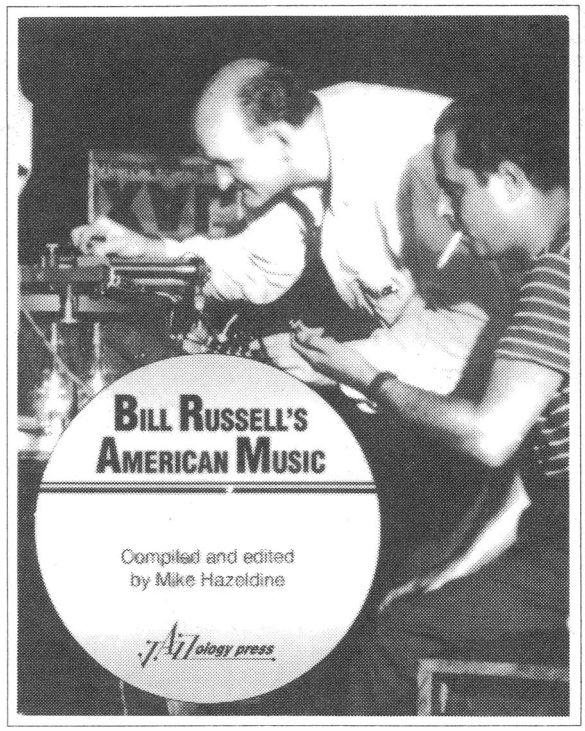
47 RACINE ROAD • REXDALE • ONTARIO • CANADA M9W 6B2

PHONE (416) 749-6601 / FAX (416) 749-3918

TREND MUSIC GROUP INC.

BILL RUSSELL'S AMERICAN MUSIC

THIS IS THE STORY OF BILL RUSSELL's quest to discover and record the music he loved. The book includes a complete discography and, in Bill Russell's own words, the detailed background story behind every AM session. It tells of his joy and disappointments, the laughter and the heartaches, and offers many new insights into the musicians he recorded. Many of the photographs appear for the first time and also included are all Bill's seating plan drawings, AM record labels, LP covers and catalogues. Plus a musician and title index.



The book comes **COMPLETE** with a unique CD of rare American Music Masters. $55.00 Canada/U.S. $45.00 elsewhere.

Wooden Joe: *Tiger Rag*/Sugar Blues** **Dink Johnson:** *Rag Bag Rag*/Talking Record** • **Bunk Johnson:** *Make Me a Pallet on the Floor*/Careless Love*/My Life Will Be Sweeter Someday*/In the Gloaming* • **Original Creole Stompers:** *I Can't Escape from You*/B-Flat Blues* • **Natty Dominique:** *You Are my Silver Star** • **Bunk Johnson:** *Honey Gal*/Margie/Do Right Baby/Slow Drag's Boogie Woogie* • **Big Eye Louis Nelson:** *Pork Chop** • **George Lewis:** *San Jacinto Stomp* • **Emile Barnes:** *DeDe & Billie's Blues No. 2* • **Kid Thomas:** *Bucket's Got a Hole in It ** (PLAYING TIME: 60 MINUTES) *(*=unissued)*

AMERCIAN MUSIC CD CATALOGUE

GOLD SERIES
(From The **ORIGINAL** Masters)

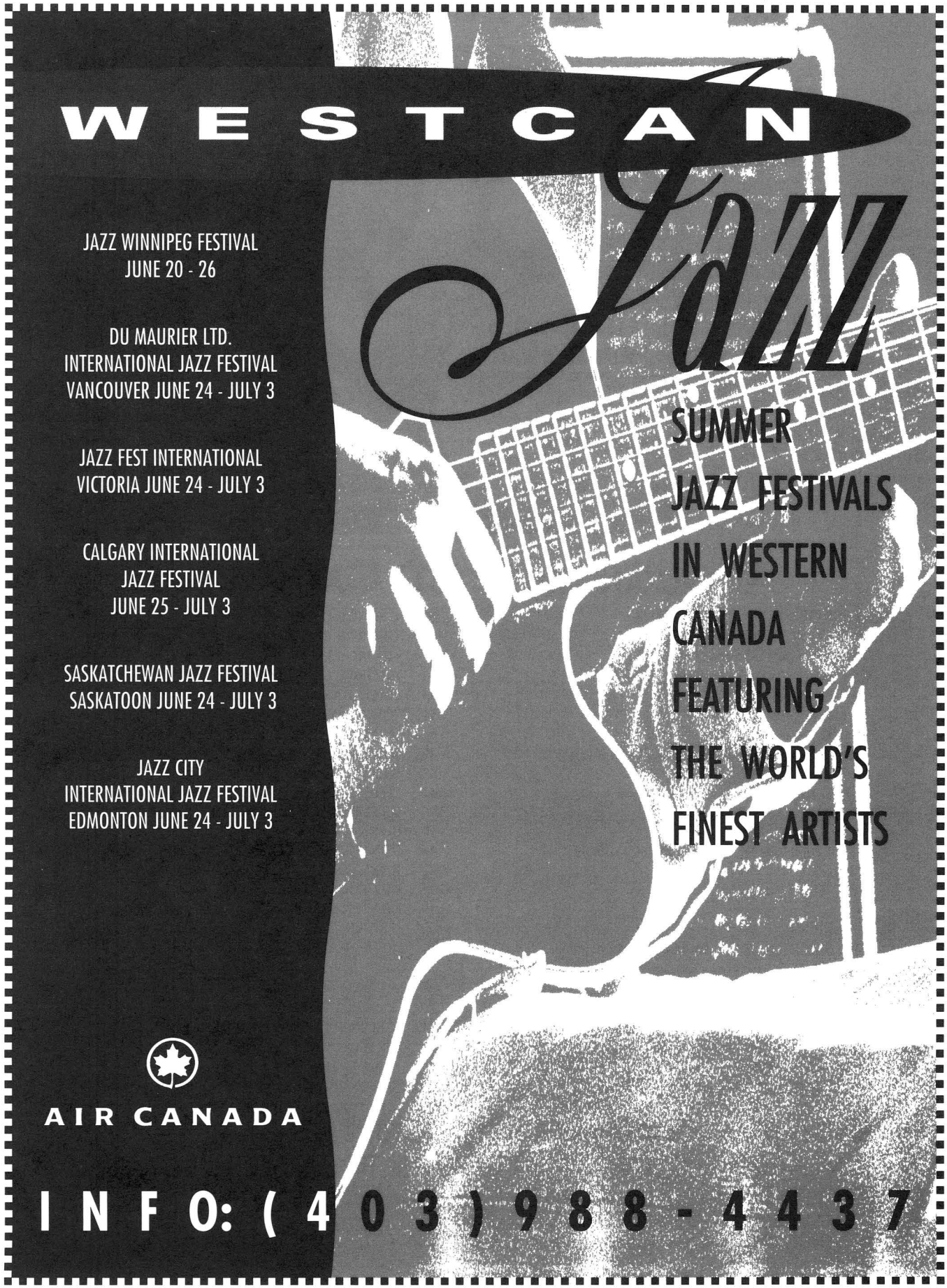
AMCD
1 - BUNK JOHNSON: King of the Blues
2 - GEORGE LEWIS: with Kid Shots
3 - BUNK JOHNSON: 1944
4 - GEORGE LEWIS: Trios & Bands
5 - WOODEN JOE NICHOLAS
6 - BUNK JOHNSON: Brass & Dance Band
7 - BIG EYE LOUIS NELSON DELISLE
8 - BUNK JOHNSON: 1944 (second masters)
9 - HERB MORAND: 1949
10 - KID THOMAS
11 - DINK JOHNSON-CHARLIE THOMPSON
12 - BUNK JOHNSON: 1944/45
16 - BUNK JOHNSON: in San Francisco

BLUE SERIES

AMCD
19 - KID ORY: '44-46 w. Mutt Carey, A. Nicholas
20 - KID ORY: King of the Tailgate Trombone 1948/49
21 - GEORGE LEWIS: Oxford Series Vol 1
22 - GEORGE LEWIS: Oxford Series Vol 2
23 - GEORGE LEWIS: Oxford Series Vol 3
24 - GEORGE LEWIS: Oxford Series Vol 4
25 - GEORGE LEWIS: Oxford Series Vol 5
26 - GEORGE LEWIS: Oxford Series Vol 6
27 - GEORGE LEWIS: Oxford Series Vol 7
28 - GEORGE LEWIS: Oxford Series Vol 8
29 - GEORGE LEWIS: Oxford Series Vol 9
30 - GEORGE LEWIS: Oxford Series Vol 10
35 - PAUL BARBARIN: Oxford Series Vol 15
40 - KID HOWARD: 1937/PUNCH MILLER: 1941
41 - KID RENA: 1940
42 - KID ORY: at the Green Room Vol 1
43 - KID ORY: at the Green Room Vol 2
44 - THE JOHN REID COLLECTION: documentary recordings of P. Bocage/S. Bechet/G. Bacquet/Bunk Johnson
45 - BUNK JOHNSON/MUTT CAREY: New York
46 - BUNK JOHNSON/LEADBELLY: New York 1947
47 - RAYMOND BURKE: 1937-1949
48 - KID THOMAS: Dance Hall Years
49 - KID THOMAS: Creole Jazz Band
50 - FRANK "BIG BOY" GOUDIE: with Amos White
51 - JOHN HANDY: The Very First Recordings
54 - KID HOWARD: La Vida Band
68 - PUNCH MILLER AND LOUIS GALLAUD
70 - EUREKA BRASS BAND: 1951 session
71 - GEORGE LEWIS with RED ALLEN 1951
72 - MUTT CAREY/LEE COLLINS: w. Hociel Thomas/Chippie Hill
74 - GEORGE LEWIS: Herbert Otto's Party 1949

FROM SACKVILLE RECORDINGS • P.O.BOX 1002 • STATION O • TORONTO • ONTARIO • CANADA M4A 2N4 • TEL/FAX (416) 593-7230

COMPACT DISC PRICES INCLUDING POSTAGE: CANADA - 1CD for Cdn $20.00 • 2 for $38.00 • 3 for $57.00 • 4 for $72.00 • 5 for $85.00 • Each additional CD costs $17.00 • Prices include 7% GST and are payable in Canadian funds.
USA/OTHER COUNTRIES - 1 CD for US $16.00 • 2 for $32.00 • 3 for $46.50 • 4 for $60.00 • 5 for $70.00.
Each additonal CD costs $14.00 • Payable in US funds or Canadian Equivalent • Payment must accompany order.
We accept Canadian & U.S. cheques, money orders, bank drafts, VISA & MASTERCARD.
(Please provide CARD NAME & NUMBER, EXPIRY DATE and your SIGNATURE.) Orders to Ontario add 8% sales tax.


WESTCAN
Jazz
SUMMER
JAZZ FESTIVALS
IN WESTERN
CANADA
FEATURING
THE WORLD'S
FINEST ARTISTS
JAZZ WINNIPEG FESTIVAL
JUNE 20 - 26
DU MAURIER LTD.
INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL
VANCOUVER JUNE 24 - JULY 3
JAZZ FEST INTERNATIONAL
VICTORIA JUNE 24 - JULY 3
CALGARY INTERNATIONAL
JAZZ FESTIVAL
JUNE 25 - JULY 3
SASKATCHEWAN JAZZ FESTIVAL
SASKATOON JUNE 24 - JULY 3
JAZZ CITY
INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL
EDMONTON JUNE 24 - JULY 3
AIR CANADA
INFO: (403) 988-4437

CODA MAGAZINE

PUBLISHED CONTINUOUSLY SINCE 1958
ISSUE 255 • Published May 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**
First class mail (U.S. funds) **$27.00**

ELSEWHERE (except U.K.)
Regular mail (Cdn. funds) **$27.00**
Air mail (Cdn. funds) **$36.00**

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

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

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

CONTENTS

COVER PHOTO COLLAGE OF
LISLE ELLIS & PAUL PLIMLEY BY BY LAURENCE M. SVIRCHEV

KALEIDOSCOPES

THE MUSIC OF PAUL PLIMLEY & LISLE ELLIS

PAUL PLIMLEY & LISLE ELLIS have been musical cohorts since 1975. Ellis was a founder of Vancouver's New Orchestra Workshop and Plimley is a long-time member. Both are native to British Columbia; Plimley has made Vancouver his home, and Ellis moved to Montreal in 1982. He currently resides in San Francisco. At the end of their two decades together, they have issued a series of stunning duo and trio albums, culminating in the critically acclaimed ***Kaleidoscopes (Ornette Coleman Songbook).*** Paul Plimley and Lisle Ellis will be touring together this June and July along with Joe McPhee. The following conversation was conducted during a ten day duo workshop after the 1993 Vancouver International Jazz Festival.

LARRY: How did the ***Kaleidoscopes*** come about?

PAUL: It came about as a project because of an idea of Werner Uehlinger of hatART. He had heard our Nine Winds CD, and he knew we had recorded with Andrew Cyrille. He liked what we were doing, and wanted us to do something different. hatART could then have its own unique stamp on what we are about. He suggested that we record some of the work of Ornette Coleman. We have been studying and playing works out of two focal points of other people's music: Ornette Coleman's and Cecil Taylor's. In Cecil you have got some kind of verticality, and with Ornette there is a kind of horizontal projection of the music. So there are twin poles. We responded instinctively, knowing that Ornette's music can be transformed or adapted to the personal needs and visions of Lisle and myself.

We started listening to Ornette's albums, trying to figure out which of these tunes we wanted to play. The transcribing went on for months. We got nine concerts in Europe as a result of an External Affairs grant and chose to evolve the Ornette work by performing these pieces in concert.

LISLE: We've been playing Ornette's music for years; that music is really close to us. To actually get down and work on the details, we took a week off in Europe and found a rehearsal place.

PAUL: A conservatory in France!

LISLE: We just kept working on the music. The music started to transform itself, becoming more our music. Why is that? For me personally, Ornette's music comes across as a kind of folk music, and we're just folks, so... [laughter].

The first time I heard Ornette's music, I didn't have a lot of background in the history and styles of jazz. I was playing in a dixieland band. Somebody said "You have to hear this crazy stuff" and played me Ornette. It didn't sound much different than the music I was learning at that time, which were tunes like *Big Butter and Egg Man.* It didn't sound that much different with its polyphony and voices. The first record I heard by Ornette was *Free Jazz.* It sounded a little wilder than dixieland jazz, but it reminded me a lot of that.

Some people might disagree, but even though we changed some of the tunes, I still felt it was Ornette. Ornette has adaptability, a chameleon quality. It's not always clear what is to be played. If you have three people transcribing an Ornette piece, you could end up with three different versions. We saw some transcriptions that other people had done and didn't think they were correct. I've even seen some charts attributed to Mr. Coleman himself that I didn't think contained precisely what was played on those records. With

Ornette, there are forking paths, and we tried to bring this aspect of his music to the surface.

LARRY: I listened to the CD as diligently as I could, and every time I listened to *Dancing In Your Head*, I couldn't find it!

PAUL: Well, that tune was the most abstracted tune, Larry, but there is a moment in there where I'm playing the melody in various ranges of the piano simultaneously. But that only went on for about two seconds!

LISLE: What happened is that over the course of a month of performing the music in Europe, the music did transform and went in different directions. Some pieces became more abstracted and some pieces became closer to what you may have heard on an Ornette recording. It's in the nature of the work that as you play it more, you get more ideas and it starts to spread out. That was my arrangement for *Dancing In Your Head*.

PAUL: This is in complete contrast to *Chronology*, which we did virtually verbatim. We played the head in unison the way it was written. It was a bass feature for Lisle and so the improvisational excursion was our own. But the head was pretty well classically done. Those are the two poles we worked from: extreme on each side.

LARRY: You have been playing together for a almost two decades. The last ten days, you've been working together as the result of a Canada Council grant. What have you been up to?

LISLE: We've been investigating our process, trying to understand what makes it tick. That can be dangerous. Things just stopped for us for about three days. We put it under the microscope and it just froze - both of us used that word. Finally, it thawed out and now it's moving better than ever. For almost two decades we've been building, but we haven't found the time to investigate what we do together and how that works. It's more than just putting Paul and me together to make something; it's about synergy.

PAUL: I used to be more competitive. I feel that I have really changed in the last four years. I was more insecure and felt the need to prove myself, to be on top of the situation, not just with Lisle but with all the players I was with. Now I'm more secure in what I do, who I am, and what I want from the music. I said to Lisle last night, "This music really works, is so pleasurable and gratifying, when I tune into your space and music." That has nothing to do with competition.

You gotta have the rhythm happening between the players. If you don't have similar modes or phrasing, the music, it ain't gonna work. On a less important level, there are areas of harmonic or pitch construction or identity. I don't play in a linear pulsation four/four format. That's used so often, and in fact Lisle and I were getting into this nice kind of relaxed way of playing in conventional time and then we let that go into a whole other kind of matrix, more of an open dynamic swing, breathing in a way that lets time unfold into a new kind of rhythmic sensibility.

LISLE: It is almost as if we are coming back to something that made us want to play music in the first place. And letting that happen rather than saying, "Oh well, we better make some reference to be-bop or something like the ethnic music or some stylistic statement. One of the ways that people are working now is dealing with information, which is really a reflection of the way we live: information, information! There are some very skilled musicians out there who can replicate a lot of different styles of music. I'm not that kind of player and Paul is not that kind of player. We're not replicants. We cannot reproduce idioms, genres, period pastiches, *ad nauseam*. We're not concerned with that. We don't only interact with each others skills. We attempt to go deeper. For me the music helps me to understand myself more, hopefully to become a better person. Ultimately, it becomes a spiritual practice.

We were having dinner with someone the other night. He was upset with the situation we find ourselves in as a result of *Kaleidoscopes*. Because of the success of that project, both musically and in the eyes of the critical music world, they are coming back suggesting another project to us. This person was upset, suggesting that we're just going to become repertoire players. "What about your own music?" he said. Well, I don't give a shit, it's all my own music, whether it's playing Ornette Coleman, or a Cecil Taylor piece, or Billy Holiday or John Coltrane. That's the music I know about from that African-American musical experience. I'm not sampling that music, I'm not replicating that music, I'm just making it my own. As I understand who I am more, then I can do all that stuff; it may not sound the way they did it. Some people told Paul, "The title says it's an Ornette Coleman piece, but it doesn't really sound like the way Ornette did it. It doesn't even sound like the way he wrote it". But that's what happens when we're asked to do those kinds of projects.

PAUL: So we made it our own, Larry. I think there are two different ways of looking at improvised music. One is to have a kind of archivist approach where you study different periods and study the language utilized by your predecessors. This music can be codified and taught in schools. When you codify music on an intellectual level, and I'm not saying that is entirely bad, there is a danger zone consisting of taking the music externally and learning it by that process of reading through solos and knowing the chords and playing in the style of so-and-so. It becomes all too easily a process of music being formed by mind.

Music is more than mind, in my view. My belief is everybody has something inside of them that is unique and yet also somehow fits into the overall order of things, chaos of things. But the music, that is inside of each musician cannot be reached or formulated solely by the intellectual process. Music goes deeper than that. It has to do with intangible things like: what position does the word *soul* have in describing music and the person making the musical statement? What process does that sense of deeper being have on

the formation of the sound that comes out? Wouldn't it be reasonable to expect that this potential well-spring would change or transform the information that comes in so that what you get is an added link to the entire tradition of music-making? Music is not a xerox process of replication but a sense of assimilating all that has come in, all the great people that you've learned from. Then, because you are a unique being, you can trust that you have something to say other than just being a proficient genre-master. You can be bold enough to stand on your own. That is a tremendous challenge.

I think that the greatest music has always come from inside the deeper layers of each musician. I don't feel there is a great problem with somebody learning from the masters and learning the solos. But if you stop there and become a replicant, you are cheating yourself and not acknowledging that maybe you have something to contribute to this marvellous tradition. Maybe you won't change the world, but maybe there is something inside that hasn't been played before. To get to that place is magical. You don't have to be a Leonardo DaVinci to do that. You have to work hard, trust, and let go, have the desire to get there. Lisle and I are not content to clone other peoples' music. We want to discover something else and that excites us collectively.

LISLE: For me music has always been a physical, body experience. I perceive the sound more than just in the ear drum. This brings to mind many questions, such as how we hear music. Is it just that music resonates and sends signals to the brain? Where is the mind within the body? I'm not sure, don't have the answers.

But getting in touch with your true feelings and playing what you feel is not that easy to do! That is one of the most scary and frightening things. It's much easier to let the mind take over. See, the mind has to be used, because the mind has to tell the muscles and digits to do what they have to do, and it monitors the music as it's unfolding. It starts to see a form unfolding and makes adjustments and corrections. But there are other aspects such as emotions and feelings that have to be kept in balance. Unfortunately, I sense that musicians coming out of these institutions with degrees in bebopology seem to be post-dating their creativity. They seem to be thinking "I have to learn all this before I can get to my own thing. I have to consume and ...

PAUL: Help certify myself to my peers and critics that "I am competent."

LISLE: And that's why they have standards. The musical form called standards is a way of measurement. For the most part, people can't tell if you're playing music or not, unless you're playing a standard. They think, "I need to hear you play a standard so I can evaluate you. I need to know how you deal with rhythm, melody and harmony, and all those so-called essential building blocks of music, before I can tell if what you did before is musically valid." So they have you play *Body and Soul*. If you were really playing body and soul then there would be no problem. *Body and Soul* should be a standard, of course, but metaphorically, metaphysically. That's what music has always been about. It's not about 32 bars of *Body and Soul*, it's not about a cycle of fourths, it's about something else.

THE MUSIC OF LISLE ELLIS & PAUL PLIMLEY

Getting to that, is the beautiful, mysterious and magical part of the music. And it takes a lifetime. So when Ornette Coleman says, "Well just play whatever you feel" it doesn't mean just play anything. It means getting in touch with your being a human being, being human and going deep into understanding who you are. That is quite a path to get on.

Knowing the anecdotal, historical transmission of the music means you can go down that path and realize a lot of people have been down that path before. You are not the first. Even if one has not looked at the standards, you can come in from another direction and find out what happened. You find that there are obstacles, dead ends and pitfalls along the way. You might come up against something and say to yourself, "How do I get around this?" And then you can say to yourself, "I play this instrument, so how did those people before me deal with this problem?" We have a recorded history, and thanks to technology, we can go back and listen. With videos, we can even watch a facsimile of how they looked physically and learn from that. But the real way is by meeting them and possibly playing with them.

