

SPOTLIGHT ON DRUMS

MARCH 16, 1972

50c

downbeat

jazz-blues-rock

ELVIN JONES: MORE THAN KEEPING TIME

THE EVOLUTION OF MAX ROACH

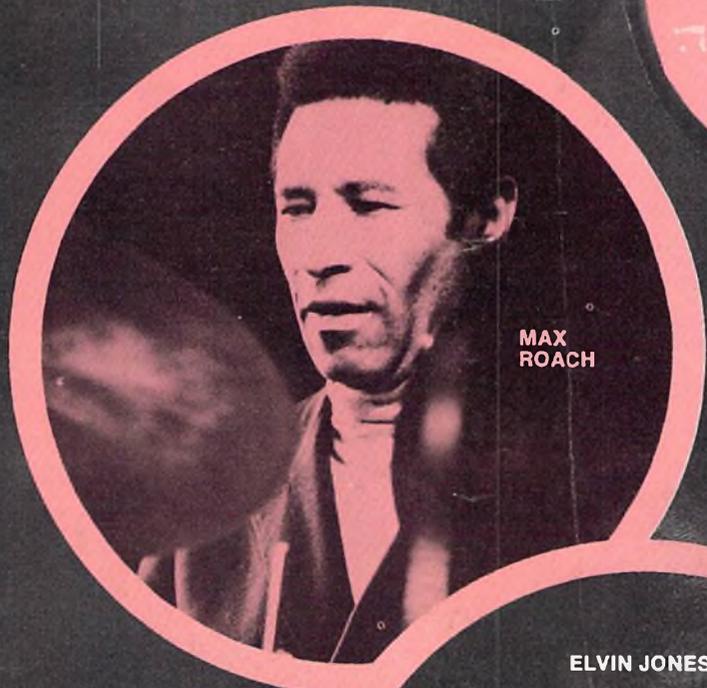
JOHN VON OHLEN: KENTON'S STOKER

NORMAN CONNORS: PHAROAH'S BEAT

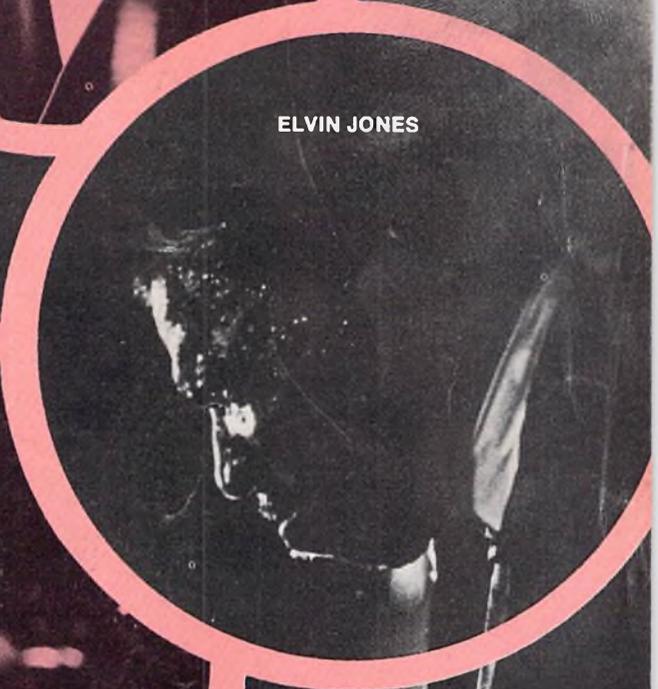
BOBBY COLOMBY BLINDFOLD TEST



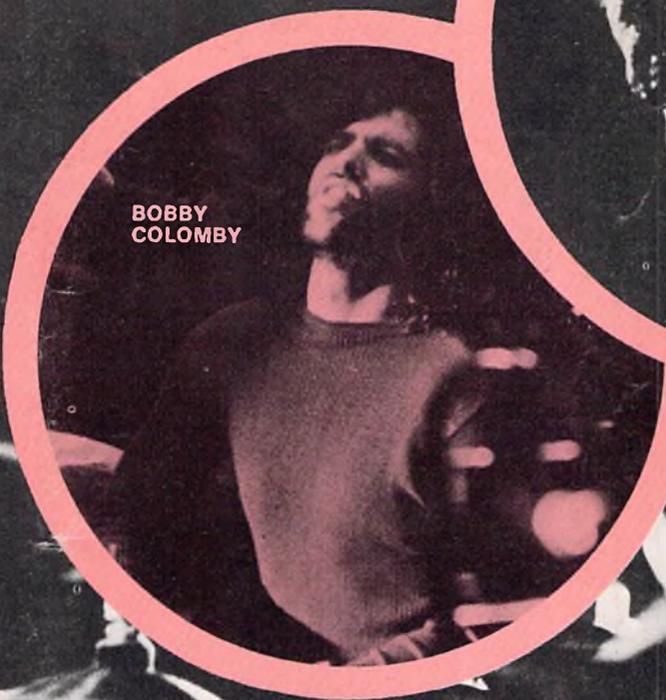
THE WHOLE DRUM SET, BY ED SHAUGHNESSY



MAX ROACH



ELVIN JONES



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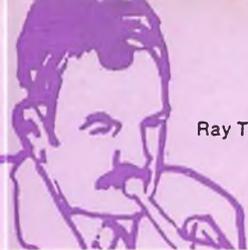
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the first chorus

By Charles Suber

This is a true and somewhat personal story about a young boy, now grown, and his first musician hero — a Snare Drummer.

