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CODA MAGAZINE

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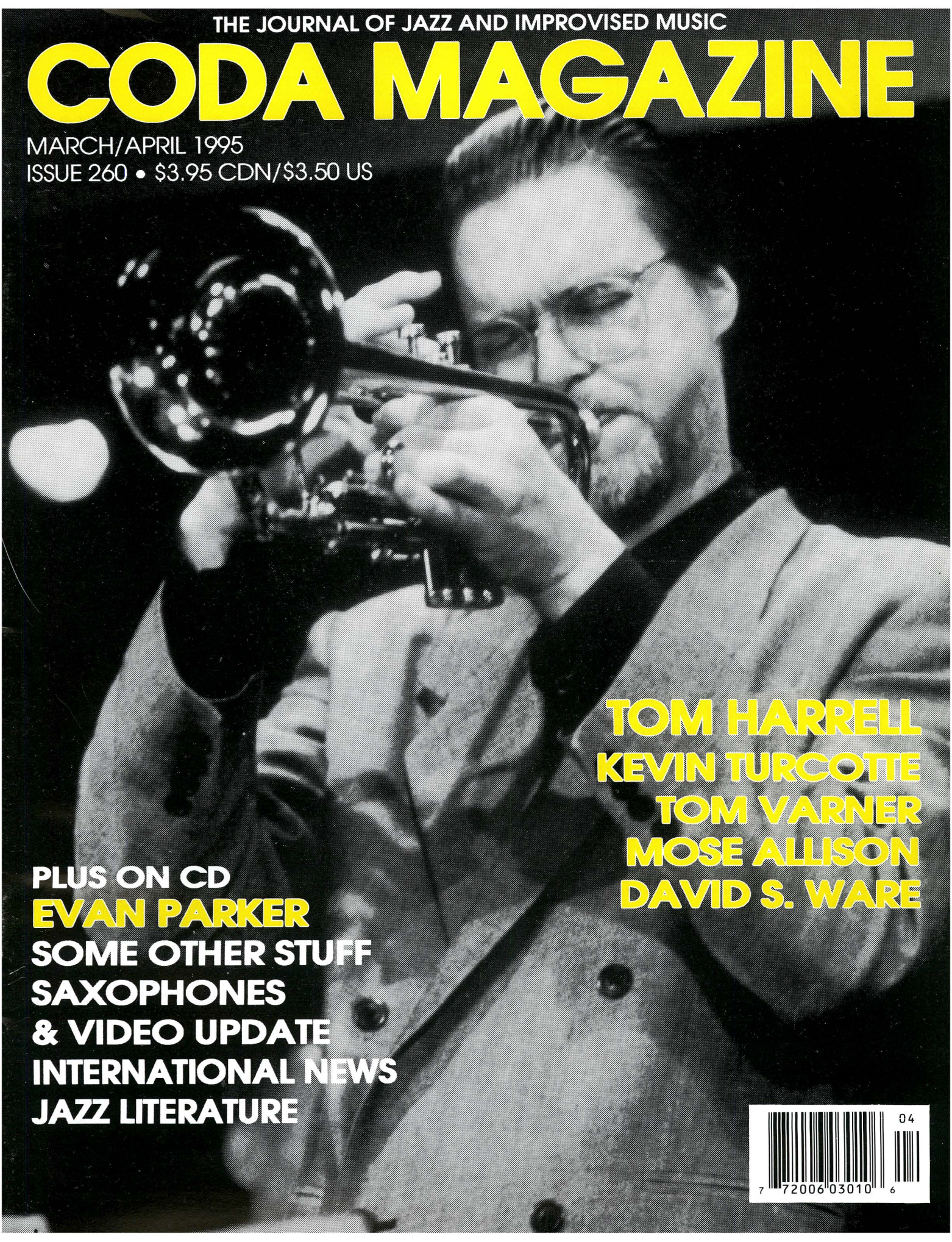

TOM HARRELL
KEVIN TURCOTTE
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MOSE ALLISON
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PLUS ON CD
EVAN PARKER
SOME OTHER STUFF
SAXOPHONES
& VIDEO UPDATE
INTERNATIONAL NEWS
JAZZ LITERATURE

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CRISS CROSS JAZZ • NEW RELEASES

NEW RELEASES

DARRELL GRANT QUARTET • *BLACK ART*
Darrell Grant (pno) • Wallace Roney (trpt) • Christian McBride (bass) • Brian Blade (drums) • **CRISS 1087 CD**

SEAMUS BLAKE QUINTET • *THE CALL*
Seamus Blake (ten & sop sax) • Kurt Rosenwinkel (gtr) • Kevin Hays (pno) • Larry Grenadier (bass) • Bill Stewart (drums) • **CRISS 1088 CD**

THE TENOR TRIANGLE & THE MELVIN RHYNE TRIO
TELL IT LIKE IT IS • Ralph Lalama, Tad Shull, Eric Alexander (ten saxes) • Melvin Rhyne (organ) • Peter Bernstein (gtr) • Kenny Washington (drums) • **CRISS 1089 CD**

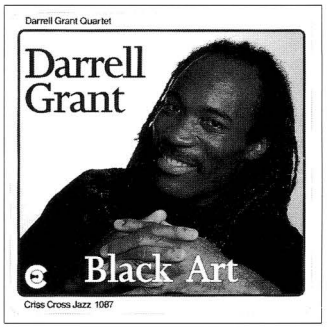
JOHN SWANA QUINTET • *THE FEELING'S MUTUAL*
John Swana (trpt & flgl) • Chris Potter (ten & sop sax + flute) • Steve Giordano (gtr) • Dave Posmontier (organ) • Billy Drummond (drums) • **CRISS 1090 CD**

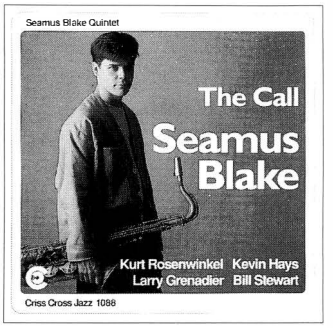
TOM WILLIAMS QUINTET • *STRAIGHT STREET*
Tom Williams (trpt & flgl) • Gary Thomas (ten & sop sax) • Kevin Hayes (pno) • Peter Washington (bass) • Kenny Washington (drums) • **CRISS 1091 CD**

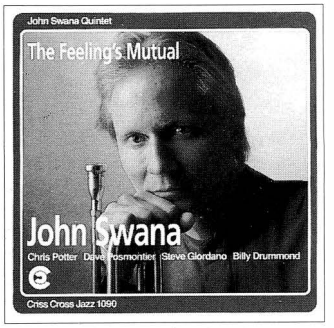
GARY SMULYAN NONET • *SAXOPHONE MOSAIC*
Arranged & conducted by Bob Beldon • Gary Smulyan (bar sax) • Dick Oates (alto, sop sax + flute) • Billy Drewes (alto sax, cl, flute) • Ralph Lalama (ten sax, cl, flute) • Richie Perry (ten sax) • Scott Robinson (bar sax & bs cl) • Mike LeDonne (pno) • Dennis Irwin (bass) • Kenny Washington (drums) • **CRISS 1092 CD**

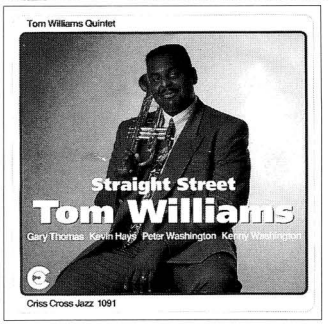
JONNY KING QUINTET • *IN FROM THE COLD*
Jonny King (pno) • Mark Turner (ten sax) • Vincent Herring (alto & sop sax) • Ira Coleman (bass) • Billy Drummond (drums) • **CRISS 1093 CD**

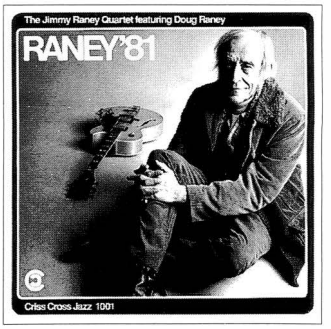
JIMMY RANEY QUARTET • *RANEY '81*
Jimmy Raney (gtr) • Doug Raney (gtr) • Jesper Lundgaard (bass) • Eric Ineke (drums) • **CRISS 1001 CD**











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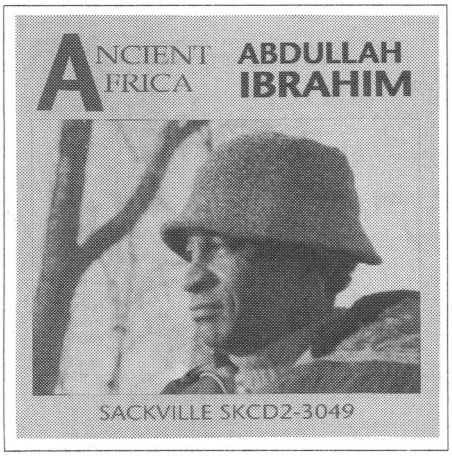

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH OF
TOM HARRELL
BY LES MACE

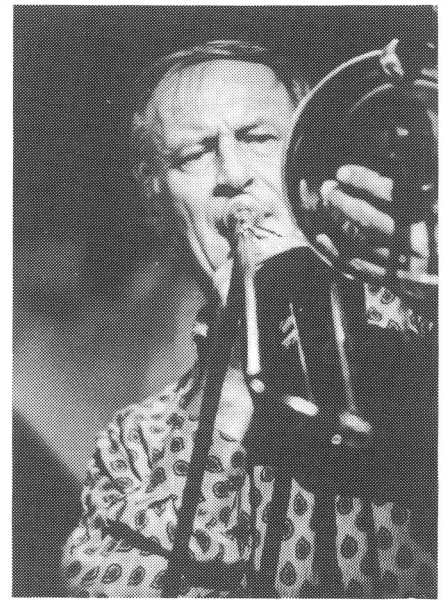
CONTENTS

COMPILED BY JOHN NORRIS AROUND THE WORLD

ALBERT MANGELSDORFF IS THE NEW ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF THE BERLIN JAZZ FESTIVAL. HE SUCCEEDS GEORGE GRUNTZ WHO HAS BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PROGRAMMING FOR THE PAST DECADE.

PIANIST AND COMPOSER **JARMO SAVOLAINEN** IS THE 1944 RECIPIENT OF FINLAND'S GEORGIE JAZZ AWARD. A RECENT EXAMPLE OF HIS PLAYING CAN BE HEARD ON THE TIMELESS CD ***FIRST FLIGHT***.

FMP RECORDS IS CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF COMMITMENT TO THE "CREATIVE EDGE" OF THE MUSIC. THEIR CATALOGUE IS AVAILABLE FROM FMP, POSTFACH 100 227, D-10562 BERLIN, GERMANY.



ALBERT MANGELSDORFF • PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK LADENSON

EVENTS

Major booking for the 1995 Artpark Jazz Festival (in Lewiston, NY) is already well advanced. **Milt Jackson** and **Roy Hargrove** are the headliners on Friday September 1st. The Saturday program has now been split into two separate concerts (afternoon and evening) with the **Gerry Mulligan Quartet** and singer Kevin Mahogany appearing at the matinee and **Sonny Rollins** and **John Scofield** the major attractions at the evening event.

Artpark keeps the Niagara frontier community focused on jazz through the winter with its fall and spring concerts at ***Artpark in the Church***. Bassist Skip Bey and drummer Thomas Harris completed the **Frank Morgan** personnel for their concerts October 22-24 with pianist Hod O'Brien providing the sparkplug for much of the music. In November it was **Frank Wess** who gave Carol Sloane's concert its extra dimension. The opening night of the spring series will be held at Buffalo's Canisius College followed by two nights at the Artpark Church. **Gene Harris** will appear the last weekend of March and Dorothy Donegan the last weekend of April.

Native Colors, the co-op band consisting of Larry Grenadier, Ralph Moore, Renee Rosnes and Billy Drummond, opened the winter series of concerts at the Brooklyn Conservatory of Music October 21st. Upcoming are **Barry Harris** (February 18th.) and Jimmy Slyde (March 18th.) Thanks to Jim Eigo for this news.

Pacific Northwest Jazz Alliance are active in Belingham, WA. The season, already in place is: February 19 - Herb Ellis & Chuck Israels; March 11 - Dee Daniels; May 14 - Leroy Vinnegar/Mel Brown; September 16 - Charles Owens/Rick Kelley; October 21 - Buddy Collette & Chuck Israels.

The ***East Coast Jazz Festival*** takes place February 16th to 19th at Gaithersburg, Maryland with Ernie Andrews, Houston Person, Junior Mance, Bobby Enriques, Nathan Page, Buck Hill and Grady Tate among the performers... The 1995 ***Taktlos Festival*** takes place at the end of March in Switzerland with concerts in Bern, Basle and Zurich. More information is available from Fredi Bosshard, Hohlstr 86B, CH8004 Zurich, Switzerland.

The 13th International ***Duke Ellington Conference*** is being held in Pittsburgh May 24th-28th. More information is available through the Billy Strayhorn Chapter of TDES, P.O. Box 10285, Pittsburgh, PA 15232.

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Bob Sweet is writing a book about the ***Creative Music Studio*** - the pioneer school run by Karl Berger. He would like to hear from readers who were, in any way, involved with the Creative Music Studio. He can be reached at 946 Westwood, Ann Arbor, MI 48103 (phone 313-994-1429).

RECORDINGS: AUDIO AND VIDEO

Gigi Campi has announced the release of a new limited edition (1500 copies) 2 double CD compilations of **Kenny Clarke-Francy Boland Big Band** recordings. Included are the live session from Ronnie Scott's club in London ***(Volcano/Rue Chaptal)*** and the Black Lion issues - ***At Her Majesty's Pleasure*** and ***Off Limits***. They are available from ECCM, Am Franenturm 5, D-50667 Cologne, Germany. The catch is that they sell for DM140.00 - about US$90.00!

It is a tragedy that such great music should be available only to those who are affluent. Many thousands are being denied the experience of hearing these great recordings through this kind of marketing. The Ronnie Scott date, like the Ellington at Fargo recording, defines the music made by this band.

In the meantime, mere mortals will be able to pick up the MPS reissue of ***Sax No End*** and ***All Blues*** which is now available on a single CD. It's one of several MPS repackages now available through German Polygram. There are two CD packages (containing 3LPS) by Monty Alexander and George Shearing as well as Oscar Peterson's ***Tracks*** (a solo piano album), Singers Unlimited compilation and Bill Evans' ***Symbiosis*** on single CDs. It's unclear whether Polygram will market these CDs in the U.S. They certainly choose not to make available many of Ray Bryant's Emarcy sessions. These are recorded for the Japanese division of the company and are widely distributed in most countries of the world. ***No Problem***, his collaboration with guitarist Kenny Burrell, was issued in the Fall and the pianist has already been back in the studio for a collaboration with bassist Ray Brown. Horace Silver's *Song For My Father* was among the tunes recorded. A miniaturised facsimile of Norman Granz' ***The Jazz Scene***

was issued by Verve at the end of the year. The music recorded originally has been augmented by enough extra selections to give listeners an excellently programmed two CD set.

Minor personnel glitches and wrong dates mar the Columbia reissues of ***Miles and Monk at Newport*** and ***Duke Ellington at Newport 1958***. All of the Miles Davis selections have already appeared elsewhere - both on Columbia and various unauthorised collections.

The two disc ***Monk Big Band and Quartet in Concert*** is another Columbia reissue. It restores the drum solos edited out of the original lp and includes the three performances not on the original lp. The CD box states clearly that these are "previously unreleased". This isn't true. Both *Bye-Ya* and *Light Blue* were on the two lp package ***Always Know*** while *Misterioso* is the title tune of Columbia CL2416/CS9216. Only the drum solos and the first brief sign off of *Epistrophy* are new. It is true (as the sticker says) that this is "the complete 1963 concert available in its entirety for the first time." What Columbia fail to tell us is that this remastered edition has much better presence than the original issues and is thus aurally a big improvement on the original issues. All Monk's Columbia lps (including those referred to here) are currently available in their original form on French CBS CDs.

There's an ever increasing catalogue of newly recorded CDs by regional artists. This is a worldwide development. How do all these performers expand their audience beyond their own communities? Among those we've received recently are the following: ***8 Bold Souls*** is a Chicago based octet under the direction of Edward Wilkerson Jr. ***Antfarm*** is its second CD to be released on Arabesque Records... Boston seems to foster a growing number of bands which reflect the dual influences of Ornette Coleman and Charles Mingus. The multiplicity of jazz education centres there may have something to do with this direction. GM Recordings and Accurate are busy documenting the local scene and Jimmy Weinstein's ***Nostalgia*** and the Either/Orchestra's ***The Brunt*** are new releases on Accurate.

The Pittsburgh scene is being documented by MMC Recordings. Tom McKinley is featured with Rufus Reid and Billy Hart on ***Alive In Pittsburgh*** and ***Golden Petals*** featured Richard Nunemaker. Young pianist Mitch Hampton is showcased in ***Mitch Plays...*** Singer Katchie Cartwright has a self-produced CD ***Live At The Deer Head Inn*** which features saxophonist Richard Oppenheim and a rhythm section of James Weidman, Cameron Brown and Bill Goodwin... There's more big band music from Sea Breeze by Tom Talbert in ***Duke's Domain*** and the Northern Arizona University's **Herding Cats**, as well as a quintet date by trombonist Bruce Paulson which also features the saxophones of Bob Sheppard.

More West Coast music is featured on Lanny Morgan's quintet date for VSOP Records.

Sun Ra, Evan Parker, Ganelin, Anthony Braxton, Vladimir Rezitsky and Lauren Newton / Thomas Horstmann are all showcased on the latest ***Leo Records*** release. The label also celebrated its 15th anniversary with a concert at London's Purcell Room January 3rd and 4th... Recently reissued on BGO Records is the legendary Dawn 2 lp set of John Surman, Barre Phillips and Stu Martin... Most of Charly Records Le Jazz series are repackages of previously available material. An exception is Ben Webster ***Live in Paris***. It's a 1972 concert with the Georges Arvanitas Trio (the same group who backed Ben on his Futura session).

Already recorded, but not set for release yet, is a Claude Williams date from September 5th, 1994 with Bill Easley, Sir Roland Hanna, Earl May and Frank Vignola... Composer/pianist Ian Pearce is showcased in performances of his own tunes in ***Tasmanian Composers Volume 111***. The pianist is probably best known for his contributions to the Pearce-Pickering Five. This CD is available from Little Arthur Productions, P.O. Box 262, North Hobart 7002, Tasmania, Australia.

Vintage jazz collectors will be interested in the first two CD issues of Gannet Records. ***Chicago 1935*** features Paul Mares, Charles LaVere, Zutty Singleton and Ikey Robinson while ***New Orleans to Chicago: The Forties*** includes sessions by Richard M. Jones, Punch Miller, Karl Jones, Preston Jackson and Little Brother Montgomery.

Royal Ellington is a January 1989 Royal Festival Hall performance by Bob Wilber's European Orchestra of Duke Ellington's Queen Suite. The hour long video also includes commentary and film footage of Ellington. It is produced by Kultur, 195 Highway 36, West Long Branch, NJ 07764.

Big Nickel Music Books (P.O. Box 157, Milford, NH 03055) has published ***Nervous Man Nervous*** the story of Big Jay McNeely and the rise of the honking tenor sax.

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JIM NOLET • With You • *Knitting Factory Works*
FRED HO AND THE AFRO-ASIAN MUSIC ENSEMBLE • The Underground Railroad To My Heart • *Soul Note*

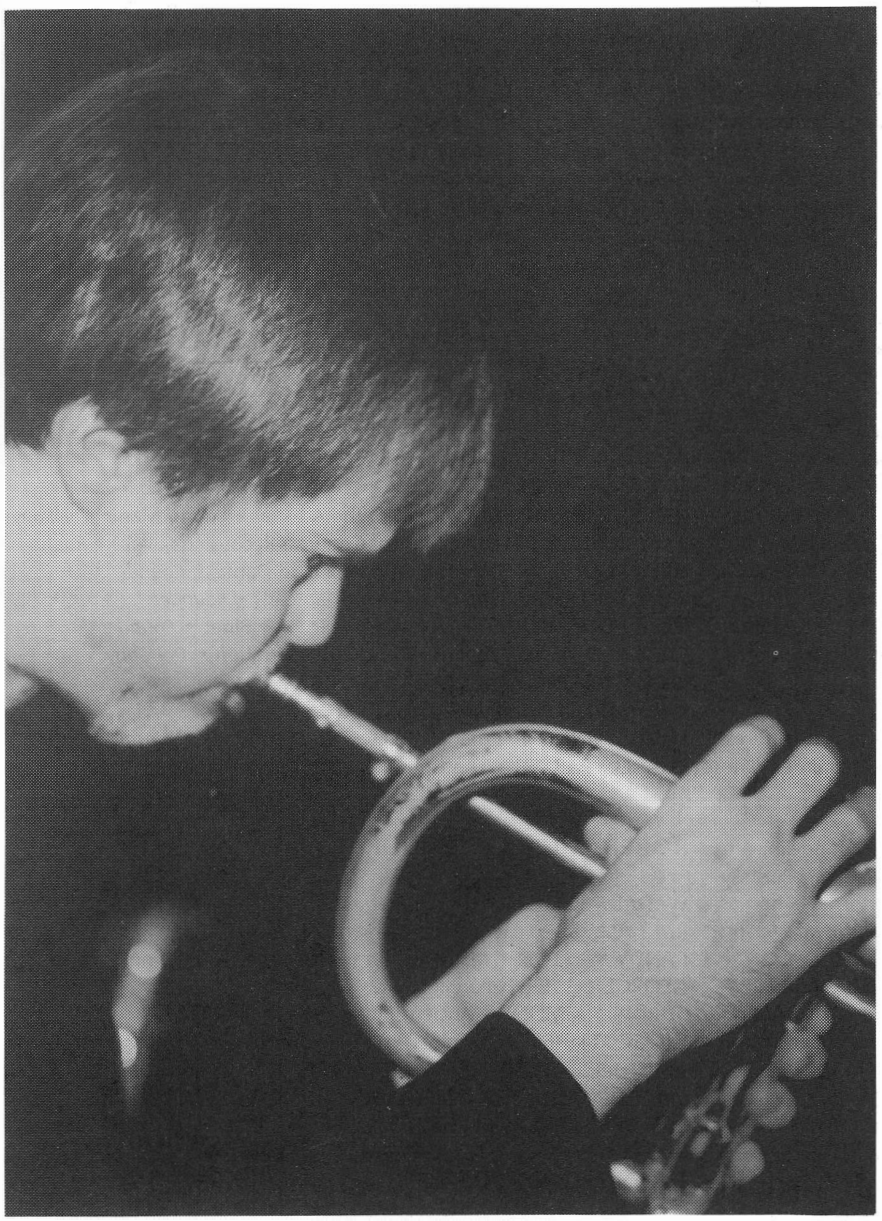
PASSING NOTES

Drummer **Lex Humphries** died July 11... saxophonist **John Dengler** July 25... arranger/saxophonist/trumpeter **George Dixon** August 1... Arranger **Bill Challis** October 4... Pianist **Donald Ashwander** October 26... Trumpeter **Shorty Rogers** November 7... Singer **Carmen McRae** November 10... Singer **Cab Calloway** November 18... Drummer **Al Levitt** November 28... Drummer **Connie Kay** November 30... Composer/singer **Antonio Carlos Jobim** December 8.