PAUL: And by taking the risks and having the courage to go down a blind alley and survive. □

DISCOGRAPHY

BOTH SIDES OF THE SAME MIRROR
Paul Plimley/Lisle Ellis Duo • *9 Winds*
WHEN SILENCE PULLS
Plimley/Ellis/Andrew Cyrille • *Music & Arts*
NOIR • Plimley/Ellis/Greg Bendian • *Victo*
KALEIDOSCOPES (Ornette Coleman Songbook)
Paul Plimley & Lisle Ellis • *hatART*
DIX VERSIONS
including Paul Plimley and Lisle Ellis Duo • *Victo Sampler*
ELEVATIONS • Lisle Ellis • *Victo* (due May 1994)

LAURENCE M. SVIRCHEV is the West Coast Correspondent for **CODA MAGAZINE**

COMPACT DISC REVIEWS BY STEVE VICKERY

PAUL PLIMLEY/LISLE ELLIS • Kaleidoscopes • *hatART CD 6117*

Paul Plimley and Lisle Ellis illustrate the hidden charm in the music of Ornette Coleman on their recent release, ***Kaleidoscopes***. Ornette's compositions have long been neglected by all but a few performers. The composer's harmolodic concept dramatically frees the soloist but depends entirely upon the strength of the improvisor's ability to react in real time to variations of rhythm, pitch and harmony. The duo of Plimley and Ellis fit the bill perfectly. Having worked together on various projects for a decade, they have developed the sort of intuitive listening skills that this music requires. One might almost suspect that the two had been cooking up this recipe for years with the relaxed feeling in this music accumulating over many sessions. ***Kaleidoscopes***, recorded in the spring of 1992, is close to the heart of Ornette's music. Choosing compositions that highlight the emotional resonance of the composer's language *(Peace, Beauty Is A Rare Thing)* the duo make Ornette's unique music their own. The joyful quality of the original versions is captured and made all the more intimate when reduced to two instrumental voices. Compositions now associated with the PrimeTime band are also given a new reading by the duo, a remarkable transition for pieces like *Moon Inhabitants* and *Dancing In Your Head*. The interaction between Ellis and Plimley is immediately engaging, beautifully recorded here to catch the woody sound of Ellis' gut-strung contrebasse. Plimley moves out from the long shadow of Cecil Taylor that imprinted much of the duo's ***Both Sides Of The Same Mirror*** into an area that is no less intense though centred more in the blues than before. The Texas blues, a foundation stone in Ornette's sound language, harmolodic even now, are written invisibly on the body of these compositions.

PAUL PLIMLEY/LISLE ELLIS/GREGG BENDIAN • Noir • *Victo cd022*

The influence of both Cecil Taylor and Ornette Coleman are defining factors in the trio/quartet recording ***Noir***. Plimley and Ellis are joined here by Taylor alumni Gregg Bendian in a series of originals from October 1992. The trio move from a Debussy-like stillness to the kind of turbulent activity common to free improvised play, but the approach taken to the composed materials here erases the discernible line between written and free. A stormy duo of drums and piano gradually subsides into Ellis' bowed bass conjuring on *Noir*, building again to a peak with prepared piano. The angularity of the themes is reinforced with the use of vibraphone (in one section, played with a bow). The formality of the duo interaction gives way in the quartet to a heated atmosphere on tracks like *Jill Cyborg* and *Interzonia* (dedicated to film maker David Cronenberg).

The intensity level of the ensemble play is supercharged with the addition of alto/soprano saxophonist Bruce Freedman. His alto smokes on the repeating riff-like theme *Sleeves Of Alloy*, making a powerful statement in the quartet sections. The simplicity of the riff, a three or four note signature, is a common denominator and importantly a point of entry for the listener in this fiery unit. The theme pulls the listener in, lulling them into a deeper place, a state of hearing where more meanings are apparent. ***Noir*** is an important opening statement for what will follow in future. □

THE SOUND OF NEW ORLEANS

REVIEWS BY TEX WYNDHAM

SOUNDS OF NEW ORLEANS, VOLUMES 1-10
Storyville STCD 6008-6017

(1) PAUL BARBARIN/PERCY HUMPHREY
(2) JOHNNY WIGGS • (3) ALBERT BURBANK WITH KID ORY • (4) SHARKEY BONANO • (5) ALVIN ALCORN • (6) GEORGE GIRARD • (7) GEORGE LEWIS • (8) SHARKEY BONAN • (9) KID ORY
(10) NEW ORLEANS TRUMPETS

GEORGE LEWIS WITH PAPA BUE'S VIKING JAZZBAND • Storyville STCD 6018

GEORGE LEWIS JAM SESSIONS • Storyville STCD 6019

GEORGE LEWIS STOCKHOLM 1959 • Dragon DRCD 221

SHARKEY BONANO 1928-1937 • Timeless CBC 1-001

FRANZ JACKSON WITH JIM BEEBE'S CHICAGO JAZZ • SNAG IT • Delmark DE 223

BRIAN O'CONNELL/WILLIE HUMPHREY
TWO CLARINETS ON THE PORCH • G.H.B. BCD-308

GEORGE LEWIS • Photograph by Grauman Marks

Under the collective title ***Sounds of New Orleans***, the Danish Storyville label has issued 10 albums of performances recorded 1950-56 by Dixielanders from the Crescent City. These are, I believe, appearing simultaneously in both lp and CD formats, making the running time of the CDs (reviewed here) between 41 and 50 minutes each—a bit on the shortish side for the more expensive CD, especially one that has to be imported. As far as I know, none of this music has ever previously been released.

Volumes 3, 7 and ***9*** are airchecks from San Francisco's Club Hangover. With both the **George Lewis** and **Kid Ory** bands being regular working units, and the early 1950s being when these combos were at peak productivity, these are well-organized, solid sessions. The repertoire and presentation are characteristic of what the bands were recording at the time, but with that caveat, Ory and Lewis fans should have no complaints. Further, as the sides were aimed for commercial broadcast, the acoustics are adequate, though not impeccable.

It's a real pleasure to hear Albert Burbank's old-timey, arpeggiated clarinet lines with Ory, while Ory's marvellous rhythm section of Don Ewell, Ed Garland and Minor "Ram" Hall is hard to beat. As for the Lewis, I need to mention only that this is the lineup with Avery "Kid" Howard on trumpet, perhaps the most fondly recalled of all the Lewis combos.

The other seven albums seems to be from the archives of Joe Mares, probably selections which he never got around to issuing on his Southland label before he sold Southland to George H. Buck (who is at this writing marketing what's left of the Southlands in lp format on his G.H.B. label). Except for two tracks, everything was recorded in New Orleans, capturing a cross-section of the Dixieland activity in the city at that time.

Unfortunately (because many of these musicians are under-represented on record today), it's easy to see why Mares postponed dealing with these sides. Almost all of them are from in-person sessions with acceptable but usually sub-optimal recording balance, one or another of the artists being overmiked or undermiked.

Moreover, a significant proportion of the jazz is fairly shallow stuff played for the grandstand, such as ***Volume 4***, in which strong-lipped trumpeter **Sharkey Bonano** leads a formulaic sextet through eleven interchangeable tunes delivered at virtually identical tempos via identical routines, complete with his incessant back-beat handclapping and cheerleading shouts to the musicians. ***Volume 8***, airchecks by the same band, is a different story, hot, tight and tough-minded.

Perhaps the best is ***Volume 10***, partly because it contains so much variety, presenting bands led by ten different trumpeters, including a few (e.g., Lee Collins, Oscar "Papa" Celestin) not heard elsewhere in the series. Moreover, it provides a good sampler of the performers frequently heard on the other albums, such as quirky clarinetist Raymond Burke, staunch tailgate trombonist Jack Delaney, bubbly clarinetist Larry Shields, stompy pianist Stanley Mendelsohn, showy clarinetist Leonard "Boojie" Centobie and Bix-tinged cornetist Johnny Wiggs.

Even when seemingly going though the motions, the New Orleans Dixielanders of that period always knew how to play cohesively and how to swing, so that there is a basic integrity that shines through much of what's here. This quality is particularly evident in ***Volume 6***, featuring two blistering, well-knit combos helmed by doomed trumpeter **George Girard**. Though sometimes aiming for excitement and applause on these mostly up-tempo renditions, Girard and his sidemen nevertheless usually manage to say something worth hearing while keeping the proceedings at an incendiary level.

The music of the white New Orleans Dixielanders—men like Burke, Shields and Bonano—has not received the recognition that, in my view, it deserves from the general jazz critical establishment. Further, their thoroughly worthwhile output on lp from the fifties is unlikely to be reissued vs. classic-period sides.

Personally, if you haven't heard much of these jazzmen, I'd recommend that you pick up what's still around on G.H.B. of the old Southland platters. I suppose the Storyville material deserves to be heard, but quite a bit of it is really for collector/completists.

Seven other Dixieland CDs arrived for review along with the Storyville set. Four of them include artists featured on Sounds of New Orleans, three by **George Lewis** and one by **Sharkey Bonano**.

The Lewis ***Jam Sessions*** cover two bands: About 26 minutes comes from 1956-7 California quartet sessions with sidemen drawn from West Coast devotees of Lewis' uptown style, well-recorded and with Lewis in good form and his contributions easy to isolate. The remaining 40 minutes are from a May 22, 1950 Crescent City recording by Lewis' regular band, but with Elmer Talbert on cornet (and two vocals). The septet is hot and playing well, but the acoustics are so tinny and unpleasant that these cuts are strictly for uncritical Lewisphiles.

The Dragon CD contains 74 minutes of extended performances by Lewis' sextet at a February 10, 1959 concert during a tour which brought the Swedes their first glimpse of Lewis in person. While not ideal, the balance is satisfactory and the band generally responds well to the obvious enthusiasm of the crowd (though pianist Joseph Robichaux's consistent reverting on solos to the same collection of showboating high-treble licks gets wearing after a while). Perhaps the most interesting aspect of this date is hearing the team stretch out and put its distinctive stamp on some of the standard tunes that Lewis didn't record all that much, such as *Royal Garden Blues* and *Milenberg Joys*.

The best of the three, for my money, is the well-recorded March 1959 studio session with trombonist **Papa Bue**'s righteous combo. The balance rightly favours Lewis, the band has the uptown idiom right in the cross hairs, and—while all of the 70 minutes is either ensemble playing or Lewis soloing—trumpeter Finn Otto Hansen's incisive lead inspires the sextet to dig in and build intensity.

Timeless' 69-minute collection presents every side listed in Rust that includes Sharkey Bonano from April 25, 1928 through January 29, 1937, inclusive, reproduced with quite satisfactory acoustics. Those of you who specialize in such recordings will know how many of these tracks you still need. The music itself is amiable, foot tapping, generic Dixieland, often on trivial ditties but we do get to hear some nice choruses from Joe Marsala and Irving Fazola along the way. The four April 22, 1937 sides under **Santo Pecora**'s leadership round out the album, comprising the hottest, most worthwhile items here.

I recently had occasion to review ***Snag It***, the 74-minute August 1990 **Franz Jackson** date for another publication. Digging out my review notes, I see at the bottom these words: "Broad-based look at a veteran pro, w. hokum, swing, jump, sentiment, lounge tenor sax & Dixieland. Very listenable, but it's the muscular, juicy Dixieland rides on about half the cuts that make this a keeper.

Clarinetist **Willie Humphrey** has long been one of the bright lights of Preservation Hall. Those of us who've admired his playing will greet this 70-minute 1991 studio session with mixed feelings because it would seem, from the nine tracks (36 minutes) on which he appears, that Humphrey, in his 90s, has suffered a marked decline both in creativity and instrumental command.

Humphrey's pupil, 31-year-old clarinetist **Brian O'Connell**, whose album this really is, does little to take up the slack, producing competent but bland improvisations that are as much pop/dance as jazz. With virtually no competition, Les Muscutt, a remarkably deft and creative banjo/guitarist, easily steals the show but does not save ***Two Clarinets On The Porch***. The remainder of this soft-edged chamber-jazz combo consists of bassist Frank Fields and, on five tracks, drummer Ernie Elly, both of whom provide idiomatic functional support. □

TEX WYNDHAM is a pianist and cornetist, who has played & recorded with a large variety of Dixieland & Swing Musicians. Recordings & video cassettes of his music are available from Tex Wyndham, PO Box 831, 632 Hillendale Road, Mendenhall, PA 19357, U.S.A.

ALBERT BURBANK • Photograph by Bill Smith

T. S. MONK ON T. S. MONK

A CONVERSATION WITH GARY WITTNER AND IRA BRAUS

PORTRAIT OF **T. S. MONK**
BY ADRIAN BUCKMASTER

GARY WITTNER: Considering the immense artistic influence your father has had on two, now bordering on three generations of jazz musicians (Sonny Rollins called him his guru), can you talk about the influence his presence had on the musicians who knew him?

T. S. MONK: Growing up so close to the source, I really didn't become acutely aware of the influence my father had on musicians as individuals, until one or two days past his death. But because he had been somewhat inaccessible in his final seven or eight years, there was a tremendous number of musicians who wanted to vent their experience with Thelonious to someone. My mother was not really up to talking with very many people. My sister was taking care of my mother and doing a lot of funeral arranging, which left me almost as a kind of public relations person. And what happened, was that the day after he died there was suddenly a continuous stream of phone calls. And the phone calls were not your typical, "Oh I'm sorry that your dad passed away. If there's anything I can do..." What occurred was that people would come to the door—major jazz figures—they would give their perfunctory condolence and then sit down and say, "Can I talk to you for a second?" And then they would begin to talk about their personal experience with Thelonious. I had known these guys when I was a kid, they were always around the house. But I hadn't known the personal hands-on relationships he had established with so many musicians.

What startled me was how many musicians called and came by who could convey personal experience with Thelonious where they felt that he had moved their spirit forward or upward. This made me realize that Thelonious had transcended just his musicality with these people; his persona somewhat exemplified what the music stood for. And so, there was a package that came along to people with Thelonious—not that anybody else wasn't capable of that, but I haven't heard of anyone who did it with such consistency.

You tend to think about the influence Thelonious had on the Dizzies, the Mileses, the Maxes, and the Coltranes, but you don't hear the stories about the next level of cats—you know, cats who have been playing hard all their life, who'll never be a John Coltrane or Dizzy Gillespie. But Thelonious allowed them to sit in and play. His humility, his giving nature, his lack of ego when it came to the music, just inspired the heck out of guys, I mean all the way up and down the ladder. When this became clear to me, I realized, "Oh my God, this guy is the real thing." Because so much about anyone who has notoriety becomes legend, which becomes fact, which becomes fiction. Paul Bunyan probably was a nice guy named Bob who cut down a little tree, and two hundred years later he's a giant eighteen feet tall and he cut down a sequoia that was eighteen miles tall! So things can really get blown out of proportion and when you really dig through the legend, you generally come up with the truth, with facts not the size of the myth.

With Thelonious it is startling that a lot of the legend is very, very real. When he was at Minton's, he was effectively the house band at the most important time in the history of modern jazz. Two things put him in that position. Number one, he had some music that supplied the real test track for all the new melodic and rhythmic ideas that had come up in the late 40s. But he also had a personality that was in tune with what the music was about, so that's why guys knew they could come up to Minton's and sit in with Monk. Even though Monk was on top of the mountain, he was always reaching down to pull

somebody else up. And it didn't matter who you were. You could knock on the door at 63rd St.—this happened a hundred thousand times when I was a kid—and say, "Monk, man, show me this bridge or this turn-around in this particular composition." And Thelonious would sit down and show it to him. He was never afraid that guys were going to steal this or steal that. He took comfort in the awareness that his genius was great enough that it really didn't matter whether you took something from him, because he was going to come up with something new. He had a supreme confidence in his ability to continually create. His was a really very hands-on kind of influence.

The wonderful thing, for me, is to watch the legend grow like a balloon to the point where the legend is reserved exclusively for Thelonious. Within that very, very small club that we consider the founding fathers—the Dizzies, the Mileses, the Maxes, of what we call modern American classical music, those cats had a reverence for Thelonious back when they were young. Back when those guys were in their late 20s and early 30s, they already knew, Charlie Parker already knew, that Monk had something that was very, very, very special and you couldn't get it anywhere else. Miles knew this, Coltrane knew this. This is why everybody wanted to play with Monk. It's extraordinary to see the world realizing this and to see people like you, Ira, who are involved in classical music, who can analyze in establishment fashion, what Thelonious is doing and connect it with 19th and 20th century European classical music.

I think this is a great leap forward, because these guys took those tools—the same twelve notes that Bach and Brahms used—its about putting it together differently. And I clearly know that the Bachs and the Beethovens would marvel at the music that came out of the likes of Duke Ellington, Thelonious Monk and Charlie Parker. That this has not been recognized on a popular level the way it should be is unfortunate, but I've seen in the last decade a sudden growth, perhaps a maturity of the listening audience. Everybody's ears are waking up and realizing that this guy wrote the songs that made the whole world play.

IRA BRAUS: Quincy Jones remarked that Monk was more or less immune to the classical tradition. Did he ever mention any classical composers to you or play recordings of their music at home?

T. S. MONK: Well, all I can tell you is that I remember very clearly that there were two stacks of books that were in the house for years and years. I was about 4' ll" or 4' 7", somewhere in there, and both stacks were as tall as I was. And I recall in the beginning looking at the names on the books, because I thought they were magazines, but they had names like Lizst, Brahms, Bach, Chopin and Mozart. Monk didn't have those stacks there to decorate the living room! So he clearly studied all those cats. He wanted to know. If you want to push the envelope you've got to know what the envelope entails. He had to study those guys, because they represented technical excellence on the instrument and all jazz musicians are looking for technical excellence on their instruments. They are classical in their approach to the instrument. Thelonious was no different. He grew up listening to James P. Johnson, Willie the Lion Smith, Art Tatum, and Jelly Roll Morton. And those guys—you cannot question their classical ability on their instrument. They had it covered, because they came up at a time when you couldn't play the instrument unless you took classical lessons. There were no places to go for jazz lessons and really learn it. So Thelonious was really steeped in classical music. I remember one time when he was under the care of a doctor—he was at a New York clinic for about a month and hadn't touched the piano. The entire ward was just dying for Thelonious to the play the piano. Not only because they loved his playing but, from a therapeutic standpoint, they felt that would certainly have to be a good sign. And so he told them, "OK, man, I'll play something." Naturally the hospital staff went crazy. They prepared for the big event, polished up the piano, told everybody in the ward about it, and so on. On the day of the performance, all the doctors and patients were there. Thelonious came in and sat down—the room was geared for a "Well You Needn't," "Around Midnight," or "Ruby My Dear,"—and what does Thelonious decide to play? "Prelude in C Minor." Everyone was in shock. But he played from beginning to end, got up from the piano and went back to his room. It sounded like a classical pianist playing Bach. It did not sound like Thelonious Monk. And he could do that. He was very, very capable of doing that. This is why he was particularly hurt by two things. Number one, he didn't have "proper" technique. That hurt him tremendously, because this was the rap on him from the critics for years and years. And I don't know what proper technique is because I know a lot of people with proper technique cannot play the things that Thelonious played.

Monk was also very upset with the rap that he was not a traditional piano player. Of course, as we analyze today both his playing and composing, he was a pillar of tradition and steeped in the tradition of not only the greatest American popular composers, but also the greatest European classical ones. So the two things really upset him because he did do his homework. To tell you the truth, it was almost the old jigaboo myth, "Oh, he just does that naturally. He doesn't have to think and he doesn't have to study and he doesn't have to practice to do it. It's just something that came out of the jungle with him." It was absolutely ridiculous, because he did practice all day and night and he did study all day and night. He loved the great classical writers and he loved playing that music. Anyone would—you would want to do that. If you want to be the best you can be, you want to be able to do everything.

That's why I, as a drummer, learned to play funk and country, and all that stuff, so that I could say, "Yeah, I play jazz, but I can do this and that." The reason I can do this well is that I learned to do that and learned to do that, and learned to do that, and so on. And Thelonious was similar to every other musician in that respect.

GARY WITTNER: In the research that I've done, I kept running across things saying how, in his high school years, he excelled in mathematics and physics. Taking that further, some of the titles of his tunes are not just simple names for instance, "Epistrophe." Now I had to look that word up myself and it fits the tune. It's a repeated fragment, and if you go back to Greek philosophy, Aristotle or whoever, it represents a whole system of thought that the tune is.

IRA BRAUS: Gary is referring to classical rhetoric. "Epistrophe" means a line that recurs at the ends of successive stanzas in a poem, and it's remarkable that Monk used "Epistrophe" to end sets.

T. S. MONK ON THELONIOUS SPHERE MONK

T. S. MONK: A lot of those titles refer to musical characteristics that are occurring. "Four in One," "Played Twice," "Monk's Point," "Criss-Cross," all those things—when you examine the music you find out, oh yes, there's a criss-cross.

Another interesting thing about Thelonious, was not only the intelligence of some of his titles, but that he has more tunes named after people and family than anyone I know of.

There's a tune called "Eronel." This tune has Thelonious' name on it, but it was actually written by Thelonious, Idries Suleiman, and Sahib Shihab. But "Eronel" is actually the name Lenore backwards. What precipitated this was that they were doing a gig in a club one time, and the club owner's old lady's name was Lenore. The club owner was a gangster—a serious, gun-toting, shoot-you-between-the-eyes gangster. Idries, who was telling me the story, said that he and Shihab had written a tune and it was almost right, but was kind of commonplace. The fact of the matter is that Thelonious came in, stepped over to the piano and changed one note in the melody, one note. Idries said, "Monk, Junior, I tell you right here and now, the one note he changed made the tune. Turned it to something real, real special." And that's clearly why Thelonious is part writer of this tune.

But, Thelonious also came over to the piano and said, "Look, man, now we got to go play this gig, you dig. And we know the club owner's got a gun, we know his old lady's fine, and we know he digs her. And we know he's got an idea you messin' with her. So I'm not playin' no tune called "Lenore." Now we're going to go in a guy's joint and start playing a tune about his old lady and get us all killed? No, no, we're going to take that name Lenore and turn it around, we'll call it "eronel." Nobody will know what we're talking about. You can tell her the tune is for her. The club owner won't know and everyone will be happy.