The boy's father and uncle were drummers, other uncles and a grandfather were Professional Musicians in New York City. (The boy was not to realize why those words were spoken as capitalized until he went out into the world beyond the Hudson River, beyond New Jersey even.) But he seldom heard his father play. "Can't take you on the job and besides you've got school next day."

The boy was allowed to handle the mysterious and wonderful things in the drum case "if you're very, very careful"—things like slide whistles and bird whistles you filled with water, slap sticks and cow bells ("cows have different ones with clappers inside"), shiny red temple blocks, and shakers and scratchers "from the time your father was in Cuba"; and the forbidden (fascinating) snare drum which you could tighten or loosen with your skate key. "Don't touch it; you'll break the head" was a familiar admonition. (The only circumstance where a bath could be delayed was when a calf skin head was soaking in the bath tub). So the boy was familiar with the drum things as toys and "what your father does for a living" but had only a vague idea of what power and glory lay among the wood, brass, and skins.

The Hero made his appearance to the boy playing the Snare Drum with the World Famous Radio City Music Hall Symphony under the direction of Erno Rapee. The scene was magnificent. You're sitting on a luxuriously upholstered seat in the World's Greatest Movie Palace. On the World's Largest Movie Screen flashes in flowing cursive: "... performing Maurice Ravel's *Bolero* with the entire Corps de Ballet plus the Rockettes". The World's Largest Tab Curtain is lowered and the World's Largest Proscenium Arch is bathed in blood-red color. The pit is rising now, rising with what seemed like hundreds of musicians—all in tuxedos (the harpist wore a black beaded evening gown) with snowy white bosom shirts. Then with a slight tremor the orchestra pit stopped rising and the first and only sound in the vast theatre was the Snare Drummer beginning the tension that was to be so agonizingly prolonged for a brief eternity.

The Snare Drummer stood slim and tall, his handsome head cocked slightly to his drum. His attitude was one of quiet strength and infinite control. He was in command. It was his commanding sound and insistent, steady beat that set in motion all the other players to whom the Conductor was making wildly extravagant gestures. It was the Snare Drummer that brought all those beautiful women to leap and glide and cast great writhing shadows on the World's Largest Cyclorama. And when the climax came shudderingly to a frenzied end, only the Snare Drummer remained steady and Cool and In Command. The boy sensed that only he and the Snare Drummer knew by whom the applause of 6,000 persons was deserved.

It wasn't until sometime later that the boy could bring himself to ask his father who the Snare Drummer was. His father's reply was matter-of-fact: "His name is Billy Gladstone. He's a good drummer and teaches quite a bit. One of his students is about your age—Charlie Manne's kid, Sheldon."

Later on, the boy was to know Shelly Manne and other great drummers and believe

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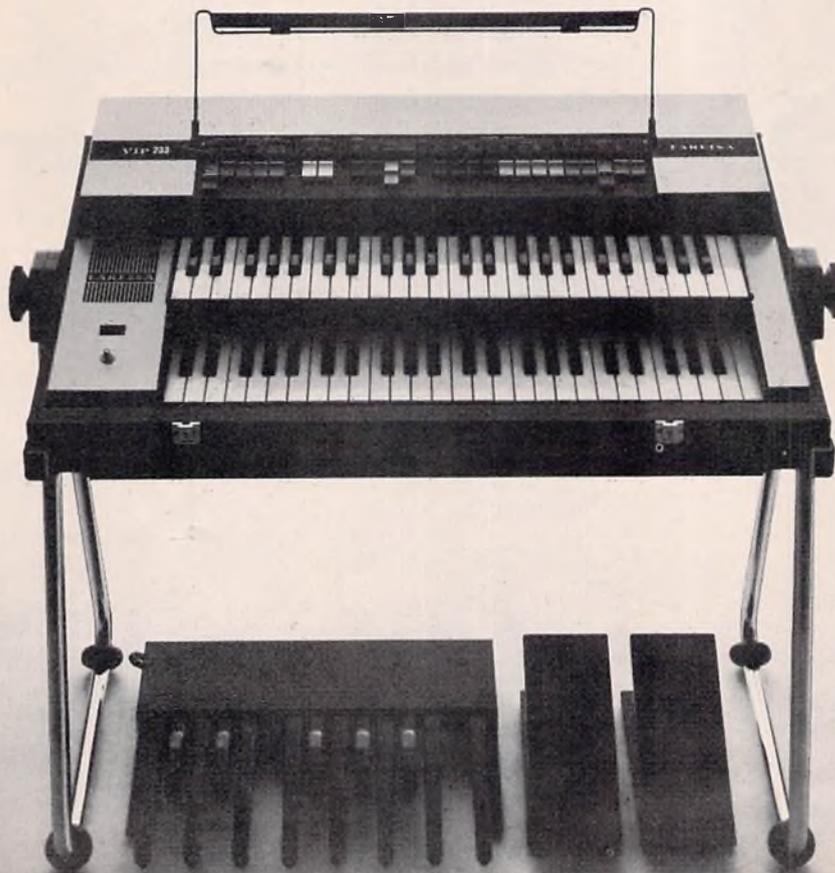
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jazz-blues-rock