Other deaths include Canadian violinist **Willy Girard**, Canadian bandleader **Art Hallman**, British bandleader **Jack Sharpe**, New York guitarist **John Smith** and clarinetist **Scoville Brown**.

TOM HARRELL

HIS HAIR SLICKED BACK, A LACONIC GAZE UPON HIS FACE, TRUMPETER TOM HARRELL SHUFFLES ONTO STAGE, HIS HEAD BENT PENITENTIALLY, ARMS DROPPED TO HIS SIDES LIKE A RESERVED CHOIR BOY BEFORE HE LIFTS HIS HORN TO HIS LIPS LEAVING BAND MEMBERS AND AUDIENCE ALIKE AWESTRUCK AT THE BEAUTIFULLY LYRICAL LINES AND INVENTIVE INTERVAL LEAPS THAT MARK HIS MUSIC IN HIS OWN QUINTET AS WELL AS HIS RECENT SIDEWORK WITH ART FARMER, HELEN MERRILL AND CHARLES MCPHERSON.



"I DEFINITELY GO THROUGH A TRANSFORMATION WHEN I get up on the bandstand. I'm trying to relate that transformation to my life too. When I'm playing, I feel like I can put myself into the music and forget about all the problems of daily life. I want to incorporate that into my life too, so that I can be in the moment and concentrate on the moment, not worry about problems that have happened in the past that I can't do anything about. I try to apply that thinking to my playing too. The music has a very healing effect and it can put you into a very positive frame of mind," says Harrell.

Throughout Harrell's brilliant career from leading his own Quintet with Don Braden, Kenny Werner, Larry Grenadier and Billy Hart as well as working with the Madarao All Stars and The New York Jazz Giants in the early 1990s to his performances with the Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra, the Phil Woods Quintet and Charlie Haden's Liberation Music Orchestra in the '80s, he has been saddled with the heavy emotional baggage of his severe mental illness. First diagnosed as schizophrenic in 1968, Harrell takes daily doses of the potent tranquilliser Stelazine to quell the voices he sometimes hears and to allay his occasional paranoiac concerns about people listening in to his conversations, or his concerns about the water being turned off in his house, all lapses of concentration which can lead him to ask for a pause to take a break from the interview.

Once he's recovered himself, though, Harrell articulates himself with great ease, especially when talking about the technical aspects of his new compositions for his quintet, or while reflecting on the sounds he hears during his daily walks. As you might already surmise, Harrell is not one to go out and socialize, but during excursions in the park, he appreciates the traffic noise and birds singing in musical terms.

"When I go on a walk, I try to hear all the sounds. Sometimes traffic jams have really beautiful voicings. I'll try to write them down. I try to imagine what the car horns would sound like if they were written for a brass section, or the train whistle can be inspiring as a sound to be orchestrated, and the rhythms of the subway are very percussive and can be played on a percussion instrument. Bird songs can be orchestrated and played by woodwinds. I love bell sounds. I'd like to try to orchestrate bell sounds using saxophones and trumpets. You can do it with piano too. Bill Evans wrote a beautiful song called 'My Bells' which uses beautiful voicings on the first album he did with a symphony orchestra in the mid-'60s," says Harrell.

PHOTOGRAPH BY LAURENCE M. SVIRCHEV (NEW YORK, OCTOBER 1994)

AN ARTICLE BY ROBERT HICKS

On ***Upswing*** (Chesky), with Harrell, trumpet and fluegelhorn; Phil Woods, alto sax; Joe Lovano, tenor, Danilo Perez, piano; Peter Washington, bass; and Bill Goodwin, drums, Harrell focuses on writing in a certain modality for the three horns using the voicings he writes for the piano as a guide post for the horn lines. The session brought Harrell back together with Woods for the first time since performing with Woods' Quintet two years ago at the Blue Note in New York and he looked forward to hearing how Woods and Lovano would sound together.

"I wanted to hear Joe and Phil play together to see how they would sound together. They're both very open players and they both have an awareness of history in their playing and everything they play sounds like themselves and they have an instantly identifiable sound. They both play music that sounds fresh. Those are my goals to play music that sounds fresh, which is rooted in tradition, but is moving forward into the music of today as they do. All the musicians on the record do that. They all play from their hearts," says Harrell.

WITH RECENT TOUR DATES in Spain with his Quintet last summer and fall, Harrell has spent a lot of time writing new tunes for his group before they head to Europe for dates in France, Luxembourg and Germany in March of 1995. **His Volume 62: Tom Harrell** (New Albany: Jamey Aebersold), a book of twelve compositions accompanied by a play-along CD/cassette recording of the rhythm section, came out in 1994. **Straight-Ahead Jazz Fake Book** (New York: Gerad & Sarzin) contains nine of Harrell's songs in a collection by modern jazz composers. **The Real Jazz Fake Book** (Petaluma: Sher Music Co.) adds two Harrell compositions to a similar collection of modern jazz songs.

In the recording studio, Harrell's on Helen Merrill's ***Brownie: Homage To Clifford Brown*** (Verve), and Arabesque has offered two CDs featuring Harrell as a sideman recently, the first being ***Art Farmer Meets Tom Harrell: The Company I Keep*** and Charles McPherson's new ***First Flight Out***.

While Harrell is known for his lyricism on harrowing ballads as well as his ability to maintain a rich tone sparkling through the brisk runs of Latin rhythms, he approaches his writing with an acute technical facility about the way the various voicings of the instruments can work together and as contrasting elements. On ***Upswing***, he had specific things in mind for the group at hand.

"I like to use the voicings that are written for the piano. I like to work with piano players that are great readers, so that I can write out specific voicings for the piano. When I write for the three horns, they can play the notes from the voicings played by the piano, so it gives a really full sound," says Harrell.

He likens the process to what he does in his Quintet when he writes out specific voicings for the piano to make as statements of the melody. Sometimes, Harrell will write chord symbols, which allow the piano the freedom to explore their own voicings apart from a set notation. Other times, he'll write the melody for the piano, so the piano can serve as a cue for what the horns will be playing. At other times, he'll compose more freely without chords for the blowing.

"I wrote a new song, *Cheetah* which is a free blowing tune. There are chords written for the melody statement, but the blowing, the improvisation by each instrument, are open, so that the piano player is free to play whatever he or she hears at the moment rather than comping for the soloist," explains Harrell.

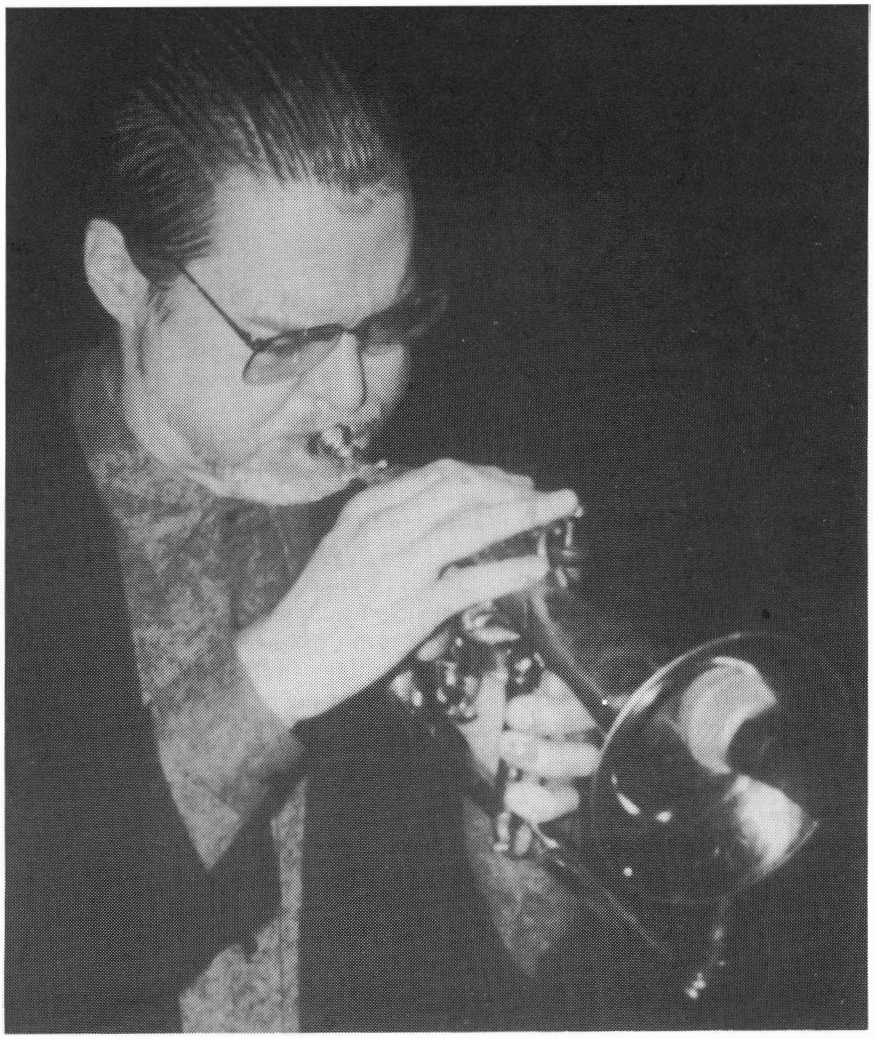
HARRELL LOVES THE SOUND OF THE TRUMPET and sax together, particularly with a tenor, which he says can fill out the lower octave. Then the trumpet and tenor can play full octaves. The trumpet can play in a low register and then the tenor can play an octave below that to produce a full sound which Harrell aims for in his Quintet.

"The tenor can also play in the high register to sound like an alto," adds Harrell. "I like to use tenor playing the lead. I like to have sax playing the lead voice on top and then have the trumpet underneath the saxophone. I like to use the colour of the saxophone as the lead voice, because it's a very expressive instrument," he says.

When the roles are reversed with the trumpet on top at the lead, Harrell gives the saxes a different role. "The saxes can play harmony under the trumpet. I like to explore different intervals between the trumpet and the alto or the trumpet and the tenor, because I like the sound of using constant intervals between the two voices, but it's also interesting to use variation intervals between the two intervals.

"I really learned a lot about quintet writing from Horace Silver and Thelonious Monk. Horace uses a lot of voicings where he'll voice a chord and then voice the horns with his voicing. Monk would do that too. He'd have a piano and the saxophone unison on the mode. It really sounds great with trumpet too in a quintet setting too to have the piano and trumpet in unison. That's the beautiful thing about a piano. It can blend in so well with so many instruments and it can even double as the bass line in unison with a bass violin," says Harrell.

Each day Harrell likes to write new material in his Upper West Side apartment in Manhattan, where he lives with his wife Angela, who doubles as his manager. In conjunction with his composing, he'll practice, working on his lines, so that he can incorporate them into his solos, or he'll write melodies that he can later work into a composition.



ONE OF HIS NEWEST COMPOSITIONS, *Theme of the Theme,* is based on intervals related to Miles Davis' *The Theme,* which is tangentially related to the changes on *I Got Rhythm*. "I explored some harmonic ideas that I haven't used previously," says Harrell before humming the leap of a minor sixth to demonstrate what he's doing. "The minor sixth interval played by the bass goes to the third of the chord, the third of the major chord, the tonic chord. I really love that sound. It has a lot of interesting implications. You can have the fact of using the tonic in the third at the same time implying a major third or a minor sixth and you can build a scale based on each of the thirds. Sometimes you can think of it as three tonics and you can add the major third, a G flat, so you can connect the three tonics with notes that are a half step below the way that you have in a major scale. I used voicings from that scale in the song," explains Harrell.

In preparation for his work with Art Farmer, Harrell penned the tune *September*, a bossa nova, a form which Harrell thinks of as having the same feeling as a ballad. "All music is about beauty," says Harrell. "It's all about how you can use the different rhythmical configurations for each instrument."

Inspired by Charlie Parker's *Confirmation* and Bud Powell's *Wail,* Harrell composed *Life View,* a medium/fast straight-ahead song in an unusual form with a ten bar A section and a six bar bridge AABA structure. "The chord changes recur on each of the A sections, but the melody statement changes every A section. I really like the idea of through composed melodies, because it gives the feeling of an improvisation with an underlying feeling of structure provided by recurring chord changes," says Harrell.

Harrell was born on June 16, 1946 in Urbana, Illinois, but was raised in Los Altos, California after his father, an industrial psychologist was hired to teach at Stanford. At age 8, he took up trumpet as an extroverted instrument in the hands of Louis Armstrong, Blue Mitchell and Clifford Brown, whose recordings he heard in his father's collection. As a young musician, Harrell was improvising constantly and began to gig around the San Francisco Peninsula, both on trumpet and piano. As a teenager, he studied with Herb Patnoe, John Handy and Lee Konitz. By 1969, he'd graduated from Stanford with a B.A. degree in music composition and soon went on the road with Stan Kenton's band. In 1970 and 71, he played trumpet in Woody Herman's Thundering Herd before moving on to work in the innovative Latin-jazz fusion band Azteca in 1972. One year later, he joined Horace Silver's band before leaving to co-lead a big band with bassist Sam Jones. Other big band and small group experience for Harrell came in bands led by Bill Evans, Lee Konitz, Lionel Hampton, Mel Lewis, George Russell and Bob Berg.

"Sometimes big band arrangements traditionally use long forms. They use more written sections than smaller groups. The first chorus and the first statement of melody are written out. There's further development through the solo sections and through the restatement of melody. It's also possible to use different forms and not to repeat chord structures as often as in smaller groups," says Harrell.

"In earlier forms of jazz developed by Duke Ellington, you can hear his use of evolving structures in different sections," he continues. "Of course, all I've said can be applied to small groups. I often use shout choruses in small group arrangements which creates incredible excitement and I use background figures behind soloists which really helps the music go forward."

Whenever the problems of his youth, the feelings of unreality, the obsessive thoughts, the drinking bouts in high school, his dropping out of college a few times, and his feeling socially inept, return to Harrell's mind, he can always find solace in his music.

"You can do that with music," says Harrell. "You can do it with the elements of melody, harmony and rhythm on your instrument. Even if you're playing softly with just a few notes, you can communicate a feeling of intensity and involvement in life. That communicates with the listeners. I think for the music to be effective, it has to have a core of strength inside the music and inside the person who's playing the music." □

PHOTOGRAPH BY BARRY THOMSON (TORONTO, 1992)

CANADIAN NOTES *COMPILED BY JOHN NORRIS*

TORONTO SINGER/ACTRESS/VOICE EXPERIMENTER **MICHELE GEORGE** IS THE 1994 RECIPIENT OF THE FREDDIE STONE AWARD... **OLIVER JONES**, FOLLOWING A THREE NIGHT ENGAGEMENT AT TORONTO'S MONTREAL BISTRO, BEGAN AN EXTENDED VACATION IN FLORIDA. HIS SCHEDULE WILL BE LIMITED TO "TEN TO FIFTEEN CONCERTS A YEAR" AT SELECTED VENUES WHICH SATISFY HIS MUSICAL AMBITIONS.

Jones' three nights at the Montreal Bistro capped a hectic and musically satisfying month for the club's staff and patrons. It had begun with a five night showcase for singer **Ranee Lee** before Ray Bryant came to town with bassist Keter Betts and drummer Dennis Mackrel for five nights of exciting piano jazz. **Rob McConnell**, **Ed Bickert** and **Neil Swainson** offered trio music with the unusual instrumentation of trombone / guitar / bass, then the focus shifted to the saxophone / piano / drums trio of **Jim Galloway**, Ralph Sutton and **Don Vickery**. The musical bonanza ended with the harmonic extensions and rhythmic flexibility of the piano and bass duo of Don Friedman and Don Thompson.

Saxophonist Chris Potter was guest of the **Bernie Senensky** Trio at The Senator and Dewey Redman was showcased at The Pilot. **Don Thompson** was a last minute substitution on piano in a quartet which included bassist Cameron Brown and drummer Matt Wilson.

Toronto's Downtown Holiday Inn has picked up the slack from the demise of George's Spaghetti House. Judy Jazz is operational six nights a week in a room which has been acoustically augmented with a multi-speaker system and video screens. **Lorne Lofsky**, Chantal Aston, **Pat LaBarbera** and **Moe Koffman** took care of the music in January.

TV Ontario's French language channel **La Chaine** is once again presenting a Sunday night jazz program. The two hour programs (aired for 2 months beginning January 8th) are drawn from programs taped over the years at the Montreal Jazz Festival. It's an eclectic mix of musical styles which range from Sarah Vaughan and Willie Dixon to Pat Metheny and Arturo Sandoval.

Singer **Denzil Pinnock** was the headliner at a jazz benefit concert in **MONTREAL** December 4th. You can find jazz on a semi regular basis at such Montreal clubs and restaurants as Biddle's, cafe Granos, L'air du Temps, L'Exterieur and La Dora. Complete information on the Montreal scene is covered in the **Montreal Jazz Grapevine**, P.O. Box 552, Victoria Station, Westmount, Que. H3Z 2Y6.

HALIFAX singer **Jeri Brown** has developed a concert showcase presenting the music of Sarah Vaughan. She was on stage at Halifax's Neptune Theatre November 27th.

The growth of jazz societies has helped make it possible for the grandiose summer festivals to flourish. Just as important though are the regional societies in smaller communities which keep the jazz flame burning year round. They now stretch right across the country and with more support and coordination could provide the kind of performance circuit so necessary for musicians committed to a full time playing career in jazz. If you have such a society in your area, please send the information to Coda.

Festival dates have started to trickle in, with the first event being the International Festival Musique Actuelle, from May 18-22 in **VICTORIAVILLE**, Quebec. Out on the west coast the du Maurier International Jazz Festival **VANCOUVER** is celebrating its 10th Anniversary with a preview series. Joey DeFrancesco and Pat Metheny were featured in February. The festival takes place June 23-July 2. For more information phone (604) 682-0706. **Barry Elmes** Quintet featuring Ed Bickert, and the **François Houle** trio, both performed at the Glass Slipper in January. François Houle has a trio recording on Red Toucan Records, a new company presenting quality Canadian improvised music. This is their third release.

The Barry Elmes Quintet, as part of their cross Canada tour, also played at Hermann's Jazz Club, the venue of the **VICTORIA** Jazz Society. Others appearing throughout January and February were the Blind Boys Of Alabama and Herb Ellis, and on March11th, the David Murray trio. Their festival will take place June 23-July 2. For more information phone (604) 388-4423.

From February 16-26 **Hugh Fraser** was the artistic Director for the 1995 Vancouver International Jazz Orchestra Workshop, at the Glass Slipper. The final night performance was scheduled to feature **Kenny Wheeler** as the guest artist.

Long time jazz fan and festival volunteer Paul Del Maschio has opened a record store at 310 Fitzwilliam in **NANAIMO**. Reports are that he sells at least one jazz record a day.

I Thought About You is the title of Ranee Lee's fourth CD for Justin Time. The Jazz focus is emphasised through the horn arrangements of Mike Malone and Dave McMurdo and the instrumental support of Oliver Jones and Terry Clarke... The changing face of Rob McConnell's Boss Brass is documented in ***Overtime*** his latest recording for Concord. Dave Restivo, Jim Vivian and Ted Warren are the rhythm section, while Alex Dean and Steve McDade are the solo voices on saxophone and trumpet respectively... Artifact Music has issued the long awaited debut recording of **Hemispheres** - the multi-directional big band based in Toronto under the direction of Nic Gotham... A performance recording of pianist Geoff Keezer, Steve Nelson and Neil Swainson from the Montreal Bistro is a new release on Sackville. □

OLIVER JONES • PHOTOGRAPH BY ELLEN TOFFLEMIRE

A PROFILE OF KEVIN TURCOTTE

BY **JERRY D'SOUZA** • PHOTOGRAPH BY **BARRY THOMSON**

YOUNG KEVIN TURCOTTE WAS FLUSHED AND HOT AS HE RAN DOWN THE STAIRS OF HIS HOUSE IN SUDBURY INTO THE BASEMENT. HE HAD JUST FINISHED ENERGISING HIS SKILLS IN A CLASSICAL WORKOUT ON THE CORNET BUT THERE WAS SOMETHING ELSE THAT HAD FIRED HIS IMAGINATION. HE FLIPPED THROUGH THE EXTENSIVE RECORD COLLECTION, PULLED OUT DIZZY GILLESPIE AND LISTENED TO THE MUSIC. THEN CAME CLIFFORD BROWN. BOTH PLAYED JAZZ BUT THEIR EXPLORATIVE TENDENCIES CREATED VARIED MUSICAL TANGENTS THAT NEVER CEASED TO FASCINATE THE BOY.