So it was just remarkable what he was able to do with the song titles. He wrote "In Walked Bud," "Little Rootie Tootie," for me, and "Boo-Boo's Birthday." In fact the two people I know he really loved were my late sister, Boo-Boo, because he wrote two tunes for her, "Boo-Boo's Birthday and "Green Chimneys." People don't know that Green Chimneys is actually the boarding school that Boo-Boo went to in Brewster, New York. But the tunes he wrote for himself! We've got "Blue Monk," "Monk's Dream," "Monk's Point," "Thelonious," "Monk's Mood." He liked his name alot.

His father's name was Thelonious. Thelonious' grandparents lived in Rocky Mountain, North Carolina, and their names were Hinton and Sarah. The had seven kids, of which one was my great-grandfather, Thelonious' dad, his name was Thelonious. It sounds Greek, it sounds Latin—they made it up. Sphere is Thelonious' grandfather on his mother's side. Her maiden name was Barbara Bats. Her father's name was Sphere Bats. So that's where the Sphere (came from)—Thelonious was the real thing from start to finish and Thelonious Sphere Monk is his God-given name.

Thelonious originally started playing in the church. I think he was playing in church by the time he was eight or nine. He actually started lessons when he was three years old. That was a funny story. His sister, my aunt Marion, was taking piano lessons, at three dollars a week, which was a tremendous amount of money in 1920. The piano teacher came to her mother after three weeks of lessons and said, "Mrs. Monk, I don't want to upset you, but I know that you're paying a lot for these lessons, and if you want to invest the money wisely, why don't you give lessons to the little guy running around over there?" Remember Thelonious was three at the time. So my grandmother was startled and asked why. The teacher said, "I can teach Marion to play the piano, but the little fellow keeps telling me that he's got something for the piano." And my grandmother was wise and said, "OK, switch it." But she wasn't really a musical person. Now, Thelonious' father played the ukulele and that's really from where Thelonious' first musical influence came. But his dad left the picture when Thelonious was about four years old.

T. S. MONK: Gary, what are the problems that you run into in transcribing Monk's music for the guitar, since most of his music on the piano and most of his melodies were written for the horns?

GARY WITTNER: The process I use would be the best place to start. I pick a tune and go through my record collection and put on tape as many versions as I have—five or six usually. Then I go measure by measure or phrase by phrase through all of them and try to find things that make the most sense on the guitar.

Obviously, some of the textures are just too dense. There are so many seconds and clusters in Monk's music that just can't be done on the guitar. So I try to extract what my ear says are the defining things and try to get a lot of the interior moving lines besides the melody. Some songs can be done more easily than others. Some I haven't tackled because they seem impossible. The ballads, the medium tempo things, the things that have moving bass lines against a melody intrigue me, because I've done a lot of gigs on solo piano, so I have a certain amount of solo chops where I can move that stuff around. Those tunes I've approached first, but my goal is to get to every one of them eventually.

PHOTOGRAPH OF **THELONIOUS MONK** BY BILL SMITH

T. S. MONK: Now that I'm listening to you talk about it, I would think it somewhat helpful to have the commonality of the string as your basic instrument in both the piano and the guitar, because I know that strings set up all kinds of overtones that you can't get from the horns and that's a great part of Thelonious' harmony.

GARY WITTNER: One of the things that he does that I love, is that he'll hit a chord and then come off all the chord except for one note. That translates beautifully on the guitar. You can hit two notes and lift off of one and keep the other one down, something that not too many guitar players do, that I've tried to get into my vocabulary.

T. S. MONK: Ira, you have been involved in analyzing Thelonious' music from the standpoint of its relationship to European classical music. I'd like to hear you for a minute just talk about what that adventure has been like for you? I know yesterday, after I gave a master class and some demonstration work, you then gave a dissertation on Thelonious which absolutely stunned me from an academic standpoint, because there are not many people who have dared to dig inside of his music to find the things you have found. How did you get involved in this and where has this led you?

IRA BRAUS: Well, this is the first analytical project that I've done on Monk, so I was really scared about it. There's hardly any literature on Monk from an academic viewpoint—a few articles here and there, but they don't really get into his harmonic language, probably because the language is so unique. From this viewpoint, it's as unique as Charles Ives'.

My work in musicology involves mainly turn-of-the-century music: Brahms, Wagner, Reger, Berg, Debussy. I got interested in Monk mostly because his music had a density of harmony, counterpoint and motive, which in some ways reminds me of the late German Romantics. Like Monk, these composers used a rich harmonic vocabulary. They were always substituting and reinterpreting the basic chord functions that had been used in European music for centuries. Most jazz musicians do this naturally, but Monk went a step beyond this.

His complex chords set up long-range tensions that span the entire tune and mark off the beginnings of the big sections. Take "Ruby My Dear," the piece I discussed yesterday at my talk. When I heard "Ruby" for the first time I thought, "There's something really beautiful about this piece but also something really disturbing. It's crazy. Why does it work?" And I looked at it and found that there were two harmonic procedures going on at once. The first was the use of whole-tone dominant chords, which Monk reinterprets to take you to two different places: first a repetition of the opening phrase, then to the bridge, where we hear the very first statement of the tonic A! The second is what some theorists call "the double-tonic complex." Monk leaves a "secondary" dominant chord (on Ab) unresolved until the tag of the last chorus, so that we're not sure whether the key of the tune is A or Db, if it's in any key at all. Both procedures were used by major European composers at the turn of the century. Arnold Schoenberg even wrote about the second—competing tonic keys—in his Theory of Harmony.

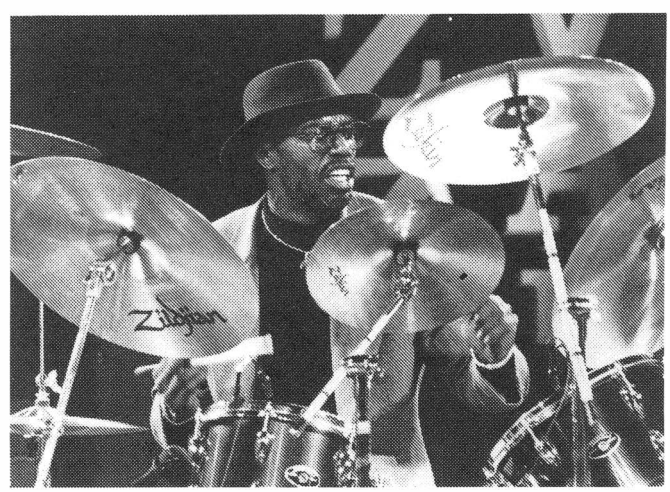
So I've been disturbed too that most of the journals say that Monk's inspiration "came from within" and that he had absolutely no conscious link with European music. I thought, "This person has mastered the deepest secrets of European music, so he must have known it very well."

And this brings my next question. Did he ever talk to you about the years he spent at Juilliard?

T. S. MONK: No, he really didn't. I think it was a sore spot for him. They didn't know what he was doing and he was clearly marching to his own drummer by the time he got there. One of the great ironies of Juilliard today is that it claims Thelonious, Wynton, Sarah Vaughan, all these people. None of these people graduated from Juilliard. They all ran for the hills after a year or two of being there. But it is a statement of recognition on the part of the established musical entities in this country that they want an association with these people. In America, colleges rarely claim people who did not graduate. The colleges claim people who did not graduate by bringing them back and giving them an honorary degree. In the case of Thelonious and Wynton, all they have to do is walk into the building and then they become "our people."

But, like I said, Thelonious did his homework. When I talk to people like Tommy Flanagan or Clark Terry—some of the really astute jazz musicians—they say that Thelonious could explain everything that he was doing from a theoretical standpoint. He never played a chord he didn't know. Not to the point that he was theoretically predisposed to what he was going to play; but once it was done, he could analyze it and know exactly what he had played.

I think it's lovely what you guys are doing, because a lot of people recognized these characteristics in Thelonious' music—a lot of classical people like Leonard Bernstein, for example—but they and even the jazz media were not able to articulate them at the time. You talk about his music in lofty terms, but there is a cadre in the music world that gets intimidated when you bring in the likes of Thelonious—"these vagabonds"—with our masters, Brahms and Beethoven and these guys. I have always maintained that the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz, which is an educational project I chair, got off the ground as the result of some wonderful work by the Beethoven Society of America.



PHOTOGRAPH OF **T. S. MONK** BY MARIANNE DE TREY

PHOTOGRAPH OF
T. S. MONK
BY BARRY THOMSON

Until last year, when we lost Maria Fischer, the director of the Beethoven Society, the last seven years of the Society were spent on promoting the music of Thelonious Monk. People would say to me, "Man, why are you hookin' up Monk with Beethoven?" I said to them, "You don't understand. Thelonious and Beethoven right now are somewhere else and they know each other, because bad cats always seek out bad cats. If Beethoven was alive when Thelonious was here, he'd have been at the club checking him out. And if Thelonious were alive when Beethoven was doing his symphonies, he would have been out there checking out that symphony."

The rifts, the divisions within music are creations of managers, industry, agents, all kinds of people with ulterior motives. But all this music, all these guys, the great ones are all on the same page, not only in terms of the magnitude of their greatness, but in terms of the basis behind their greatness. And they would all understand what each other was doing. I know that the great harmonic technicians of centuries past would marvel at what Thelonious played. And he certainly marvelled at many things he heard, because, as you can see, he incorporated them into his music.

GARY WITTNER: Did he listen to his own recordings much and did he say which ones he liked the most or thought were the most important?

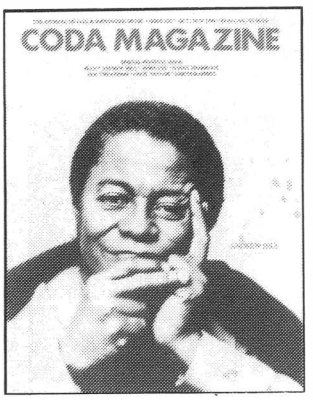
T. S. MONK: Well, yes. He was like anybody else. When you get a chance to make a record, you listen to it a hundred thousand times for the first two weeks and then you may not listen to it ever again. But he was acutely aware of his recordings. Most recently, my mother told me that he used to practice the classic riffs that you hear on his recordings, not for calisthenic reasons, but because he said that he knew that he had the ability to play them differently every single time—this was an aspect of his genius that he was acutely aware of. He also knew that he had a market place and listeners to deal with. And he knew that although his listeners were ready for anything from him, there were still characteristic things that they expected to hear. The only way that he could insure that he would play them was to practice them, so they were like top-of-the-mind. So when he went to the club he'd say, "Oh yeah, I have to play that because I practiced it all today." He was truly aware that he could play a tune differently each time.

I had seen him do this. There was one occasion I'll never forget. He was playing down at the Village Vanguard. The club was packed, there was a line outside, everybody was waiting in anticipation of Thelonious. Thelonious came about ten minutes late, sat down at the piano. Now, the day had begun at about 10:00 in the morning, with Thelonious getting up, going to the piano in the living room and extrapolating on "The Devil and the Deep Blue Sea" for about two hours. Then he got up, went outside for a walk, came back. And he did this all day, nothing but "The Devil and the Deep Blue Sea." Then he comes into the club that evening, sits down at the piano and starts playing "The Devil and the Deep Blue Sea." Rouse and the other cats in the band realize that something extraordinary is about to occur.

And what occurs is that Thelonious plays "Devil and the Deep Blue Sea" for about forty minutes straight. Now I think that "The Devil and the Deep Blue Sea" is about a 24-measure thing, a very brief statement. He played this for forty minutes never playing the same thing twice. You could hear a pin drop in the room. And that night I realized that this is what genius is about in this music, because he took that melody and he bent it. And every time he bent it one way, you said, "Well you can't bend it any other way, because you made it round, you made it square, you twisted it, you made it into a screw, you scrunched it down, you stretched it out." And every time he would start at the top of the tune and just do it a different way.

Barry Harris told me another interesting thing about Thelonious also. We were discussing the level that Thelonious and Bud Powell and some other guys played on, and he said that Thelonious never practiced the calisthenics. Thelonious practiced playing. Thelonious would be in the house playing eight or nine hours, so by the time he went to the club, he wasn't just practicing because he had to play—he was just continuing playing. □

The preceeding conversations have been edited from a longer interview that was conducted by **IRA BRAUS**, formerly Professor of Music at Bates College, and **GARY WITTNER**, guitarist and Lecturer in Music at University of Maine-Augusta. The interview took place on March 18, 1993 at WRBC-Lewiston, Maine.



BACK ISSUES

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

CANADA • 10 issues for $11.00 • Each additional copy $1.10 • (includes GST. Ontario residents add 8% PST)
USA / ELSEWHERE • 10 issues for US $15.00 or CDN equivalent. • Each additional copy $1.50
LESS THAN 10 ISSUES • **CANADA** • $2.50 each • **USA / ELSEWHERE** • US $2.50 or CDN equivalent.

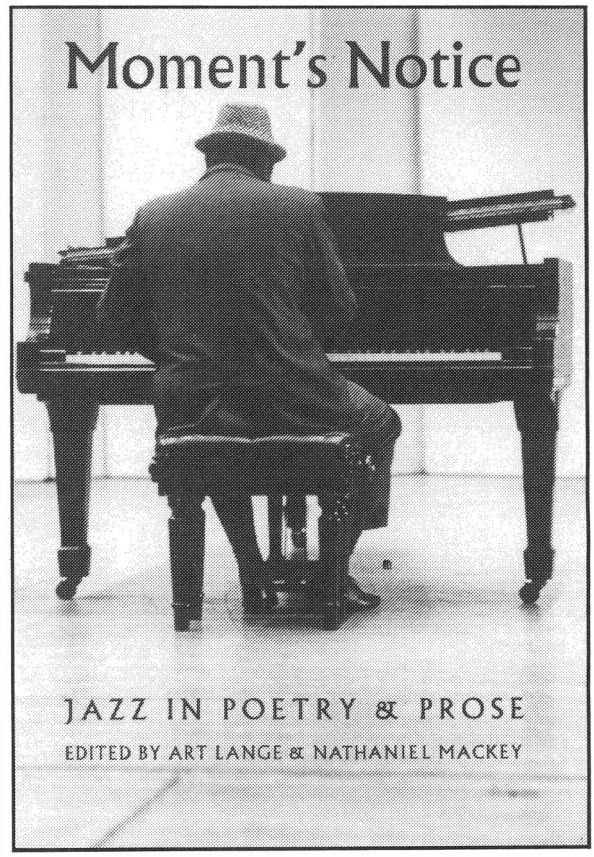
236	(Mar. 1991)	Count Basie, Benny Powell, Scott Hamilton, Pepper Adams
235	(Jan. 1991)	Shorty Rogers, George Russell, Impulse Records, West Coasting
234	(Nov. 1990)	Andrew Hill, Sonny Sharrock, Cecil Taylor, Doc Cheatham
233	(Sept. 1990)	Oliver Lake, Lisle Ellis, Mel Torme
232	(July 1990)	Mulgrew Miller, Buck Clayton, Hugh Fraser, Errol Parker
231	(May 1990)	Sun Ra, Roland Hanna, Freddie Redd, Paul Plimley
230	(Feb. 1990)	Jackie McLean, Jayne Cortez, Willem Breuker, Bob Wilbur
229	(Dec. 1989)	Dave Holland, Maarten Altena, Thelonious Monk, John Casavetes
228	(Oct. 1989)	Pharoah Sanders, Roscoe Mitchell, Paul Smoker
227	(Aug. 1989)	Wardell Gray, Harvie Swartz, Butch Morris, Cassandra Wilson
226	(June 1989)	Oscar Peterson, Ronnie Mathews, Jane Bunnett
225	(April 1989)	Frank Foster, Susan Chen, Frank Morgan, Cedar Walton
224	(Feb. 1989)	Paul Desmond /Jim Hall, Buddy Collette, Sam Rivers
223	(Dec. 1988)	Charlie Parker, Chet Baker, Mal Waldron, Steve Tibbetts
222	(Oct. 1988)	Anthony Braxton, Irene Schweizer, Dave Brubeck
221	(Aug. 1988)	Sonny Stitt, Al Cohn, John Tchicai, John Zorn
220	(June 1988)	Cecil Taylor, Misha Mengelberg, John Hicks, Herbie Nichols
219	(April 1988)	30th Anniversary Issue Freddie Green, Bill Frisell, Rene Lussier
218	(Feb. 1988)	Ed Blackwell, Jack DeJohnette, Claude Ranger
217	(Dec. 1987)	Charlie Parker, Lee Konitz, Nick Brignola, Paul Cram
216	(Oct. 1987)	Bea Benjamin, Marilyn Crispell, Sheila Jordan, Steve Lacy
215	(Aug. 1987)	Ornette Coleman, Paul Rutherford, Grachan Moncur
213	(April 1987)	Duke Ellington, Art Hodes, Andrew Hill, Reg Schwager
212	(Feb. 1987)	Charlie Haden, Carla Bley, Ray Anderson, Peter Leitch
210	(Oct. 1986)	Lee Konitz, Teddy Edwards, Bobby Watson, Dexter Gordon
209	(Aug. 1986)	Don Cherry, Pee Wee Russell, Ornette Coleman/Metheny
208	(June 1986)	Woody Herman, Stanley Jordan, Jim Hall
207	(April 1986)	Kenny Wheeler, Bill Dixon, Wynton Marsalis
206	(Feb. 1986)	Charles Mingus, Jimmy Blanton, David Holland
205	(Dec. 1985)	Big Bands, Gil Evans, Artie Shaw, Thad Jones, Basie, Duke
204	(Oct. 1985)	Coleman Hawkins, Sahib Shihab, Sonny Rollins
203	(Aug. 1985)	The Jazz Singer, BB King, Eddie Jefferson, Jimmy Rushing
202	(June 1985)	Art Pepper, Johnny Hodges, Carlos Ward, Braxton
199	(Dec. 1984)	Lester Young, Andrew Cyrille, Vienna Art Orchestra
195	(April 1984)	Buddy Tate, Jay McShann, Nelson Symonds, Mel Lewis
192	(Oct. 1983)	Leo Smith, Baikida Carroll, Mal Waldron, Piano Variations
190	(June 1983)	Don Thompson, Tristan Honsinger, Mario Pavone, Al Haig
189	(April 1983)	Lol Coxhill, George Shearing, John Surman, Jim Galloway
188	(Feb. 1983)	Roy Porter, Buell Neidlinger, 1982 Writers Choice
187	(Dec. 1982)	Charlie Rouse, Frank Rosolino, Fraser MacPherson
186	(Oct. 1982)	Cannonball Adderley, Pheeroan Ak Laff, Michael Zwerin
185	(Aug. 1982)	Sam Rivers, Bobby Naughton, Trevor Watts, Roscoe Mitchell
184	(June 1982)	Sonny Greenwich, Ray Crawford, Ganelin Trio, Ed Bickert
183	(April 1982)	Roswell Rudd, Milford Graves, Art Davis, Sonny Rollins
179	(June 1981)	Dannie Richmond, Jimmy Knepper, Blues News
174	(Aug. 1980)	Leroy Jenkins, Jemeel Moondoc, Eddie Jefferson
169	(Oct. 1979)	Amina Claudine Myers, Kenny Burrell, Pisa/Bracknell Fests
168	(Aug. 1979)	Albert Mangelsdorff, Barry Altschul, Moers Festival
167	(June 1979)	Evan Parker, Incus Records, Red Callender, Rova Sax Quartet
163	(Oct. 1979)	Henry Red Allen, Frank Lowe, Albert Nicholas
159	(Feb. 1978)	Randy Weston, Milt Hinton, Blues News
158	(Dec. 1977)	Joseph Jarman, Eddie Durham, Bobby Hackett
155	(June 1977)	George Lewis, Lloyd Glenn
154	(April 1977)	Milt Buckner, Christmann, Schonenberg
151	(Oct. 1976)	Don Pullen, Benny Waters
150	(Sept. 1976)	Milford Graves, Will Bradley
134	(Dec. 1974)	Julian Priester, Muggsy Spanier Big Band, Steve McCall
133	(Nov. 1974)	Charles Delaunay, pt. 1, Rex Stewart, Howard King
132	(Oct. 1974)	Karl Berger, Jazz Crossword, Johnny Shines

MOUTHPIECES

A REVIEW OF THREE BOOKS OF WRITING ON JAZZ

BY CAROLE CHAMBERS

THE WEST EUROPEAN TRADITION OF ORAL POETRY IS INHERITED from the Norse and Anglo Saxon sagas. These relied upon internal rhyme, rhythmic and choral repetition, to keep the imaginations of the audience on track. The bard's life was not an easy one. They were expected to extemporize, eulogize the exploits of warriors, women and chieftains in a time of complex kinship bonds and internecine war, and to keep the history of the tribe or cynn alive. (cynn-kin-king) This they did on their feet, perhaps accompanying themselves on a small harp. There was a pressing expectation that they not break down or dry up during performance, and from the translated fragments that have survived, we can see the metric structure they relied on to keep them going, live.



PERFORMANCE POETRY put on the page sometimes doesn't survive the transition well. It loses more than song lyric lifted from its music, because the essence of the work is the electricity of live performance, with all its risk and glory. Our heritage is oral/aural and not long ago literacy wasn't general in the west. Without reading and without soundprints, people knew how to listen and how to remember.

Today some performance poetry relies so heavily on electronic enhancement, that the poet and machine seem inseparable. The bard alone with all eyes on him, contrasts with the modern performer, before an audience sitting in darkness, surrounded by banks of synthesizers that modulate every utterance. This work isn't meant to be heard outside of the theatre, or a good reproduction from a sound studio, but the two poets, ancient and modern, are co-creators in the same genre, and the parallels between them and the jazz musician are clear.

The Opus of Everything In Nothing Flat by Mikhail Horowitz (Outloud Books, New York, 1993) transcends most of the dangers of trying to cage the live: flatness and repetition. The poetry is so joyous, reckless, headlong; the sound of it so close to the music it is celebrating, that the reader is transported, not just to the audience, but right onstage with the sweat and hot lights of unique, once only, listen with all you've got or it will be gone, live performance.