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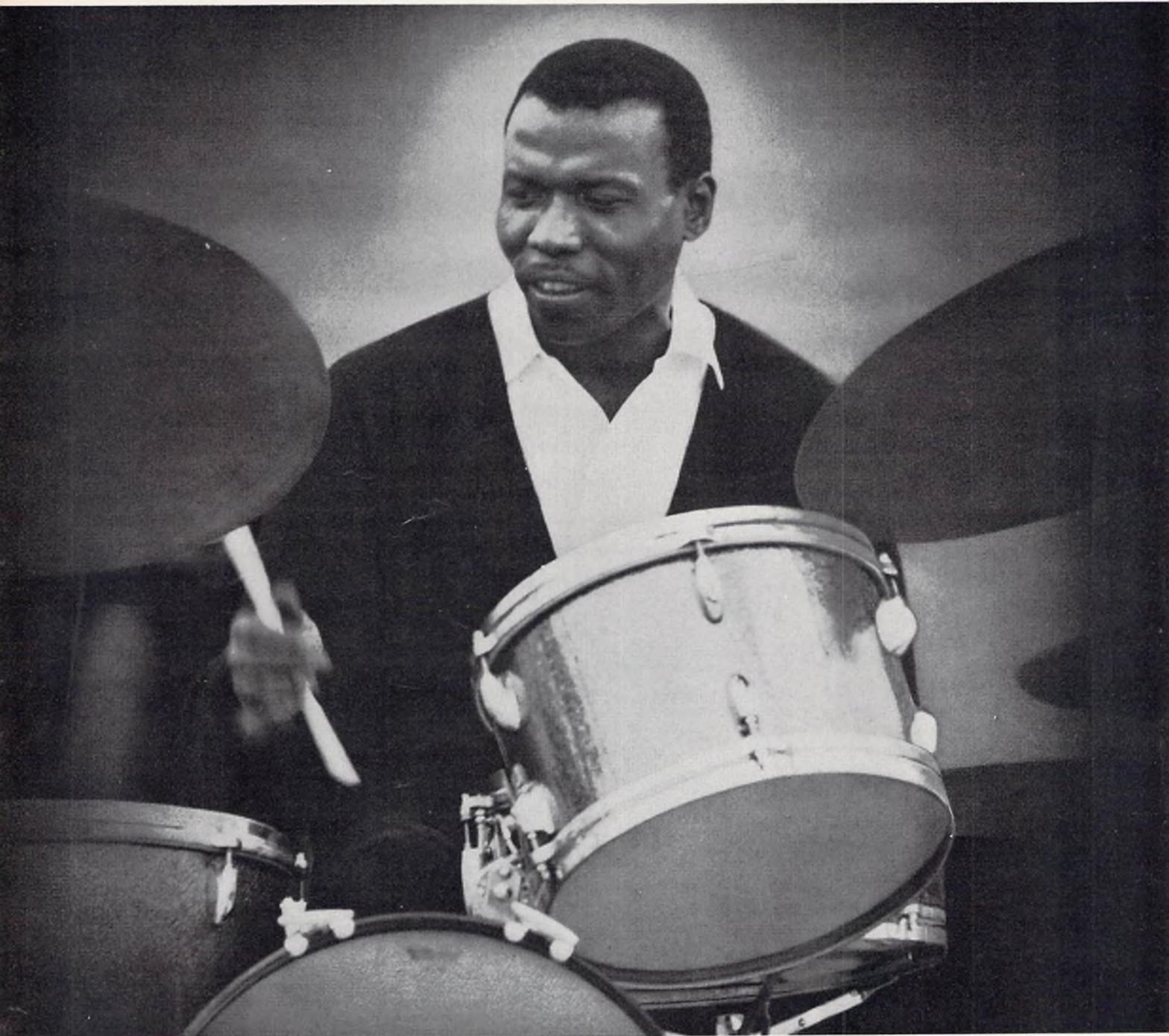
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Newport Move

... George Wein will move the Newport Jazz Festival to New York and the only jazz that Newport will see this year is a possible one afternoon-and-evening affair. I was present at last year's festival as I have been for quite a few years and can only agree with Wein's decision.

I feel that I must express the anger, contempt and regret that I and other jazz fans in Rhode Island feel for the irresponsible, disrespectful young people who were the cause of the past summer's fiasco.

The distance to New York City is a minor obstacle easily overcome and I plan to attend all nine days of the NJF this summer; but it is indeed a shame that the world's greatest outdoor music festival will have to take place elsewhere than in its home city.

Alas ... Newport in New York is not Newport.

Brian Robert

West Warwick, R.I.

Two Different Worlds?

Although it is currently fashionable to be optimistic about the jazz and rock worlds "coming together", one needed only to witness a recent fiasco at Philadelphia's Spectrum to be totally convinced otherwise.

Placed between frantically received sets by War and Buddy Miles, Archie Shepp got what amounted to no reception at all. The au-

dience, in fact, was extraordinarily rude: Jimmy Garrison's unaccompanied bass solo was almost drowned out by conversations in the crowd. Shepp himself played comparatively little, but his group (including Grachan Moncur III, Beaver Harris and Dave Burrell) played passionately and well, under the circumstances.