"I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN EXPOSED TO JAZZ," EXPLAINS TURCOTTE. "I HEARD IT IN THE BACKGROUND ALL THE TIME. I WAS INTRIGUED BY THE IMPROVISATION."

INTRIGUE MAY HAVE BEEN TRIGGERED BY JAZZ but Turcotte, who began finding his voice on the cornet when he was 15, first dipped into classical music. This was quite understandable coming as he did from a musical family. His parents taught the music. Besides, his father played the clarinet, his mother was a concert pianist, his sister played flute and his brother the trumpet.

"Yes it was quite a musical scene," he smiles, "it was fun!" Fun continued in school and on occasions into the Kiwanis Festival where he played. The classical leaning, however, did not cover the underlying fascination for jazz. He kept studying the records to "figure out what was happening, to find out what improvisation was, to find out what the players were doing."

The keening mind that tried to analyze what the musicians were doing led him deeper into the trough of jazz and to assimilate those permutations into his own playing. Despite this Turcotte avers that he "hadn't decided at any time to be a jazz musician. I just wanted to find out what was new that could be done on the trumpet. I enjoyed listening to jazz and saturated myself in all the different styles."

As Turcotte began to explore the various approaches he also opened his ears to other musicians among them Eric Dolphy, Ben Webster and Miles Davis. In doing so his focus shifted firmly to jazz.

The language that first made his mind and fingers twitch was be-bop because of the speed and technical virtuosity. In there was the centrifugal force that had given him the thrust - Clifford Brown. "As a trumpet player I couldn't help but be impressed by what he was doing. You hear the clean, high note players and you are impressed. These are the things which are difficult to do. Brown did it and inspired me to become a stronger trumpet player. From there I discovered other players like Ted Curson who also played be-bop but could sound original. The first time I heard him was on Charles Mingus Plays Charles Mingus. Dolphy was in there and they sounded very original. They were not treating it straight ahead in an a-a-b-a form. I was intrigued at how they could do the same thing in different ways and yet make it sound so personal. That really attracted me to jazz."

Despite it's lure, jazz did not nail Turcotte down within its terrain. He prefers to explore wider musical pastures, for him the grazing grounds of artistic fulfilment. One of these is Latin American music. "I've been a big fan of the latin sound in jazz," he asserts. "I listened to Woody Shaw a lot. He was a great composer and much of his music was influenced by latin music. I first got exposed to latin music through him. I like that kind of style where there is a lot of motion in the playing."

Turcotte decries the feeling that Latin American music, particularly when played in a dance band as he does, cramped the improvisatory freedom of jazz. "No", he exclaims leaping to bridge the chasm between his calling as a jazz musician and a trumpeter in a dance band. "You are free in latin music and sometimes a little freer than in standard jazz to explore the harmonies and stretch them as far as you like, as long as you are true rhythmically to the music. I enjoy improvising in that setting as well. I like the forward motion of the style. A trumpet player has more of a role to play in a dance band, he has to play longer and louder. There is a lot of strength involved. And it is exciting music!"

The New Music Orchestra is another avenue of expression for Turcotte. The name springs from the fact that every piece they play is composed specifically for the group. Improvisation is part of the composition but the music isn't purely jazz. "We interpret these compositions together so that we can get a unified sound as a group. There is a wide writing style in the group and we get a lot of different sounds and styles from jazz to whatever," he says.

"I consider myself a trumpet player who improvises in many different styles and not necessarily a jazz musician," he affirms. "I am open to a lot of different experiences."

Improvisation, the key to the different genres of his calling, is built upon technique. Without this attribute Turcotte says that a musician is unable to translate what he sings or hears in his head. "If you want to be a jazz musician there has to be technique so that you are not scuffling in your head to express ideas. It can be more demanding than other musics. You don't have to just maintain technique to get a certain job done, you need several techniques ready in case they are needed."

Unlike some performers who rotate ideas in their head, Turcotte does not plan ahead. To get a feel of what is happening, he may sing or play along in his mind while another player is improvising. "When I start to play it's not like I'll take the first idea that comes

into my head. I'm already into the solo and starting something else in order to get rid of the cliches that I don't particularly want to play. Most of the times I don't think of anything and try to deal with what's happening at the moment. I find it very challenging to make something out of nothing. I start to play and what people are playing behind will reflect on what I play. So what comes out is a combination of you making melodic statements and having the band react to what you are doing, and tossing ideas back and forth. It's easier to do when you don't think of what you are going to play. I enjoy the feeling of interacting with the band. Sometimes good things happen, sometimes they don't. I would like to take that risk. All you can do is practise a lot, play in different keys and transpose quickly. There have to be reference points as far as the style goes and the music you are playing. Generally, I try to start from there and go somewhere else."

NEVER SEEKING HIS MUSE IN ONE PLAYER, Turcotte has several points of reference as he roves the realm of improvisation. This attitude directed him to listen to as many as possible and to approach their sound in his own way. "I never sat down to transcribe 15 Miles Davis solos," he says, a smile flitting across his face. "I like to have a little bit of everything in what I do. I like players who can stretch the harmony and can solo rhythmically like Don Cherry, Ted Curson and, in the more mainstream, Thad Jones. I am not saying I sound like any of these guys but they are the ones I listen to. I am still trying to develop a personal sound."

Turcotte has received critical acclaim for his playing. Yet he feels that he has not yet distiled an essence that can be uniquely his. "Oh I'm definitely trying to find my own voice! I've been playing in different bands and musical situations and I've never really sat down and said - okay let's develop a certain voice. Right now at this point in my career I am trying to get used to the idea of developing a voice or a sound which I can put into my own music so that I can have an angle to come from. I have done a couple of gigs with my own band (tentatively called The Kevin Turcotte Quartet with Kieran Overs on bass, Ted Warren on drums and Reg Schwager on guitar) to try and find my sound. I have started writing songs for the band in trying to find that sound."

Even as he tries to zone in on the voice he would like to have, Turcotte revels in the music of the various groups he plays with among them Time Warp and the Kieran Overs Octet. And though they are exemplary musicians, and jell beautifully in their configurations, it is not easy getting shows often enough. "It is not like it was five or ten years ago, where a band would get chances to play often and get their own sound. There aren't many touring opportunities either."

"I've been lucky enough as a member of Time Warp to do some touring over the last couple of years. These days if you want to make a living as a jazz musician there has to be some sort of business sense and some self promotion. You have to get out and make sure people get a chance to hear what you are doing. I myself am not the greatest of businessmen. I have been concentrating on playing music and having fun. I have no complaints, but right now I think I am at a point where I would like to do more playing in my own group. I probably have to think of having to record, play at festivals and getting gigs out of Toronto."

Recording is certainly a part of the recognition process for a musician and Turcotte has achieved that with an impressive list of credits on several albums. He, however, has not yet felt the need to record on his own, one of the reasons being that he has had the "chance of playing with several different groups and in many styles of music. I've been lucky to play the music I want to explore."

Turcotte complements his persuasion as a musician with his calling as an educator. Teaching at the University of Toronto for the past three years, he savours the freedom given to him to teach anything he wants to. It is in that freedom that he has drawn the best out of several trumpet players who he says have, "world class potential. It's only a matter of time they before they are known."

There is another reason he is happy about the opportunity. There are all too few jazz education programmes being offered in Canada where one can go out and get a degree. "It's great to be part of a growing jazz programme and it's getting stronger every year. "There was another academic pursuit when he played at the Summer Jazz School at the Banff School of Fine Arts and had the opportunity of working with Roscoe Mitchell, Muhal Richard Abrams and Anthony Davis. A lot of good things happened for him and he describes this period as a very exciting time. Quite naturally.

Just as Turcotte has felt excitement being pumped into him, he has in turn given that impulse to all those who have heard him. He is one who can swoop in and around a melody making statements that crystallize every nuance. His is an authority without swagger, an impulse shorn of time worn cliches. He might still be searching for his voice but he darned sure is on the right track! □

SOME OTHER STUFF

THE CONTINUOUS FLOW OF RECORDINGS
HAS CREATED A STATE OF CONFUSION FOR THE CONSUMER. JUST ABOUT EVERY CONTEMPORARY MUSICIAN WHO CAN PLAY AN INSTRUMENT HAS MADE A CD AND VAULT RECORDINGS FROM THE PAST APPEAR ON A MULTIPLICITY OF ISSUES.

JACK TEAGARDEN • PHOTOGRAPH BY JACK BRADLEY • *METROPOLE N.Y.C. 1964*

NUMEROUS GUIDES ARE NOW available which are useful for both the casual listener and the serious collector. Just out is the ***All Music Guide To Jazz*** - a Miller Freeman publication edited by Ron Wynn. It's the most comprehensive North American guide yet published but it still has many drawbacks. The fundamental problem - which limits its usefulness to both listeners and retailers - is that the listings contain many long out of print lp selections and there is no attempt to indicate which listings are on CD. The Ruby Braff section, for instance, lists 10" Vanguard lps, and several of Bill Russell's legendary American Music lps are also listed. In some cases (Buck Clayton) the same music is listed more than once with different catalogue numbers. All the major jazz figures are covered extensively but below that level there is less consistency in the entries. The major omission I could find is New Orleans clarinetist George Lewis. There are no entries for Louis Cottrell, Don Ewell, Bobby Henderson and Ronnie Mathews. There is also editorial confusion in the Bennie Green listing. The text discusses the trombonist's contributions, but the heading relates to the activities of the English saxophonist and writer of the same name.

Another curiosity, considering the book's US slant, is the listing for Georges Arvanitas. He is one of the few Europeans included but they are unable to list any of his recordings. Other artists suffer the same fate.

The depth and accuracy of the entries depends upon the editorial team that made the contribution. The opinions of the writers are augmented by excerpts from magazine reviews (some very old).

Working with this book and ***The Penguin Guide*** (wait for the new edition) will give you a great deal of useful information but no one can keep up to date on the myriad CD issues.

Major label jazz - primarily post Herbie Hancock/Wynton Marsalis - is a highly visible commodity. But jazz didn't start in 1980 and its stylistic tentacles are being reworked constantly.

Both classic and not so classic recordings of the 78 era (before the mid 1940s) are being reissued by many different labels in the world. The most prolific (they will have 300 titles available soon) is the French ***Classics*** label. Until recently they focused their attention on the recordings made by Black artists but are now working away at such performers as Bunny Berigan, Eddie

A RECORD UPDATE BY **JOHN NORRIS**

Condon, Benny Goodman and Jack Teagarden. Heavy hitters such as these are also available in major label issues but they are rarely as complete and often have less satisfactory sound quality. The Classics CDs satisfactorily handle the technical challenges of transferring the sound from the original sources. (Optimum sound quality lies in the hands of a few specialists and that is what makes the Collectors Classics/JSP and Timeless Historical programs so special.)

Classics has an ongoing series of Clarence Williams reissues as well as recent CDs by Lovie Austin (but the sound should be better once John R.T. Davies has done the same material for Collectors Classics), Joe Marsala and a John Kirby series which will duplicate a French CBS two CD set of all the Columbia sides and French RCA's Jazz Tribune set of all his Victor material as well as that of Una Mae Carlisle.

Classics' **The Best of Jazz** series is for those who don't want everything an artist recorded on 78. The Mills Blue Rhythm Band is a recent addition to that series.

SWEDEN HAS a long jazz tradition. Duke Ellington acknowledged that in 1939 with his *Serenade To Sweden*. Swedish musicians were recorded extensively in the 1940s and 1950s which showed, for the most part, that they had assiduously absorbed American recordings. Recent ***Phontastic*** reissues featuring trumpeter Gosta Torner and vocalist Alice Babs attest to this. Of more interest, internationally, is Phontastic's series of Benny Goodman CDs from the 1940s using alternative takes to those issued on the original 78s.

Phontastic is also recording present day musicians and **Hot Time in Umea** (NCD8833) is a Goodman Trio inspired date featuring clarinetist Anti Sarpila, pianist Ulf Johansson and drummer Ronnie Gardiner. Similar styled music is to be found on the second set of music by the Lars Estrand Quartet **Beautiful Friendship** (Setlel 9205) is a collaboration between the Swedes and Ken Peplowski and Frank Vignola. The new breed of hammond organ players make sure they let you know they are playing a B3. Kjell Ohman does just that on his ***Opus 3*** CD **The Hammond Connection** (19402). Contributing significantly to the music are veterans Arne Domnerus, Rune Gustafsson, Mads Vinding and Leif Dahlberg.

Fantasy's Original Jazz Classics are a widely circulated budget-priced reissue series in the U.S. Their big name artists are also showcased in multi-disc boxes where packaging is a highly skilled art. Less well known is ***Fantasy's Limited Edition OJC*** series. These are recordings which they feel have less universal appeal. They are not so well distributed and usually cost more. But they have some exceptional music drawn from the Contemporary / Prestige and Riverside catalogues. Recent additions include **This Is** by Walt Dickerson, **Another Opus** by Lem Winchester, **Evidence** by Steve Lacy/Don Cherry and the New Orleans recordings made in 1961 by Riverside with bands led by Sweet Emma Barrett, Percy Humphrey, Peter Bocage, Kid Thomas and Jim Robinson. Best of all was the trio date by clarinetist Louis Cottrell. These CDs add many (but not all) of the selections included in the two-lp sampler which launched the original series.

Fantasy also has a way of sneaking some of their recordings onto the market without fully informing the consumer. In the 1950s singer Claire Austin made two highly regarded (but stylistically diverse) recordings for Lester Koenig. There was a 10" lp of 1920s blues songs with Don Ewell and Kid Ory for GTJ and a 12" lp for Contemporary in a Lee Wiley styled setting. The OJC reissue (1711) of both lps used the Contemporary cover but only by reading the fine print can you find out exactly what it includes.

More recently issued is **Mellow Moods** (Prestige 24136) which has all the music from Clark Terry's Moodsville lps **Everything Mellow** and **All American.** Coleman Hawkins' **Bean And The Boys** (Prestige 24124) retains the 1940s 78s from the lp compilation, drops the French Vogue material but adds all of **Stasch** - a jam session originally issued on Swingville. **Red Garland at the Prelude** (Prestige 24132) is still called volume 1 even though it contains all the music from that lp and the New Jazz issue called **Live**. At 77 minutes it is excellent value both musically and economically.

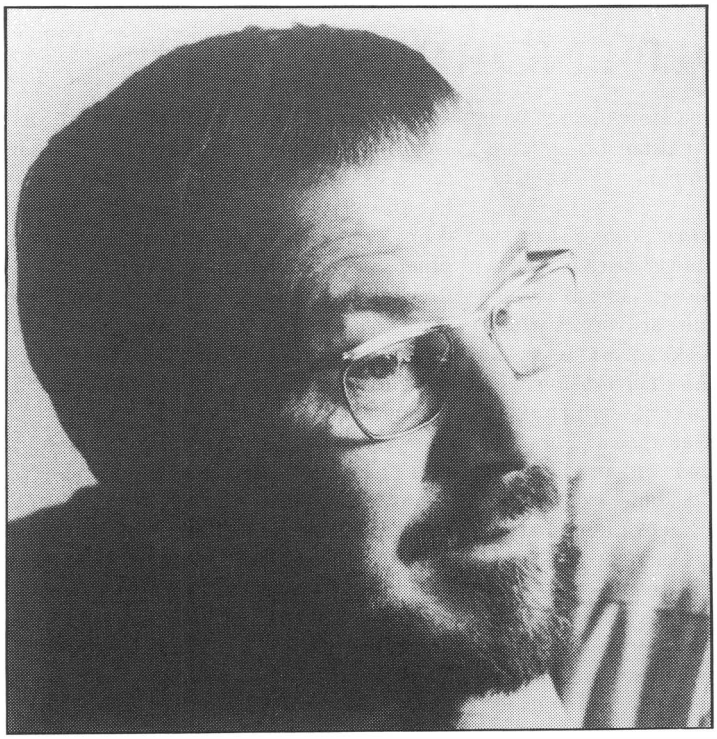
Repackaging is not limited to 78 era recordings. ***EMI*** has available a four CD set called **Chet Baker: The Pacific Jazz Years.** It's an overview of his seminal recording years with Gerry Mulligan, Art Pepper and other West Coast stars. It's a good collection but the avid Baker collector will already have nearly all of it. Mosaic comprehensively reissued much of this material and there are several single Baker CD reissues on Pacific Jazz.

EMI has also repackaged again **The Atomic Mr. Basie** - adding this time the five unissued performances which were first made available a year ago on ***Mosaic*** as part of their multi disc **Complete Count Basie on Roulette.** This CD on Blue Note makes use of the upgraded Malcolm Addey transfers used by Mosaic.

MORE THAN 30,000 PEOPLE attend the annual Dixieland Jazz Festival in Sacramento but you would only know this if you subscribe to specialist magazines which chronicle that style of jazz.

It's generally felt that the initial impetus for what has become a world wide phenomenon was the ground breaking band formed by Lu Watters in the late 1930s in San Francisco to play tunes recorded by King Oliver, Louis Armstrong and others less than twenty years earlier in the 1920s. Today, more than fifty years after Lu Watters first recorded, musicians are still playing his charts. All of Lu Watters classic recordings were eventually acquired by Good Time Jazz and reissued on lp. They are now reassembled, along with some broadcast material, the four sides made by trumpeter Benny Strickler with the band, and several alternative versions of the tunes in a lovingly prepared and presented four CD box set by ***Fantasy*** as the **Lu Watters Yerba Buena Jazz Band: Complete Good Time Jazz Recordings** (GTJ 4409-2).

Lu Watters had a direct impact on Holland's Dutch Swing College Band, Australia's Graeme Bell and England's George Webb. For more than a decade the focus was, once again, on collective ensemble music and non American musicians were also influenced by Bill Russell's New Orleans recordings (now wonderfully reissued on ***American Music*** CDs) and



Kid Ory's 1940s band which featured trumpeter Mutt Carey.

THE MUSIC CREATED outside America through the 1950s had a spirit and a style which is rarely duplicated today. Historical evidence of this is becoming available as some of these recordings become available again. ***Cadillac*** has reissued all the Melodisc recordings of The Christie Brothers Stompers (Cadillac 20/1) which was a short lived band assembled by the clarinet and trombone brothers using personnel from the Lyttelton and Crane River bands. It marked the first expansion beyond the original parameters of the 1940s bands. Ken Colyer and Dickie Hawdon are the trumpeters who define the past and future directions within the tradition and this is spirited music. So too is an early collection (1957) of Acker Bilk recordings made for Doug Dobell's ***77*** label in 1957 which features the fiery trumpet of Bob Wallis. Acker Bilk's **New Orleans Days** is on ***Lake*** CD 36.

Ken Colyer was good enough a jazz musician to be offered the trumpet chair in George Lewis' band while he was in New Orleans in 1951. His Mutt Carey tinged horn playing is easily identifiable. Since his untimely death there has been something of a growth industry of his recordings. Lake has issued (mostly on lp) all of his 1950s Decca sessions but there have been many location performances issued for the first time. **Serenading Auntie** (Upbeat 111) is a recent example. It's a collection drawn from BBC Jazz Club radio performances between 1956 and 1960 and includes a number of tunes not recorded elsewhere by the band. Jazz Crusade claims to have Ken's last session - a pickup date in Stockholm in 1986. Like others issued elsewhere it is typical Colyer working with musicians who have learnt how to play his style.

Chris Barber, more than anyone else, helped package and popularise an anglicised version of New Orleans jazz which became immensely popular. You can hear the process in transition in a two CD set on ***Timeless*** which contains previously unissued live performances recorded in Germany and Holland between 1954 and 1956. It's packaged as **40 Years Jubilee** (Timeless TDD 586).

The 1943 George Lewis **Climax** session had a big impact. It was issued originally through Blue Note and is included in Mosaic's George Lewis box. Bill Russell maintained that he still retained ownership and the complete session is now out again on two ***American Music*** CDs remastered from the original acetates. AM has also issued the Circle sessions by the Zenith Brass Band and George Lewis' Eclipse Alley Five. These too, have been remastered from the original acetates and included a number of previously unavailable alternative takes. Unlike the Climax date, which should be heard by everyone, this Circle material is less significant but you should avoid the poorly dubbed reissue of the Riverside lp from the 1950s.

Bill Russell, besides making significant recordings and writing essential early critiques, was a capable violinist who was a member of The New Orleans Ragtime Orchestra for twenty years. ***Arhoolie*** has issued a CD which combines their 1971 lp with a 1989 session which was originally on a Stomp Off lp. These performances (now on Arhoolie CD 420) give a much better feel of how jazz musicians approach ragtime than the classic approach of Gunther Schuller's New England Ensemble.

Tom Baker is an expatriate American who has found a niche for himself in Australia performing in a variety of settings. **Ozark Blues** by the Baker-Baldwin Radiogram Washboards is evocative of The Clarence Williams tradition and the seminal Aussie sound of the Bell-Monsbrough pickup bands. Baker doubles on various saxophones and trumpet in spirited performances of jazz standards and popular songs. Baker is also a solo voice on a couple of CDs by Australian singer Janet Seidel. We've seen a rebirth of the jazz singer in the CD era even when they lack the seasoning (experience) to be convincing in this demanding area of expression. Seidel is one singer who seems to have it together. **Little Jazz Bird** and **Winter Moon** are her two CDs on ***La Brava Music***, P.O. Box 261, Kings Cross, NSW 2011, Australia.

Doc Cheatham only sounds like himself. This makes **Swinging Down In New Orleans** a charming set. The trumpeter shares the spotlight with pianist Butch Thompson and up and coming clarinetist Bill O'Connell in a Crescent City production on ***Jazzology*** JCD233.