Even if you don't know jazz, I think you'd find yourself under its influence, down in a club with your ears open, just to figure out what this guy is so high about.

Horowitz is a spendthrift of words, and read straight through, the book flags a bit. His devices are sometimes apparent through the cleverness, but overall the excitement holds. So different from criticism or historical writing about art, this is art written of art, a clean lift off, jumping mediums, one of the ties that bind a creative community. Such generation is the blood line of civilization. Most valuable in ***Nothing Flat*** and work like it is in the bridge created, the transformation, the explanation of why anyone would do such a mad, hard thing as make jazz or write poetry.

Jamie Reed's book, ***Prez—Homage to Lester Young*** (Oolichan Books, Lantzville, B.C., 1993) is a different genre, poetry written for the page rather than the stage, and is a more distant success. His intention, stated in the title that this long poem is a tribute, explains perhaps why the writing is more about the music than of it.

It is difficult to create valedictory work that is passionate and inspired, the difference between a memorial and a spontaneous love poem. ***Prez*** lacks the hot distillation and possession of the music he is writing about. It is honourable work, certainly deserving inclusion in an anthology of jazz writing, but it is reverential, referential, secondary.

Moment's Notice—Jazz in Poetry & Prose (Coffee House Press, Minneapolis, 1993) is the fourth anthology of jazz writing published in the United States in as many years, but is the first combining poetry, short stories and novel excerpts.

The best of the poetry is haunting and effortless, about the world of music, the life background of the streets and clubs, bonds of spirit, the predators, the undone and the consumed, poverty, drugs, booze, the open window of the sound and alot of death.

The music is evoked, as in Larry Neal's "Harlem Gallery" ...

They speak of wandering ghosts
and Harlem saints; the words lay slick
on greasy floors: rain-wet butt in the junkie's
mouth, damp notebook in the number runner's
hand.
.....
ghosts boogaloo against this haze
Malcolm eyes in the yellow glow;
blood on black hands,
compacted rooms of gloom;
Garvey's flesh in the rat's teeth
Lady Day at 100 Centre Street
Charlie Parker dead in the penthouse ...

It ends simply with a roll call of the dead, and -

all
falling faces in the Harlem rain
asphalt memory of blood and pain.

THELONIOUS MONK • Photograph by Jim Marshall

There is humour as well, in some of the poetry, pulled from the sadness, as in Robert Kelly's "Newark" -

John Coltrane died this morning, Le Roi's in jail.
Whatever you say of the daytime
it gives you a taste
for the obvious.

The essential relationship between the creator and the listener is shown in "Dance Of The Infidels", as Al Young gives Bud Powell some of what he got:

The world in case
you're losing touch again, keeps wanting the same
old thing.
You gave me some of it; the beauty I sought
before I was aware how much I needed it.

Naturally much of this work is drawn from personal memories, of the first recording or live performance heard, and much is praise, thanksgiving to the men and women who have made jazz the boundaryless phenomenon it is, whose excellence has given relief to the mind and heart and release to the spirit.

One of the best pieces of prose in this collection is James Baldwin's "Sonny's Blues". The story is of two brothers, the older has put all his energy into just barely getting out of the cycle of poverty and despair of the ghetto by becoming a teacher, and has never understood Sonny's determination to play jazz and stay in the slipsliding, dangerous world of the streets. Sonny is back out of jail and his brother watches him through the window, listening to some people holding a revival meeting outside a greasy spoon:

As the singing filled the air the watching, listening faces underwent a change, the eyes focusing on something within; the music seemed to sooth a poison out of them; and time seemed nearly, to fall away from the sullen belligerent, battered faces, as though they were fleeing back to their first condition, while dreaming of their last.

Later the older brother tries to reach him, saying:

Please believe me, I don't want to see you die - trying not to suffer." Sonny responds, "Sometimes, you know, and it was actually when I was most out of the world, I felt I was in it, that I was with it really, and I could play or I didn't really have to play, it just came out of me, it was there.

There is also a fine excerpt from Michael Ondaatje's prize winning, first novel, "Coming Through Slaughter", a tribute to Buddy Bolden. Buddy has come back to New Orleans and sat through the afternoon until darkness fell, lost in memories of the men and women he had known, the music, the whites using the blacks and kicking them away like shit: *Nothing about the change in the weather anywhere but there were the details of the children and ladies changing hands like coins or a cigarette travelling at mouth level around the room. All those contests for bodies with children in the background like furniture.* When his friend comes to find him: *there was nothing on me. I was glinting and sharp and cold from the lack of light. I had turned into metal at my mouth.*

The final scene is extraordinary, as Bolden in parade begins playing to a woman dancing, and realizes her body has gone ahead of his sound. Their unity becomes ecstatic, pushing each other beyond the thresholds of fatigue, until finally the music that is driving up Bolden's throat to the metal in his mouth, becomes blood and he collapses.

Ondaatje is an honoured Canadian poet and novelist (he won the Booker Prize for 'The English Patient' in 1993), but I think "Coming Through Slaughter" (House of Anansi Press, Toronto, 1976) is the most moving prose he has written.

There is such a variety of writing here it is impossible to give a cross section of it in review. Beyond the pleasure of the individual works, this anthology celebrates and strengthens the unity of the people who love the music. As the old poets spoke the story of their kin, jazz is the living history of these people. This book honours and challenges Charles Lloyd's statement, when asked about his music, "Words don't go there."

From "In The Tradition" Amiri Baraka writes:

open us
yet bind us
let all that is positive
find
us.

CAROLE CHAMBERS is a poet and performance artist who lives and works on Hornby Island, British Columbia. Her books include **From The Gulf** (Moonsnail Press) and **Still Life Under The Occupation** (Quadrant Editions).

DOWN AT THE CORNER STORE | PHIL HAYNES

THIS IS THE FINAL EPISODE IN A SERIES OF THREE INTERVIEWS INVESTIGATING MUSICIANS THAT HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THE BROOKLYN BASED CORNER STORE COLLECTIVE. THE TWO PREVIOUS SUBJECTS WERE ELLERY ESKELIN (ISSUE #252) AND HERB ROBERTSON (ISSUE #253). THE CORNER STORE COLLECTIVE WAS CREATED BY A GROUP OF MUSICIANS INTENT ON DEVELOPING THEIR MUSIC IN NEW YORK, A CITY WHERE IT IS DIFFICULT TO BUILD A STABLE AUDIENCE BASE. AS A COLLECTIVE THEY REHEARSED A NUMBER OF GROUPS, PERFORMING ORIGINAL MUSIC, AND PRESENTED THEM IN THE FORM OF A FESTIVAL AT THE KNITTING FACTORY. THIS HAS NOW BECOME AN ANNUAL EVENT.

IN CONVERSATION WITH BILL SMITH

LAST SUMMER, THE VANCOUVER JAZZ FESTIVAL presented several of these groups, giving me the opportunity to experience drummer Phil Haynes in a variety of situations. His animated, boisterous and humorous personality was a most positive asset, and when combined with his unique musical attitudes, gave all the music in which he participated, a special edge.

He is often thought of as the organizer of the Corner Store Collective, which is located in a converted storefront where he lives. When asked if this is so he replied - "Well, I was silly enough to have the idea, and I guess have some organizational abilities, and I am one of the few people who will go out year after year and so... what did somebody say, 'he's become the de facto leader'".

My first experience of him on recordings is from 1985 with the Paul Smoker Trio, a recording that features Anthony Braxton. Then again with Paul Smoker, in the collective band Joint Venture. His discography which includes three recordings as leader, has him in company with Ellery Eskelin, Andy Laster and Herb Robertson, all cohorts from the Corner Store. So why isn't he invited more often to be a sideman?

PHIL HAYNES: A lot of people don't perceive me as a side person, which I came to New York fulling expecting to do. I had loved all the master drummers who had their own style, but I also admired other master drummers like Roy Haynes or Billy Hart, who could play any instance they were in and yet you could still hear their sound through it. I always wanted to take that to an extreme, have the possibility to play most kinds of music that were important to me, and yet never be mistaken for someone else. You can always hear Elvin (Jones) or Tony (Williams) or Jack DeJohnette or Philly Joe Jones, they come out in a bar or two, you know who they are, and this was important to me. But as a result of having such a strong personality, at least in this musical climate, most people see me as a leader or a collective drummer, someone who puts his stamp on everything. It wasn't the way I went out to do it that's for sure.

I would love to play with Sonny Rollins or McCoy Tyner, people who are real percussionists kind of leaders, but those things didn't come to pass, so I was forced to do things like concert promotion and do our own records. Most of the records I'm on were originally self-funded before they were picked up by independent labels.

BILL SMITH: What I hear now as the influences in your music, are people like Ornette Coleman, Charles Mingus and the Art Ensemble of Chicago. Do you feel that has been more of an influence on you than say listening to Jo Jones or Big Sid Catlett or ...

PHIL HAYNES: I listen to all of them and carefully, but the ones that form my current technique and perception are definitely starting a bit later. I see Philly Joe as the last bebop drummer, he was more influential for me than say Art Blakey or Max Roach, guys that are considered in different kinds of esteem, and perhaps even higher in a certain amount of drumming mastery, but Philly Joe had a big influence and mostly because of his impulsiveness. And then you hear the spirit of Elvin Jones, well my favourites, Elvin Jones and sixties Tony Williams, and Jack DeJohnette, who talks about coming out of both those players. They're huge influences. Ed Blackwell is high on my list for what he did for Ornette's music. I love Billy Higgins but boy, when I hear Blackwell with Ornette that's got that original touch and feel which is just dancing in a new way, in a very original way. But when I got to New York I didn't meet young musicians who heard things that way, except the ones I'm still playing with. They didn't take Jack DeJohnette and Gary Peacock for granted in 1983. I remember when the first Keith Jarrett record came out I wasn't really sure I liked all of it aesthetically, it wasn't hot enough for my taste then. Subsequently within a year I started realizing what they were doing and my own taste became enlarged. Now they're one of my favourite groups. But I didn't find other drummers with Jack's influence and bass players playing with Gary's influence. Not really. And for ten years, I waited around and then all of a sudden the last two years, players like Jim Black came to town fully versed in Jack's tradition. I see myself as very mainstream, but only mainstream in the way that you can look back in twenty years and say that Ornette Coleman was mainstream. Absolutely central. Or Thelonious Monk. Now even though Thelonious played with Parker and all the other guys of the time I don't think his music was seen as mainstream at the time and...

All of a sudden in the early eighties, Monk becomes the big thing. And Ornette Coleman re-emerged, and you realize that that is the jazz mainstream. I see myself right in the middle of the mainstream even though the real mainstream so-called, the people who love the music of say the Wynton Marsalis coat tails, they see me as avant-garde, and the people who I consider as truly avant-garde, the real

PHOTOGRAPH BY
GERARD FUTRICK

free players, the people who have only been playing free music all their lives, won't play changes, they see me as a jazz player. So a lot of us have been caught because of this generational thing. I've heard record company executives and musicians talk about how there is isn't any real jazz after Mingus and Miles Davis. A few people will say Ornette, and of course Coltrane. We have to add to the language as well as know their language and the pioneers before them. You can go back to Louis Armstrong, but we have to move on just like they did. In other words, the best compliment to pay to your father, is not to do the same thing that he did but to grow from that and take the strength and what you can use from that, and develop your own language. This is very important to us, and I feel so strongly that what we are doing is real jazz and is very mainstream and I hope that it bears fruit in twenty years and that people can say, 'oh yea, there were things going on in the '80s and the '90s' apart from what was being called mainstream jazz. And you don't know, you won't know, until you listen to musicians twenty, thirty, and forty years from now, and then all of a sudden it becomes clear what's the tradition and what's part of the music scene. There are two different historical musical perspectives.

WHAT'S INTERESTING is the music is developing, the audience is developing from two things. First of all, the rebirth through the Wynton Marsalis coat tails and the big labels pushing jazz again, the circa Miles Davis 50s, 60s aesthetics, and also you have the opposite thing happening where people like Ken Pickering, the director of the Vancouver Festival, takes the music that none of the straight clubs want, none of the rock clubs want and put it out there as alternative music, and you start getting that young audience. And so you've got it from two totally opposite directions, the total rebels and the, some people call them the republicans, all coming together; democrats, wild libertarians and the republicans, all coming together in the same audiences. And they of course hear it from a different perspective, but it's all there with the greatest players.

BILL SMITH: It seems you started your public career with quite an explosion. Your first recording with the Paul Smoker Trio, included Anthony Braxton!

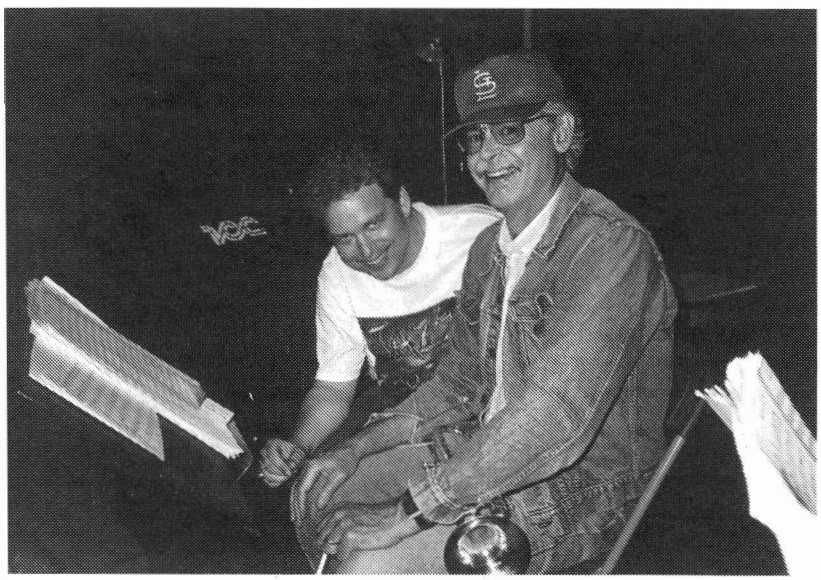
PHIL HAYNES: Anthony had Paul over on a tour in Europe and he took him by his shirt and shook him and said 'you're an American restructuralist', which was his word for innovator, 'you're a master, you have to get your own music out, you're hiding this Smoker, you should have ten, fifteen records out in the next ten years, or else I'll come looking for you.' Paul and I had a demo tape, so it changed from a collective at that point, and Paul became the leader. We always made open decisions like that. So here we are, we have Paul's trio with Anthony playing on it. He accepted the idea of this gig and came out to Iowa to do this. We played a lot of music and he selected what he wanted to play on.

ANTHONY WAS ACROSS THE TABLE from me, we were having dinner, and all of a sudden he launches in. He said "Mr Haynes, what right have you got to perform Paul Smoker's music?" I said, "Excuse me?" He said "This is Paul Smoker's music." I said "Well, I write almost half of the material and we developed it collectively." "Yes but..." I was 21 or 22 then ..."you have no right to interpret somebody else's music, especially on this level, until you have your own music. After all what will you do but gravitate to their aesthetics and not bring your own to it from an interpretive point." Of course, this is backwards from what I had been brought up on and no one ever worried about that in Iowa. It would be great if I could just be a drummer in the equivalent of Art Blakey's group, you know, you want to come up through the tradition.

Paul was a huge influence. He was my college professor. He got me associated with the masters, these are the records, and so on and so forth, and you went from there. I think the reason any of us can play jazz who didn't grow up in the jazz community is that jazz is the only art form I know of where the whole history is on record and I lived those records. At least eight hours a day I was listening to those things and the other eight hours I was awake I was playing. Well that's what brought me to do my first project which many people see as outside of what they expect Phil Haynes to be. They know of Phil Haynes, they think of pretty avant garde new music and so on, and in Continuum, my debut recording with Mark Feldman (violin), David Kikoski (piano) and bassist Drew Gress, I put myself in a traditional rhythm section but with new music and with new players.

BILL SMITH: There are certain kinds of stereotyped jazz histories, and one of them is that you can't be white and middle class and from Iowa and play jazz. Do you get a reaction to this, that you don't come from the lower Eastside and live in a rat infested hovel?

PHIL HAYNES: I'm curious about how all this came about myself. Jazz was not particularly in the house. I was in the sixth grade and I remember for Christmas, the drum instructor had told my parents to get a Buddy Rich record, Live At Ronnie Scott's, and a new Elvin Jones record which was Merry Go Round. Well of course it didn't take me long to get excited about Buddy's big band, but it wasn't until I got into college, six or seven years later that all of a sudden Elvin's record became one of my favourites. It was sometimes just very tough because I didn't hear that music, I mean high school stageband, it's just not the same kind of thing as Elvin Jones. You know what I'm saying? It was kind of a surprise.



I always thought that when I went to New York that I should fit right in to playing with Henry Threadgill, the whole black post AACM avant garde, that it should be a natural thing. But for whatever reasons, it's just never worked out and who knows why. I will say that jazz doesn't exist in Africa and doesn't exist in Europe. But it was born in America because of the strange circumstances, the musical instruments, the enslavement, the church music that was allowed, the African scales that survived reinterpreting, trying to sing the Baptist hymnals, all these things came together. How I fit in I don't know, but jazz is certainly a music of overcoming great obstacles and feeling oppressed, and my childhood...I had a great childhood, I had great parents, but for seven or eight years I was surrounded by a group of people who hassled me no end in all sorts of ways. Somehow I managed not to fight back and kept my dignity. When I was a junior in high school, I won the State Competition in classical percussion, all around percussion. I remember my band director at a big sports program, he got up and said in front of the whole school. "We have one more award, and in a school among champions we only have one true state champion this year"... and it wasn't the football team, it wasn't the basketball team, it wasn't the wrestling team, "we only have one state champion this year and he comes from music!"... It was right then that I realized that I had a lot of inner strength and confidence. I realized from things that happened, and having to overcome physical abuse from these other people, that I had to fight against things. And also can you be a white boy from wherever and play jazz. I was lucky enough to meet someone like Paul Smoker.

BILL SMITH: It seems, that originally in each town or city, there were groups of players who played in different bars and territory bands, and people locally knew who they were and supported them just because they were part of their natural environment and in recent times it would seem that there is a pop music mentality, like a corporate mentality, being in the very minute that it's out there, that it has to have a star system and so on. So one of the things that I'm interested in is whether it's possible for the people to have not left Iowa and gone to Brooklyn, but actually have developed a whole scene where they were already.

PHIL HAYNES: Well Paul's trio was a scene because the three musicians were in Iowa. He was one, I came in to go to school and Ron Rohovit was someone who Paul didn't think was interested in playing his music, but he was the best bass player and I wanted an acoustic bass player, so he put that together. I had to leave Paul because once it was his trio, it was always his trio, if I was going to be anything besides his drummer, which is an incredible honour, and what a way to start a career with a band that had such an identity, I had to go to New York, I had to go to find other musicians, I had to do a project like Continuum that was completely within me, completely the other aesthetic experience. I think that's why anybody has to leave their territory. People always say, oh there are no players out there. Well there's always one in a state, at least one. The question is have they been able to team up with anybody else to do something besides a solo project, and those people don't do solo projects. They have their own series of expectations about what great music is and so, they're not going to get a solo project. But they'll wait until they get a quartet or quintet. Well, that never happens. It's too bad. □

DISCOGRAPHY

AS A LEADER

Continuum: The Passing (Owl Time Lines) • **4 Horns & What? / 4 Horn Lore** (Open Minds)

WITH JOINT VENTURE >> **Joint Venture • Ways • Mirrors** (Enja)
WITH PAUL SMOKER >> **QB** (w. A. Braxton) (Alvas) • **Mississippi River Rat • Alone • Come Rain or Come Shine** (Sound Aspects)
WITH ELLERY ESKELIN >> **Setting The Standard** (Cadence) • **Forms** (Open Minds)
WITH ANDY LASTER >> **Hippo Stomp • Twirler** (Sound Aspects)
WITH HERB ROBERTSON >> **Certified** (JMT)
WITH TOM VARNER >> **Long Night Big Day** (New World)

*Prepared for publication by **P.R. (Brownie) Brown** - transcription and **Sheila Macpherson** - editing.*

PHIL HAYNES CAN BE CONTACTED AT: THE CORNER STORE, 1657 - 8TH AVENUE, BROOKLYN, N. Y., U.S.A. 11215

PHIL HAYNES & PAUL SMOKER • Photograph by Bill Smith

Montréal

RESTAURANT/BISTRO & JAZZ CLUB

65 SHERBOURNE STREET, TORONTO,
ONTARIO, CANADA M5A 2P9
PHONE (416) 363-0179

SPRING SHOWCASE

APRIL 19th - APRIL 23rd
RED RICHARDS - SOLO PIANO

APRIL 26th - APRIL 30th
PHIL NIMMONS QUARTET WITH
GARY WILLIAMSON, JIM VIVIAN & TED WARREN

MAY 3rd - MAY 7th
ART MAISTE - PIANO/BASS DUET

MAY 10th - MAY 14th
DAVE YOUNG/PHIL DWYER
QUARTET WITH **ROB PILTCH & MICHEL LAMBERT**

MAY 16th - FOR ONE NIGHT ONLY
LYNN McDONALD AND
DAVID RESTIVO

MAY 17th - MAY 21st
TOMMY BANKS PIANO
WITH **DAVE YOUNG** BASS

MAY 24th - MAY 28th
DAVE McKENNNA - SOLO PIANO

MAY 30th - JUNE 4th
DAVE McMURDO JAZZ ORCHESTRA

JUNE 7th - JUNE 11th
JAMES WILLIAMS - SOLO PIANO

TUESDAY THROUGH SATURDAY WEEKLY EXCEPT FOR
DAVE MCMURDO JAZZ ORCHESTRA
(MONDAY TO SATURDAY)

MUSIC NINE TO ONE NIGHTLY
LIGHT AMERICAN - FRENCH MENU SERVED
NOON TO MIDNIGHT

The CLASSIC JAZZ SOCIETY OF TORONTO

Founded 1993

To Promote Traditional Jazz, Produce a world-class Classic Jazz Festival and Annual Concert/Dance Series showcasing the world's finest traditional jazz musicians.

THE WELLINGTON TRADITIONAL JAZZ SERIES
sponsored by Wellington County Brewery Limited.