Incredibly, though, only a few hundred of the several thousand present bothered to applaud when the performance was over. And



when Shepp introduced the musicians individually (over a mike that kept feeding back) there was virtually no applause. When one considers the fact that the audience was predominantly black, the situation becomes even more perplexing and discouraging.

James Roman

Pemberton, N.J.

The point is well taken, but conceivably a different kind of jazz might have been better received. —ed.

Terry's Buddy

Your reviewer gave Buddy Terry's new album 3½ stars. (db, Feb. 3). He also allowed that "Buddy Terry can play." Who ever said he couldn't play?

I've been a friend an fan of Buddy's for a long time. I'm proud of his latest effort.

Awareness offers a variety of quality music: Straight ahead, avant garde, and soulful.

Could Bob Porter's negativism be "sour grapes" over losing a musician of Buddy's stature? Incidentally, why is an employee of a record company reviewing records for down beat? Are we to assume there is no vested interest?

Maybe *Awareness* should be reviewed by one of Mainstream's producers.

J. Cohen

Frazer, Pa.

No employee of any record company reviews for this magazine. Bob Porter has resumed reviewing because he is presently *not* employed by any record company; he left Fantasy-Prestige several months ago. Paraphrasing, to say that a musician "can play" is a laudatory phrase which doesn't imply the opposite. And the review wasn't negative — 3½ stars means better than good. —ed.

Chase-tening

Thanks to Mike Bourne for his interesting review of *King Curtis Live at the Fillmore West* (db, Feb. 3). Curtis is surely a beautiful guy who will be missed.

Also, we at this end would like to hear more about Angel South and the rest of Chase along with Bill. Szantor's interview was pretty good, but there are nine guys in Chase, not one.

Mike Jarboe

Vincetown, N.J.

And that's why Szantor's interview was called *Chase: Focus on Bill*. —ed.

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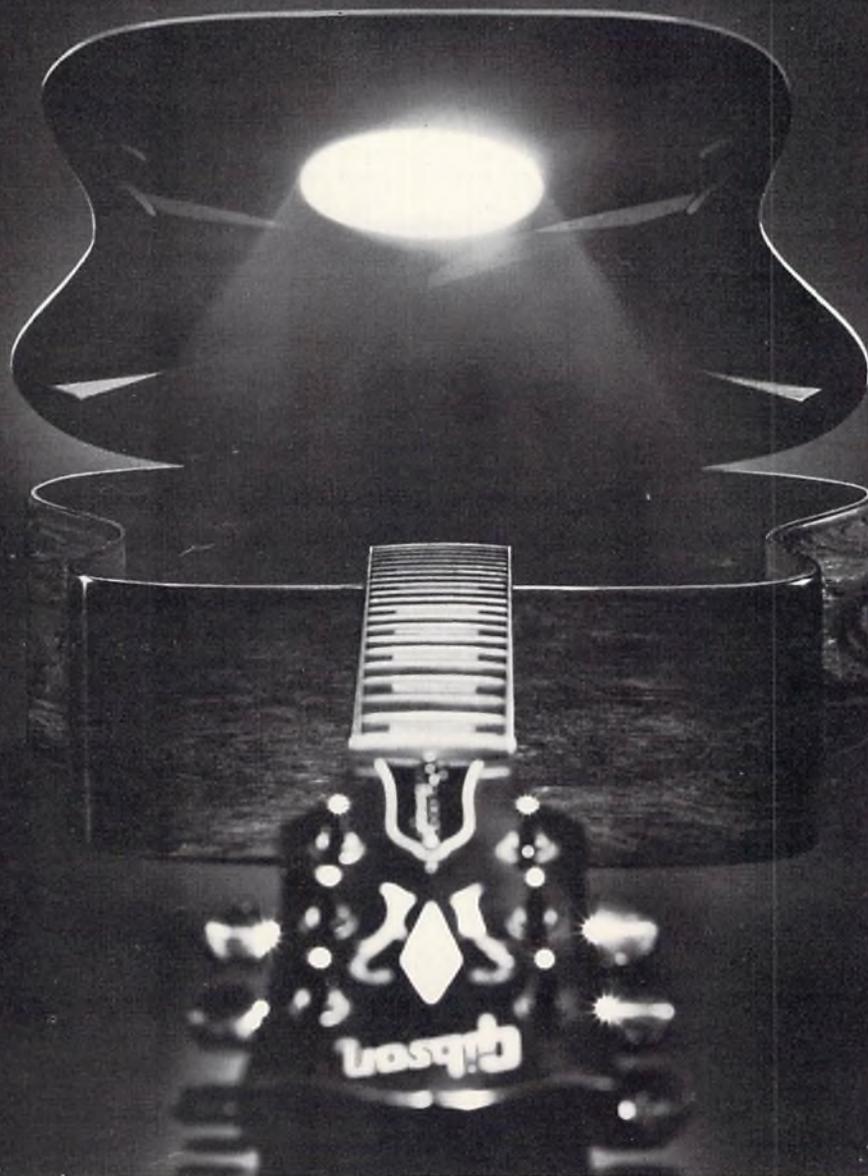
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down beat NEWS

MAHALIA JACKSON 1911-1972

Mahalia Jackson, who rose from poverty to world fame as the greatest of gospel singers, died of a heart seizure in Little Company of Mary Hospital in Evergreen Park, Ill. Jan. 27. She was 60 and had been in poor health for several years.