When you hear trumpeter Yoshio Toyama you know that he both admires and listens to Louis Armstrong. His playing is full of Satchmo phrasing in a collection of pleasing duets with pianist Ralph Sutton recorded in Japan in 1987 and 1990 and now issued on Jazzology JCD226.

SINCE ART TATUM recorded *Tiger Rag* in 1933 the world knows that he is the pianist who sets the standard for everyone else. The release of **California Melodies** (Memphis Archives 7007) is a major event. These are never before issued radio performances from 1940 David Rose programs. The 70 minute CD has 24 selections and all but one of them are solo

KEN COLYER • PHOTOGRAPH BY BILL SMITH

piano interpretations of popular songs with two of them - (**I Thought About You** and **I Cried For You**) never recorded elsewhere by the pianist. The sound quality is excellent and the performances are stunning. Other Art Tatum, from 1944/1945 transcriptions, has been repackaged by ***Black Lion*** on **Tea For Two** (BLCD760192).

Also issued by ***Memphis Archives*** is Jack Teagarden's 1963 Monterey Festival performance which reunited on stage the musical members of his family. This material has already appeared elsewhere on CD but the sound quality here is particularly good. There's a two CD collection of regional blues performers on stage in **The Memphis Blues Caravan** as well as five archival collections. Historically the most interesting is a collection of early 1920's recordings by the W.C. Handy band. **Tin Pan Alley Blues,** Memphis Country Blues Greatest Hits Volume 1, **Riverboat Shuffle** and **Memphis Town** are broad based compilations.

The Swing Time Records Story is a two CD set on ***Capricorn*** which gives an overview of the West Coast label. Charles Brown, Lowell Fulson, Lloyd Glenn, Ray Charles, Joe Turner/Pete Johnson and Jimmy Witherspoon are prominently featured. Seasoned collectors will already have the Night Train CDs featuring Lowell Fulson, Lloyd Glenn and Jimmy Witherspoon, the Arhoolie Joe Turner/Pete Johnson collection and the Ebony Ray Charles set. This Capricorn set is, however, an excellent sampler and the sound transfers are spectacular. Missing from the elaborate booklet, though, are any personnels - an important oversight.

The Obscure And Neglected Chicagoans (IAJRC 1007) is the kind of project dear to the heart of vintage 78 collectors. The only widely known names on these recordings are Jimmy McPartland on four 1927 sides by the Original Wolverines and Muggsy Spanier's presence in the Ray Miller Orchestra. Less obscure but just as esoteric are reissues from England's ***Frog Records***. Their first release (Frog 1) presents the Thomas Morris 1926 Victor sessions which included Joe Nanton and Buddy Christian in the personnel. Frog's second release is a collection of 1920s New Orleans music - all the new New Orleans Owls material as well as Victor dates by the New Orleans Rhythm Kings and Johnny Hyman's Bayou Stompers.

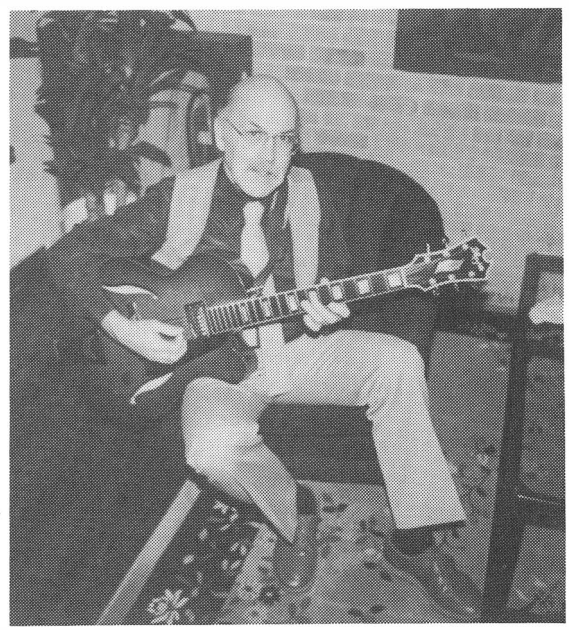
AMERICANS HAVE BEEN recording overseas for a long time. ***Jazz Connaisseur*** is a Swiss label which recently issued a 1987 Wild Bill Davis Quartet date done originally for Swiss radio with Clifford Scott a featured sideman. Sir Charles Thompson visited Switzerland for lengthy stays and Jazz Connaisseur has now assembled a collection of solos drawn from dates in 1961 and 1967 made for Swiss Radio. In 1993 Sir Charles recorded a trio CD for Japanese King with Eddie Jones and Eddie Locke which is being widely circulated in Europe through Bellaphon.

Several magazines offer CDs as part of their subscription packages and Italy's ***Musica Jazz*** often includes CDs full of surprises. Their Jim Hall collection comes from concert dates between 1982 and 1992 and another CD is a Duke Ellington concert from Rotterdam (January 28, 1967).

Blowing Hot From The North (Loose Tie Records 4301) features Bob Wilber in a core group which performs with a variety of young and aspiring musicians from the north of England who participated in Yorkshire Televisions' Young Jazz Player competitions between 1991 and 1993. Twenty-two performances are assembled here.

Radio France has issued a souvenir CD (9401) of performances from the Marciac Jazz Festival. Dee Dee Bridgewater, Stephane Grappelli, Tete Montoliu, The Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, Guy Lafitte, Dianne Reeves, Gerry Mulligan and Wynton Marsalis are the featured artists.

It's now more than a year since jazz was featured at the White House gala celebration. The presentation was fashionably hip but it was Dorothy Donegan who ripped through the cultural veneer with a no hold barred performance which created the only spontaneous ovation as well as reminding her "children" what this music is all about. The charisma of her musical personality is captured in her ***Chiaroscuro*** Floating Festival performance from 1992 with special guest Clark Terry. It's issued on Chiaroscuro 323. □

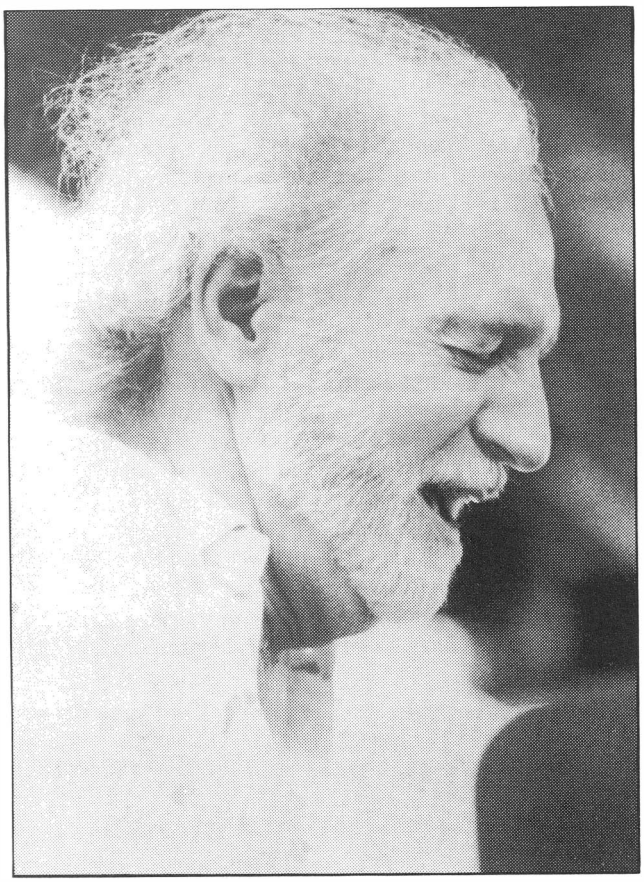


JIM HALL • PHOTOGRAPH BY BILL SMITH

LITTLE SHELF SPACE IS GIVEN IN MOST MAJOR CD EMPORIUMS

to labels without the power to dictate what music is made available to the consumer. Consequently it is important for listeners to support (through the mail or over the counter) establishments which cater to the whole wide world of jazz and also offer the jazz enthusiast understanding and service to the customer. The following list is merely a guide to some of the available outlets who cater to the jazz enthusiast.

PINTAIL RECORDS, 11640 Pintail Drive, Richmond, BC V7E 4P5, Canada
CADENCE, The Cadence Building, Redwood, NY 13679, U.S.A.
J & M RECORDS, P.O. Box 276, Taunton, Somerset TA3 6YZ, England
ACORN MUSIC, P.O. Box 17, Sidmouth, Devon EX10 9EH, England
MOLE JAZZ, 311 Grays Inn Rd., London WC1X 8PX, England
JAZZ IS BECK, Ludwig beck AG, Marienplatz 11, 80327 Munchen, Germany
SKIVFYND, B.F. Scherman, Box 8003, S-10420 Stockholm, Sweden
JAZZ TIME, Hardstrasse 47, CH-5430 Wettingen, Switzerland



LOCAL COLOUR
MOSE ALLISON

IF MOSE ALLISON HAD NEVER DONE ANYTHING IN HIS CAREER BUT WRITE IMPERISHABLE CLASSICS SUCH AS *PARCHMAN FARM, A YOUNG MAN, YOUR MIND IS ON VACATION (AND YOUR MOUTH IS WORKING OVERTIME), YOUR MOLECULAR STRUCTURE* AND *TELL ME SOMETHING*, HE WOULD STILL BE ASSURED OF A DISTINGUISHED PLACE IN ANY JAZZ OR BLUES HALL OF FAME.

BUT IN ADDITION TO BEING A SONGWRITER OF GENIUS, WHOSE TYPICALLY WORLD-WEARY, WRY AND WITTY LYRICS ARE TRULY INIMITABLE, ALLISON IS ALSO A MAGNIFICENT SINGER, WITH AN UNMISTAKABLE, HIP, CONVERSATIONAL STYLE, AND AN EXCELLENT, DISTINCTIVE PIANIST, GOOD ENOUGH AS EARLY AS THE FIFTIES TO HAVE PLAYED WITH THE LIKES OF STAN GETZ, GERRY MULLIGAN AND ZOOT SIMS.

PHOTOGRAPH BY GERARD FUTRICK

ALLISON'S MIGHTY CAREER now spans nearly forty years, since, fresh from university graduation with a degree in English, he signed for Prestige and made a number of timeless recordings, including ***Back County Suite*** (1957), ***Local Color*** (1957) and ***Creek Road*** (1958). In the 60s and 70s Allison released the equally impressive ***Transfiguration of Hiram Brown*** (1960, Columbia) and, for Atlantic ***Swinging Machine*** (1961), ***Mose Alive*** (1966), ***I've Been Doing Some Thinking*** (1968), ***Hello There Universe*** (1970), ***Western Man*** (1971), ***Mose In Your Ear*** (1972) and ***Your Mind's On Vacation*** (1976).

More recently the outstanding quality of Allison's work has been maintained with ***Middle Class White Boy*** (1982, Elektra), ***Ever Since The World Ended*** (1988, Blue Note, with Kenny Burrell guesting) and ***My Backyard*** (1990, Blue Note).

Despite the evidence of such a dazzling catalogue, however, somehow, amidst Allison's super abundance of talents, his piano playing has sometimes been underappreciated. "You learn more about it all the time," he explained after his recent debut appearance in Belfast, for Jazz Northern Ireland. "I'm playing differently than I played thirty years ago. A lot of those early records have been reissued on CD now, and I was listening to a couple the other day and I had a pretty different approach. But there's similarities too. The basic thing is to swing and I'm still trying to swing, though it's a little more extensive now and I play a lot more variations. But still, swinging is the main purpose."

The thunderous, dense clusters of notes that Allison interjects into some of his tunes have led some listeners to compare his playing to Cecil Taylor's. "People have mentioned that a few times - but they haven't heard Cecil Taylor recently," laughs Allison, "I'm certainly not in the same league as Cecil Taylor as far as pianistic force goes. I heard him in New York in the fifties - I've been listening to him for thirty years - and he's been doing this as long as I've been doing it. He's influenced most pianists these days. But if you get behind that you get back to Arnold Schoenberg, and you see where a lot of that comes from. There are jazz groups now that sound more like Arnold Schoenberg than they do like Louis Armstrong."

Allison's classic songs, with their characteristically ironic, biting wit, are amongst the most unique and literate in jazz. "I get the main idea, or the punch line, or the theme. Then I put that into a line, and the line takes on a melody, and then the melody suggests a song form. I don't want to write the same song over and over, and sometimes I think I've covered everything, so the whole idea now is to try and get something that I haven't done before, a little different slant on something.

"Of course there are certain elements that are always there, because I'm me and I'm not going to change into somebody else anytime soon, I don't think," chuckles Allison. "So there are certain ingredients that you'll probably find in several songs - most of them - but the idea is to keep trying to come up with something that's a little different. When

IN CONVERSATION WITH **TREVOR HODGETT**

you get an idea and write a song and get it completed you're always enthused, but certain songs I'll record and never play again. Others I keep in my repertoire and play every night. I do the things that I feel I can put across best."

Anyone with any taste, of course, has recorded cover versions of Mose Allison's songs. Strangely, considering the sophistication of his writing, many of these cover versions have been by rock musicians. "I like a lot of them. Van Morrison did a good job on *If You Only Knew* and I like Bonnie Raitt's version of *Everybody's Crying Mercy*. Also somebody sent me a tape recently of Elvis Costello doing a couple of tunes and he did a good job. And I thought Robert Palmer did a good job of *Top 40*."

In addition John Mayall has recorded *Parchman Farm* and Georgie Fame has recorded several Allison songs, including, again, *Parchman Farm*, as well as *Ask Me Nice* and *Work Song*. And rock legends The Who famously recorded a wild, over-the-top version of *A Young Man*. "I always tell everybody that's the Command Performance version. It's a lot more involved than my version was. My version was pretty unembellished and was sort of matter-of-fact, and they made a big production number out of it - which is fine with me."

But in addition to his own rich catalogue of great songs, Allison has also recorded masterful and highly personalized cover versions of material such as Willie Dixon's *Seventh Son*, Duke Ellington's *Do Nothing Till You Hear From Me* and Mercy Dee Walton's *One Room Country Shack*, as well as of more surprising material such as *You Are My Sunshine*. "I like to take old songs that people would never associate with me and try to turn them into something that I can do something with, and almost every album I've done one song like that - taken an old song and tried to do something with it that was unusual. And a lot of people give me tapes of their songs that they say they thought I could do, but I'm not looking for songs like I've written - I'm looking for something completely different!"

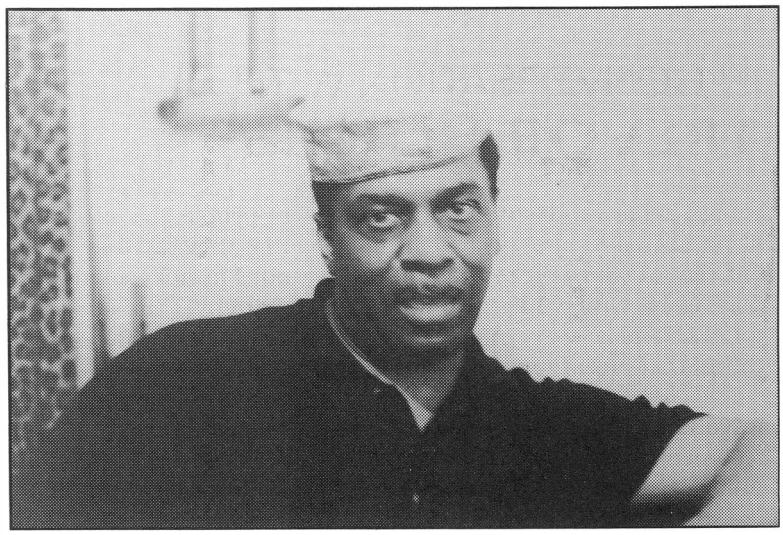
Asked to nominate a contemporary songwriter that he admires, Allison, perhaps surprisingly, goes outside the world of jazz and blues and chooses a cult / rock singer / songwriter. "People used to ask me what one of the younger songwriters do I like, but at this point they're not young any more! I like Loudon Wainwright and he's middle-aged now, but he's always been one of my favourite songwriters, because he has the ironic, satirical approach."

Although Allison has recorded and performed with larger line-ups, he normally works in a trio format. "If you've got horn players - and I like to play with good horn players and I've done it a lot - it's a different thing. And actually on my recent album I had horn players and that's what influenced me to do *Top 40*, which I wrote 25 years ago, but I'd never recorded, because I was looking for something for the horn players to play on. I needed a tune that would make a good tune for them and that I could write a little arrangement on. But a trio gives you more freedom. You have complete harmonic control and also you can take different directions if you have a responsive drum and bass player. You can do whatever comes into your mind, whatever you want to do at the moment."

And on that positive note our interview ended, and the legend and the writer parted: the legend to be chauffeured off to an after hours Belfast drinking spot for a rendezvous with rock superstar and local boy Van Morrison and British r'n'b and jazz great Georgie Fame; the writer to trudge home alone through the lashing rain, and a grim encounter with a mob of psychopathic lager louts. Such, alas, is life. □

CHASING THE VIBRATIONS
EXTENDED PLAY
OMNIVERSE SUN RA

JAZZ LITERATURE



TWO MAJOR QUALITIES RECOMMEND GRAHAM LOCK'S **Chasing the Vibrations** *(Stride Publcations, 1994, 11 Sylvan Rd, Exeter, Devon EX4 6EW, U.K.)*: THE MUSICIANS INTERVIEWED AND LOCK'S WRITING. FOCUSING GENERALLY ON "OUT" PLAYERS, HE INCLUDES PIECES ON THOSE ABOUT WHOM MUCH IS KNOWN (CECIL TAYLOR, ABDULLAH IBRAHIM, MAX ROACH, AND BETTY CARTER) AND THOSE WHO SELDOM RECEIVE SERIOUS ATTENTION (CHRIS MCGREGOR, MIKE WESTBROOK, NORMA WINSTONE, AND THE GROUP ENTITLED THE GUEST STARS). IN EACH OF HIS TWENTY-ONE PIECES, LOCK'S ENTHUSIASM AND DEFT PROSE ENCOURAGE READERS TO ADMIRE HIS SUBJECTS, DESPITE THEIR OCCASIONALLY OFFPUTTING IDIOSYNCRASIES.

LOCK CAPTURES PERSONALITIES AND EVENTS, often quite vividly. Sun Ra gave him pages from Ra's ***The Information Book*** , the contents of which befuddle him (and, I admit, befuddle me). John Gilmore tells of Stan Getz's influence on him and of Ahmad Jamal's on Sun Ra. Lock discusses the shyness of Kenny Wheeler, who admits to thinking himself more a composer than a trumpet player. Mike Westbrook proclaims jazz "a socialist music"; Chris McGregor believes that music can help solve "the world's problems" because it "orients minds and spirits." Marilyn Crispell states that John Coltrane's ***A Love Supreme*** led her to jazz and that, not surprisingly, Cecil Taylor "is her aesthetic role-model." Sunny Murray tells that he and Taylor were beaten by gangsters, with both of Taylor's wrists being broken and Murray almost being run over by a car. Taylor frustrates Lock. He responds to many questions by asking Lock to explain what he truly means. One result of this questioning of the questioner is that Lock feels defensive. He wonders, "Am I lunching with a genius or a fruitcake?" All of this is just to say that Lock often succeeds in getting his subjects — who also include Steve Lacy, Mal Waldron, Dave Holland, Jimmy Giuffre, and Evan Parker to reveal aspects of what appears to be their real selves.

Lock also includes reviews of recordings by Billie Holiday, Horace Tapscott, and Leo Smith. Although the last two are fairly routine, the first is not. Here, he takes on the significant issue of why Holiday sang such tunes as *My Man, Don't Explain,* and *You're My Thrill,* the lyrics of which depict women as being submissive to men, who can and do treat their women badly, even brutally. He also wonders why people respond so positively to such lyrics, at least as Holiday sings them. He does not claim to offer definitive answers to these questions, but he does consider possibilities, one of which is that Holiday sang such lyrics in order to convey a sub-text of protest against harsh treatment of women. This review of less than three pages is the most provocative piece in the entire book.

Lock presents himself as a social liberal, as in the Holiday review, but at least once with humorous results. When he suggests to Marilyn Crispell that sexual prejudice has caused her artistic neglect, she disagrees, citing musicians who respect her work, such as Anthony Braxton and Reggie Workman. To Lock's credit, he does not attempt to protect himself from appearing foolish. Yet he also reveals his own sexism. He himself mentions the families of no male musicians (although he records a statement Sunny Murray makes about his family), yet he points out that Betty Carter reared two sons and mentions Crispell's failed marriage. Surely some of the male musicians have reared — or helped rear — children and have had failed marriages. Why mention only women's domestic realities?

Lock permits himself to get carried away on the issue of race. In writing in his Taylor piece about a short-lived group Taylor had with Albert Ayler in the early 1960s, Lock makes this statement: "But gigs were hard to come by and, thanks to the racist obduracy of the US music business, no recording was ever made of this unique musical pairing." Perhaps he correctly explains why this group never recorded; but on what basis does he characterize the music industry as racist in this instance? Is this what Taylor told him? If so, what evidence, if any, did he offer? Or is this merely Lock's interpretation? If so, what leads him to this conclusion? This unsupported claim is doubly grating coming, as it does, immediately following Lock's statement that the group had difficulty finding work. Does this mean, therefore, that club owners who refused to hire the group were racist? Would Lock consider anyone who did not like their music to be racist? Surely other black musicians were working clubs and being recorded.