1st concert/dance - May 7th featuring the New Black Eagle Jazz Band from Boston, U.S.A. Other bands booked include the Grand Dominion Jazz Band from Seattle/Vancouver and Neville Dickie's Rhythmakers from the U.K. Neville is one of the world's finest stride pianists.

Join **The Classic Jazz Society of Toronto**, write to:
Suite 221, 253 College St., Toronto, Ont., M5T 1R5.
(416) 698-0336 or (905) 859-3818

---

du Maurier Ltd.

atlantic JAZZ

HALIFAX • JULY 16-24, 1994

Evening Mainstage Concerts & Late Night Jazz, Jazz in the Clubs, Jazz Clinics, FREE Outdoor Concerts and more featuring world class jazz in a friendly and intimate coastal setting!

JAZZ INFO: 902•492•2225
Call or write to:
du Maurier Ltd. Atlantic Jazz
P. O. Box 33043, Halifax, N.S., Canada, B3L 4T6

Mosaic™ RECORDS

MICHAEL CUSCUNA

IN CONVERSATION WITH JAMES ROZZI

IN MUCH THE SAME MANNER IN WHICH BLUE NOTE, COMMODORE, PACIFIC JAZZ, AND VERVE MANY YEARS AGO TOOK UP THE SLACK FOR THE MAJORS BY PRESERVING THE OTHERWISE FLEETING SOUNDS OF EXQUISITE JAZZ, MOSAIC RECORDS NOW DOES LIKEWISE BY PLUMBING, COMPILING, ANNOTATING AND RE-RELEASING THE SAME (PLUS ALTERNATES), THEREBY SAVING THE MUSIC FROM THE DEVASTATING FATE OF CORPORATE APATHY.

AS CO-FOUNDER OF THIS LABOUR OF LOVE (MOSAIC JUST CELEBRATED ITS TENTH YEAR), OR AS A MUCH SOUGHT-AFTER INDEPENDENT PRODUCER, OR AS THE MAN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE LION'S SHARE OF THE POST-BOP REISSUE MARKET, 45 YEAR-OLD MICHAEL CUSCUNA'S NAME IS ON THE TIP OF THE JAZZ WORLD'S TONGUE. NOT SURPRISINGLY, A QUICK LOOK AT CUSCUNA'S RESUMÉ FINDS HIS CREDENTIALS IMPRESSIVE WHILE STILL IN HIS TEENS: DISC JOCKEY FOR HIS COLLEGE STATION; PRESENTER OF CONCERTS (BY THE LIKES OF PAUL BLEY AND JOE HENDERSON); WRITER (JAZZ AND POP, DOWNBEAT); AND RECORD PRODUCER (BLUES GUITARIST GEORGE FREEMAN).

FOLLOWING SEVERAL professional years in radio (Philadelphia, New York), Cuscuna concentrated on his first love of producing, logging studio time with numerous labels and artists, including Dave Brubeck, The Art Ensemble of Chicago, Andrew Hill, Cecil Taylor, Larry Coryell, Anthony Braxton, Dexter Gordon, and Woody Shaw. At every opportune moment, Cuscuna could be found in the tape vaults of his respective employer, eagerly uncovering whatever artistic artifacts lay buried and forgotten for years.

That Mosaic recently reissued ***The Complete CBS Studio Recordings of Woody Shaw*** is a true milestone for Cuscuna, who happened to be the original producer on these historically significant sessions. At the time of this interview, the Shaw box had been released, but Cuscuna's own notes included in the liners aptly answer all questions concerning his involvement with the late, great trumpeter. Our conversation centred around Cuscuna's background and knowledge of the inner workings of the jazz record industry.

James Rozzi: *You were a musician of sorts.*

MICHAEL CUSCUNA: Yeah, amateur, a weekend musician, I guess you'd call it. I played alto and tenor, flute, and drums all during high school. Just played weekend dances, fake book things. I brought the tenor with me to college, but discovered radio and marijuana and there just wasn't enough time to keep practicing. When I was in high school, I'd come home, get my homework out of the way, eat quickly and I'd be at the piano or working on music for four hours. Then, in college there wasn't enough time. Plus, I was a lousy improviser, so it wasn't going anywhere anyway. Although I wish I had kept it up because it would be fun just to play in horn sections.

Have you found that your knowledge as an instrumentalist has helped you with producing and A&R?

I'D SAY THAT being able to read music is important in terms of editing and stuff like that. A basic knowledge of music and a basic knowledge of sound and engineering is important. But the thing that you have to draw upon most, is a certain amount of psychological perception, to really make an artist feel comfortable and get the best out of them; create the best atmosphere. You need to know when to back off and when to shift things when an artist is getting stuck in a hole. I think it's more of a human aspect.

How prepared do you have to be going into the studio? Have you already talked about repertoire?

OH GOD, YES, but it varies as to how prepared you have to be. It varies with the artist's needs. There are a lot of artists that you just sit there and make sure nothing goes wrong. If you're smart, you'll keep your mouth shut and don't put a wrench into things. And then there are other artists who you've got to spend a lot of time with, talking and philosophizing. Also, you may spend a lot of time going to gigs, seeing them and seeing what their repertoire is, talking to them about a direction and the personnel that might be best. Sometimes, you sit there and wonder whether you need to be there, and other times, it's very much your own show. Your job is to bring to fruition what's in the artist's mind coupled with making it something that will reach people and help the artist's career.

How does a live recording differ from one done in the studio?

IT'S A LOT MORE WORK to record live. When it works, it's great. What every jazz producer has discovered is—because no one gets to look at other people's work—if you're

in a club and you've got three sets, you develop what's called the "target material," the material that you want to get on the album. You construct sets with the leader so as to get at least two takes per night of the target material. It's set up on a rotational basis, probably a set and a half rotation for two or three days, however much your budget allows. The two worst things that can happen are either all the takes of a particular desired tune are all bad, or all of the takes do make it, and the agony of choosing one. Artists aren't the most decisive people, generally, and you hate to put a good take on the shelf. You can have a great take, and somebody messes up on the bridge going out. It's not like in the studio where you can do an insert. You're locked in another room and you're helpless. Of course, when it works, you get the better stuff live.

Is that your decision, or yours and the leader?

EVERYTHING is a joint decision, never just the producer. If it is, he's out of line, I think.

How often do you do inserts in the studio? Do you ever cut solos?

INSERTS? OH, A LOT, where it's needed. It's not uncommon. Sometimes it's just the last note or the last four bars. I try to avoid cutting solos. I know they used to do it a lot in the '50s, for Blue Note. Alfred [Lion] would use, say, a great trombone solo from take four and insert it into take six. They could only do it if the tempo was the same. I try not to, but there have been times when I have because that's the only way to make it great.

What are some of your favourite pre-Mosaic productions?

WELL, WORKING WITH WOODY [Shaw] was always wonderful, and working with Braxton was always a delight because he's such a funny, wonderful guy; one I love dearly. Dexter [Gordon] too. Those are three people I got to spend a lot of time with—social time, business time, and studio time over very long periods. They're three people I love very much. From a personal standpoint, this is. From a producing standpoint, we did an album called ***Woody Three***, that was one of my all-time favourite albums.

Interestingly, while we were making ***Woody Three***, another session took place which was one of the most memorable for me. Joe Fields of Muse Records called me up and asked me to produce a session with Lockjaw Davis, whose playing I enjoyed, but whom I never knew personally. So what we did was to book Lockjaw for midnight over three nights at the same studio where we were recording the Woody Shaw sessions. We decided to keep Victor Lewis on drums because he's great and the drums and the mikes were set up. Lockjaw wanted George Duvivier and I hired the pianist. So, it turns out that he didn't know the pianist or drummer. The first night, Jaws gets there at about eleven and peeks his head in and introduces himself. We start talking, and I say, "Yeah, we've got tonight, tomorrow night and the next night." He says, "Man, we're not going to need three nights to make a record." I say, "Look, it's a safety valve. We've got it if we need it." He sort of looked at me patronizingly and said, "Yeah, sure." When the session began, he rehearsed a twenty-second chunk of going from tune A to tune B, with a modulation. I said, "Do you want to run it down once?" Jaws said, "No man, let's not waste it. Put it on tape." It took a total of an hour and twenty minutes to do a 40-minute album. This guy was in and out of there before I realized he was even there. This was a great album. I was amazed. I never have seen anyone that efficient who played that well. He was like a business man. He walked in with an attaché case instead of a saxophone.

You said most musicians are indecisive. Playbacks must help a lot regarding decisions among the group.

YES, I'LL STICK BY THAT; most players are indecisive. And yes, playbacks help a great deal. It's impossible for the musicians to concentrate on playing and listening at the same time. Playbacks allow everyone to hear what they're doing wrong and they'll correct it. It's humiliating to tell someone he's messing up. Negativity is not conducive to a creative atmosphere, so playbacks are a great diplomatic tool.

How about favourite pre-Mosaic reissue projects?

WELL, I DID A TON of Blue Note, Impulse, and some Atlantic stuff too. Two of my greatest finds occurred the same week, when I was first cracking the Blue Note vaults. They were in terrible shape, with no documentation or anything. I found a stack of seven-inch reels of Sonny Rollins at the Vanguard. I was thrilled to find these because that was always one of my favourite records: ***Sonny Rollins: A Night at the Village Vanguard***. The other was finding a box of stuff that Alfred Lion had bought from Tom Wilson at Transition. There were these two seven-inch reels in yellow boxes, marked only with the date of April twenty-something. Charlie Lourie was with me and I said, "This is it! This is the Paul Chambers-John Coltrane date!" Charlie said, "How do you know?" I didn't, but we ran down the street to the studio, and sure enough, that's exactly what it was. It came out as a double album called ***High Step***, Paul Chambers and John Coltrane. Then it came out on CD as ***Chambers Music***.

All this time that you were going through the vaults, Alfred Lion was indisposed. You had no way of contacting him?

NO, THE ONLY PERSON who was in contact with Alfred was Horace Silver. He would send him messages, but I'd never hear back from him. So, I'd pull out a Jackie McLean tape, listen to it and try to decide who was on it. I'd play some of it over the phone for the musicians to make sure it was them and send a tape to Jackie to identify everybody else. If they didn't remember the tunes, I'd look in the BMI log for tunes written by the leader or sidemen—registered by Blue Note's publishing company, Blue Horizon Music—about two weeks after the date. It really was a Sherlock Holmes routine. As Alfred later said to me, "Well, you probably had more fun doing it that way." In fact, I probably did.

At first I found a guy who was at United Artists films who had a file that Alfred had given him, a lot of information on unissued stuff. Then, I got to be friendly with Alfred. He was going through a trunk of Frank Wolff photos and he had no idea he had this, but at the bottom of the trunk were all of his recording logs. We had made errors on certain things, but it's cleared up in the ***Blue Note Discography***. I think the discography has just a few inputting mistakes.

Can you put into perspective Blue Note's contribution to jazz?

I THINK THE VALUE of Blue Note can be summarized by pointing to one album: Eric Dolphy's ***Out to Lunch***. Compare that to

everything else he ever recorded. When you hear what they could accomplish given just a few days rehearsal and some inspiration, and what Eric Dolphy was really capable of as a leader of an ensemble and a composer, it's extraordinary. There's nothing in his discography that even comes anywhere near that. It was an extraordinary date, and it just showed the untapped potential the guy had. In that period of time and in that environment, it just couldn't have been accomplished anywhere else.

How did Alfred feel about all of the unissued takes being released?

WELL, IT'S WEIRD. Some of it is great and some just okay, but it becomes important after the era is no longer a living thing. There were some that we used to talk about, with Alfred saying, "I racked my brain trying to figure out why I didn't put that out immediately, and I can't imagine why I didn't." There were often reasons other than the quality of the music for not putting things out. Like, right after Lee Morgan recorded ***The Sidewinder***, he recorded ***Search for the New Land*** and ***Tom Cat***, both great sessions. ***Sidewinder*** came out and was such a big hit that they went in and did ***The Rumproller*** in the same mold, and those other two got forgotten about. ***Search for the New Land*** didn't come out until five years later. ***Tom Cat*** didn't come out until I put it out in 1980. They didn't come out because Lee's career and finances were going in a different direction. So, there were often temporal reasons like that for unissued material. Alfred was always thinking about tomorrow. He was never thinking about yesterday. That's why a lot of the 78s never got on 10" lps, and a lot of the 10" lps never got on 12". He was always thinking about what he was going to record tomorrow. So, if something didn't get out for whatever reason, it would stay in the can.

Can you give me a quick run-down of how Mosaic was formed?

MOSAIC WAS BORN as part of a proposal. We had proposed to Capitol to restart Blue Note, and one of the things I wrote as a part of this long proposal, in the catalogue exploitation section, was the idea of boxed sets. I had been pretty much out of work for a couple of years. I'd go over to the Blue Note vaults every day to listen and label and compile tapes. I had nothing else to do. So anyway, in the course of all that, I thoroughly exhausted the Blue Note vaults and found about 27 minutes of unissued Thelonious Monk that was worth putting out. The lp was the only thing in those days, and you can't put out a short lp like that, although there have been those that have. It was too short for an lp and besides, Blue Note was dead at the time. I started to think back on all the Monk lps and the way all the tunes were all scrambled up. The sessions were all commingled. Some were on a Milt Jackson lp, some were only on 78s or 10". So, I thought, "Wouldn't it be nice to take the whole thing apart to start from scratch, build it up, and make full albums for a boxed set?" But even before Capitol turned us down because they weren't ready to launch jazz for a couple of years, it somehow dawned on me that this would be a great thing for us to do ourselves. I costed it out and realized that if we did it by mail order, where we don't have to deal with a distributor and getting stiffed, and if we did it as limited edition boxed sets, so that people would hurry up and buy them, we could make them work. I talked to Charlie Lourie one night at midnight, and boom, it became reality.

THE COMPLETE CBS STUDIO RECORDINGS OF WOODY SHAW

The unfortunate coincidence that jazz plummeted into abyss while Woody Shaw reached his pinnacle in the late seventies is a sad fact of life. Twenty-five years later, as an emphasis on acoustic jazz once again takes priority over electronic wizardry, the wealth of the man's talent can finally, once and for all, be identified and savoured. Woody Shaw was a master brass player with a beautifully resonant sound and incredible ears, possessing the physical and mental ability to translate ideas and emotions into sound.

Containing the lps ***Rosewood, Woody Three*** (minus one live track), ***For Sure***, and ***United,*** skilfully arranged large ensembles alternate with small blowing bands featuring a quantity of excellent sidemen, some of whom are now stars in the own rights (Joe Henderson, Steve Turre, Rene McLean, Victor Lewis, Mulgrew Miller), and others whose names are less often seen(Carter Jefferson, Onaje Allan Gumbs, Stafford James, Clint Houston, James Spaulding).

Composer and arranger credits go to many of the individuals heard here. But these two hours and 46 minutes of music attest most notably to the complexities of the leader. Shaw's compositions, like his solos, are miniature studies in tension and release. With performances that artfully mix the effects of the serene with the chaotic, the calm with the unnerving, and the humorous with the weighty, extreme poignancy remains the bottom line. Moreover, this is serious music, worthy of its own boxed set just as Woody Shaw is worthy of a hallowed place in music history. □

MOSAIC RECORDS/TRUE BLUE MUSIC can be reached at: 35 Melrose Place, Stamford, Connecticut, USA 06902.
TEL: (203) 327-7111, FAX: (203) 323-3526

JAMES ROZZI *is a freelance musician, teacher, and writer in the Orlando, Florida area.*

WOODY SHAW
PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER DANSON

AROUND THE WORLD

BERNIE SENENSKY • Photograph by Barry Thomson

CANADA

HALIFAX • **Jazzeast** is the name of the organization that is creating a scene in the Halifax area. Upcoming events include ***We Were Talking***, a trio with saxophonist Mike Murley, percussionist Mark Duggan and pianist Bill Brennan. They will perform for two nights, May 15th & 16th, at the Dalhousie Arts Centre. June 30th, at The Church (5657 North Street), will be a performance by a seven piece all star Halifax band with saxophonists **Paul Cram** & **Don Palmer** among the cast. Maxwell's Plum is Sunday jazz heaven, and presents a wide variety of Halifax based artists. For information on the Halifax region including the upcoming ***7th Atlantic Jazz Festival*** (July 17-25), contact Jazzeast, Box 33043, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3L 4T6. Tel/Fax (902) 492-2225.

MONTREAL • ***Jazzvine*** is a new monthly eight page jazz newsletter promoting the Montreal Jazz Scene. Its the brainstorm of Carol Robertson and Karen Evoy - two women whose advocational enthusiasm is helping bring together an audience for the music. The newsletter lists fifteen Montreal clubs where jazz is presented as well as one page rundowns of concert events and jazz radio programs. The $20.00 one year membership defrays the printing costs of the newsletter which can be ordered from The Montreal Jazz Grapevine, P.O. Box 552, Victoria Station, Westmount, Quebec H3Z 2Y6.

The Rising Sun was, for more than a decade, a major showcase for jazz and blues artists in Montreal. It was held together through the energy and enterprise of its owner Doudou Boicel. Those times can now be relived through a series of recordings from the club being issued on ***Just A Memory*** - a subsidiary label of Montreal's well known jazz label Justin Time. Now available are CDs featuring John Lee Hooker, Nina Simone, Taj Mahal and Big Mama Thornton.

TORONTO • Both ***Eye*** and ***Now*** newspapers (they are published weekly and can be picked up free of charge in many downtown locations) usually list close to 30 venues where jazz can be heard in Toronto. Once you get beyond the better showcase venues (George's, Montreal Bistro, Top O' The Senator, The Rex, The Pilot) there's an ever changing array of restaurants and bars which flirt with the music. Toronto's pool of musicians far exceeds the available venues and they often work for wages comparable to those employed in fast food chains. Success has less to do with the music than the promotional and entrepreneurial skills of the leaders.

A major retrospective of **Michael Snow**'s multi-media art was launched March 9 by the Art Gallery of Ontario. He's been deeply involved with jazz since the 1940s when he was the pianist with various traditional bands. His work with Mike White's Imperial Jazz Band was documented on record in the 1950s and in the 1960s he performed with and filmed some of New York's most innovative musicians. For more than twenty years he's been a member of the CCMC - one of Canada's foremost free improvisational groups. The exhibition runs until June 5 at the Art Gallery and The Power Plant.

The Art Gallery was also the venue for an early spring series of concerts featuring the music of **Bob Mover** and **Don Thompson** (March 4), **Rainer Wiens** and **Nilan Perera** (March 11), **Allen Cole** (March 25) and **John Lennard** & **James Pett** (April 1).

CBC Stereo's ***The Arts Tonight*** presented three concerts at Toronto's Glenn Gould Studio for future broadcast. First up was the Phil Nimmons Quartet on March 5, followed by Time Warp (March 19), and the P.J. Perry Quartet (March 26).

Hemispheres, the unique fifteen member ensemble whose music covers a wide spectrum, were recorded in performance at the Glenn Gould Studio last October and a CD from that evening is in the works. Hemispheres next concert event is scheduled for April 29 at the new Music Gallery.

Wednesday evening jazz concerts continue at ***Walter Hall*** in the Edward Johnson Building on the University of Toronto campus. There's no charge for these events which feature students and faculty from the Music Department's jazz program. Faculty members Phil Nimmons, Kirk MacDonald, Chase Sanborn, Roy Patterson, Gary Williamson and Don Englert have been involved in recent programs.

Toronto's Silver Rail, one of the city's first cocktail lounges, launched a jazz policy in early January when it opened its upstairs bar with the vocal stylings of the **Georgia Ambros Trio**. They continue to be heard Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings.

COMPILED BY PUBLISHER JOHN NORRIS

The twenty third annual ***Canadian Collectors Congress*** takes place April 16 at Toronto's Ramada 400/401 Hotel... June 24 to July 3 are the dates for the eighth annual du Maurier Downtown Jazz Festival in Toronto. du Maurier festivals will run concurrently in Victoria, Vancouver, Calgary, Saskatoon and Edmonton. While these festivals haven't announced any names we do know that **Trevor Watts Moire Music Drum Orchestra** will be a participant. They have a new recording to be issued on ECM and are looking for other engagements on this trip to North America. Interested parties should write Gillian Levine, 5 Foster Place, Cambridge, MA, USA 02138 (Tel/Fax 617-868-3172).

Jazz at the Castle is a Sunday Brunch program which continues at the Westin Harbour Castle with the Steve Holt Trio (Mike Downes, Jerry Fuller) and their guests. Mike Murley, Bob Brough, Lorne Lofsky and P. J. Perry were there in March and the April lineup includes Alex Dean, Don Thompson, Kevin Turcotte and Steve Hall... Sunday afternoon jazz continues also at the Kind Edward Hotel with **Joe Sealy**'s Quartet.

ONTARIO • Phil Barrette's Quartet played a Sunday Brunch February 13 at the Sheraton Hamilton Hotel with guests Lynne Arriale, Jeanie Bryson and Don Thompson... Bill Mays and Ed Bickert were heard in concert February 28 at St C's in **Hamilton** before a five night run at Toronto's Montreal Bistro. From there they went to San Francisco for a concert/recording at Maybeck Hall for Concord Records.

The Carol Welsman Trio and the Joe Sealy Duo share the stage in **Peterborough** April 10 for the first of the Kawartha Jazz Society's spring concerts. The Jane Bunnett Quintet will be there May 29.

Kenny Wheeler returned to Canada for a six night gig at the Montreal Bistro (Toronto) and a Peterborough concert. Phil Dwyer, who subbed for the ailing Sonny Greenwich (and Reg Schwager subbed for Dwyer on one night!) blended well with the highly individual Wheeler and they were supported by the high energy of Don Thompson (piano), Jim Vivian (bass) and Joe LaBarbera (drums).

Dave Young, Reg Schwager and Michel Lambert were featured at the February concert of the ***London Jazz Society*** (P.O. Box 2141, Station A, London, ON N6A 4C5). Clarinetist Phil Murphy was showcased March 13 in a quartet setting and on April 10 his son tenor saxophonist Chris Murphy was featured.

The first of several collaborations by **Bernie Senensky** with U.S. musicians has now been issued through Holland's Timeless Records. "Wheel Within A Wheel" features the pianist with Bobby Watson, Ray Drummond and Marvin "Smitty" Smith... Tim Postgate's debut CD "Hoser City" was released in early January with a traditional launch party at Top O' The Senator.