Born in New Orleans Oct. 26, 1911, Ms. Jackson was the third of six children. Her father was a longshoreman who worked as a barber in the evenings and was a preacher on Sundays. Her mother died when Mahalia was 6, and she was reared by Aunt Duke, a deeply religious woman who instilled in the child the strong faith that was to become the guiding principle of her life.

Though she was taught to regard secular music as profane and wicked, Ms. Jackson was nonetheless profoundly influenced by the singing of Bessie Smith, which could be heard on phonograph records throughout her neighborhood. She began to sing in a local Baptist church, joining in "because I was lonely."

Obligated to leave school in the eighth grade, Ms. Jackson went to work as a cook and laundress. In 1928, she left New Orleans for Chicago to live with an uncle. Here, she continued to do domestic work, but also joined the Greater Salem Baptist Church, where she soon became a solo singer.

In the early 1930s, she made a cross-country tour with a gospel crusade and began to attract attention in the black community. Her first recording, made for Decca in 1937, was *God's Gonna Separate the Wheat From the Tares*.

It took some time, however, before Ms. Jackson was accepted in the larger, more middle-class black churches. The vigor of her style and performance was frowned upon as "undignified." But as her fame spread among the masses, these churches began to open their doors to her, and she responded by performing more traditional songs on such occasions.

She did not record again for almost ten years, but when she signed with Apollo records in late 1946, her records began to sell in the millions, particularly the two-part *Move On Up a Little Higher*, considered by many to be her masterpiece.

On Oct. 4, 1950, she appeared before a packed house at New York's Carnegie Hall in the first of a series of annual concerts there. Soon thereafter, she began to appear on radio and television, and further broadened her audience with tours abroad, starting in 1952. She became particularly popular in France, Denmark and Israel.

In 1954, Ms. Jackson began to record for Columbia, and that company placed her in more commercial contexts, though she steadfastly refused to sing secular material. Her version of *Silent Night* became tremendously popular here and abroad.

In 1958, in her second appearance at the Newport Jazz Festival, she was persuaded to sing with Duke Ellington's orchestra in a special setting of the *23rd Psalm* and *Come Sunday* from *Black, Brown and Beige*. She appeared again at Newport in 1970, in the 70th birthday tribute to Louis Armstrong, whom

she joined in several selections. These occasions marked her only concessions to jazz; in the days of the "pop gospel" movement, she was offered enormous sums to appear in Las Vegas and other night club venues, but she turned them all down, refusing to sing anywhere where liquor was sold or served.

Ms. Jackson was a symbol of the civil rights struggle, and one of the great moments of her career came when, at Dr. Martin Luther King's request, she sang *I've Been 'Buked and I've Been Scorned* as a prelude to his famous "I Have a Dream" speech at the March on Washington Rally at the Lincoln Memorial in 1963.

From 1964, Ms. Jackson was in and out of hospitals. Doctors warned her to slow down, and she was hospitalized with heart trouble in



the fall of 1967 and again last year. Nevertheless, she continued to tour (in 1971, she sang in Japan, Europe and India) and attend to her considerable business interests, including a beauty parlor, flower shop and real estate holdings.

She persevered in performing, she said, because "I have hopes that my singing will break down some of the hate and fear that divide the white and black people in this country." But her main intent, as always, was communication of her faith, which was as profound and deep as it was immediate and direct.

Her art, projected with immense dignity and vital power through the magnificent instrument of her voice, is one of the glories of black American music in this century, and it reached and touched untold millions. —d.m.

STARS SPARK SRO MINGUS N.Y. CONCERT

Though the downers had been mumbling about a repetition of the 1962 Town Hall disaster that was Charles Mingus' last New York concert, a souled-out house including most anybody who is somebody in the local jazz community was on hand to greet the

bassist-composer at Philharmonic Hall on Feb. 4.

The concert, by any standard, was a major musical and social event. It started almost on time, proceeded without a hitch, and ended a bit anticlimactically only because the clock had run out.

If there was too little for some of Mingus the brilliant bassist (he took no solos and left conducting chores to Teo Macero) there was a great deal of Mingus the brilliant composer.

Even though rehearsals proceeded almost until starting time, some of the new music written for the occasion and most of the music from Mingus' soon-to-be-released album announced in the program had to be omitted, but this was no cause for complaint.

A fabulous orchestra had been assembled. It had guest stars, members of Mingus Workshops past and present, and capable section hands all working together to make the music come alive. Sy Johnson admirably accomplished the difficult task of orchestrating.

The roster: Eddie Preston, Lloyd Michaels, Lonnie Hillyer, John Faddis, trumpets; Eddie Bert, trombone; Dick Berg and a pretty young blonde whose name wasn't announced, French horns; Bob Stewart, tuba; George Dorsey, Lee Konitz, Charles McPherson, Richie Perri, Bobby Jones, Gene Ammons, Howard Johnson, Gerry Mulligan, reeds (quite a section); John Foster, piano; Milt Hinton and Mingus, bass; Joe Chambers, drums; Honi Gordon, vocalist.

Ammons, scoring in particular with some wonderfully earthy blues (at intermission, a very young man was heard to say, "He's playing some of that early King Curtis stuff"), Konitz, Jones, Hillyer, Mulligan, McPherson and Miss Gordon were spotlighted, but almost all members of the band got to solo. Joe Chambers did his job splendidly.