SIMILARLY, JOHN GILMORE tells Lock of Sun Ra's belief that the word "Negro" derives from "necro"; therefore, people permitting themselves to be called "Negro" accept, psychologically, that they are "the equivalent of a dead body, or a person who [cannot] function." Gilmore calls this observation an example of Ra's "wisdom." Lock does not comment on Ra's etymological statement or on Gilmore's assessment of it. Does Lock

SUN RA • PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

agree with them? Gilmore and Lock — especially Lock — needed to consult the ***Oxford English Dictionary*** or some other dictionary which shows the evolution of the word "Negro." Is Ra correct? Are these dictionaries wrong? Lock leaves us dangling, wondering.

To Lock's credit, he states his bias clearly and forthrightly in the introduction to his book. He avers that the lack of public acceptance of "African-American creative music" is due in part to "racism and the prevailing capitalist mind-set." Perhaps so; but I would like to know some of his reasons for making this statement. Here, in his Taylor-Ayler comment, and in his treatment of Gilmore's endorsement of Ra's linguistic acuity, Lock permits his politics to go unexamined and to diminish his voice as reliable questioner and evaluator.

With the exception of the Sunny Murray piece, the contents of this book have been published elsewhere, in ***The Wire*** and ***New Musical Express*** . And although Lock has expanded some of his pieces (Sun Ra, Evan Parker), in length they average only six pages. So how should one account for the conclusion to the Dave Holland profile: "Sorry, I'm out of space"? Or Lock's statement that he must finish discussing Sun Ra because of "a cosmic lack of space"? Is he being ironic?

Despite my reservations about this book, it is, finally, a valuable introduction to improvising musicians who are outside the mainstream.

REGULAR READERS OF THE JAZZ press will likely be familiar with certain selections in John Corbett's 1994 book, ***Extended Play: Sounding Off from John Cage to Dr. Funkenstein*** *(Duke University Press, Box 90660, Durham, N.C. U.S.A. 27708-0660).* Many of them originally appeared in periodicals, including ***Down Beat*** , ***The Wire*** , ***Cadence*** , and ***Coda*** . Yet, they are worth reading again, if only to be reminded, in this retro age, that dedicated artists pursue truly new and even shocking means of expression. With only an occasional exception, such as devoting part of a profile to Von Freeman, Corbett focuses on the avant garde. He gathers his pieces into three sections: "Dancing in Your Head" (seven essays about theory), "An Ear to the Ground" (profiles of eleven musicians), and "Music Like Dirt" (thirteen interviews).

ALTHOUGH THE OPENING ESSAY ON EXTRA-TERRESTRIALS Lee "Scratch" Perry, Sun Ra, and George Clinton sets the "out" tone for most of what follows, I admit to reacting negatively to the depiction of them as "great thinkers," as Corbett characterizes them on the second page of the essay. Provocative, yes; but great? He is not writing about Plato or Einstein. To illustrate the ludicrousness of Corbett's claim, in the Sun Ra interview, Ra launches into a quasi-etymological explanation of the word "earth" that strains credulity and induces smiles. This is more gibberish and put-on than serious — let alone great — thought. I am surprised that Ra could con someone so otherwise savvy as Corbett.

I also find some of Corbett's theorizing heavy going, especially when he fails adequately to connect it to music, as is the case with his essay "Postmodernism — Go, Figure: Smell, Sound, and Subliminal Suggestion." Some of it, though, is not only insightful but engaging. He addresses the effort to connect the visual to sound (picture discs, record jackets, MTV); he writes persuasively about the sexist and racist imperatives that dictate keeping background singers anonymous and subordinate. In the wonderfully titled "Bleep This, Motherf*!#er: The Semiotics of Profanity in Popular Music," he offers a compelling argument against those who would censor lyrics, such as Tipper Gore, Susan Baker, and their followers in the Parents Music Resource Center. In his introduction, he discusses the postmodern significance of the shuffle (random) button on CD players. He even applies the concept of randomness to his own book, encouraging readers to violate its structure and to read it non-sequentially in order "to create new connections," which is what he himself has attempted to do. He reminds us in the Barry Guy profile, for example, that Guy was once "principal bassist in Christopher Hogwood's Academy of Ancient Music." Corbett loves such incongruities.

ANTHONY BRAXTON & KENNY WHEELER
(WINTER 1970, LONDON) PHOTOGRAPH BY VAL WILMER

SUN RA • PHOTOGRAPH BY BILL SMITH

CORBETT PROFILES BOTH THE RELATIVELY WELL KNOWN (Sun Ra and George Clinton) and relatively little known (Ikue Mori and Catherine Jauniaux). I had not previously known of the vocalist Sainkho Namtchylak, who performs with a vinyl record atop her head and who, despite her image and her association with Free Music Productions (FMP), "would like to improvise more infrequently."

Perhaps the most perceptive comment in the profiles comes from Franz Koglmann. Although Corbett terms it "conventional" in the context of postmodernism, it warrants restating. According to Koglmann, because "classical and modernist movements of America and Europe... have played themselves out, their pioneers having explored all the options inherent in their various musical languages," musicians should "use all the systems... and use them together." Corbett then applies this observation to Koglmann's own playing, noting how the trumpeter adopts Alain Resnais' film editing technique on one recording and how he inserts a fugue into a waltz on another.

In usually treating his subjects' careers chronologically, Corbett structures his profiles traditionally and conservatively, which is also the case with his interviews. However, such a structure violates his announced desire to encourage the new. Aware of this problem, he begins his interviews radically. Corbett composed questions for John Cage, but through a procedure too intricate to detail here, he permitted Cage to select the sequence of the questions by rolling dice or tossing coins. That is, Corbett composed the questions but Cage "performed" them. Thus, an interview occurred with the least amount of structure. But this non-interview succeeds. Cage addresses serious issues; that one does not lead logically to another does not matter.

Many of the other interviews also delight. As with the subjects of the profiles, Corbett treats the relatively unknown (Nicolas Collins and Jon Rose) as well as the relatively known (Anthony Braxton and Sun Ra). To me, the most revealing of them is with Alton Abraham, the long-time associate of Ra.

Abraham's preferred pronoun is "we," as in "we started El Saturn Research and we started the Sun Ra Arkestra." That is, he presents himself as a — possibly *the* — central player in the marvel called Sun Ra. But when Corbett asks him to identify *"who constituted the we,"* Abraham avoids answering. Undaunted, he continues using "we." I do not mean to imply that Abraham was not with Ra at the beginning or that he was not instrumental in the development of Ra's career. I mean merely to point out that Abraham makes claims for himself that he elects not to support, despite Corbett's plea for him to do so. Perhaps his self image explains his reluctance to justify himself. Abraham offers this: "When you see me, you see a representative of what the Creator and what the higher powers are about." Gods apparently do not have to explain themselves.

Abraham provides some interesting information about Ra, such as how the name Herman Poole Blount was changed into Le Sony'a Ra. He also suggests that Darwin's theory of evolution is incorrect and that sand grains possess intelligence. One wonders.

Corbett himself does not come off well in the Ra interview. Two men accompanied Corbett to this 1986 interview. One of them, who knew little about Ra, dominated the questioning. To indicate his pique, Corbett identifies him only as "irritating reporter." Ironically, this man asks questions that Ra answers fully and informatively. Ra also tells that "Sun Ra is not a person, it's a business name," that he "could stop a war by gettin' up above [warring troops] with a spaceship and playing some of my music," and that the French government asked him to "take over all the arts."

In sum, Corbett provides a valuable service in publishing his pieces in book form.

I ADMIT TO HAVING BEEN EAGER to read Hartmut Geerken and Bernhard Hefele's ***Omniverse Sun Ra*** *(Waitawhile 1994)*, if only because Geerken is one of the few people who can legitimately claim to be a Sun Ra expert. (Hefele's name appears as co-author primarily because he provided Geerken with computer technology, which must have been invaluable.) The authors wish to identify and treat discographically all of Ra's recordings. Given the carelessness with which Ra's music was released on his own Saturn label (sometimes Saturn issued only seventy-five copies of a recording and gave the same matrix number to different recordings), such an undertaking seems doomed to failure. Happily, I can report that Geerken and Hefele have succeeded wonderfully in this substantial book of 276 pages. Their text is in English.

Readers will turn immediately to the last 100 pages, which is where Geerken and Hefele treat discographical matters. First, they include 250 colour reproductions of Ra records and record covers, including numerous Saturn singles and the exceedingly rare Aristocrat 11001, which shows the "B" side ("Dawn Mist") of the single he made with Eugene Wright and His Dukes of Swing in late 1948. Ra collectors will marvel at these images, which form a stunning kaleidoscope.

Impressive though these images are, the discography itself is even more so. Accurate, to the best of Geerken's knowledge, as of March 1994, the entries begin with Wynonie Harris' "Drinking by Myself" and "My Baby's Barrel House," which were recorded for Bullett in 1946, and conclude with ***A Tribute to Stuff Smith***, which Ra and Billy Bang (with John Ore and Andrew Cyrille) recorded for Soul Note in 1992. Eschewing the now-standard method of identifying sessions by recording date (possibly because the precise dates of many recordings are unknown), as pioneered by David Wild, Geerken and Hefele number the sessions consecutively from 1 to 189. Here is the information they include in a typical entry. Item 178 is the album ***Blue Delight***. They identify the leader (Ra), the original issue (a vinyl album for A&M) and label number, the date and place of recording, the release date, the liner-note writer, the tunes included (and the recording time of each), the personnel and instrumentation, and other formats in which the music was released (both CD and cassette in 1989). They also provide useful annotations (in this case that the fourth tune on the vinyl album appears as the seventh selection on the CD). When recording features singing, they print the lyrics, as with "NUC" from the 1982 album ***Nuclear War*** .

Although I defer to Geerken and Hefele in all matters of Ra discography, I note one error. In session 161, ***Live at Praxis '84, Vol. 1***, they identify the untitled third piece on the second side as "Yeah Man," a composition by Noble Sissle. In fact, it is Fletcher Henderson's "Hotter Than 'Ell," a tune based on the chords of "I Got Rhythm" and which Henderson recorded for Decca in September 1934. Ra's recording is eerily similar to Henderson's.

But there is more. Following the discography is a list of all tunes Ra recorded, with each followed by the session number on which it appears. Not surprisingly, the pieces Ra recorded most frequently are "Space Is the Place" and "We Travel the Spaceways" (fifteen times each). Then comes an alphabetical listing of personnel and the session number for each person's appearance, by instrument. For example, Roger Blank appears on four sessions, two as drummer and two as percussionist. So, if one wishes to know the recording on which John Gilmore appears playing tambourine, the answer is readily available. It is session 23.

NEXT COMES AN ALPHABETICAL LIST OF INSTRUMENTS, with the names of the musicians who play them. Perhaps surprisingly, only once does someone (Marshall Allen) play a cowbell, and that is on session 94. Next comes sessions keyed to Saturn recordings, followed by sessions keyed to other record labels, which are arranged alphabetically. Finally, there are brief biographical sketches of selected musicians, a lengthy tapeography, a brief filmography, and a seemingly comprehensive 591-item bibliography.

Writings about Ra precede the discographical material. Robert L. Campbell's "Sun Ra: Supersonic Sounds from Saturn" is both the longest and most substantial piece. (Campbell has just published his own Ra discography.) In his thirty-seven page essay, most of which originally appeared in ***Goldmine*** in 1993, Campbell traces Ra from his birth in Birmingham, Alabama, on, probably, 22 May 1914, to his death in Birmingham on 30 May 1993. In doing so, he details Ra's various residences, numerous recordings, and the musicians associated with Ra. He notes the probable origin of Ra's taste for exotic costumes (Oliver Bibb, whose musicians, including Ra, wore 18th-century garb, "complete with wigs and lace sleeves"); he notes that Ahmad Jamal "supposedly pillaged" his treatment of "But not for Me" from Ra. He explains the unreliable numbering of Saturn recordings and identifies the years during which various colours were used on Saturn labels. Because of Ra's increased recording activity, Campbell generally ceases discussing individual recordings made after 1970 and deals instead with what he calls "broader trends" from that year until Ra's death.

Campbell begs a question that I — and, I suspect, others-would like to have answered. He relates that in 1964 Ra argued against having a woman (Carla Bley) in Bill Dixon's Jazz Composers Guild. For what reason, then, did Ra have June Tyson in the Arkestra, even when she was physically unable to sing? And why did he use the female background singers called the Space Ethnic Voices? How does one resolve this seeming paradox? How, really, did Ra respond to women's presence in music? Campbell does not say. Perhaps inadequate evidence keeps him from answering. Although he writes well, he occasionally makes claims I doubt he could support. For example, he states that Pat Patrick's playing on "Pleasure," on ***Other Planes of There***, "sums up everything [he] had done, concisely, without wasting a note." "Everything"? Not one wasted note? Despite these minor reservations, Campbell's is the most thorough and reliable essay on Ra of which I am aware.

Each of the other introductory pieces possesses merit. Amiri Baraka notes that Ra's theme is "the evolution of humanity"; Sigrid Hauff states that Ra "took refuge from unbearable reality in a mythical cosmos of a higher reality, which was to heal those wounds that everyday life had caused"; Chris Cutler opines that the Arkestra was "the best documented group in Jazz history"; Robert Lax ingeniously presents, in the form of a poem, his notes of time spent with the Arkestra in Athens, Greece, in 1984; Salah Ragab provides insight into Ra's rehearsals; Karl Heinz Kessler focuses on Ra's spiritual influence; Hartmut Geerken tells of bringing Ra to Egypt in 1971; Gabi Geist reads Ra's horoscope; and Bernhard Hefele relates how he used computers to generate the Ra discography. Who could ask for more?

All of this is just to say that ***Omniverse Sun Ra*** succeeds grandly and is mandatory reading for anyone interested in Sun Ra. It is available *from S. Geerken, Wartaweil 37, D-82211 Herrsching, Germany.* The cost is $75.00 US (Postage included), plus a cheque handling charge of $10.00. □

TOM VARNER LOVE OF THE SINGLE LINE

THOUGH JAZZ HAS OPENED ITSELF UP CONSIDERABLY TO SO CALLED MISCELLANEOUS INSTRUMENTS IN RECENT YEARS, IT STILL REMAINS DOMINATED BY THE USUAL RHYTHM AND WIND INSTRUMENTS, TRUMPETS, SAXES LEADING THE PACK FOLLOWED THEN BY TROMBONES AND CLARINETS. MUCH LESS FREQUENT, HOWEVER, IS THE FRENCH HORN, AN INSTRUMENT SELDOM HEARD IN JAZZ, LET ALONE IN MORE CONTEMPORARY IMPROVISATIONAL STYLINGS. STILL, IT IS WITHIN THIS REALM OF NEW MUSIC THAT THERE HAS BEEN GREATER ACCEPTANCE OF THESE LESSER HEARD INSTRUMENTS, THE CELLO FOR INSTANCE.

THE FRENCH HORN, in contrast, has yet to achieve the same kind of notoriety, even in the classical world where it mainly supplies harmonic lines within symphony orchestras. In fact, few horn players have become famous as soloists (the most notable exception being the late Dennis Brain). As hard as it is in the classical field, it's place in jazz has been at best marginal. Not too long ago, the term "jazz French horn" had something of an exotic ring to it. Those acquainted with the music to some degree could immediately name Julius Watkins as its chief exponent. The cognoscenti, however, would be able to identify Johnny Grass, David Amram (before he got caught up in ethnic instruments) and, why not, Gunther Schuller himself (though he never proved to be an improviser).

Over the last few years, though, one is able to find more players than ever in jazz circles, the likes of Sharon Freeman, Vincent Chancey, the up and coming Mark Taylor, the seasoned John Clark and Tom Varner. Of these players, Tom Varner has been gaining a measure of prominence in New York, not just for his considerable talents as an instrumentalist but also for his work as a band leader and composer. In his 15 years in the the Apple, he has produced a body of work for small to medium size ensembles. More recently, he is appearing as sideman, particularly in Europe where he has established a Viennese connection, primarily with the post-free improv unit Ton-Art and flugelhornist Franz Koglmann. Another important credit for Varner has been his collaboration with Steve Lacy in the latter's orchestral suite "Vespers", premiered in North America last Summer but now touring Europe on a regular basis.

After first meeting Tom Varner at last Summer's festival in Vancouver, we crossed paths again last Fall on his own home turf. Because of his chosen instrument, it seemed only natural to ask him about the paucity of French horn players in jazz. While his answer reiterated much of the usual explanation, i.e. it's difficulty to master, it served as a basis to explore his own views on music, both as a player and as a composer.

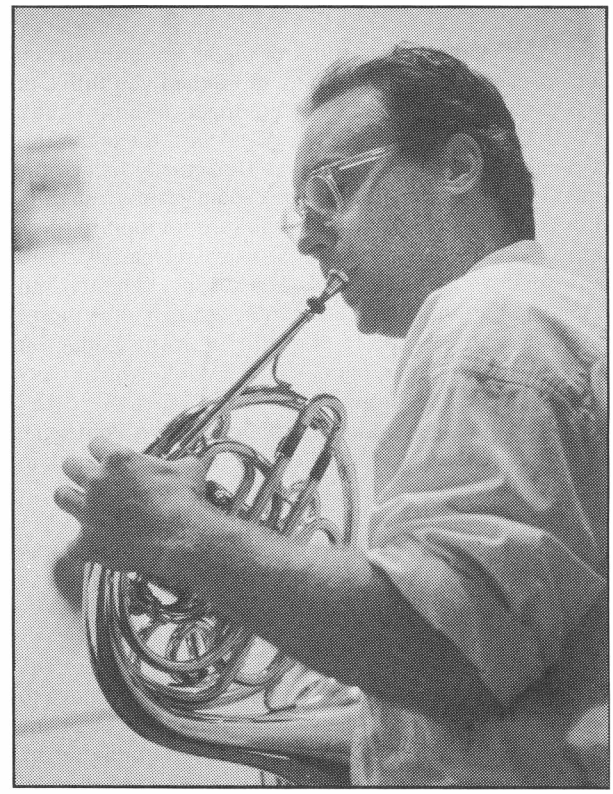
T.V.: Sure, French horn players are rare in jazz and it is partly due to the nature of the instrument, but this also related to the historical context in which early jazz was played. It is hard to play, because of all the tubing and the closeness of the overtones. Just to get your act together technically, you have to go through a lot of slipping and sliding. It's a bit like trying to do ballet on ice in a snowsuit! You see, on the saxophone you can achieve a good level of articulation if you work hard, but on French horn you need that much more time just to sound adequate, let alone to play in tune. Another problem with it, too, is that it does not project as sharply as other brass instruments, but I can now say that I reached a point where I can cut through. Since it lacks that cutting edge of a trumpet or a trombone, that, to me, is an important reason why it has not found its place within the jazz language. When you look at classical music as well, its role is that of a colouristic instrument, used within the inner voicings rather than being the lead.

***M.C.**: Because it's not an obvious choice as an instrument, whatever music one plays, what brought you to it in the first place?*

FOR ME, IT'S SORT OF A FLUKE. In suburban New Jersey where I grew up, they had music programs you could enrol in by the start of fifth grade. So by the end of the fourth year, we were asked what we would like to play come next September. At first, I thought of trumpet or trombone, I kind of found them cool. They showed us lists of instruments with pictures of them and asked us to put a check next to the one we were interested in. I saw the picture of the French horn, and I knew what it was vaguely, so I changed my mind at the last minute and opted for that. From the beginning of the next school year on, I never played another wind instrument.

At around 15 or 16, I first discovered jazz and really started liking it. But I was rather discouraged by the fact that there were no French horn players I knew of. So I was resigned into believing that I could never become a jazz musician, because it was too late now to change my whole embouchure. This was back in the mid-70's and at that time, I was making some new friends who were a year or two older than me and who were all into jazz. I still have some of my early albums that did it for me, like Hank Mobley's ***The Turnaround*** and the ***Big Band Monk*** lp, the one with those transcribed Monk solos and which had Steve Lacy playing lead. Jazz just had a much more visceral connection at that point than rock did. To me, the whole rock thing was just connected to trashy mediocrity. Rock wasn't Jimi Hendrix, it was Grand Funk Railroad and that sucked in a lot of ways. My two older sisters were listening to Hendrix and the Beatles, but that wasn't my music, it was that of those who were older than me, though there were just a couple of years between us. Basically then, it was this love of the single line in jazz that made it for me.

INTERVIEW BY **MARC CHÉNARD**



At 17, I discovered from a neighbour of mine that Monk record with Julius Watkins playing *Friday the Thirteenth*. Now that was like a great event for me: here is somebody playing my instrument and really improvising on it! Before that, I had just about given up, thinking I could only be a classical musician who liked jazz. As for my interest in classical music, it was not so much in wanting to be a classical French horn player, but it had to do more with looking at that tradition from the composer's vantage point. Actually, I never quite had that vocation as an instrumentalist, because I always felt there was something more out there.

Do you think that specific interest of yours in classical music has had a special effect on your own writing? When one listens to your latest release as a leader, it seems very composer oriented.

IT JUST MIGHT. In those early years, I was really captivated by Monk and Miles, Ornette, the Art Ensemble and, a little bit later, Steve Lacy's own music, but to me I was starting to look into something more than just playing lines over standard changes; I was interested in conception, like asking myself "OK, what do we do now on this next step?" At this stage, you are talking more in terms of things involving formal organization with improvisation. I was into that very early on. Within a three year period, I went from Monk to Braxton's ***New York Fall 1974*** album. It seems a short period now, but I discovered a lot of music in that time: I was checking out Braxton, Bird, the AEC, Clifford Brown, and it was like appreciating jazz history simultaneously. While I was transcribing Clifford and Miles solos, I was starting to compose my own stuff as well, so all these things sort of fell in together, somewhat like an organic evolution.

From those early years, how did your own musical training continue and tell me about getting into the New York scene?