EDMONTON • Most of the activity in Edmonton is under the sponsorship of the Edmonton Jazz Society and takes place at their club the Yardbird Suite. In February and April they presented local talent - **Inside Track** (February 19), the Edmonton big Band Society Big Band (March 5), and the **Chris Andrew/Doug Berner Quartet** (March 12). visitors included **Thomas Chapin** (February 26 & 27), The **Tana/Reid Quintet , Free Trade**, a Canadian All Star Band (March 26), and the on tour **Johnny Griffin Quartet** (April 8 & 9). There are also jam sessions every Tuesday night. For more information please contact The Edmonton Jazz Society, 10203 - 86 Avenue, Edmonton, AB T6E 2M2.

CALGARY • The Classic Jazz Guild of Calgary (who publish a monthly newsletter as well as running regular events with local jazz musicians) helped sponsor a March 18 concert featuring Marian McPartland's Trio and the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra.

VANCOUVER • The music, mostly due to the Coastal Jazz & Blues Society and the musicians themselves, continues to grow. The N.O.W. ***Hear It Now Festival*** (February 20-26) was a great success, and a profile of this organization will appear in the next issue of Coda. The orchestra music, composed and conducted by British bassist **Barry Guy**, was recorded for future release on Maya Records. The **Johnny Griffin** quartet appeared April 11th at the East Cultural Centre. Western Front featured a diverse series of events, as always, with Tim Brady (March 11), **Al Neil**'s 70th birthday party, entitled Dollarton Dada (March 26), **Steve Lacy** with singers Irene Aebi & Nicholas Isherwood (April 28), and the legendary British group **AMM** with Lou Gare, Eddie Prevost, Keith Rowe, John Tilbury and Rohan de Saram (April 29th). Poet **Jamie Reid** read form his book ***Prez***, accompanied by the Henry Boudin Trio, at the Malcolm Lowry Room. **JAZZ HOTLINE** (604) 682-0706.

FOOTNOTE: The Newfoundland ***Sound Symposium*** will take place from July 15-23. Information Tel (709) 737-8210/Fax (709) 753-4630.

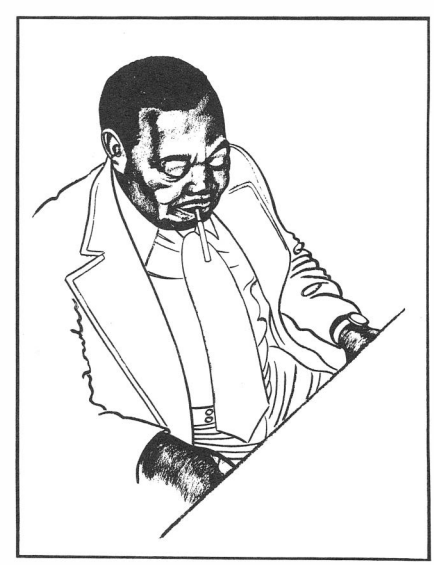
UNITED STATES

Jay McShann was honoured March 5 at the Federation of American Jazz Societies Convention in Kansas City. McShann received the Benny Carter Award for his contributions to jazz.

Louie Bellson, Ahmad Jamal and **Carmen McRae** received Jazz Master Fellowship Awards from the National Endowment for the Arts. Bellson and Jamal were presented with their awards at the Jazz Educators Convention in Boston January 14.

Niagara region jazz enthusiasts are being well served by Art Park's ***Jazz in the Church*** series. The spring program began with solo concerts by Dave Frishberg (March 24-26). Kenny Barron's Trio will be showcased April 21-23 with Joe Lovano's Quartet appearing May 19-21. Tom Harrell, Anthony Cox and Billy Hart will be heard with the saxophonist.

Jazz Festivals are notoriously late in announcing their programs but ***Art Park*** is an exception. They've already announced their lineup for the two day event to be held Labour Day Weekend (September 2-3). Friday night will feature Betty



JAY McSHANN • Artist Unknown

Carter, the J.J. Johnson Quintet and Pharoah Sanders Quartet. Saturday offers a wide variety of contemporary styles and range from the Latin rhythms of Poncho Sanchez, through the bebop of Bobby Watson to Clark Terry, Cyrus Chestnut and Chico Hamilton.

Gene Bertonicini and Michael Moore will be in Meadville April 15-17 for ***Allegheny Jazz Society*** concerts. On May 13-15 it will be the turn of singer Barbara Lea with instrumental support from Keith Ingham and Bob Reitmeier... June 13-18 are the dates for the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse All Star Summer Jazz Workshop and Festival. On hand will be Marshal Royal, Ed Shaughnessy, Snooky Young, Curtis Fuller, Leslie Drayton and Audrey Morrison... ***Jam 94*** is the umbrella for three days of jazz in Indianapolis July 1-3 at the Holiday Inn North. Featured musicians (there are 20 of them) include Howard Alden, Dan Barrett, Keeter Betts, Kenny Davern, Bob Havens, Eddie Higgins, George Masso and Bucky Pizzarelli.

The Dan Sandridge Quartet (which features ex Maynard Ferguson tenor saxophonist Chip McNeill) can be heard at Maxwell's in Blacksburg, Virginia... **Ray Anderson** was featured guest February 12 with Barbary Coast at a Dartmouth College concert... **Rob McConnell, Bobby Watson** and Nnenna Freelon participated in February, March and April events at University of South Florida, Tampa Bay... **Marilyn Crispell, Jane Ira Bloom** and **Amina Claudine Myers** were among the headliners of "The Women of The New Jazz Festival" held April 6-8 at Hothouse in Chicago... The **George Gruntz** Concert Band will be making the festival rounds this summer in Canada and the U.S. The band recorded a CD of Ray Anderson's compositions in January for Grammavision.

FESTIVALS

Our mail has mostly just produced dates! The Jamaica-Ocho Rios Festival (June 12-19)...Copenhagen Jazz Festival (July 1-10)...Istanbul International Festival (June 15-July 25) with Lalo Schifrin, Gateway, Toots Thielemans, Joe Henderson, Bheki Mseleku and Andy Sheppard among the jazz artists... The Montreux Festival begins July 1. There will be a two night program celebrating Verve Records 50th anniversary and Ray Brown, Grady Tate and James Morrison will also appear... From a pamphlet published by the Finnish Music Centre, Teosto and Finnish Jazz Federation we gleaned the astonishing news that this smallish country has more than fifteen festivals a year. The most famous are Pori (July 16-24) and Tampere Jazz Happening (November 4-6).

EURO NEWS

Tomas Frank, Thomas Clausen and **Niels Henning Orsted Pedersen** performed with Roy Haynes in Denmark in March in celebration of Haynes winning the 1994 Jazzpar prize. The concerts were recorded for TV and radio and recordings will follow... Finland's top jazz award was won this year by UMO Orchestra conductor **Markku Johansson**.

FMP's Jazz Workshop takes place April 27 to May 1 in Berlin's Akademie der Kunste and features five different groups... John Scofield, Paul Bley, Marc Johnson, John Surman and Tony Oxley were participants in Ravenna, Italy's ***Mister Jazz Festival*** April 1-3... Sicily's Brass Group presented the Modern Jazz Quartet (April 14), John Abercrombie (April 18) and Diane Schur (April 28) in Palermo... There's still time to make plans to attend ***Ellington 94*** in Stockholm May 19-22... Jimmy Heath, Kenny Barron, Rufus Reid, Keith Copeland and Sheila Jordan were in Interlaken, Switzerland April 5-8 for a jazz workshop program.

BLUES NEWS

Centrum's second Port Townsend Blues Workshop and Festival takes place June 13-19 with John Jackson, John Cephus, Jack Owens, Yank Rachell, John Dee Holman and Phil Wiggins among the participants... ***Bluesland: A Portrait in American Music*** is a new BMG Video which includes clips of Son House, Muddy Waters, Bessie Smith, T-Bone Walker and Dinah Washington.

New CDs from ***Delmark*** include reissues of early Little Walter material, and Eddie Cleanhead Vinson date which is also on Black and Blue, Yank Rachell's electric "Chicago Style" date and Edith Wilson's 1975 sessions in the classic style..."Catching Up With The Blues" is Johnny Copeland's new ***Verve*** release. An all star backing band gives it extra panache... Charles Brown continues his comeback career with "Just A Lucky So And So" on ***Rounder***.

VIDEOS

The recently seen PBS Benny Goodman documentary is now available on a ***Columbia*** video titled "Adventures in the Kingdom of Swing"..."The Story of Jazz" is a ninety minute video from ***BMG***... ***Shanachie*** is issuing a series of videos from the legendary 1962 TV show "Jazz Scene U.S.A." Cannonball Adderley, Teddy Edwards, Frank Rosolino, Stan Kenton, Shelly Manne, Shorty Rogers, Phineas Newborn and Jimmy Smith are featured on the first four videos.

LITERATURE

Too Marvellous For Words is the title of a new biography of Art Tatum by James Lester. It is published by Oxford University Press who has also made available in paperback such recent books as

JANE IRA BLOOM • Photograph by Peter Danson

VIDEOS • LITERATURE • RECORDINGS

West Coast Jazz and ***King of Ragtime***.

The history of Gennett Records is the subject of Rick Kennedy's ***Jelly Roll, Bix and Hoagy*** - an Indiana University publication.

Small presses are offering jazz enthusiasts important books which involve research in areas beyond the scope of major commercial houses. ***Bill Russell's American Music*** is an extraordinary account of the recording activity of Russell in the 1940s. His recordings of Bunk Johnson, George Lewis and other New Orleans musicians changed the shape of the music as well as giving the artists international recognition. This book, assembled by Mike Hazeldine from Bill Russell's sessions. The recorded output is then shown with all known issues. For example, the jazz bush telegraph must have been operating perfectly in 1944 when Russell began recording Bunk Johnson at the San Jacinto Hall. Alfred Lion spent the week there as Russell's timekeeper and even John Hammond put in an appearance! Included with the book is a CD containing selections not available on the other Am CDs.

James M. Doran's ***Herman Chittison: A Bio-Discography*** is an IAJRC publication. The 120 page book is divided between interview material about Chittison and a discography of his recordings. The book is well illustrated with photographs from Chittison's personal and professional life.

Stan Getz is a 47 page book in appreciation of his recorded work by Ron Kirkpatrick. The author's observations on the recordings enhances the readers appreciation of the music and will motivate a re-listen of the tenor saxophonists' many recordings under discussion. ***Stan Getz*** is published by Zany Publications, 6 Kings Circus, Bath BA1 2EW, England and costs £4.99 (UK) or £5.99 (elsewhere).

Set for publication in June is Graham Lock's ***Chasing The Vibrations*** - a collection of interviews with creative musicians. It's to be published by Stride Publications, 11 Sylvan Road, Exeter, Devon EX4 6EW England and is distributed in the UK by Password Books Ltd... Francois Postif is writing a book on Thelonious Monk... A third and updated edition of Maurice J. Summerfield's ***The Jazz Guitar - Its Evolution, Its Players and Personalities*** has been published by Ashley Mark. This edition includes 125 new entries in the biographical section. It's an essential reference work.

Specialised discographies are the lifeline of jazz researchers. They augment, add to and correct the efforts of earlier discographers. They also provide a shape to musician's professional lives. ***Chet: The Music of Chesney Henry Baker*** by Thorbjorn Sjogren is a much expanded hard cover discography of the trumpeter's output published by Jazz Media in Denmark. An interview with Chet, a biography and photographs enhance the value of this unique book.

A massive five volume discography of ***Mercury Records*** is the latest work by Michel Ruppli. His collaborator in this work is Ed Novitsky and their research in the Polygram files has produced a remarkable amount of detailed work on the recordings by this major label. Volumes one (1945-1956), and two (1956-1964) and three (1964-1969) contain most of the recordings of interest to jazz listeners. Volume four covers more recent popular recordings and classical music while volume five contains indexes of recordings and artists. This book like other Ruppli discographies is available in hard cover format from Greenwood Press, 88 Post Road West, P.O. Box 507, Westport, CT 06881.

RECORDINGS

Lakeshore Jazz of Chicago is a new jazz label out of the Windy City. They sent out a sampler featuring the music on their first five releases. Featured artists are pianist Bradley Williams, drummer Jeff Stitely, singer Jackie Allen, bassist Marlene Rosenberg and a collective known as Byron Febbs.

Capri Records. So too is tenor saxophonist Fred Hess' "Sweet Thunder".

Chiaroscuro showcases the talents of pianists Mike Jones and Bill Charlap in "Oh Look At Me Now" and "Along With Me". They've also reissued Scott Hamilton's 1977 collaboration with Bob Wilber and

The brief announcement in the last Coda about the initial release on CD ***(ECCM)*** of the music of the Kenny Clarke / Francy Boland band created a lot of interest. The music on the two CDs spans the years 1963-1967 and more than half the selections are previously unreleased. The 1963 material was issued on Atlantic/CBS and there are selections from the MPS lps "Sax No End", "All Smiles" and "More Smiles". This limited edition set comes complete with a booklet and is stored in a metal case.

Veteran violinist Claude Williams was recorded "Live at J's" in 1989 with Ronnie Mathews, James Cicillo, Al McKibbon and Grady Tate/Akira Tana. Much of this music, an excellent showcase for the violinist, is now available on two ***Arhoolie*** CDs... Phil Wilson's "The Wizard of Oz Suite" is on all the music from the Ruby Braff/ George Barnes New School concert - ten selections were never issued before.

Concord debuted two vocalists in their recent release. Roseanna Vitro is a transplanted Texan who works in New York. Miyuki Koga is a popular Japanese artist. John Bunch, John Webber and Chuck Riggs are heard with guitarist Chris Flory in "City Life".

Wynton Kelly, Paul Bascomb, George Freeman and Frank Walton all have newly repackaged CD releases on ***Delmark*** who have also dug back in time with historic issues by Bunk Johnson (The Last Testament Session of 1947 which was on Columbia originally), clarinetist Clem Raymond with Dick Oxtot's Golden Age Jazz Band a 1970s session with Little Brother Montgomery. Delmark has also

CLAUDE WILLIAMS • Photograph by Rick Kendrick

issued newly recorded CDs by popular Chicago artists Chuck Hedges and the Dixie Stompers.

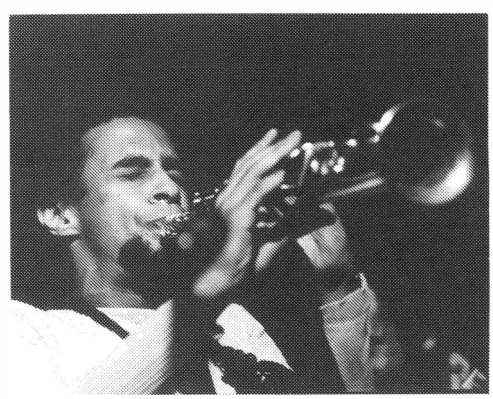
The Japanese based ***DIW*** label is a great supporter of American jazz. A few of their titles are being more widely distributed through US Sony (CBS/Columbia). They put their muscle behind a midwest tour in February featuring "The Key Players" - Harold Mabern, James Williams, Mulgrew Miller and Geoff Keezer who are also known as "The Contemporary Piano Ensemble". Their newest recording which also includes Donald Brown, the group's fifth member, was issued in conjunction with the tour - which missed most major cities!

Saxophonists Ron Holloway and Ronnie Cuber have been signed by ***Fantasy*** for recordings to be issued on Milestone... ***Jazz Alliance*** is busy releasing the best of Marian McPartland's "Piano Jazz" on CD. Out recently are programs with Eubie Blake and Dizzy Gillespie. Among those in the works is one by Red Richards... Loren Schoenberg's 1992 Jazz Orchestra recording of "Manhattan Work Song" is out on ***Jazz Heritage***... Sheila Jordan and Mark Murphy collaborated on the ***Muse*** release "One for Junior".

New World Records is distributing four CDs funded by the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest fund from its Counter-Currents Jazz Series. Between March and June CDs will appear by Joey Baron, Mario Pavone, Ed Jackson and Human Feel... ***Novus***, the jazz arm of BMG, has issued Mitchell Forman's "Now and Then: A Tribute to Bill Evans" and the Roy Hargrove/Antonio Hart "Tokyo Sessions"...Kenny Barron, Abbey Lincoln, Hank Jones and McCoy Tyner all have new releases on ***Polygram***'s jazz labels.

Buffalo saxophonist Bobby Militello has a live CD recording "Easy to Love" on ***Positive Music Records***... 20 more titles are now available from ***Denon***'s Savoy reissue program. They include piano dates by Erroll Garner, Hank Jones, and Valdo Williams, small band dates with Stan Getz, Eddie Bert, Yusef Lateef and John Jenkins as well as Eddie Condon's "Ringside at Condon's"...Los Angeles ***Starline Productions*** has issued Johnny Guarnieri's "Echoes of Ellington" along with CDs featuring Anita O'Day and Page Cavanaugh.

New on ***Storyville*** are three CDs featuring the 1993 Jazzpar winners: Tommy Flanagan, Steen Vig and Kim Kristensen... From Sweden come Krister Anderson's "About Time" on ***Flash Music***, pianist Susanna Lindeborg's "Mwendo Dawa" on ***LJ Records***, volume 5 of Maxine Sullivan on Kenneth and CD reissues on ***Phontastic*** of Bengt Hallberg and the Harlem Jazz Camels... Switzerland's ***Jazz Connaisseur*** has issued "My Pal Basie" - 1989 recordings by Nat Pierce with Irving Stokes, Jimmy Woode and Oliver Jackson.



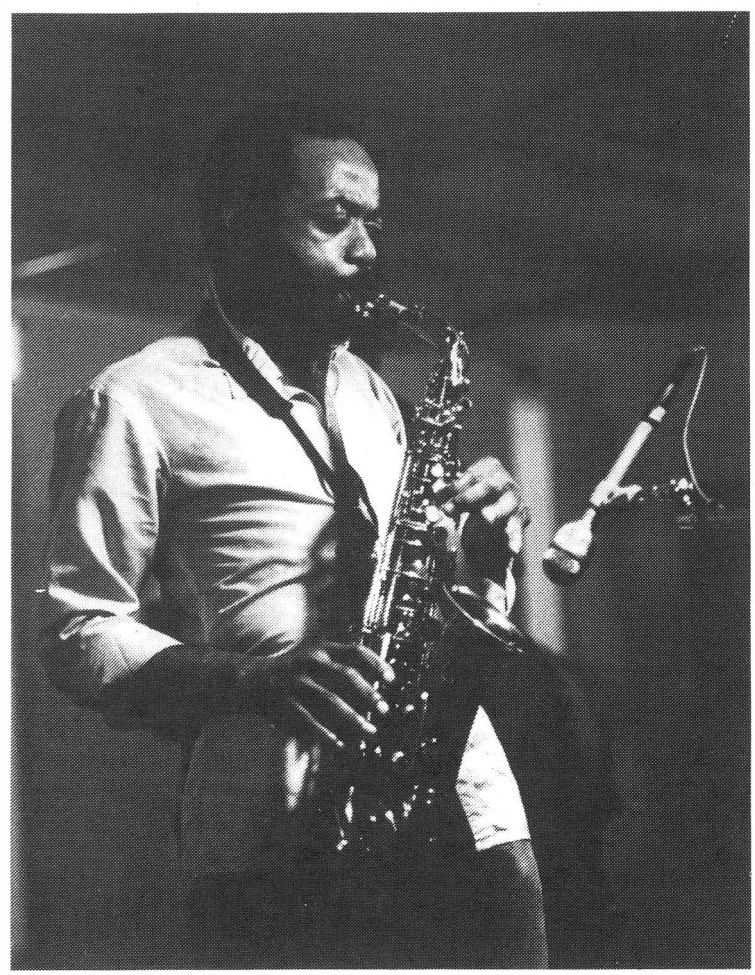
The ***Creative Works Orchestra*** has issued a CD of its performances at Willisau and other venues (Mike Wider, Postfach 5330, CH6000, Luzern 5, Switzerland)...Keshavan Maslak, Maggie Nicols, Cecil Taylor and Marilyn Crispell are featured on new ***Leo*** CDs... Newly issued on ***Unit Records*** is Peter Seiler's "Le Chauffeur". Three recent CDs on the British based ***Maya Records***, Bramleys House, Shudy Camps, Cambridge CB1, feature Barry Guy, Irene Schweizer, Evan Parker, Konrad Bauer, Barre Phillips and Paul Lytton (Elsie Jo), Barry Guy solo (Fizzles), and Maya Homburger baroque violin, performing the solo works of Georg Philipp Telemann.

PASSING NOTES: Vibraphonist **Johnny Rae** died September 4 in San Francisco... Trumpeter **Jimmy Deucher** September 9 in Dundee, Scotland... Veteran Washington DC broadcaster **Felix Grant** October 12... IAJRC President and author **Bob Hilbert** October 22 in Florida... Singer **Adelaide Hall** in England November 7... Trumpeter/bandleader **Erskine Hawkins** November 11... Blues guitarist/singer **Albert Collins** November 24... Saxophonist **Carter Jefferson** December 9 in Krakow, Poland. He was 49... Bassist **Eddie Calhoun** January 27 in Paradise Lake, Michigan. He was 72... Trombonist **Bobby Pratt** January 7 in New York. □

CARTER JEFFERSON • Photograph by Gerard Futrick

NOTES FROM THE BASEMENT

CHARLES TYLER • TRIGGER • TCHANGODEI • ARCHIE SHEPP • MAL WALDRON DAVID MURRAY • SUN RA • KEN VANDERMARK • MARTY KRYSTALL BUELL NEIDLINGER • ROOTS • **RECORDINGS REVIEWED BY DAVID LEE**



THE WAY I HEARD IT, YEARS AGO a magazine that I will call ***Audio Review*** had such a reputation for the quality of its record reviews, that the editors decided to do a feature on "our writers—and their stereo systems." The emphasis of the magazine was on hardware and they presumed that state-of-the-art musical journalism must depend, inevitably, on state-of-the-art audio equipment.