On a fast blues (*E Flat's A Flat Too*), there were surprise walk-on solos by James Moody (flute) and Randy Weston, and some scat singing by Dizzy Gillespie, looking a bit wan but in good spirits. But the real solo surprise of the evening was 18-year-old John Faddis, called upon to fill the big shoes of Roy Eldridge in a piece composed for the absent trumpeter (he was suffering from laryngitis).

Little Royal Suite (yet another beautiful Mingus title) presented the most demanding task for a soloist of the evening, and Faddis acquitted himself splendidly. He wisely refrained from attempting to copy Eldridge, but brought to the music a strong Gillespie influence and astonishing assurance.

But this is not a review of the concert, just a report. It was refreshing to see so many young people in the audience, and so many musicians. As we left the hall, Mingus was at the apron of the stage, signing autographs for the youngsters crowded below, and he was beaming.

Compliments to Bill Cosby, who presented the concert and was its amiable if somewhat overactive emcee, and producers Julius Larkin, Arthur Weiner and Seth Willenson, all of whom began producing jazz events in college (the first two at Hunter, the latter at Cornell). Also to Teo Macero, Susan Graham, and Columbia Records, who recorded the evening's music. —d.m.

GIL EVANS AT SLUGS': A MEMORABLE WEEK

Not since those memorable weeks in 1960 at the Jazz Gallery have New Yorkers had the pleasure of hearing a Gil Evans-led band in a club. (Some lucky Europeans did have the opportunity last summer.)

During the last week of January, however, Evans directed 11 musicians who obviously enjoyed every moment of it at Slugs', and that somewhat seedy but relaxed East Village jazz spot provided a welcome if not ideal setting for some vibrant music-making.

The lineup was Woody Shaw and John Faddis, trumpets; Dave Bargeron, trombone; Pete Levin, French horn; Howard Johnson, tuba, baritone sax, fluegelhorn; Billy Harper, tenor sax, flute; Ted Dunbar, guitar; Herb Buschler, acoustic and electric bass; Bruce Ditmas, drums; Sue Evans, percussion; Dave Horowitz, synthesizer, and the leader on acoustic and electric piano.

It was a very cold night when we dropped in, and by the time the last set got under way (about 2:45 a.m.), band and audience were of about equal size, and the proceedings took on the informality of a rehearsal.

Rehearsals, of course, are sometimes sloppy. But this band was together; it was just a matter of getting things really tight, and Evans would repeat certain sections of a chart, etc., to achieve this. The men were into the music.

On this and the previous set, there were both new and familiar pieces, but even an Evans standard like John Benson Brooks'



lovely *Where Flamingos Fly* seemed a fresh discovery. There could be no doubt that this was Evans' music, yet the band is unlike any previous editions. These were not the sounds of the Miles Davis period nor those heard on the Ampex album, though they contained the beauties of the former and the energy of the latter.

There was much room for solo ventures. Shaw handled most of the trumpet spots more than capably, but Faddis, playing first chair and taking just one brilliant solo, is a find. Recommended by Snooky Young (for whom he's been subbing in the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Band), this 18-year-old has fabulous chops and executionary skills.

Harper shone on *Flamingos* and *Blues in Orbit*, and Bargeron had plenty to say, in an explosive, full-toned style sometimes reminiscent of Roswell Rudd. But it was Johnson who provided the most exciting solo moments, particularly in a wall-shaking tuba outing.

The piece de resistance for the collective forces was the closer, *Eleven* (familiar to Miles Davis followers under another title), which really should be re-named *Twelve*—Evans' strong comping was very much in evidence in a rousing performance.

Evans says he intends to keep active this year. His long-awaited Capitol LP should be out before long. He is doing a March 19 concert at Washington's Kennedy Center, and he would like to take a band to Europe again this summer (promoters please note). Hopefully, there'll also be more things in the nature of this far-too-short club stint.

—morgenstern

FINAL BAR

Trombonist Richard Roush, 24, died of cancer Jan. 24 in Elgin, Ill.

A native of Park Forest, Ill., Roush played bass trombone and baritone horn in the University of Illinois Jazz Band from the late 1960s until 1971. He appeared with the band at many major college jazz festivals and also at the Newport Jazz Festival in 1969. He also toured Europe and the Soviet Union with the band.

Roush also played with the UI Dixieland group and played on several of the big band's recordings, including *In Champaign-Urbana* and *In Stockholm Sweden*. At the time of his death, he was in his second year as music teacher at Elgin Jr. High School.

potpourri

Erroll Garner is set for his first tour of Australia, which will take place June 22 to July 3. Garner may also play two concerts in Tokyo en route, which would mark his first appearance in Japan. The pianist will be touring Europe in April and May. On St. Patrick's Day (March 17), he starts a three-day stand at Brandt's Wharf in Philadelphia, where he set a house record last fall. Garner's new album is being readied for late spring release.

Trumpeter Buck Clayton, inactive for some time, was set to perform at New York University's Loeb Center March 7 at 8:30 p.m. in

MAHALIA REMEMBERED

by Studs Terkel

"Life is short, art is long. And music is the noblest of the arts." Viennese maestro Josef Krips was reflecting on this day, commemorating the birth of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. On this day, Mahalia Jackson died. All her live-long days, she followed the invocation of David . . . "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord." She lifted up all hearts with her singing. In such a way she blessed His name that even agnostics, such as I, were buoyed in spirit. Thus her art endures; and though doctors tell us she died of heart failure, she really died of joy. And of hope in times of such despair.