I STUDIED FOR TWO YEARS at the New England Conservatory and that is where I met many of my current musical friends, people like Ed Jackson and Jim Hartog (both of the 29th Street Saxophone quartet) and who are also on my most recent record. By the way, I also produced Ed's first record as a leader and I play on a couple of cuts too. I finally made the move to New York in 1979 and listened to a lot of music at first. For a while, I studied with Dave Liebman, just so I could get the "straight ahead" jazz language down. My first band was in fact with Ed Jackson, and we were still in the Boston area back then. After playing Monk and Ornette tunes in the beginning, we gradually built our own repertoire which eventually lead us then to make our first record together with Fred Hopkins and Billy Hart as rhythm section.

Do you find that playing a seldom heard instrument in jazz has been beneficial to you? Since there are not that many French horn players around, it must be easier to develop an original voice.

IN CERTAIN WAYS, it's a relief. You don't have a lineage of musicians looking over your shoulder. That's nice and it's very freeing. Like, I can use things that I might have transcribed from a Sonny Rollins solo or one by Gene Ammons and no one is going to notice, with the possible exception of a pretty knowledgeable tenor saxophonist! But there is also a disadvantage and that is the lack of opportunities. People don't really think: "Ah! Let me put a French horn in my band." As a sideman, then, it has been few and far between. In fact, I realized when I was 19 or so that if I'm going to get somewhere, I'll have to do it by myself, which means leading a band that plays my own material. But I have also done a fair bit of work as a sideman, like in Bobby Previte's quintet - which was always very rewarding - and also in George Gruntz's Concert Jazz band. He was always nice and interested in the French horn as well, he's out of that Gil Evans school of arranging. But the fact remains, as a sideman it is only in special circumstances there is work, like when someone has a special project with a special kind of instrumentation in mind.

Since jazz french horn players are still a minority, I wonder if there is a sense of community between you and if you sort of hang around with each other?

THERE IS A CERTAIN SENSE OF COMMUNITY, I would say so. In fact, you even have that amongst classical players. Even in New York, where things are just so competitive, there is some sense of understanding about how hard it is to play the horn, so there is a certain bond between us. Before settling in New York, I was fortunate enough to take lessons from Julius Watkins, that was throughout the month of January 1976. Of course, I asked him a million questions and it was a wonderful experience. But he died 14 months later and I always wanted to get in touch with him again, something I still regret now.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROB WHITCOMB • CIRCA 1993

Nowadays, some people think of me as the only French horn player, but there are many more than you think, in fact, you can just about cover the fingers of both hands. We all know John Clark, who worked with the orchestras of George Gruntz and Gil Evans. He actually helped me when I first settled here and I took some lessons from him also. There's also Alex Brofsky, who subs for John in those bands he works in regularly. Sharon Freeman is heard mostly with Charlie Haden's Liberation Orchestra, but she's playing more piano and arranges also a lot. Vincent Chancey is also on the scene and there is this young cat in Henry Threadgill's band, Mark Taylor, who is very talented. Over in Europe, I shouldn't forget my friend Arkhady Shilkloper from Russia and Claudio Ponteggia, a Swiss Italian, not to forget Jean-Christophe Mastnak in Vienna.

Was it difficult for you to break into the scene, because of your instrument? How would people react when you told them about playing French horn?

I MUST SAY THAT MOST WERE generally supportive. Saxophonists certainly were, because they didn't have to say "Not another one of us!" One thing that kept me going in those days was looking at the example set by other instrumentalists. For instance, Steve Lacy: I could really appreciate that sense of sticking to one horn and to explore all the possibilities of it, making that your lifetime quest and never veering from it so you can attain that voice that is all your own. Like, I talked to Ellery Eskelin and he used to play many horns but got rid of them, the clarinet, the flute, the baritone and sopranino, so he could just concentrate on the tenor and nothing else. I think it really changes your sense as an individual with regards to what you play. At a very early age, I kind of decided to stick to my guns because there would be some reward for me. In my case, I just couldn't double on another brass instrument because of the embouchure needed. What you have to do physically is so different, so you just can't switch around like that. The mouthpiece being so small, it's quite unlike that of a trumpet and if I did try, I'm afraid it would screw up my French horn playing.

Coming back to your composing, I notice that the scope of writing is quite varied on your new recording. Some tracks are real up-tempo swingers, while others have a definite classical bent to them, and a few more have that hard-edged energy of free music. Are there any particular influences on you in this regard?

IT'S HARD FOR ME TO SAY, and I haven't really studied composition formally. For me, it's rather a question of sounds or events I want to hear juxtaposed so I can see what happens out of that. In ***Long Night Big Day***, I wanted to work on those ideas and try to bring them to their next logical step. When it comes to influences, I can mention the 60's quintets of Miles, but a composer like Webern is also important to me as is the tradition of Gregorian chant. Most importantly, I have no set compositional theories or routines, but I shape my pieces according to my needs and to what I want to hear at certain moments. I am not interested in redoing some 1960's Blue Note-like record, I wouldn't feel honest if I did. After all, if it was done so well thirty years ago, why do it again?

Like a lot of American musicians, you are working regularly in Europe, especially with players from over there. You seem to have developed a European connection in Vienna, for example the ensemble called Ton-Art. How did you get involved with them?

BECAUSE OF MY WORK WITH GEORGE GRUNTZ, I got to know quite a few Swiss musicians, like reedman Urs Blochlinger and the drummer Dieter Ulrich. Through Urs, I got to know a trumpeter by the name of Peter Schärli, and we even did an album together. With him, I did a tour in Russia and its was in the Baltics that I first met these guys of Ton-Art. I hit it off particularly well with the guitarist Burkhard Stangl, and I was invited to work with them on their second Hat Art recording. From these people, I came into contact with Franz Koglmann, who asked me to be on his latest record ("Four Cantos").

At this time (April 1994), I'm starting to think about my next project as a leader, it's going to be somewhat of a more introspective kind of recording, a sort of change of pace from my more energetic side that comes through in the quintet. In May, I'm scheduled to do a session with Roberto Ottaviano in Italy, then I'll be in Vancouver for the festival where I'm playing in a quartet with clarinetist Ben Goldberg. In the Summer, I hope to do my next record, then I'm off to Europe in September where I'll do a tour with Peter Schärli and Glenn Ferris on trombone, a brass ensemble project.

Nowadays, I know that a lot of people tend to look at the music in terms of geography, like talking about an American scene here and a European scene over there. As for myself, I see this more in terms of a complete spectrum of music. I'm thinking more in terms of an emotional link than that of making stylistic distinctions, say between Ornette, Bird or Alban Berg: to me, there is much more empathy here. So, in terms of using those different languages, I'm not worrying about this one or that one. What I'm trying to do is to worry about the emotional qualities of the music rather than the sources per se. Essentially, the best music always transcends categories and tends to be timeless: whether it be Monk, Berg, Gregorian chant or whether, we musicians may come from different eras, but somehow we're all in this together. □

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SAXOPHONING

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WENDELL HARRISON & HAROLD McKINNEY • SOMETHING FOR POPS • WenHa WCD 200
RALPH MOORE • WHO IS IT YOU ARE? • Savoy Jazz CY-75778
SCOTT HAMILTON • EAST OF THE SUN • Concord Jazz CCD-4583
VINCENT HERRING • FOLKLORE • Music Masters 01612-65109-2
KESHAVAN MASLAK • LOVED BY MILLIONS • Leo LR105 • **ABASH** • Dragon DRCD 249
FRANK WESS • GOING WESS • Town Crier TCD518
BOBBY MILITELLO • ...EASY TO LOVE • Positive Music PMD 78014-2

REVIEWED BY
J E R R Y D ' S O U Z A

PHOTOGRAPH OF **VINCENT HERRING** BY GERARD FUTRICK

ON A WARM AUGUST DAY IN NEW ORLEANS, THE JACKSON STREET JAZZ BAND IS WOWING A MOTLEY GROUP OF TOURISTS AND LOCAL FOLK. AN OLD MAN AMBLES UP, LEANS ON HIS CANE AND SAYS, "LOOKIT THEM. LOOKIT THAT TENOR MAN SWAGGER! Y'KNOW THIS HERE IS THE BIRTH PLACE OF JAZZ AND WE DID NOT HAVE THE SAX FOR A LONG WHILE YET. AND NOW YOU FIND IT ALL OVER THE PLACE!" SPITTING ON THE GROUND HE AMBLES AWAY. THE SAXOPHONE MAY NOT HAVE DONE IT FOR HIM BUT, QUITE ARGUABLY, IT IS THE MOST ELOQUENT INSTRUMENT IN JAZZ. ATTESTING TO THAT ARE SEVERAL ARTISANS OF THE SAXOPHONE. THEY COME FROM PLACES THAT INCLUDE NEW YORK, DETROIT, KANSAS, BUFFALO AND SWEDEN.

A 1983 date finds **BOBBY WATSON & The Horizon Quintet** dipping into ***Gumbo*** (Evidence ECD 22078-2) yet bypassing the flavour of New Orleans. This does not detract from the heady delights the group provides ranging from the tunes to the torrid, and romantic, evolutions of the performances. Listen to *Unit Seven* the light groove scooped by Watson enhanced by the brilliant Mulgrew Miller and to the stormy swing they essay when getting to *Point The Finger* without losing the tight and controlled pulse. Watson is downright brilliant on the melting pot of attitudes and styles called Gumbo. Written by bassist Curtis Lundy and featuring baritone sax player Hamiett Bluiett, the tune bristles with the combustion of the players' aggressive energy. Lundy also has a calmer side which rises on the lyrical and majestic sweep of the opulent ballad *Luqman's Dream*. In short this is a fount of inspired music!

In contrast, old timers **WENDELL HARRISON** and **HAROLD MCKINNEY** go down the trail to New Orleans all the way from Detroit with ***Something For Pops*** (WenHa WCD 200). Five of the compositions were commissioned by the Arts Foundation of Michigan and are dedicated to Louis Armstrong (the album was made with the support of the Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs). But except for *Rampart Street* where Harrison is sweet and nimble on the tenor saxophone with McKinney picking up the controls seamlessly on the piano for an exquisite experience, none of the others save the day for "Pops". *Armstrong Park*, a delectable ballad terrained in sweet fullness and built on Harrison's early voice of passion gets hit with free-form shrapnel and rather misplaced honks and dissolves into an irksome exercise. With "futuralistic" compositions *Chroma II* and *Threes And Fours* played by McKinney to a pattern where neat motifs are structured by a strong, chorded left hand without featured, individualistic countenances, the album has less than what it premises.

Man of many seasons **RALPH MOORE** leads a top-notch outfit - Benny Green on piano, Billy Higgins on drums and Peter Washington on bass - on ***Who Is It You Are?*** (Savoy Jazz CY-75778). Moore's ideas filibrate varied stylistic excursions in an inspired mix of standards and originals. His ode to *Skylark* soars, lending the tune a remarkable lightness of being with Higgins' delectable touch and swishes enhancing the inherent empathy. Green, as ever, has that clear spatial approach, even his clusters have a clean resonance. The theme of *Recado Bossa Nova* has an airy intro before being immersed in the ardent rhythm of the bossa and a warm, compelling mood. There is a ripe, palpitating emotion in the fire-by-the-hearth ballad *Since I Fell For You* but the most oracular example of Moore's ability to converse persuasively with his fellow players comes on the high gospel, incendiary *Testifyin'*, swirling, tempestuous and set to a waltz beat! No questions about this one laying it square on the head!

Called the leader of the tenor swing pack in the eighties, **SCOTT HAMILTON** shows that it still means a lot to him. ***East Of The Sun*** (Concord Jazz CCD-4583) teams him with Brian Lemon on piano, Dave Green on bass and Allan Ganley on drums. The songs here, with the exception of the original composition *Setagaya Serenade* (a robust swinger, naturally!) were voted for by the readers of Japan's Swing Journal. Hamilton has recorded them all before, the exceptions being Setagaya and *Autumn Leaves* on which the swing is earthy and a herald of the colours and nuances he incorporates into his playing. He can be breathy when needed, witness the illumining *Stardust* or he can shoot percussive oddments into *It Could Happen To You* and give it an unusual turn of phrase. Green who has played with Sonny Rollins and Ben Webster among others, has a dynamic attack best manifested on *Bernie's Tune*. It is here that the spiralling interplay of the quartet stands out in a seamless switch of roles that profiles soul satisfying virtuosity.

While veterans continue to have their play, there are

several youngsters who are set to make their mark. One of them is sax man **VINCENT HERRING** whose musical sojourn into ***Folklore*** (MusicMasters 01612-65109-2) is captured live at the Village Vanguard. Though the recording suggests that there were a handful of people at the time this album was recorded, there can be no denying that Herring has all the right attributes including the perspicacity to choose a band (Carl Allen on drums, Ira Coleman on bass, Cyrus Chestnut on piano whose linear expression is a continued delight and Scott Wendholt on trumpet) that gloves his style. The band sashayes to the raw, abrasive bebop heat of *Fountainhead*, a deliberation that also seeps into *Folklore* which is fleshed by the corkscrew inventions of Herring. On the quieter side come the tranquil ballad *Theme For Delores* and *The Girl Next Door* where Allen provides the hammock for Herring's gentle swing. Herring has a compact sense of phrasing, harmonic strength and a command of structure that portents well for the future of jazz. But attention must also be paid to Wendholt who delves into the thick, sets his own distinct path and never goes over the top.

Europe has it's votaries of free jazz. Count **KESHAVAN MASLAK**, the man who not only worships at the altar of Coltrane but has warped, fractured song titles which nestle on the delightful side of the looney bin among them. Both traits are certified on ***Loved By Millions*** (Leo LR 105). Take *Compulsive Lust* and enjoy the ruminative bass line from John Lindberg that primes Maslak to lock his horn with curved notes that jostle the angular. A free air pervades and envelopes *When You Look At Me, I Want To Vomit* on which Sunny Murray times in with quick changing signatures, the vaunted dimension of his conceptual grasp. As for those Coltranisms, witness *Bukowski In Love*. Melody is not lost in the pantheon of Maslak's expression even as he filters the high notes, squeals, flips, flops and catapults across uncharted territory with the certainty of a visionary.

Mix elements of free jazz with European idiosyncrasies and one gets **ABASH** (Dragon DRCD 249), shaped through the trio of Anders Ekholm on tenor saxophone, Tommy Skotte on bass and Nils Danell on drums. Each plays in other configurations but they seem to find a particular chemistry through music they describe as having freedom, energy and humour. There is no quarrel with their prognosis, this effort is full of what they aim for, once one gets past the caught-in-a-trance approach of Skotte on the opener *Ball* where he bows on, seemingly unaware that he isn't doing a solo album. Once Ekholm comes in to clasp the melody, the tune opens up and it is not long before the tenor begins to convolute like a dervish. They come *Out Of Nowhere* on the swinging intertwine of Skotte and Danell before Ekholm scarps the melodic line. Freedom and humour are manifested in the spaced out honk of *Slapp* and to prove that they have a grace to their disposition, they fill *Bete* with shimmering elongated lines and a rhythm bed that abets the lyricism of the tune.

The Hammond organ does not come into play often. **FRANK WESS** who was with the Count Basie Orchestra for 11 years was intrigued when the idea of recording with an organ player in a trio was suggested to him. He was willing to explore. Out of that positive stance comes ***Going Wess*** (Town Crier TCD 518) with organist Bobby Forrester and drummer Clarence "Tootsie" Bean. The explorations pay, with the organ pumping getting good and hard on *Love Letters*. The joyous epiphany of *On The Street Where You Live* finds energetic organ flounces countenanced by thick, meaty sax lines. Wess sets up a smoothly floating timbre as Forrester lets the organ ease gently into the permutation. But it is time again for fire, if not for brimstone, on the rousing *Frankie And Johnny* where all three capture a blistering spirit. Wess and his band certainly get going as does this other band from Buffalo.

BOBBY MILITELLO pulls a Hammond B-3 with it's master Bobby Jones, the drums of Bob Leatherbarrow and the trumpet and flugelhorn of Jeff Jarvis in a programme aptly called ***...Easy To Love*** (Positive Music PMD 78014-2). Good time bebopping rears it's head on *Double Take* with Militello shaping up a vortex on the alto. The tender ministrations of *Remember Me* seep into the soul, Jones' touch soft and tender. But the organ wouldn't be what it was meant to be without the pulsing riffs and sure enough the twirps and trolls are unloaded as Militello scales the bumps on the flute when it is time to *Gimme A Break*. The leader of the pack scats convincingly on *I Thought About You* and with Jones adding the potent dynamics that make *Full House* an incendiary piece, goes on to sing with a romp and a wail. Growl and out. □

DAVID S. WARE

"WHAT IS AVANT-GARDE?," MODERN TENOR GIANT DAVID S. WARE ASKED ALOUD. THE RESPONSE TO HIS OWN QUESTION EFFORTLESSLY FOLLOWED.

PHOTOGRAPH BY GERARD FUTRICK

"TO ME, 'AVANT-GARDE' MEANS 'ALL-INCLUSIVE.' It has a parallel with spiritual development, because spirituality deals with the development of everything. All departments of life. 'Avant-garde' deals with all departments of music. It doesn't leave out any style, or any approach. I'm free to deal with any form I see fit. Any melody, whether it comes from Broadway, gospel, The Beatles. The bottom line is creativity, not trying to maintain some kind of image of what I'm *supposed* to sound like."

Ware's own sound is certainly distinctive. He is an exceptionally powerful player who retains remarkable control over lengthy passages of circular breathing. The manipulations of harmonics and rhythm on his latest discs, ***Flight of i*** (DIW/Columbia, 1992) and ***Third Ear Recitation*** (DIW, 1993), are stratospheric along the lines of his late '60's out predecessors; but Ware's reworkings of melody are particularly intrinsic. Nobody has pushed the structure of "Autumn Leaves" to the extreme levels that Ware's quartet frequently inhabits.

These two discs are the crystallization of Ware's career so far, but he's been an important player for quite some time. One of the key figures in New York's early '70s "loft" scene, he helped keep the high-energy school of free playing alive following the death of Albert Ayler. His tenure in bands led by Cecil Taylor and Andrew Cyrille helped these renowned musicians re-affirm their creative prolificacy. Ware's control of his own current group reflects the disciplined investigations of freedom he gained as their sideman.

Today Ware lives in his rural/suburban New Jersey childhood house. He acquired it from his parents a few years ago when they decided to move to a warmer climate. During the course of our afternoon he pointed to a neighbour's home where he practiced while growing up, and to the classroom of an early music teacher who appreciates what his pupil is doing now, even though it's not completely understood back home. Ware is a large man with a gentle speaking voice who pontificates knowingly on a wide range of disparate issues, from the financial conditions of jazz musicians today to the value of vegetarianism. He has seen a lot, but his wide eyes show he's always ready to learn more.

From childhood, Ware had an innate interest in music that became fueled by his environment.

"As a kid I used to hear my father's hundreds of 78 records," Ware recalls. "People like Dinah Washington and Illinois Jacquet, and Billie Holiday. I guess that was what helped spark my interest. I remember listening to jazz radio programs late at night, people like Symphony Sid."

"In fifth or sixth grade they introduced us to the instruments. I came home from school and I wanted to play the drums, but my father said, 'why don't you try the saxophone?' Because he loved the saxophone, he was always crazy about the tenor saxophone. And I tried it, but it took me a while to get into the habit of practicing. Gradually it all came together. In elementary, junior high, and high school, I was in all the bands. However, when I was in those bands I started out on alto, since that's what they needed. I developed my concept of tenor on my own."

NO PLACE EXISTED IN THE SCHOOL, or under formal training, that incorporated Ware's tenor concepts at this time. He absorbed Charlie Parker's, and Sonny Rollins' transcriptions on his own. Ware also attributes an early minimalist rehearsal scenario to his later focus.

"There was a drummer who lived in the house right behind us here at the time. And we used to practice all summer long, just with drums and saxophone. That's how my concept developed — around rhythm and melody, basically. There was never a chordal instrument, no piano, guitarist, or even a bassist. I didn't feel like anything was missing."

THIRD EAR RECITATION
AN INTERVIEW WITH AARON COHEN

During Ware's developing years, he was on the receiving end of jazz's pedagogic tradition. Rollins became an inspirational teacher in the early '60s.

"I must have been in junior high school. In '61 or '62 he wrote me a letter when a friend's father gave him my address. In '64 I started going to jazz clubs in New York. Even though I was way underage I was always big enough to have no trouble getting into the clubs. So I started to see Sonny at the Five Spot. He would invite me and my friends to Village Vanguard on his tab for the whole night. After that he'd take us home to Brooklyn with him at four or five in the morning."

"He could see our interest, he could see that we were for real. He knew how that was because he used to love Hawk, he'd wait on Coleman Hawkins' doorstep. We started practicing together in 1969, I'd go over to his apartment, and play for him, and he'd listen. Then we'd practice. 'Just be at ease with yourself,' that's basically what he taught me."

IN NEW YORK AT THIS TIME, the free movement's revolutionary sounds were increasingly ubiquitous. Although Ware's use of overtones has been connected to Ayler, there were others who had a more immediate impact.

"The first time I heard Pharoah [Sanders] was at a Coltrane concert in '66," Ware recalls. "That opened up a whole new thing for me. I was very impressed by where he was in the music. Pharoah dealt with the higher octave of the music. His so-called screams and screeches was moving differently than Coltrane but it complemented the whole environment of what they were doing. I dug the sound. I caught Ornette live quite a lot, I was especially into ***Ornette On Tenor***."

At this time, Ware felt his own music was "moving along quite nicely."

"I still basically only had drums to deal with when I was in high school. A drummer and I put together a group that had two horns and a drum. That was it, all the way through my development. It gave me freedom to be more creative harmonically. It made me think differently about harmony than someone who would use traditional chord patterns. I knew my chords, but I just played them how I wanted to play them, not in any particular order. The melody was my thing."