However, after quizzing a few of their ace reviewers, they discovered that the ***Audio Review*** correspondents were listening to lps on Sears Roebuck mono TV/hi-fi consoles with fake mahogany finishes; Radio Shack turntables plugged into the amplifiers of clock radios; portable record players with pictures of Micky Mouse on the speaker; in short, the same kind of haywire, one-step-from-the-trashcan rubbish that you and I have been listening to music on for our entire lives. Instead of acoustically-tiled audio dens in his suburban basements, the typical reviewer listened to records with streetcars rumbling by and drunks arguing on the sidewalk below his window, while his wife watched TV in the next room. And he still loved the music he heard, knew what worked and what didn't, and could tell whether the bass player liked Charles Mingus better than Scott LaFaro, or vice versa.

In short, they proved that high fidelity was bullshit. They contradicted everything that ***Audio Review*** stood for. The project was quietly buried.

Lately someone who was leaving town, for reasons that are beyond me, gave me their CD player as a parting gift. I mentioned this to Bill Smith and within ten days received eight CDs in the mail with a request to review them; in fact to review them as if they had some sort of unifying features in common. Of course they do; essentially this is all contemporary jazz music, played by Americans.

I only have time to write at night after the kids are in bed. I don't think my wife really needs to hear me feeding CDs like silver dollars into our hand-me-down machine, so I've taken the CD player downstairs and plugged it into my cassette recorder. For you technophiles, the CD player is a Technics SL-P101. The cassette recorder is a Panasonic "Ambience" with two built-in microphones and four 3-inch speakers. Both models black in colour.

CHARLES TYLER

Folly Fun Music Magic
ADDA CT 1941

I've always liked Charles Tyler. He has a great saxophone tone and his records are well thought-out. This record starts with his *Ride of the Phantom Politician*, based on Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries," spinning out a beautiful 10-minute fairly-tonal free improvisation. It puts this all-too-familiar theme in perspective, if anything more kindly than Elmer Fudd using it to chant "Kill de wabbit" in that great Bugs Bunny cartoon. Wagner would no doubt be delighted to know that one hundred years after his death, a black American musician would collaborate with four Europeans to improvise on one of his themes. I'd rather listen to this than the original! Tyler's *Just Me Luck* makes the style clear: languorous melodies embraced by tonal, rather than chordal improvisation. The band is excellent and their rapport with Tyler superb. Remi Charmasson guitar, Christian Zagaria violin, Bernard Santacruz bass and Jean-Pierre Jullian drums. There's a misogynist folk song which, this being a CD, it's easy to skip over, but don't skip over the whole record; to do so would be to allow, to paraphrase René Char in the liner notes, "the essential to be menaced by the insignificant." Check this one out.

CHARLES TYLER • Photograph by Gerard Futrick

DAVID MURRAY • Photograph by Gerard Futrick

TRIGGER

All These Things
POGUS 21006-2
A document of three years of Saturday-morning improvisations in New York, TRIGGER seduces by its instrumentation alone. Fred Lonberg-Holm plays cello and banjo, Paul Hoskin contrabass, and Eb and bass clarinets, and Leslie Ross bassoon, chinese shawms and musette. The listener who enjoys free improvisation might find a certain lack of focus—but then, Trigger has no leader, no virtuoso players, and plays no compositions—but might well be won over by texture alone. And texture counts for a lot.

TCHANGODEI / ARCHIE SHEPP / MAL WALDRON

Three For Freedom - Volume 3
VOLCANIC RECORDS 18018
There must be bass players or drummers out there who wonder, as I do, at this novel direction taken in enlarging a piano/saxophone duo to a trio: add another piano. In some strange way it works. This session feels, to say the least, very freely arranged. Its virtuosity lies not in technical displays but in the sheer relaxation with which the trio get into a groove, play with it and exit (or don't exit; *Driftin Blues* ends with a fade). Shepp is in wonderful form and whenever he's playing the pianists are completely overshadowed by the power of his tone and attack. It's not surprising that the differences in Tchangodei's and Waldron's rhythmic senses are glaringly apparent in their duet; after all, Mal Waldron's the only pianist in the world who consistently plays behind his own beat. However, out of their differences they create a likeable, somewhat clunky tapestry of chords and rhythms which, to their credit, they never even try to make swing. A very odd record.

ARCHIE SHEPP QUINTET

Bird Fire / Tribute To Charlie Parker
FD MUSIC 151962 (IMPRO 05)
Shepp is better matched on "Bird Fire", a 1979 Paris session with Everett Hollins trumpet, Siegfried Kessler piano, Bob Cunningham bass and Clifford Jarvis drums. *Parker's Mood* is a long jam on the basic 12-bar blues. There must have been many times in his career that Charlie Parker wished he had a band this good to play with. FD Music is French which will be frustrating to North American readers, but surely there are importers who carry this CD.

DAVID MURRAY QUARTET

Let The Music Take You
FD MUSIC 152002 (Previously issued as MARGE 04)
After Shepp and the New York music of the sixties came the leap into new compositional structures of the AACM/BAG generation, and after them came David Murray. Murray's rise to prominence was prompted less by virtuosity or innovation than by sheer aggression, both musically and professionally. There was nothing new in his musical concept, but his tenor style, heavily influenced by Shepp, Pharoah Sanders and especially, Albert Ayler, was very exciting. When he began touring Europe in earnest, there seemed to be a new David Murray record every two or three weeks. This is the period "Let the Music Take You" is from, and it still seems a superior example of Murray's music, as it did at the time (1978) when it first came out on lp. Murray has always been consistent in the quality of musicians he appears with, and here the band is Butch Morris cornet, George Brown drums and the fabulous Johnny Dyani on bass. On these four tunes, from 9 1/2 to over 12 minutes long, the horn soloists take long solos which don't always end before they run out of ideas; not through lack of energy or initiative, but because these are talented young people playing at the very limits of their abilities, which process is in itself exciting. When they're groping for ideas, which isn't too often, you can always concentrate on Dyani, one of the four or five best bassists of his time.

SUN RA ARKESTRA

Friendly Galaxy
LEO RECORDS CD LR 188
It's tempting to start a Sun Ra review with one's own personal epitaph to this great man, but one glance at the liner notes is enough to tell me that, in death as in life, Sun Ra got there first. Graham Lock's liner notes consist of excerpts from interviews with Ra, whose cosmic meditations can be read as a fascinating paradigm of the artist's concern with process in a market hungry for end products: "It's not about life, it's not about death. It's about being." As with all artforms that contain large elements of satire, the music of Sun Ra was largely concerned with process, which meant that in live concert it was electrifying, and that by definition a recording could never capture what was going on. Fortunately, however, there are many recordings, and some of them, like this one, are delightful. Despite

the expertise of other large contemporary big bands, it is in hearing the most avant garde of them all, the Arkestra, play *Prelude To A Kiss* or *Blue Lou*, that the listener feels what it must have been like to hear, say, Duke Ellington circa 1940, and when that same quality—the freedom of texture and improvisation combined with the ability to swing—is heard here immediately afterwards on *Lights On A Satellite*, the largeness of the Arkestra's accomplishment is made clear. A beautiful recording. Recorded live in 1991.

THE VANDERMARK QUARTET

Big Head Eddie
PLATYPUS RECORDS PP 001

Uh oh—white guys. This means trouble for sure. Like it or not, now that jazz is back with us in the form of suit-and-tie fifties hard bop—hey, I'm *glad* to see it happening, I just have no need to listen to it—it's up to bands like this—Ken Vandermark reeds, Todd Colburn guitar, Kent Kessler bass and Michael Zerang drums—to take familiar envelopes (in this case the Ornette-styled head/free improvisation/head format) and push them past the boundaries of good taste. This has to go on constantly because these forms are so powerful that they can assimilate the most extreme stylists (check out how beautifully Marshall Allen's alto playing suits *Prelude To a Kiss* on the Sun Ra disk). The pivot on which all this turns is Kent Kessler's acoustic bass, pumping away courageously behind raucous saxophone, percussion and a most electric guitar player. In general I preferred the improvisations to the heads; this band is at its best when it's at its freest and noisiest.

THE MARTY KRYSTALL SPATIAL QUARTET

Seeing Unknown Colours
M-A MO15A

All I know about Marty Krystall is that he is a southern California tenor player who every now and then issues an excellent recording, often with Buell Neidlinger on bass. He doesn't seem to tour much, although this CD was recorded in Japan in 1990 with Hugh Schick trumpet, Yasushi Yoneki bass and Takumi Iino drums. It's a mixture of originals by the horn players, some Monk and Ellington, and Papago (an Arizona/Mexico First Nations tribe) melodies arranged for jazz quartet. Just as the Vandermark Quartet constantly pushes the boundaries of good taste, this band stays firmly within them with playing that is consistently lyrical and beautiful, to almost a devotional extent, even on *Humph* (speaking of avant garde, has anyone surpassed Monk yet?—jeezus he wrote some strange music!). One doesn't need to know too much about Marty Krystall except that his music is incredibly sweet and likeable. The liner notes are all about the culture of the Papago people, and his kids. And he has a great, molasses-smooth tenor tone—how can you not like this guy?

BUELL NEIDLINGER QUARTET

Big Drum
K2B2 3069

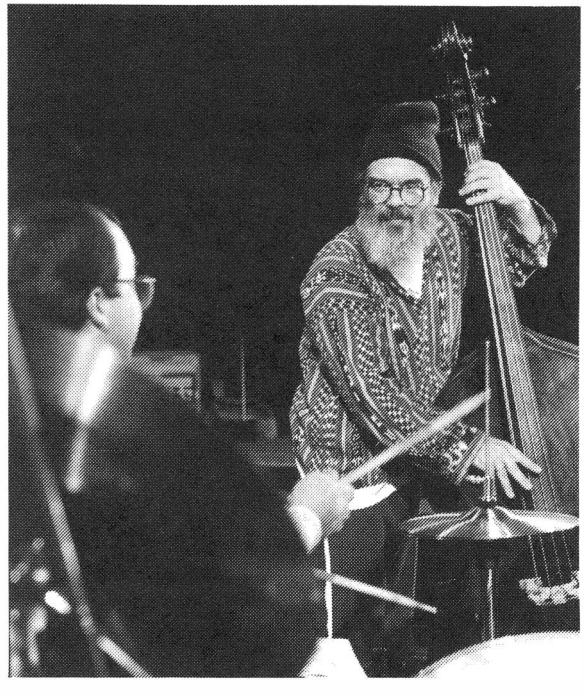
Krystall and Schick again, with Vinnie Colaiuta drums and Buell Neidlinger on bass. After participating in seminal recordings with Steve Lacy, Cecil Taylor and Archie Shepp, Neidlinger left New York some years ago for classical music and the Los Angeles studios, driven no doubt by the desire to make a living from music without facing starvation every day. For all his years in the studio, his group music is remarkably untidy and I mean this as a compliment. There is a genuinely improvised feel not just about the solos, but about the whole dynamics of each piece, and the level of musicianship is so high that the players themselves forget about how good they are, or aren't, in favour of just relaxing and having a good time. The test of course, is whether the listener has a good time. The short *Sam's Blues*, a bass feature, is a good example. Neidlinger just plays the 12-bar blues for its own sake, with a big solid tone and singleminded attack, and in doing so reminds you what a beautiful form it is. The whole disk is like that. The liner notes are in the form of an open letter by Neidlinger to Herbie Nichols, the great pianist/composer who passed away in 1963.

ROOTS

Stablemates
IN & OUT IOR 7021-2

In general, "Roots" represents a generation of musicians who, having taken jazz to its freest and most extreme, looked back over their shoulders at the music's history, and saw most of their audience sitting there, waiting for them to return. Arthur Blythe, Nathan Davis, Sam Rivers and Chico Freeman saxophones, Don Pullen piano, Santi DeBriano bass and Idris Muhammad drums. When you hear this group play Oliver Nelson's *Stolen Moments* or Benny Golson's *Stablemates* it's evident—as in hearing Sun Ra play Ellington—that some unknowable historic cycle has come around again, because these tunes swing in a way that they never have since they were first played over thirty years ago. Swing of course is a mixture of extreme freedom and extremely tight discipline, and it's interesting to hear how this band of players from the "free" school can swing where other, more conventionally-oriented musicians never seem to do more than keep time. The horn arrangements are excellent, and help to buoy up interest between an awful lot of long saxophone solos. The rhythm section is superb; for my own tastes the star of the date is Don Pullen, whose dedication to George Adams is not only the most wholly satisfying composition on the disk (although, despite the strong contribution of the horn arrangements elsewhere, this is a quartet with only Blythe on alto), but features a piano solo whose joyousness is a fitting tribute to a tenor player who, as far as I can recall, never played a sombre note.

DAVID LEE is a biographer (Paul Bley), a writer of fiction, and a bassist. He lives on the Sunshine coast of British Columbia, Canada.



PETER ERSKINE & BUELL NEIDLINGER • Photograph by W. Patrick Hinely

LADY DAY & FRIENDS

JAZZ LITERATURE REVIEWED BY AL VAN STARREX

LADY DAY: The Many Faces Of Billie Holiday • By **Robert O'Meally** • (192 pp. Arcade Publishing, New York.$29.95
A LESTER YOUNG READER • Edited By **Lewis Porter** • 229 pp. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington D.C. $19.95
THE NIGHT PEOPLE: The Jazz Life Of Dicky Wells • As told to **Stanley Dance** • 229 pp. Same Press. $15.95
A CALL TO ASSEMBLY: The Autobiography of a Musical Storyteller • By **Willie Ruff** • 423 pp. Viking , NY. $24.95
SIDEMAN: The Long Gig Of W.O. Smith • 319 pp. Rutledge Hill Press, Nashville, Tenn. $17.95

BILLIE HOLIDAY • Photograph By William Gottlieb

FRESH ARCHIVAL MATERIAL on Billie Holiday, collected by one of her most ardent fans, throws a new light on the legendary singer's life and artistry. The valuable material forms the basis of ***Lady Day:*** The Many Faces of Billie Holiday by Robert O'Meally that purports to look "beyond previously exploitive accounts of Lady Day's life."

This long time passionate admirer-student was Linda Kuehl who, in the early 1970s, dropped everything to devote the rest of her life collecting data for a proposed biography of her idol. Kuehl was thorough: she spent hundreds of hours — in bars, clubs, cars and at kitchen tables — interviewing dozen of people who had known Holiday — fellow musicians, family members, former neighbours, lovers, friends, doctors, lawyers, pimps, hookers, drug dealers, narcotics agents, managers and maids, users and abusers.

She interviewed the whole Count Basie Band, John Hammond, Teddy Wilson, Buck Clayton and other key figures in Billie's career. But more important, from a biographical standpoint, were interviews with people who lived in Baltimore in the twenties and thirties who remembered Holiday as either Eleanore Fagan or Eleanora Gough.

Thus in direct contrast to Billie's ghostwritten autobiography ***Lady Sings The Blues***, documents signed by Holiday's mother obtained by Kuehl attest to her daughter's birth in Philadelphia and not Baltimore as had been previously believed. There is also proof that her parents were 17 and 19 when Billie was born, not 13 and 15 as ***Lady Sings The Blues*** suggests in the opening line. ("Mom and Pop were just a couple of kids when they got married, he was 18, she was 16 and I was 3.")

In addition to the interviews Kuehl acquired loads of Billie's personal items — letters, snapshots, bankbooks, cancelled cheques, rare press clippings, court records, official documents (including a passport), shopping lists (Billie was a terrific cook), bar tabs, bills, memos and set lists scrawled in the singer's broad handwriting to remind her piano player and herself of an evening's anticipated sequence of songs.

But Linda Kuehl died in 1973, before she could start work on her book. Over a decade later, at the recommendation of jazz historian Martin Williams, this mountain of Kuehl's research — stuffed into filing cabinets — was purchased by Toby Byron Multiprises, who commissioned Robert O'Meally, an English professor at Barnard College, New York, to compile this book.

O'Meally, who is not a jazz critic, does a workmanlike job, while imposing his own critique of Billie Holiday's music and lifestyle to disinter "the many faces of Lady Day." (She had so many looks, moods and attitudes that pictures taken of her during the same session or appearance show almost completely different women.)

He also uses other sources — including John Chilton's excellent 1975 biography ***Billie's Blues*** — to bolster his contention that many of the faces Billie wore were made-up, invented and, like her music, fantastic compositions: "In the roles she created through her music she faced the world not as a victim, but as a towering hero ...Through her music... she arranged to secure the power she so desperately sought."

O'Meally looks beyond the conventional portrait of Holiday as star-as-victim, heroin addict, bedraggled dupe of men who kept her singing to support themselves. It was an image fostered by Billie's own autobiography ***Lady Sings The Blues***, the basis of myths and movies, generally bad. (Correspondence obtained by Kuehl indicates that a month after Billie's death, manager Joe Glaser tried to get her story on

film.) The book (based on conversations between Billie and writer William Duffy), says O'Meally, was "a dream book — a collection of Holiday's wishes and lies," and should be interpreted as such — a medium of publicity and quick cash.

Well packaged and visually impressive, though its laissez faire attitude to scholarship is unsettling, it should be seen as much as an accolade to Lady Day as to the work of her dedicated fan Linda Kuehl, who helped in its genesis. She should at least have received co-author credit or her name on the cover. All she gets is a shared acknowledgement (along with 'student researchers' at the author's college, assorted typists and the like), in small print in the back and a secondary dedication of sorts, below the author's family. To all intents and purposes she remains virtually anonymous. There is no index.

One hopes that, in after life at least, Billie Holiday found the peace that so long eluded her, and Linda Kuehl finally got to meet her idol. It would be a happy ending to this *Saddest Tale* (a blues Billie prophetically sang on film for Duke Ellington early in her career). This book is a tribute to both determined women.

A LESTER YOUNG READER

Lester Young was Billie Holiday's closest friend, her favourite musician; it was he who called her Lady Day while she, in turn, dubbed him Pres (z), the President. His emotional playing complemented her heartfelt singing and their lives took similar tragic turns. When Billie was barred from singing at Lester's funeral, because his widow feared a scene, she broke down and cried. A few months later, Lady Day, at 44, followed her President...

Like Billie, Lester Young continues to be listened to — in a multitude of reissue material, from CD compilations to video film clips; written about, taken apart, analyzed, and argued over ad infinitum.

Thirty six pieces on Prez have been collected in a new anthology of Young the man and his music titled ***A Lester Young Reader*** by Lewis Porter, author of one of the most comprehensive biographies on Young (1985). The articles, from a variety of sources, are divided into three parts: biographical articles, interviews, and discussions of his music. Rare unpublished photographs add to the appeal.

An article by Phil Schaap and previously unpublished interviews with Lee Young (Lester's brother) by Patricia Willard shed new light on Lester's early years, with the Young family's touring show and later (after Basie) with Lee's own band. An elegant essay by Whitney Balliett and a touching portrait of an encounter with Prez at a party in his honour at Birdland in 1958 by Dan Morgenstern are high points in this well-balanced anthology.

Not all the pieces are laudatory. There is a snide attack on Young after a 1958 Jazz At The Philharmonic tour by a reviewer in Melody Maker deploring "the years of deterioration" in Lester's music and personality: "Lester Young is no longer the President. The mantle of honour has slipped from his shoulders, and his greatness lives only in his past... On stage he is a big empty shell of a man. Offstage he is a whisky drinker who makes a lot of witty remarks... a zombie who was once President."

In all fairness Melody Maker carried an opposing view of the same JATP concert and its star by Derek Young. It's title "He Holds His Office Graciously" tells it all.

Of thousands of words on Lester Young, which Porter has impartially compiled without taking sides on issues, the most compelling are those of Young himself, in interviews done at various phases of his career. In a 1949 Down Beat interview by Pat Harris, Prez talks about himself and copycats ('The trouble with most musicians today is that they are copycats.')

To interviewer Chris Albertson in 1958 Young described why he was fired by Fletcher Henderson because he didn't play like Coleman Hawkins. Young's phrase "You got to be original man!" appears in a 1946 piece under that name by Allan Morrison — the first article anywhere to be devoted entirely to Lester Young.

Some writers try to postulate a bitter rivalry between Lester Young and Coleman Hawkins ('his nemesis' as one critic describes it) but the fact remains that the two admired and respected each other, though their styles were dissimilar. (Hawk, Young told Albertson, was the man 'who woke you up and let you know there *was* a tenor saxophone...')

As to being called the President, Young settled the issue in the final paragraph of the legendary interview given shortly before his death to French writer Francois Postif and published here for the first time in its full unexpurgated form. Asked what he thought about Coleman Hawkins, Young replied: "As far as I'm concerned, I think Coleman Hawkins was the President first, right? ...As far as myself, I think I am the second one. No braggadocio, you know. I don't talk like that." And Prez he remains to this day.

THE NIGHT PEOPLE

Dicky Wells, one of the most evocative of trombonists, joined Count Basie's band during Billie Holiday's brief stint with that group; he was hired for six weeks and — a measure of his talent — stayed for eleven years, becoming one of the key players in that swinging organization.

Wells' laconic "talking" style, that has never been imitated successfully or unsuccessfully, is also evident in ***The Night People***, Wells' vivid account of his life and times as a jazz musician, as told to Swing Age sage Stanley Dance. It has been reprinted — and deservedly so — in a new expanded edition that is compulsory reading for any jazz fan or scholar. (An introduction by Martin Williams points out that stylistically the book "stands virtually alone in jazz literature.") Introductory chapter material by Dance, a new up-to-date discography by Chris Sheridan and a critical essay by Andre Hodier (who describes Wells as "majesty personified, in style and particularly tone") are added attractions.

Wisely, the expressive down-to-earth colloquial language of Wells and his associates (where quoted) are retained and his salty evocations of life "on the road" with various bands and conversations enroute — in a virtually self contained chapter entitled "Bus Talk" — make compelling reading.

In the first chapter, Wells offers an unusual picture of jazz developing outside the main centres of New Orleans, Chicago, New York, Kansas City. Names later to become famous are encountered in what might be termed the sticks. There is for instance a vivid picture of the legendary Jimmy Harrison — Wells' main influence on trombone — playing in a Louisville hotel with only a pianist.

Born in Centerville, Tennessee, Wells was raised in Louisville after his parents died. There he joined the Sunday school band of the Booker T. Washington Center (where Jonah Jones and Helen Humes were later alumni) to start his musical career.