Who was Mahalia that all sorts of swains commend her? Tributes will be paid by elderly people with calloused hands, black and white; by young people just now discovering Bessie Smith and Billie Holiday; by the dispossessed in all societies, the wretched of the Earth, who, lacking coal, warmed themselves with her song. Yes, politicians, too, will be ready with their superlatives; the same ones who "buked and scorned" Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in life and praised him in death are to be heard, loud and clear, informing us of Mahalia's majesty.

Some 20 years ago, as we sat in her Prairie Avenue flat in Chicago, she was staring out the window, toward the setting sun, miles away and centuries ago. "Mahalia, she was a girl in the slave days. She was dreaming of Jubilee all the time. Of better days to come. My people gave me her name."

Her hands were clasped on the kitchen table. They were delicate, graceful hands. But not dainty, not soft. The callouses were eloquently there. She had scrubbed floors in other people's parlors. She had laundered other people's finery. She had nursed other people's children.

Oh yeah—to use Mahalia's favorite exclamation—hers was not an easy life. It was out of such tribulations she sang out of her soul. It was a fusing of the artist's flesh and spirit.

"You got to work with your hands. All artists should work with their hands. How can you sing of amazing grace, how can you sing prayerfully of heaven and Earth and all God's wonders without using your hands? My hands demonstrate what I feel inside. My hands, my feet, I throw my whole body to say all that is within me. The mind and the voice by them-

selves are not sufficient . . ."

She was part of an early migration to Chicago, some 45 years ago. Her people wanted her to have a better chance than she'd have in New Orleans. Perhaps, she'd become a beautician. She didn't make it. She worked as a factory hand and as a domestic.

But come Sundays, she found respite and exhilaration. She sang open-voiced and freely in the Greater Salem Baptist Church. For that matter, she sang in any church you could name on the South Side, the West Side—wherever black working people gathered to find a one-out-of-seven days of solace.

"When did I first begin to sing? You might as well ask me when did I first begin to walk and talk. When did I first breathe? I remember singing as I scrubbed the floors. It would make the work go easier. When the old people weren't home, I'd turn on a Bessie Smith record and play it over and over. *Careless Love*, that was the blues she sang."

Suddenly, her eyes suggested a twinkle.

"That was before I was saved. I don't sing the blues now. The blues are wonderful and I don't sing them. Just remember, all I'm saying about my listening to Bessie and imitating her when I was a little girl, just remember this was before I was saved."

Again, the twinkle and the deadpan seriousness, as I chuckled. As she knew I would. "And I'm going to save you, too." But always, it was a remembering of beginnings, of where she came from, and of her people's condition.

"I don't know what it was at the time. All I know is it would grip me. Bessie's singing gave me the same feeling as when I'd hear men singing outside as they worked, laying the ties for the railroad, working on the docks . . ."

Her reminiscences were always interrupted by friends and strangers. The doorbell rang incessantly. And the telephone was always the hot line. A blind basso and four women singers entered. They were from a gospel group from Washington, just passing through. They'd dropped in to rehearse. Mahalia's piano was available.

Mildred Falls came by, her sensitive and warm-hearted accompanist, who knew every breath Mahalia took. In my mind's eye now, I see Princess Stewart at the door, sightless

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a concert billed as *The Living Legends of Jazz*, with Jerry Jerome, tenor sax, flute; Tiny Grimes, guitar; Hayes Alvis, bass, and Percy Brice, drums.

ASCAP now offers associate membership (without dues) to writers of music or lyrics even if their works have not been published. In an effort, the music licensing organization says, "to encourage young writers in their professional aspirations and growth. Information is available from ASCAP's New York, Nashville and Los Angeles membership representatives.

Weather Report's first tour of Japan in January was a tremendous success. The group (Wayne Shorter, saxophones; Joe Zawinul, keyboards; Miroslav Vitous, bass; Eric

Gravatt, percussion) played to S.R.O. houses in Tokyo, Osaka and Sapporo, and one of the concerts was recorded live for the group's second Columbia album. The group also received *Album of the Year* and *Band of the Year* awards from *Swing Journal*. From April 15 to May 10, Weather Report will tour South America with pianist Friederich Gulda, and a European tour is planned for the summer.

The Louisiana Jazz Club, a division of the Music Therapy Fund, is expanding its activities. Chapters are being organized in a dozen cities along the Mississippi River now visited by the Delta Queen, last of the passenger-carrying riverboats. New Orleans jazz bands will be sent to these cities to further the membership drive, and is hoped that an international jazz club can be developed.

strictly ad lib

New York: For the second time, a scheduled engagement of the Oscar Peterson Trio at the Rainbow Grill failed to come off. With only a moment's notice, singer Morgana King was the very able substitute. Stan Getz' three weeks at the club, preceding the singer's frame, found the tenorist in fine fettle and offered a rare and welcome opportunity to hear drummer Tony Williams in a different musical context. Tony's former Miles Davis sidekick, Chick Corea, played exquisite electric piano and provided much of the group's repertoire, and bassist Stanley Clarke and percussionist Airtio Moirera,

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The TRAPEZOID PAPERS

by Jim Szantor

Here at last are the fabled, not-so-secret Trapezoid Papers. The real thing—the result of much leakage and an unknown (but probably scant) amount of thought, whimsy and unfashionable horse sense—in which it is revealed that:

—Dizzy Gillespie would be the greatest of talk show hosts. His handpicked house band would, of course, be out of sight and would play no fewer than three full-length feature numbers per program. (But the real treat would be Dizzy doing Aunt Blabby.)