Since Cecil Taylor plays the piano as a percussive, rather than a strictly chordal, instrument, Ware says, "his music fit me like a glove." After moving to lower Manhattan in 1973, Taylor hooked up with the energetic tenor player. The ***Dark To Themselves*** (Inner City, 1977) lp displays the strong polyphony Ware co-contributed to the Unit. Through this experience he met drummer Andrew Cyrille, who also possessed keen rhythmic sensibilities, and joined his Maono group. Ware's appearance on their ***Meta Musicians Stomp*** (Black Saint, 1978) is an early indication of his impressive ability to bring original shadings to traditional ballads.

WHILE ON TOUR WITH CYRILLE, Ware began recording as a leader. These early efforts are difficult to find, and throughout the '80s the opportunities for him to enter the studio have been sporadic. His career had the beginnings of a renaissance in 1990 when Silkheart released the two-volume ***Great Bliss*** series. Ware felt a particular affinity for Rahsaan Roland Kirk, and he used a similar array of woodwinds, including the saxello and flute, on these discs. He primarily sticks to tenor today.

"You go through periods as an artist where you get bored," Ware says. "You just get bored with your instrument, and you want a different kind of challenge. The flute was part of that. It takes a tremendous amount to maintain all the instruments to be fair to them. You have to spend time on each one of them, and I don't have that kind of time presently."

Recently Ware has taken a closer examination of his own playing, and this has led to a new approach.

"I believe I'm more aware of the separation of a beat. You have the upbeat and downbeat, and I've just become more conscious of these divisions, how it can be broken up and expanded. When I practice, I hear music moving in a certain way. What I do is put my attention on that movement, and then decide to change it. Then you get a variance from that. Like if I'm moving through a passage, and if I'm always ending on an 'F' I'll become aware of that, change some things, and do it another way. There's a place for emotionalism, but for me, my whole thing is not just based on it, because if you base everything on emotion you'll wind up repeating yourself if you're not intelligent about it."

"Over the past ten years I've slowed down what I was playing so I could take a look at it and become *aware* of what I was playing. Because you can be playing and not know what you're playing on a lot of different levels. I want to understand the intricacies of what I'm doing. That's how to do it; you just slow your stuff down, and then you can come up with describing what you're playing on a solid musical level as it relates to regular harmony and scales."

A noticeable constant in Ware's tenor is his use of the number ten mouthpiece — the largest one made. Anyone who has seen Ware in person would not doubt his assertion that this is the only size that fits him on this instrument.

"Man, I've been using that mouthpiece for close to twenty years. It's not that I haven't tried other numbers, but I guess it's just when the air flows out of my cavity within, it needs that space to express itself properly. That's just what it takes."

Inner cerebral processes are also involved, according to Ware.

"For a person that's on the meditative path, there's the experience of what they call transcendence. Everybody thinks. Transcendence takes place in between thoughts. There's a space in between thoughts and it's described in many different ways — the Hindus talk about it one way, and the Buddhists talk about it another way. The more experienced you become in this practice, the more you can experience the space between the thoughts. Physicists talk about the speed of light, but the speed of thought is faster."

The verve of Ware's quartet — especially pianist Matthew Shipp and bassist William Parker — is another key asset. Part of what makes them sound so commanding is Ware's rehearsal method.

"What I like to happen is when each and every one of us can internalize the written material that is in front of us. Now when I say 'internalize', that's a whole lot deeper than 'memorize.' You can memorize something and be able to play that, but that does not mean you've integrated it on a level where you can be creative with it. You can get infinite possibilities from that one figure. In other words, that written material becomes like spontaneous improvisation. There's a reversal process. You can start playing so-called 'spontaneous free fashion.' Then you can hear something you like, and stop and write it down. What we do is the opposite. We have frozen music, take that, unfreeze it to the point of making it totally free. When we walk out on stage, I just start playing, and everyone should know what's happening."

Ware would like to tour more, but not many of the presenters who have offered him concerts include financial guarantees with the gig. He also wants to record more, but is aware of the difficulties faced by the tiny labels that release new improvised music.

"We could record, I'd say, easily every three months. And the records would be totally different — the music is moving that fast. I'm quite satisfied with the two new records, but they're just the tip of the iceberg. We don't get a chance to express ourselves as frequently as we should. We could put them out like pancakes."

"There's so many things that we could do. I'd like to do some things with strings, three or four cello players, or with an orchestra."

In some regards, Ware does not totally mind that he is required to spend considerable time away from playing.

"I like to get some kind of exercise every day. I meditate every day. I have to maintain this house, because you can't get out unless you spend an hour shovelling snow from the driveway. I wish I had the leisure to stay in this room and practice for eight hours a day, like it was a job. But I'm totally optimistic. I don't really see this situation as a drawback in a certain sense. It's all a process of gaining balance. And music is not the be all and end all to me. It's what I do better than anything else, but life is about balancing a lot of different things. That's what it takes for me to get at the music that I want to get at." □

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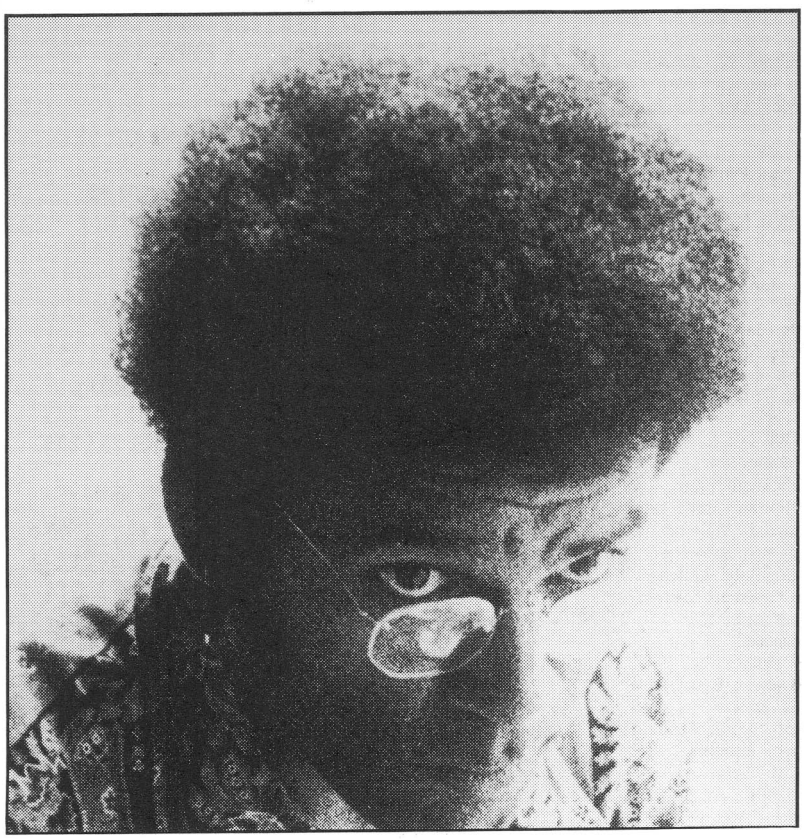
THE LAST SHOW AT THE OLD KNITTING FACTORY, 47 EAST HOUSTON STREET, EST. 1987, WAS ONE OF THE STRANGEST IN A VENUE WHERE STRANGE MUSIC WAS NO STRANGER: **ANTHONY BRAXTON**'S "NEW BEBOP PROJECT" (NOVEMBER 8 TO 13), IN WHICH HE PLAYS PIANO, JOINED BY BASSIST JOE FONDA, DRUMMER PHEEROAN AKLAFF, AND MARTY EHRLICH ON ALTO, SOPRANO AND CLARINET. BRAXTON IS A LINEARIST. HIS REGULAR QUARTET MIGHT PLAY FOUR OF HIS TUNES SIMULTANEOUSLY, BUT HE HASN'T WRITTEN ONE WITH CHORD CHANGES SINCE EARLY CHICAGO DAYS.



ANTHONY BRAXTON • PHOTOGRAPH BY GÉRARD ROUY

His taking up piano in earnest is his belated confrontation with harmony — except that Braxton's playing behind Ehrlich is too dense to pass for comping in a functional sense. (His piano playing reminds me of how Jackie McLean and Sonny Rollins describe Valdo Williams: pouring any old thing into the right number of bars.) Fonda isn't always scrupulous about marking the changes either — which is okay, unlike his regrettable singing along with his solos. In this topsy-turvy band, harmonic information flows from the top: anarchy below makes Marty limn the changes that much cleaner. Happily, this entertaining group puts heavy pressure on Ehrlich, to glue everything together and to keep the tune and chords before your ears, and on akLaff to swing the hell out of it, assuredly not the pianist's prime concern. Both succeed.

The repertoire is standards, read from the sheet music — *Epistophy, You Stepped Out Of A Dream, Fly Me To The Moon, Waltz For Debby* — and played in continuous sets, with long improvised segues. The popping in and out of songforms works well. Braxton's solo on *Prelude To A Kiss*, typically busy, was a real moodbuster; he has a habit of extending his right arm, elbow locked, and letting his hand bounce up and down on the keys, a pianistic pogo. Advance word (Anthony's included) had it that he plays rather like Brubeck, and that's true as far as the hammer-heavy attack and blocky chords go, but Cecil's in there somewhere too, as is the more general tradition of crackpot jazz piano (a noble tradition which includes certain Tristano records after all). His looney solo on *Darn That Dream* gave me more pleasure than anything else all month. For the record, the last tune played at the old Knit was *Airegin*.

I'll miss it dearly. In the five and a half years I hung out there regularly, since I moved to New York in '89, it was as much clubhouse as venue, a place where musicians met and began collaborating, and exchanged ideas, a place where gigs, often two the same night, demonstrated how diverse the various scenes sanctuaried there were. (You learned fast not to lump together, say, Marc Ribot, Steve Coleman and Tim Berne.) Reputations were made there, veterans who'd been brushed off by the West Village clubs found a home, and minor players honed their art 'til they became major talents. If you want names, look over the last five years of this column; there are few in which the Knit didn't figure.

The new, bigger Knitting Factory is at 74 Leonard Street, in the deserted-at-night, subway-inconvenient courthouse district below Canal. It's got problems. In the double-decker large room, at least half the seats upstairs and down offer obstructed views; the small basement room feels like a bunker; sound bounces around. Opening-week bookings were aggressively high-profile — **Roscoe Mitchell**, the **Art Ensemble** (minus Jarman, rumoured to've quit), a **Henry Threadgill** quintet, **Blood Ulmer**, **Steve Coleman**, the **Jazz Passengers** (with Debbie Harry sounding quite good singing those jazzy tunes) — and well-attended, but it remains to be seen whether a regular audience will gravitate there as the novelty of a Knit with clean bathrooms wears off. "Cheer up," a musician said to me opening week, as I glumly surveyed the glitzy new surroundings. "In a month it'll be a dump."

December 1, the **Carnegie Hall Jazz Band** presented a program called "Women in Jazz," specifically women composers. (The only woman in the band is Canadian pianist **Renee Rosnes**, sounding fine.) Half the pieces were by Mary Lou Williams, which showed her breadth and depth as a writer, and made you question if she's sufficiently appreciated. They included *New Musical Express, Scratchin' In The Gravel*

NEW YORK NOTES BY KEVIN WHITEHEAD

and *Blue Skies* (as *Trumpets No End*, heard in this venue before, as Ellington fans know). Melba Liston, Carla Bley and guest conductor Toshiko Akiyoshi were represented by two pieces each, Maria Schneider, who also conducted, by one. (Most of these pieces were commissions.) In picking composers and compositions — Jon Faddis is listed as musical director — no axes were ground to make a case for how women's writing should or shouldn't sound. Even Toshiko's distinctive flute-over-clarinets reed-section writing sounded more Japanese than stereotypically distaff. Save for Carla's tricky, false-ending-laden *On The Stage In Cages*, apparently added late (it wasn't listed in the program), the band was right on the money; the brass sections in particular sound smooth and well-integrated. Byron Stripling is a tasteful high-note trumpeter (and acceptable singer, on MLW's *In The Land Of Oo Bla Dee);* altoist Jerry Dodgion and baritonist Gary Smulyan played standout solos. As for the problematic Carnegie sound, it's not often you get to hear Victor Lewis sound like a cipher. His drumming barely made it two-thirds of the way to the rear of the parquet.

Thanks to the BIMhuis' Huub van Riel, while on busman's holiday in Holland, your correspondent went on the road to Cologne's Stadtgarten and Ghent's Vooruit with the Europe Jazz Network's **October Orchestra**. Its week of gigs (October 20-26) began with four concerts at the BIM and Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum. The core band was **Misha Mengelberg**'s ICP octet, with Eric Boeren and Ted Daniel replacing regular trumpet Thomas Heberer, and with the addition of Italian trombonist Giancarlo Schiaffini, Swiss second pianist Jacques Demierre, the excellent German tubist Lu Huebsch, and Henry Threadgill on alto and flute. The announced plan had been to feature one composition each by Demierre, Mengelberg, Schiaffini and Threadgill, but it was opened up to charts by Daniel and the ICP's Ab Baars, Ernst Glerum and Michael Moore, and to additional scores by Schiaffini and Misha. For variety there were improvised duos, trios and quartets, save for the tour-ending Ghent gig, the only concert where all these composers were represented. To these ears most memorable were: Misha Mengelberg's Ellingtonian - pastels arrangement of his *De Sprong, O Romantiek Der Hazen*, aka *Romantic Jump Of Hares*; Glerum's *Omnibus*, which sounds like a Neal Hefti chart for Basie with some tricky rhythmic modulations thrown in; Daniel's *Module*, a Sun Ra/Fletcher Henderson-type swinger with a three-bar bridge — we will simply note the swing-era echoes in all these pieces, so much for the rootlessness of jazz's progressive wing — and especially Threadgill's irresistibly catchy oompah tango *The 100 Year Old Game*. He'd previewed it at an AACM concert at New York's Ethical Culture Society on October 7, with Daniel, Pheeroan, Tony Cedrus on accordion and Jose Davila on tuba. It's an older piece much in need of recording. A month and a half later, it's still playing in my head.

EVAN PARKER
COLUMNS OF AIR:

CDS BY REVIEWED BY
STUART BROOMER

PHOTOGRAPH BY LARRY SVIRCHEV • OCTOBER 1992

LOOKING FOR A WAY TO BEGIN THIS ARTICLE, THINKING ABOUT THE DIVERSITY OF EVAN PARKER'S MUSIC AND THE WAY IT SEEMS TO BELONG AS FULLY TO THE REALM OF PHILOSOPHY AS IT DOES TO MUSIC, I STARTED SKIMMING THROUGH THE WORKS OF ELIAS CANETTI, A WRITER TO WHOM PARKER HAS DEDICATED ONE OF HIS SOLO PIECES.

IN CANETTI'S COLLECTED JOTTINGS, ***THE HUMAN PROVINCE,*** I NOTICED A PASSAGE, ONE I'D PREVIOUSLY MARKED, IN WHICH HE DEFINED *"THE VARIOUS LANGUAGES YOU OUGHT TO HAVE: ONE FOR YOUR MOTHER, WHICH YOU SUBSEQUENTLY NEVER SPEAK AGAIN; ONE WHICH YOU ONLY READ BUT NEVER DARE TO WRITE; ONE IN WHICH YOU PRAY BUT WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING A SINGLE WORD; ONE IN WHICH YOU DO ARITHMETIC AND TO WHICH ALL MONEY MATTERS BELONG; ONE IN WHICH YOU WRITE (BUT NO LETTERS); ONE IN WHICH YOU TRAVEL, AND IN THIS ONE YOU CAN ALSO WRITE YOUR LETTERS."*

THERE ARE ANALOGUES THERE FOR EVAN PARKER'S PARTICULAR AND MYSTERIOUS FLUENCIES AND OMISSIONS; for his solitary and social discourses; for his sense of occasion; for the structures in which we hear his musics; and the ways in which they might be made. While Parker has developed distinct solo, trio, and group musics, he has also been alert, as a dedicated improviser, to the possibilities of other musics, ones that might arise only in specific encounters. Among a selection of recently recorded, released, or reissued CDs, he develops his solo and trio vocabularies, and finds opportunities to form new and distinct musics in a series of duets. An architect of evanescent forms, Parker makes music as if music and not words might be the primary instrument of thinking.

SPONTANEOUS MUSIC ENSEMBLE
KARYOBIN
Chronoscope CPE3001-2

The **Spontaneous Music Ensemble** was an early high point in British improvisation. Percussionist John Stevens was joined in the project by Parker, Kenny Wheeler, Derek Bailey and David Holland, the most gifted musicians in London in the period. The instrumentation was conventional — saxophone, trumpet, guitar, bass, and drums — but the premise of free collective improvisation was still unusual, if not unique. ***Karyobin***, from 1967, is a crucial document of improvised music in London in the late sixties. Heard retrospectively, it not only prophesies what its players would become but is actually shaped by identities that would become clearer later.

Stevens has a wonderful sense of openness. Much of his "drumming" here actually takes place on cymbals and it is his clarity — a spun metal and wirey brightness — that shapes the sound of this group, a marked thinness which is quite opposite to what one expects from a quintet, especially one interested in collective improvisation. One of this group's disciplines is the way it sets itself within a narrow frequency band. Stevens' cymbals and abbreviated drum kit often define this, and it's heightened by Bailey's burgeoning use of harmonics, which he couples with a volume pedal to alter the traditional guitar envelope. With a deft touch, Holland seems suspended below, the trace of a fundamental.

What's most interesting about this music is the way it's shaped by the mix and balance of what, for want of better terms, might be called disjunctive and normative players. Parker and Bailey are the disjunctives; Wheeler and Holland the normative. Within the context of free improvisation, Bailey and Parker tend to multiply the materials and interrupt emerging connections of line and mood. Conversely, Wheeler and Holland construct logical or conventional connectives among the data they are given. They tend to make a music seem more conventional than some of its wilder premises.

Tone is a distinguishing element between these diverging conceptions. Then as now, Wheeler and Holland almost always practice a version of "good" tone — clear, consistent, articulate. Parker and Bailey are beginning to move beyond that, each already cultivating complexity of sound, dense individual meshes of overtones, subtones, harmonics and grit. Internal meters are another formative tension. Parker and Bailey tend to address extraordinarily fast internal tempos that allow for much finer gradations of time and a much denser weave of sonic events, even when they're leaving space or silence. Along with this will come multiple internal meters within a single line. Parker has the freest sense of line here, while Wheeler is more deliberative, addressing some unarticulated continuum.

The form in this music arises in the ways it's pulled in different directions and by a common movement towards an almost serial line. In this mix, Stevens emerges as the natural arbiter, the integrator of all this difference, an integration he most often accomplishes with his cymbals.

EVAN PARKER TRIO
ATLANTA
Impetus IMP CD 18617

Atlanta presents a 1986 concert from Atlanta, Georgia, with the trio of Parker, Barry Guy and Paul Lytton. Two long trio pieces — 25 and 20 minutes respectively — open and close the CD, with solo pieces in between by Guy and Parker.

Parker plays tenor with the trio, as was then his custom. It is the instrument with which he speaks of the jazz tradition, so that there is often a clear break between his tenor playing and his soprano. With Charles Gayle, Parker is one of Ayler's most profound students, but in Parker's playing Ayler has been thinned whereas in Gayle's he has been thickened. Here Parker is a rhythmic melodist. One feels in these trio performances vast sub-texts to Parker's lines, which emerge as a sequence of almost delicate, very fast, sputters and flutters.

Parker's sense of occasion is very strong, and here he plays a decidedly traditional trio music. The source in Ayler is emphasized by the playing of the other trio members. Guy's background of knots and flurries is akin to the style that Gary Peacock developed playing with Ayler, a bass line of clustering and stringing that suggests the knotted ropes that formed the first writing. The drumming of Paul Lytton has its kinship with the prototypical free drumming of Sunny Murray and Milford Graves (a note to record producers: the ideal tribute to Albert Ayler would be a set of his tunes performed by Parker and Gayle with some of Ayler's original sidemen, e.g., Peacock, Murray, Ali, or Graves).

The first and longest piece is called *Atlanta*, and this seems to mean more than simply the place where the performance took place. Parker's artwork for the CD — collages of ante-bellum mansions, neoclassical columns, floods and fire, and symbols from several systems of mystical initiation — is rooted there or in Atlantis. A passionate discourse on American history is implicit here, the most jazz-ordered performance in Parker's recent output.

Between the two trio pieces, the solo pieces by Guy and Parker show a strong resemblance, since Guy's bass playing has developed along lines very similar to Parker's soprano. There is the same emphasis on polyphonic density achieved through the use of harmonics, and the same emphasis on continuous lines. Parker's solo soprano piece, *The Snake as Road Sign*, is dedicated to Elias Canetti, and it may follow directly from *The Snake Decides*, the long title piece from his solo record of the same year.

COLLECTED SOLOS

In 1989 Parker gathered his solo saxophone recordings as ***Collected Solos***. He included the four lps he had recorded for Incus and added a cassette of music from 1974, more material from one of the two sessions that produced the earliest lp, ***Solo Saxophone***. Paul Haines provided one of his remarkable texts for the boxed set. Only 200 copies were produced of one of the most extraordinary musical accomplishments of the past thirty years, though you might be able to seek out some of the individual records. It is a rare body of work and one that should be reproduced on CD.

The set traces Parker's exploration of the soprano's sonic potential as he moves from short pieces to ones of ever greater length and complexity. The short early pieces have some of the strength of fragments that one finds in such short texts by Samuel Beckett as Fizzles (a title also used by Barry Guy for one of his solo recordings). The long tracks of ***Monoceros*** and ***The Snake Decides*** are especially powerful.

There's a tendency to talk about Parker's solo soprano work in terms of its mechanics, if only because its sheer physical existence is remarkable enough. He has explored circular breathing to permit extended segments of continuous music. He has developed false fingerings, harmonics, embouchures, and double tonguing to create polyphonic music on a single saxophone, developing the physical quirks of the horn and its keys into an extraordinary virtuoso system built on the chance factors of instrument design. The first fourteen recorded pieces were called, appropriately, *Aerobatics*.