As he developed his musical skills Wells worked with a variety of bands — Lloyd Scott, Benny Carter, Charlie Johnson, Fletcher Henderson, Teddy Hill, Earl Hines, Sy Oliver, Ray Charles — besides Basie. But the Count and his distinguished bandsmen made the greatest impression on Wells — and vice versa. There was a bond of deep musical affection between Wells and Basie who (says Dance) appreciated better than most the meaning of the "talking phrases" with which Wells accompanied Jimmy Rushing's blues. And Wells gives an insider's view of the band in what is considered its greatest period.

Wells, who made several trips to Europe (and made the first records under his name there in 1937), spent the last years of the 1960s, when jazz was in the doldrums and gigs were scarce, working in a stock room on Wall Street. He had joined the Day People.

Tragically, he was mugged twice in Brooklyn and twice in New York, the last time so viciously as to hospitalize him with suspected brain damage. But he recovered and was able to play his horn again and, with Dance's help, recount this exceptional narrative just as evocatively as his horn.

A CALL TO ASSEMBLY

Willie Ruff may not be a Lester Young in terms of fame but he comes with impressive credentials in music, straight or swinging. Possibly the only musician to play french horn as a primary instrument in jazz, he is best known as one half of the Mitchell-Ruff Duo, one of the most unusual and longest running combos in jazz.

His playing with Count Basie, Duke Ellington (who performed a suite written for Ruff's french horn by Billy Strayhorn), Lionel Hampton, Dizzy Gillespie and on Miles Davis' albums **Miles Ahead** and **Porgy and Bess** may strike familiar chords among fans. But he is as well known in Russia — where he was the first jazz musician to lecture and play there since the 1920s, and Shanghai, where he astonished Chinese musicians with his demonstrations on the art of improvising. And once he gigged with a remote tribe of Ba Benzele Pygmies in the deepest reaches of the African jungle...

But it is as a musical storyteller that Ruff comes through most vividly, in music (if you heard him) and in a new book of his adventures in music called ***A Call To Assembly***.

LESTER YOUNG • Photograph By Daniel Filipacchi

Born on Labour Day 1931 to a poor black family in rural Sheffield, Alabama, Willie Ruff learned about music any which way he could, including Mrs. Nance the solo bass drummer of the Baptist Church "whose beat gave her right arm the churning motion of a set of steam locomotive wheels."

At fourteen, to better his education and way of life, he lied about his age and joined the Army. It was the beginning of Ruff's journey of self-discovery for it was in the services that he learned about the proud tradition of black men in the U.S. military — and the racism that kept them segregated. It was also where Ruff began his musical apprenticeship: he taught himself the french horn to play in the Army's all black band, which had an over supply of drummers. He also met Dwike Mitchell who taught him the bass and eventually became his musical partner.

Earning a diploma, Ruff entered Yale in 1949. He studied classical music, played in the New Haven Symphonic Orchestra ('Dress British, think Yiddish' one professor instructed) and met his future wife. Ruff went on to receive his master's degree in music at Yale, but instead of accepting an invitation to play horn with the Buffalo Philharmonic, he opted for a career in jazz and teaching. Which is how he came to join Lionel Hampton's band at the Apollo and embark on a life in jazz, much of it with the highly acclaimed and long lived Mitchell-Ruff Duo.

After a year of playing in clubs, opposite the likes of Basie, Gillespie and Miles Davis — all of whom thought the Mitchell-Ruff Duo was something exceptional — Ruff began to expand his musical horizons, embarking on tours of the college circuit at home and eventually abroad, teaching young audiences about jazz in specially designed programs (and learning several languages — Russian, Chinese, Italian — to do so).

In 1958, while the Soviet Union was blocked to visiting jazz musicians during the Cold War, Ruff was able to go as part of the Yale Russian Chorus. They were mobbed by jazz starved fans, one of whom clutched a bootleg copy of a Miles Davis album featuring Ruff etched apparently on a sheet of X-ray film! The duo was also involved in a CBS project filmed in Brazil, spurring Ruff to extend his studies to film-making, editing and scoring.

While teaching at Yale, where he is now a Professor of Music, Ruff's researches took him to Africa, where he accompanied stone age Pygmy drummers (paid with sacks of salt) o French horn. When he got no response except yawns of boredom, Ruff performed a spirited "hambone" dance from his boyhood South that had the Pygmies enthusiastically joining in. He had found the roots. The experience was topped only when he played horn alone at midnight in Saint Mark's Church in Venice, as musicians in the fifteenth century had done.

But these are merely highlights of a musical chronicle told by a knowledgeable musician in language as rich and rhythmic as his music. Willie Ruff's first teacher in the Army, Pete Lewis, once told him: "Always remember that music don't mean a thing if it doesn't tell a story." And this is an exceptional story.

SIDEMEN

Unlike Bessie Smith, Fats Waller, Duke Ellington, Coleman Hawkins, Dizzy Gillespie, Thelonious Monk and other jazz greats with whom he played as a backup musician, bassist W.O. Smith was content to remain always a sideman, with composing as a creative adjunct. Later in his career he turned to the education field and spent most of his life teaching music in several Southern colleges.

He has also penned a wry engaging memoir, ***Sidemen: The Long Gig Of W.O. Smith***, that's both the moving story of a virtuoso musician and a historical account of the early days of jazz through the eyes of a sensitive observer. "I have been a witness to the birth and growth of jazz as an American art form," he writes. "The connection between the early New Orleans jazzmen and modern jazz took place right before my eyes, and I watched in awe and even participated in some of it."

Born in rural Georgia in 1917 and raised in an inner-city ghetto in North Philadelphia (after his father, a grocer, was run out of town by the Ku Klux Clan), Smith started his musical career playing with a Philadelphia high school orchestra. He graduated to professional backing the great Bessie Smith (a job he got through Bessie's husband Jack Gee, who subsequently married his widowed mother).

Later as a member of the Frankie Fairfax Orchestra Smith met its new trumpet player Dizzy Gillespie (who grew up close to the pool-room run by Smith's father in Philadelphia). The two became lifelong friends and when Dizzy led his own band Smith was a sideman. In a glowing "Fanfare" to the book, Gillespie states that he learned a lot from Smith, whose sense of rhythm and harmony was almost perfect. Smith's decision to remain a sideman, says Gillespie, was because "he was always a team player, concerned about his companions and eager to make them look good."

It was with the Fairfax band that Smith got his first taste of the "road" and his adventures on the TOBA black theatre circuit, related in a brief chapter, add much to the "road" folklore initiated by Dicky Wells in ***Night People***. Living in Harlem, while he attended New York University, Smith caught up with the New York jazz scene, playing gigs to pay for college with the likes of the nascent Mercer Ellington Orchestra (rehearsed by Duke himself), and Coleman Hawkins, who had just returned from Europe. He was a member of the group that recorded the all-time classic *Body and Soul* and his account of this historic session might be considered definitive:

All the musicians at the 10 AM recording had worked the previous night at Kelly's Stables until 4 AM and were sleepy and on edge. "And it didn't help when Coleman himself showed up an hour late with a giggling young blonde on his arm. Almost everybody was quietly furious, and I would have bet that the session would be a flop."

It almost did. When the RCA engineers, unused to recording "noisy" jazz groups (this was for the prestigious Read Seal label) tried to confine drummer Arthur Herbert in another studio then muffle his drums with blankets a heated argument arose. Finally, led by Hawkins, the band stood for "artistic principles" and won out against the all-powerful engineers.

This did not help the prevailing mood or atmosphere. Everyone was dog tired and on edge but being the professionals they were, says Smith, "we gave it by then our limited best."

There was no argument for the last number, *Body and Soul*. The group played it a least a hundred times at the club and each performance by Hawk was different. "He would go from unbelievable to impossible on successive renditions but what should we do on record?"

Hawkins suggested a 2/4 bass line and, after a piano introduction, trumpeter Joe Guy (Billie Holiday's escort) improvised a trumpet background and Hawkins played what he did each night — abbreviated by about a hundred choruses!

Like most of the musicians, Smith left the studio "almost with a feeling of failure." (Hawk packed up and left, without bothering to listen to the playback.) Little did he realize that what he had done that day would have an impact not only on the jazz world (the record was the company's first million-seller) but on the rest of his own life as well. Thanks to *Body and Soul*, Smith had won a measure of fame.

The major part of Smith's narrative deals with his work teaching music in Southern colleges, with side trips to Cuba, Central America and Togo, Africa — still a sideman. "It has been a long and interesting gig for me," he writes. "I have played with abandon, giving myself to the music and the life it opened for me. I embrace it all, body and soul." One month after he wrote the last chapter, on May 30th, 1991, Smith's long gig came to an end when he died of cancer. □

AL VAN STARREX is a writer/broadcaster living in New Jersey. Formerly foreign correspondent for the New York Times in South East Asia, and publicist for several Hollywood films.

JAZZ VIDEO UPDATE

A COLUMN BY SCOTT YANOW

MUSICIANS IN EXILE (1990, 75 minutes) is only of limited interest from the jazz standpoint although of more significance in its portrayal of the struggle of creative musicians against unjust governments. Produced and directed by Canadian/South African Jacques Holender, this documentary on the plight of political refugees from South Africa (Hugh Masekela), Chile (the folk music group Quilapayun) and Cuba (percussionist Daniel Ponce and Paquito D'Rivera), focusing for a period on each of their individual stories. **Hugh Masekela**, who opens this film, reminisces about his life in South Africa and how when he first came to New York he used to go to as many clubs as he could, and for just a few dollars he could catch most of the jazz greats. Surprisingly Masekela is more hopeful about the future for blacks in South Africa than he is about the U.S. and he clearly misses his native country.

The members of **Quilapayun** were in France in 1973 when the fascist coup that resulted in Pinochet occurred. Reluctantly in exile ever since, they have kept their group together partly because their music allows them to feel at home while far away from home. This folk music ensemble (which consists of two flutes, piano, two guitars and percussion with plenty of shifting between instruments and vocal leads) performs a few songs and discussion emphasizes how difficult it was to leave loved ones behind, saying that they still feel Chilean despite being in France for 18 years.

In contrast, **Daniel Ponce** (who is seen performing in New York) says he never regretted leaving Cuba in 1980 and that he would return only if conditions drastically improved. After Ponce's brief segment, altoist **Paquito D'Rivera** is shown playing in a New York club with his quintet (which includes trumpeter Claudio Roditi) but all of their performance footage is only shown as excerpts. D'Rivera talks about the difficulties and limitations of being a musician in Cuba, saying that the bass guitar is thought of by the government as an imperialist instrument. He also plays a bit of *Donna Lee* on clarinet at his apartment, backed by his son (who also escaped from Cuba) on guitar.

MUSICIANS IN EXILE finishes off with a group of South African musicians performing in England including the late altoist **Dudu Pukwana** (who confesses that he likes to travel frequently so he will forget how he has not seen his South African mother in many years) and trombonist **Jonas Gwangwa**. A melancholy but oddly hopeful film, ***MUSICIANS IN EXILE*** is thought-provoking without becoming gloomy.

In the July/August 1991 issue of Coda, I reviewed a fascinating 20-minute black and white film from 1966, ***ON THE CREATIVE PROCESS***, that featured **Bill Evans** and his brother Harry discussing the pros and cons of jazz education. That short film was as interesting for what the pianists said as for the tension that clearly existed in their relationship, with the younger Bill renowned as a jazz innovator and Harry not that content at being an educator. ***THE UNIVERSAL MIND OF BILL EVANS*** expands the original tape to 45 minutes, including all of the original footage along with a stronger contribution from Steve Allen and some additional comments from both of the Evans siblings. Bill Evans felt that every human being was creative but that the development of one's "universal musical mind" depended on conditioning so one could "hear" certain types of music. He also felt that the laymen's opinion of music was often more important than that of a professional musician. Steve Allen tells more jokes this time around and demonstrates how deliberately copying another's style (he uses Erroll Garner) often sounds like a put on. "I think the last thing that Bill would wish to do would be to create a group of young pianists who play in his style." Bill Evans describes jazz as a revival of the spirit that early improvised classical music had. "I feel that jazz is not so much a style as a process of making music, the process of making one minute of music in one minute's time." He also criticizes jazz students who copy another player's entire style (including their improvisations) rather than working on smaller parts and staying focused; it stunts one's musical growth to be so general and vague.

This "new and improved" Bill Evans film is especially recommended to the countless number of pianists who have become part of the "Bill Evans school" without forming their own distinctive voices.

The String Trio of New York's *BUILT BY HAND* (1988, 30 minutes), is a definitive if brief portrait of this underrated avant-garde unit. Each of the musicians (violinist Charles Burnham, guitarist James Emery and bassist John Lindberg) gets an opportunity to talk about the band and how they hope to win over audiences without compromising their music. Emery parallels one of their concerts to taking a trip away from home, starting off with the familiar and then, as one gets further away, encountering new images and surprising adventures. Happily there is a generous amount of music in this film including Burnham's *Wise Old Owl*, Lindberg's *Seven Vice* (which is highlighted by a "drum battle" as each of the strings play percussively, literally hitting their instruments with sticks), Jimi Hendrix's *Manic Depression* (the psychedelic images of the players caused by the camera work is a bit unnecessary), Emery's very advanced *Ephemera - Trilogy*, Lindberg's ballad *Multiple Reasons* and Emery's lowdown *Texas Koto Blues* which finds his guitar doing a close impression of a delta bluesman. By the conclusion of this intelligent film, one has a very good idea as to the inner workings of this formerly esoteric group, and a deeper understanding of what makes the musicians tick. In other words ***BUILT BY HAND*** succeeds at its dual purpose of documenting this important band and making its music a bit more accessible without changing a note. □

Available from Rhapsody Films, P.O. Box 179, New York, NY 10014, U.S.A.

A pair of A*Vision releases are titled ***VINTAGE GETZ VOLUMES 1 & 2***. When one thinks of "vintage" **Stan Getz**, chances are that the 1950's come to mind, but these two 50-55 minute tapes both stem from a 1983 concert at the Robert Mondavi Winery in Napa Valley, California. Originally aired on the Bravo pay TV network, Getz is featured with pianist Jim McNeely, bassist Marc Johnson and drummer Victor Lewis, all in prime form. It is particularly nice, in view of the health problems he would soon suffer, to see the tenorman looking relatively youthful. *Volume 1* starts off with three harmonically complex McNeely compositions: a samba *(Over The Edge)*, a waltz *(From The Heart)* and a ballad *(Answer Without Question)*. The latter is the most memorable of the trio, a rather emotional and melancholy tune. But I preferred the three standards that finish off this tape: a cooking *Sippin' At Bells*, a version of *Spring Can Really Hang You Up The Most* that contains dramatic pauses and a lengthy

DUDU PUKWANA • PHOTOGRAPH BY ENRICO ROMERO

and heated *Tempus Fugit* that is more adventurous than one would expect.

The second volume starts with Stan Getz talking briefly about his late father and his two new grandchildren before launching into *Lush Life* (what a tone he had!). Getz surprises everyone with a medley of *Desafinado* and *Girl From Ipanema*, two tunes that he rarely played after the mid-1960's. After saying "now that we got that out of the way," Stan plays superior versions of *Alone Together, It's You Or No One, In Your Own Sweet Way* and a passionate *Blood Count*. The colour photography is basic but alert, Getz's sidemen (especially McNeely) get plenty of solo space and these two films (with the second one getting the edge) serve as fine examples of how this sorely missed tenor-saxophonist sounded during his last decade.

SARAH VAUGHAN & FRIENDS (originally titled Sarah Et Brass) is most notable for teaming the late Sassy with one of the oddest trumpet sections ever assembled: Maynard Ferguson, Dizzy Gillespie, Chuck Mangione, Al Hirt and Don Cherry! Actually this strange live session (performed at Storyville Jazz Hall in New Orleans) succeeds without getting as silly as one might expect. Backed by Herbie Hancock, Ron Carter and Billy Higgins, the five trumpeters are seen rehearsing *Watermelon Man* over the opening credits and joking around a bit. Vaughan performs *I Can't Give You Anything But Love, Just Friends* (her trio gets two beats ahead of her in the first chorus but recovers quickly) and her showcase *Send In The Clowns* with her regular group (pianist George Gaffney, bassist Andrew Simpkins and drummer Harold Jones). Next, the trumpeters get their chance to be featured. Don Cherry joins the Herbie Hancock trio for a not-too-serious *Bemsha Swing* (he seems somewhat distracted), Ferguson and Hirt take turns on *I Can't Get Started* with MF also singing; no real fireworks occur. *'Round Midnight* has some superb Sarah and ok Dizzy while *Bags Groove* teams Vaughan with the other four trumpeters; Al Hirt actually takes the best solo. A slower than usual *Take The 'A' Train* features the entire group but the solos are rather restrained and generally just a half-chorus long. Finally, the trumpeters start *Watermelon Man* but the closing credits cut that performance short. Overall ***SARAH VAUGHAN & FRIENDS*** (which was filmed in 1986) has some fine moments but falls short of its potential. ☐ *Availlable from A * Vision, 75 Rockefeller Plaza, NY,NY 10019, U.S.A.*

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

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

BOOKS

EXPLORE THE GENIUS OF BILL EVANS...in THE HARMONY OF BILL EVANS, a collection of seven articles examining the melodic, harmonic and rhythmic motifs of the most influential jazz pianist of the 20th century...written by pianist, composer and recording artist ***Jack Reilly***, who JAZZ TIMES magazine recently hailed as "...one of our great contemporary acoustic pianists...". Order your copy by sending a check or money order for $16.95 (N.Y. residents please add $1.42 sales tax) plus $2.95 shipping and handling (S&H outside U.S.A. $6.95) to: UNICHROM, 125 Prospect Park West, Suite 6B, Brooklyn, New York 11215-4244. (718) 768-4053

SOCIETIES

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

RECORD SHOPS

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

RECORDS, CD'S, TAPES. We buy and sell. Jazz, a specialty. **AROUND AGAIN**, 18 Baldwin St., Toronto, Ontario, Canada. M5T 1L2. (416) 979-2822

SWEET THUNDER RECORDS Specialists in all styles of jazz, and catering especially to the collectors of vinyl - 575 Johnson Street, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada V8W 1M2 - Phone/Fax (604) 381-4042.

WANTED

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

RECORDINGS

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

JAZZ QUIZ

JAZZ QUIZ - Test your skill. Answer dozens of intriguing questions along with their answers that every jazz fan should know. Enclose $10.00 U.S. to: P. Clough, 45 Balliol Street, #205, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4S 1C3

INSTRUCTION

LEARN PROFESSIONAL CONGA DRUMS with Select Records "Hot Percussion Licks". Send $5.00 to Simmons Music Company-COD, Box 880761, San Francisco, CA 94188-0761, USA

LLOYD GARBER Improvising Guitarist Teaches privately in Toronto. Cassette "London On Air" with Lloyd Garber (guitar) and Herb Bayley (trombone). $12.00 postpaid. Video "City Under The City" with music book, both by Lloyd Garber. $30.00 postpaid. Poetry book "Through The f Holes" (June 1993). $20.00 postpaid. From Lloyd Garber, Box 7020, Stn. A, Toronto, Canada M5W 1X7. Telephone (416) 594-6838.

MAGAZINES

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

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

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

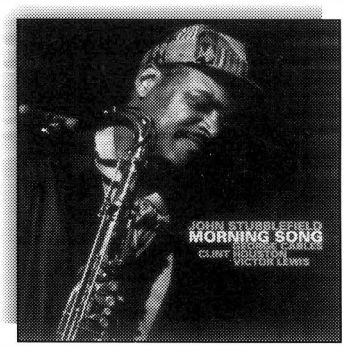
LIVING BLUES - Journal of the Black American Blues Tradition - Published bi-monthly - $18.00 US per year - Center of the Study of Southern Culture, University of Mississippi, University, MS 38677, USA

EXPERIMENTAL MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS - A newsletter for the design, construction and enjoyment of unusual sound sources. US funds $24.00 for 4 issues from EMI, PO Box 784, Nicasio, CA 94946, USA.

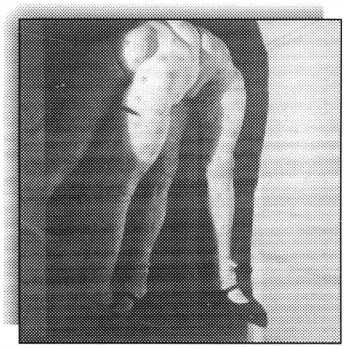
NEW RELEASES - Spring 1994

MARIA SCHNEIDER JAZZ ORCHESTRA
Evanescence

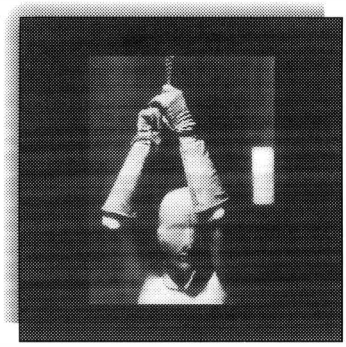
TIM BRADY
Scenarios



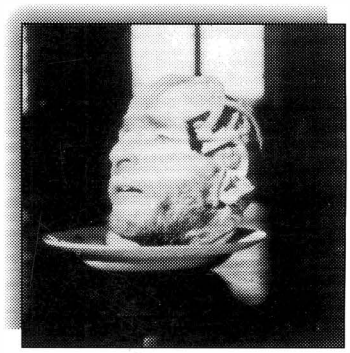
JOHN STUBBLEFIELD
Morning Song



NAKED CITY
Absinthe

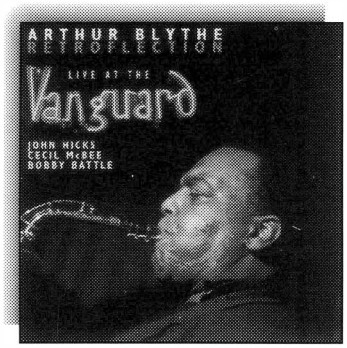


NAKED CITY
(John Zorn, Bill Frisell, Wayne Horvitz, Fred Frith, Joey Baron & Yamatsuka Eye)
Radio



NAKED CITY
Grand Guignol

NAKED CITY
Heretic



ARTHUR BLYTHE
Retroflection - Live at the Vanguard

DUSKO GOYKOVICH
Soul Connection

Justin Time

enja

AVANT

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

DISTRIBUTION FUSION III

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