Parker has been specific about the beginnings of these techniques. Discussing his early years with Lawrence M. Svirchev ["Intensity of Purpose" Coda July/August 1993], Parker mentioned "Ornette Coleman , Eric Dolphy, and Pharoah Sanders' ESP recording." It was on that recording, a generally flat quintet session that otherwise retraced rather than advanced, that Sanders' breakthrough into the polyphonic saxophone first appeared on record, erupting briefly at the ends of solos in a group context in which there was almost no place for it to go. Within a few years, Sanders would have virtually abandoned the practice, but for Parker it was clearly the key to a whole music. Such sources are important to keep in mind when people glibly divide American jazz from European improvisors. Parker is in the great tradition.

That said, however, it doesn't account for the interest of this music. A key element is the singular act of concentration involved. For the design on the box of ***Collected Solos***, Parker used a "taoist talisman to vitalize the tongue" and added that "in earlier versions such diagrams were made on paper in blood from the cut tongue of a medium." He goes on to explain that, "My efforts to develop a kind of double tongue attack with synthetic reeds sometimes cut my tongue, blood ran through the saxophone and dripped onto the floor in patterns that seemed to me like a picture of the music."

The solo music is, then, the music of a singular concentration in which the saxophone is a literal conduit for essences. Parker has made this music out of the physics of saxophone and saxophonist, but he has done so with the focus of a medium, a medium focused on the medium of the soprano saxophone. It is less an act of virtuosity than a profound statement of being, act of ontology, philosophical system. If one is first impressed by the sheer facility, the impression is quickly superseded by that expanse of mind that it serves to reveal. And it is always musical.

The solo soprano music may be described in its resemblances to the natural order and specific musical orders. It sometimes resembles birds, whether individually or in flocks, and sometimes it sounds like a squeaking door, or whole skyscrapers of squeaking doors. Its polyphonic density and extended phrases are analogous to keyboard musics from Bach to Cecil Taylor, while there is more than passing resemblance to the electric organ music of Terry Riley (e.g., Persian Surgery Dervishes) in its fondness for cycles, circularity and continuity.

There is a strong kinship with eastern wind musics, too, with the shakuhachi of Japan, the shannai of India, but those resemblances are as much to spiritual exercise as to specific instrumental practices. The music of the shakuhachi is a form of zen, or meditation, akin to archery and the tea ceremony. Circular breathing, common to shannai players and a few jazz musicians — Harry Carney, Roland Kirk, more recently Anthony Braxton — is a performance yoga. But exercise of the spirit can assume any form. German monks of the third century included bowling in their devotional practices.

Words like zen and yoga, like jazz, have long been used up. One cannot affix a convenient name to what Parker is doing; he is making a music in which music assumes its fullest meaning, in which words that can no longer be uttered without a speaker seeming simply facile — words like being and fear, nothingness and trembling — are the only ones that might apply. To name that in which Parker engages us is to distance us from what we would name.

It is a performance almost only insofar as it is done in part for the benefit of others, and it is pitched perpetually at the dissolution of one world and the formation of another, a site of being and becoming. It is a music pitched between the lines of language and silence, a music that suggests another evolution wherein music, not words, has become the principal instrument of philosophy.

EVAN PARKER
CONIC SECTIONS
ah um 015

There is perhaps nothing like a collected works to fuel production. From the same year that Parker assembled his solo work, 1989, comes ***Conic Sections***, another foray into the solo soprano. Recorded in Oxford's Holywell Music Room, the music gains from the room's very lively acoustics. Parker seems to be playing the room as much as he is playing the saxophone, and the room seems to be joining in, playing the saxophone and the saxophonist.

One can hardly compare Parker's solo pieces, or even discuss their details. Together they form an extraordinary continuum, a chart of his explorations over the past twenty years. The five pieces of ***Conic Sections*** may only be the most recent of these, or they may be a peak in this process. Since recording them, Parker has produced another solo record, ***Process and Reality*** on FMP, that uses overdubbing. After twenty years of exploring the polyphonic soprano, perhaps it is time to start overdubbing, somehow emphasizing the processes of phase music that are so much a part of ***Conic Sections***. Meanwhile, the continuous and polyphonic soprano techniques have begun to mingle with other voices.

PARKER - GUY - LYTTON
IMAGINARY VALUES
Maya MCD 9401

This 1993 trio performance represents a far higher integration of musical lines than ***Atlanta***. Parker has, in his words, "sacrificed" his solo music to the trio, and, in doing so, he has created another trio music. The separate solo languages of 1986, even then so compatible, are now woven through the trio music. The recording of Guy's bass here emphasizes the equality of parts. His use of the almost cello-like chamber bass when Parker plays soprano

PAUL LYTTON • EVAN PARKER • BARRY GUY (PHOTOGRAPH BY CAROLINE FORBES)

emphasizes the detemporalized, phase music-aspect of what was once material Parker reserved for the solo music.

The velocity and intensity have reached a point where pieces contract in time. In some pieces, speed has increased until the grain of Parker's tenor tone has become the pulse, each vibrating fleck of his sound standing out as the rhythmic measure.

BORAH BERGMAN & EVAN PARKER
THE FIRE TALE
Soul Note 121252-2

When Friedrich Nietzsche finally succumbed to the dementia of syphilis, he was discovered pounding a piano. It suggests a certain end and completion of the nineteenth century, romanticism, philosophy, the piano, and something of western civilization as it once must have been known. It is piano music for the void, dividing, linking, and filling. Years ago I often thought about that lost Nietzsche piano music, and it occurred to me again recently as I listened to Borah Bergman's CD with Andrew Cyrille. There's something of Nietzsche's lost piano music, its vast consciousness (and unconsciousness), in the most interesting piano music, and it's at least a metaphor for what Bergman is doing. Bergman has an unusual capacity to fill space while subdividing time. It's a predilection that he shares with Parker, and the two create the densest duo music I've heard, throwing off almost enough notes to fill the void that is central to each musician's vision. In the opening *Fire Tale*, the two musicians reach levels of density and synchrony that are a major musical leap.They extend that fervour in each succeeding piece, doing the unthinkable of speeding one another up, constructing the musical analogue of a particle accelerator.

ANTHONY BRAXTON/EVAN PARKER
DUO (LONDON) 1993
Leo CD LR 193

I don't think it's stretching things to say that Parker and Anthony Braxton possess both the broadest and quickest minds of any saxophonists active in the past twenty five years (as well as the most stubborn and single-minded). Because of that, their styles are in many ways essentially dissimilar, despite a common ancestry and a fair amount of cross-fertilization. Braxton is a more note-specific player than Parker, more formal, less intuitive.

In this series of duets, recorded in May 1993 in London, the two merge their breadths and quickness of line and prediction to create unique music. Each finds things to do that are highly specific to the encounter, and there are many moments when their differences blur into one another and they're hard to distinguish. Warne Marsh and Bismillah Khan would be both flattered and impressed.

The mood of this CD is very different from the others, in that it seems more concerned with vocabulary and architecture than with experience and expression. That Parker frequently plays tenor is a distinguishing mark. As with the Bergman disc, there are moments when it's really unimaginable that only two players have accomplished this. By the end there are hints that it is four saxophonists, with one very fine mind.

EVAN PARKER/JOHN STEVENS
CORNER TO CORNER
Ogun OGCD 005

This series of duets, recorded some two weeks after the duets with Braxton, explores another question: How naked might a music be? One could count the notes in this hour of music, the avant-garde equivalent of fife and drum music, played by survivors of attenuated struggles.

Parker plays soprano only, but he does so with scant recourse to the virtuoso languages of the other records. When he uses circular breathing, it's to repeat short phrases that are microscopically varied. Stevens' kit is reduced to little more than two hi-hats and a small snare drum. The impression of some ancient military ensemble is heightened by Stevens' occasional use of trumpet, usually for single and solemn, bugle-like, sustained notes. This is Reveille and The Last Post when tonality has died, the musical equivalent of Beckett's theatre. This minimal instrumentation is exploited to the fullest, and almost covertly, as when air is passed through the trumpet to activate the rattle of a snare.

Reviewing Parker's ***Process and Reality*** in these pages (January / February 1994), Gary Parker Chapin wrote that "you come to the sudden, vaguely frightening realization that he has absolutely no intention of letting up." One of the things that links Parker's different musics is that they are, to varying degrees, both exhaustive and exhausting, though the earlier groups and the duets with Braxton and Stevens are less so than the solo music, ***Imaginary Values***, and the duets with Bergman, musics in which our relationships with time seem to be altered. They are welded together by a singular intensity, a startling concentration of focus that can leave a listener feeling as if he has somehow participated in producing them, or paid for them in an energy equivalent to that involved in their original making. The strain, I think, is connected to breathing. Listening to music, we are used to a mental breathing that Parker has broken through.

At times during the listening for this writing, I have left the room when the CDs were playing, sometimes pushed out by their intensity. But I would leave rather than take the CD out of the machine. There is a sense in which the most powerful of this music has a life of its own, whether someone is available who can listen to it or not, and even its reproduction should not be interrupted. I leave it playing... for what? The house, the walls, the paintings, the fish? For itself? I have no idea. Does the laser of the CD read it like a prayer wheel? Is its influence benign? These are questions without answers, but Parker's music has a power that requires they be asked.

In ***The Human Province***, Elias Canetti writes, "It is not enough to think, one also has to breathe. Dangerous are the thinkers who have not breathed enough." In Evan Parker's music, thought and breath are continuous, each the instrument and measure of the other. □

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VIDEO UPDATE

CHICAGO AND ALL THAT JAZZ
THE SOUND OF JAZZ
JAZZ FROM STUDIO 61
THEATER FOR A STORY
GROVER WASHINGTON JR.

ALTHOUGH SOME OF ITS MUSIC HAD COME OUT PREVIOUSLY on lp, it has been literally decades since more than a handful of people have viewed ***Chicago And All That Jazz***, a 60-minute special (available from Vintage Jazz Classics, 611 Broadway, #411, New York, NY 10012) that was taped during October and November 1961 and aired just once, on Nov. 26. William Nichols, who produced and wrote this show, clearly went overboard in stuffing in as many topics and musicians as he could during the relatively short show. Garry Moore, who narrates throughout much of this special, discusses such topics as the beginnings of jazz, the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, Fate Marable, the end of World War I, the social changes that occurred in the 1920s, prohibition, gangsters, Louis Armstrong, Bix, and the decline of Chicago; all of these issues are illustrated by stills and film clips.

MOST IMPORTANT OF COURSE is the actual music performed. Although the performances tend to be brief and such forgotten performers as vaudevillian Blossom Seeley and singer Mae Barnes waste valuable time, there are several memorable moments. At the beginning of the show, 18 classic musicians are introduced and take short bows; out of these only the two bassists (Bob Haggart and Milt Hinton) are still alive. Despite wearing some silly hats, a quintet does a fine job of recreating the Original Dixieland Jazz Band with trumpeter Yank Lawson, pianist Johnny Guarnieri and drummer Cliff Leeman being quite prominent. A new "Hot Five" that includes three of the original members (pianist Lil Harden, trombonist Kid Ory and guitarist Johnny St. Cyr) and logical fill-ins (trumpeter Red Allen, drummer Zutty Singleton and Hinton) are wonderful on a brief blues and *Jelly Roll Blues*. They should have recorded a full album. Johnny Guarnieri plays a spirited version of *In A Mist* and Meade Lux Lewis is seen on film from 1946's ***New Orleans*** and then in the "present day" performing *Honky Tonk Train Blues*. A crazy production number on *Chicago* throws in everything from Blossom Seeley, Lil Hardin and Jack Teagarden splitting the vocal to Tony Sbarbaro (why wasn't he shown with the ODJB?) on kazoo for a split second, a variety of silly film clips and even a glimpse of Doc Severinsen with the studio orchestra!

The second half of this unique hodgepodge has a hot if disappointingly short spot for the Chicagoans (Jimmy McPartland, Bud Freeman, Pee Wee Russell, Teagarden, Joe Sullivan, Eddie Condon, Haggart and Gene Krupa) on *China Boy*. Al Minns & Leon James demonstrate dances of the era and even if their acrobatics are impressive, the Nicholas Brothers have spoiled me! ***Chicago and All That Jazz*** concludes with a rather bizarre jazz "free for all" that features a medley of short performances, with Krupa's drum breaks acting as segues. Highlights include a sextet (with Red Allen, Kid Ory and Buster Bailey) taking one chorus on *Cornet Chop Suey*, Teagarden singing *After You've Gone*, Lil Harden (with Mae Barnes on drums) performing *The Pearls* and a dumb run through on *Heebies Jeebies*, the Chicagoans jamming on a brief *Wolverine Blues*, some corny Blossom Seeley, Meade Lux Lewis rushing through *Pinetop's Boogie Woogie* and a riotous version of *Tiger Rag* that includes everyone! Although there is a great deal of lost potential in this film (the Chicagoans and the Allen-Ory band should have performed for a half-hour apiece!), ***Chicago And All That Jazz*** is a true historical curiosity that is fascinating to view.

The A*Vision series has come up with two titles, one of which is recommended. Starting with the dud, ***Vintage Collection Vol. 1 1958-59*** goes out of its way to disguise the fact that its contents are actually ***The Sound of Jazz*** which, despite its title was actually recorded Dec. 8, 1957! There are a remarkable amount of errors in the relatively brief linernotes, everything from misspellings (Nat Pearce? Ossie Johnson?) to assigning the wrong personnel to individual songs (Dickie Wells is never mentioned, not even on *Dickie's Dream!)*. In the actual film, the spoken introductions have either been deleted or truncated so as to hide the film's identity, and the order of

CLARK TERRY & HENRY RED ALLEN • PHOTOGRAPH BY BILL SMITH

the songs has been shifted around a little bit for no apparent reason.

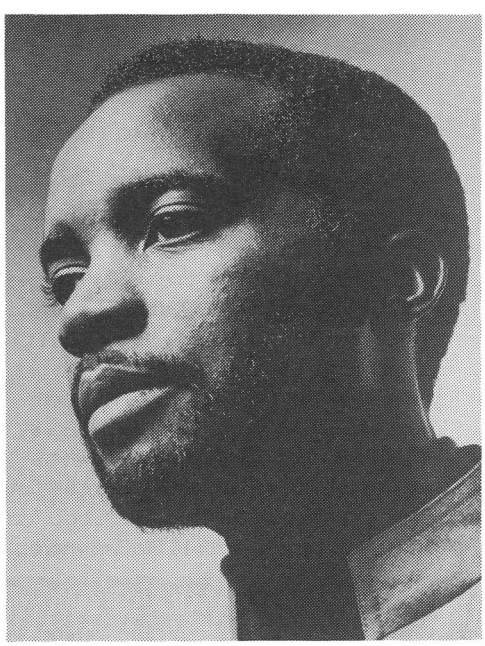
THE MUSIC IS BRILLIANT, for ***The Sound of Jazz*** is arguably the greatest of all jazz films. Highlights include the reactions of Pee Wee Russell (turning a squeak into a logical part of his solo), Rex Stewart (who imitates Russell) and Red Allen (who, after hearing Stewart scream a high note, decides to hit one of his own) on *Wild Man Blues*, the very different facial expressions of Coleman Hawkins (pride), Count Basie (enjoyment) and Jimmy Rushing (bewilderment) to Thelonious Monk's performance of *Blue Monk* and the classic Billie Holiday rendition (with Hawkins, Ben Webster and an ailing but soulful Lester Young) of *Fine And Mellow*. The advertising brags that this material is available "for the first time on video," yet another error. Vintage Jazz Classics has already released this material the correct way on their Sound of Jazz video (which I reviewed in much greater detail in the July/August 1991 issue of Coda), so what's the point of this shoddy and possibly dishonest release?

On a higher level is ***Vintage Collection Vol. 2 1960-61*** despite the (once again) incorrect dates (how about some quality control?). This second tape combines together two half-hour TV specials, both from 1959 and originally titled respectively ***Jazz From Studio 61*** and ***Theater For A Story***. The Studio 61 date has a pair of songs from two different groups. First the Ahmad Jamal trio (with bassist Israel Crosby and drummer Vernel Fournier) is heard on a surprisingly uptempo version of *Darn That Dream* and *Ahmad's Blues*. The slightly cloudy sound does not really help Jamal's light touch but the camera work is excellent (various musicians and unidentified people watch the pianist closely as he plays) and Jamal's expert use of space shows why he impressed Miles Davis so much. Then an all-star sextet led by the great tenor Ben Webster (trumpeter Buck Clayton, trombonist Vic Dickenson, pianist Hank Jones, bassist George Duvivier and drummer Jo Jones) takes centre stage. Webster is featured throughout *Chelsea Bridge* with Hank Jones (the Teddy Wilson of the bop era, so flawless and tasteful) getting half a chorus. This segment concludes with the full sextet running through *C Jam Blues*. Part of Buck's solo might be missing (he seems to take just 2 1/2 choruses) but otherwise it is a strong performance with plenty of growls from Webster.

Theatre For A Story is rather famous for it contains the only filmed performance (prior to 1966) of Miles Davis that has thus far been discovered. Most longtime jazz fans have seen excerpts from this show, but until now this material had not been widely available to the public. First Miles performs a brilliant version of *So What* with his quintet, soloing along with John Coltrane (seen in his earliest film appearance) and pianist Wynton Kelly; bassist Paul Chambers and drummer Jimmy Cobb are prominent in support. The remainder of this classic film showcases Davis with Gil Evans' 19 piece orchestra, playing *The Duke, Blues for Pablo* and *New Rhumba*. Although not as exciting as the quintet track, these performances are quite intriguing to watch (the camera work is superb) and Miles really digs into the blues. Although one can bemoan the fact that there is not more early Miles on film (I believe that the next earliest still-existing documentation is from an English TV show in 1966 with the quintet that included Wayne Shorter), we should all be thankful that at least this precious half-hour was saved for future generations. An essential tape.

View Video (34 East 23 Street, NY 10010) has put out several fine jazz films during the past few years. ***Grover Washington Jr. In Concert*** (60 minutes) features the soulful saxophonist in an excellent show from June 27, 1981 before an enthusiastic crowd at the Shubert Theatre in Philadelphia. Grover's r&b-oriented jazz (which I've termed "rhythm and jazz") manages to be both danceable and adventurous within its format, accessible yet occasionally unpredictable. Washington performs his usual repertoire of the time *(Winelight, Let It Flow, Come Morning (No. 5), On The Dark Side, Make Me A Memory, Just The Two Of Us, Mister Magic)* and, although the rhythm section (keyboardist Richard Tee, guitarist Eric Gale, bassist Anthony Jackson, drummer Steve Gadd, percussionist Ralph MacDonald and the synthesizers of Paul Griffin) offers little more than repetitive funky grooves, Grover Washington's solos hold one's interest throughout. Zack Sanders takes a vocal on *Just The Two Of Us* but this performance must have taken place before the Winelight album was released, for it is obvious from the audience's reaction that the song had not become a hit yet. The camera work is excellent and Grover (whether on tenor, alto or soprano) is quite distinctive. Although one can certainly argue that this music is not as significant as, say, David Murray's, Grover Washington Jr.'s contributions to stretching the r&b/jazz idiom and increasing the jazz audience should not be overlooked or lightly dismissed. □

SCOTT YANOW *is a freelance writer residing in Los Angeles, and is published worldwide in nine music magazines.*



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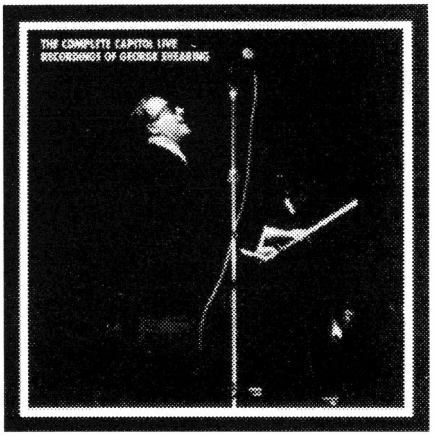

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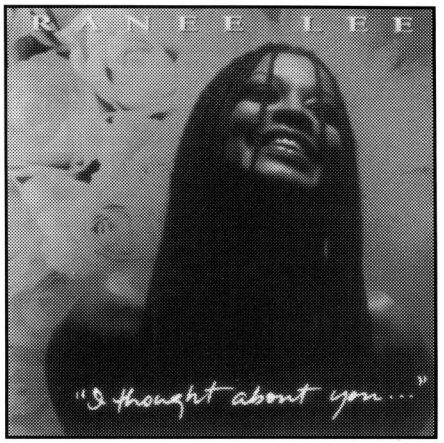

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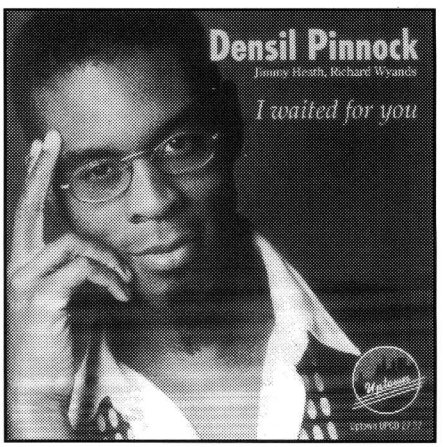

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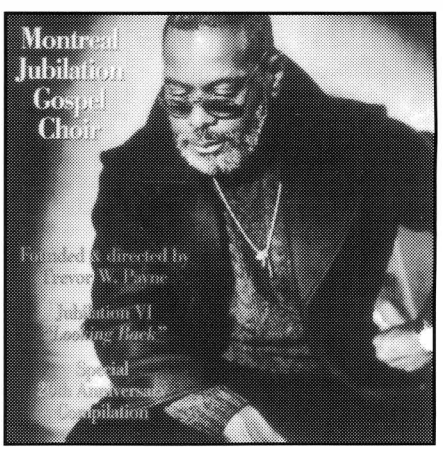

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