—Contemporary commercial music is in dire need of proper interpretive terminology a la *allegro*, *andante*, *con vivo*, etc. How about *schlockissimo*, *rockante*, *non tropo de Motown*...

—People who complain that Chicago does not have enough (or any) live jazz and/or full-time stone jazz clubs are really being unfair. Chicago is a great sports town and a stronghold of the Democratic machine. Isn't that enough for a city of four million people?

—You know they're bombing when they ask you to clap (or sing) along.

—Did you know that, among them, the reed section players in the University of Illinois Jazz Band (Ron Dewar, Howie Smith et al.) have amassed a total of 634 years of college jazz band experience?

—It's nice to award jazzmen honorary degrees, but those who receive them (admittedly deservedly) usually need the exposure and publicity the least. How about an honorary sheepskin for someone like, say, Cecil Payne? Not to mention a little dishonorary employment.

—All that glitters department: You hear a lot of talk these days about the fabled Golden Age of Television. Surely you remember all those specials on Billie Holiday, Prez, Bird, Fletcher Henderson, not to mention Art Tatum's long-running series...

—Had a weird dream recently involving

reincarnation. Duke Ellington was joining Harry Carney's big band and Nat Hentoff was seen burning manuscripts in his backyard. But Miles was still with Columbia.

—To some, Doc Severinsen is beginning to look (not sound) like the horn man's Liberace. Now before you write angry letters, we all know Doc can take a joke... or at least pretend to. (Nobody gets that much exposure without having to pay some dues.)

—In the early days, musicians and athletes had a lot in common. Then came airplanes, expansion, million-dollar gates and similarly lucrative TV packages. But still, the only basic difference now between, say, Vida Blue and Tommy Flanagan, is that when Tommy turns 50 there's no \$1,700-a-month pension waiting for him.

—Interpreting the critics: "Acquits himself well" (doesn't really stand out or conversely, embarrass himself); "intelligent use of space" (musicians, too, must breathe) (momentarily hung up for ideas); "deserves kudos" (if that's a foreign currency, good!)—musicians should get something for recording these days), and "really burns" (plays over his head).

—There's 16-track recording and talk of 32-track. *Sgt. Pepper* was made on 4-track. Sorry Bix, Hawk, Bird and Prez. You were just born too soon.

—If ever an area replaces 52nd Street as an incubator of heavy new jazz, they'll have to call it Europe.

—TV commercials, great mirrors of the real world as they are, have neglected jazzmen for the most part (though Duke Ellington, for one, has done commercials). But no matter. No need to show Miles eating a bowl of Wheaties. We all know Miles must be eating something...

—There's a new plastic trash bag on the market especially for musicians. Let's see, there's the disc jockey size, the piano-tuner's size, the bus size. Sorry, no wallet size.

—Would like to see a season of *The Odd Couple* with different pairs of musicians enacting the lead roles each week. One week there'd be Doc Severinsen and John Lewis, then Lionel Hampton and Rahsaan Roland Kirk, followed by Stan Kenton and Rashied Ali, then Tommy Newsome and Yusef Lateef, Ira Gitler and Jim Szantor...

—Country-rock is really the evil of two lesser.

—I'm planning to market a new breakfast cereal. What'll I call it? Let's see, we al-

ready have Total, Product 19, Special K. But mine's for certain New Music types. They'll start off their day with Practice.

—Names of jazz clubs sometimes are quite ironic. The Open Door, the Five Spot...

—Overdubbing Dept: Airline passenger (bassist) to stranger (drummer): "That's quite a coincidence—I was at Jake's Memphis Musicland Studio at 9 o'clock this morning too!"

—IRS investigator to jazzman: "I'm sorry sir, but 'dues' in that sense..."

—Do you know what it means to be rejected by the counter-culture just because you happened to have more than their obligatory 10-word vocabulary. Well, I do and I've written a song about it: *Baby, They Ripped Off What I'm Into Even Tho I Was Right On With My Rappin' Bad Number Blues*.

—I'm overdue for announcing my Worst Albums of 1971 Awards. I'm having trouble deciding, but so as not to keep you in suspense too much longer I'll at least announce the prizes:

First Prize: A string tie once worn by Ralph Gleason.

Second Prize: The original manuscript of a Leonard Feather article—successfully placed in 17 different publications.

Third: A transcript of a Ramsey Lewis solo—successfully placed on 17 different album tracks.

Fourth: A treatise on the acoustical deficiencies of the throw-away bottle by Yusef Lateef.

Fifth: A string tie never worn by Ralph Gleason.

Sixth: A pencil once used by Johnny Carson—guaranteed to tap on one and the and-of-three.

Seventh: A mirror once kissed by Buddy Rich.

Eighth: An electric handkerchief once used by Don Ellis.

Ninth: A cup mute once used by Maynard Ferguson.

Tenth: A mirror once smashed by Buddy Rich.

Eleventh: A used container of Arrid Double Dry once used by Art Blakey.

Trapezoid Salutes: Bassist George Duvivier, who has probably elevated more record dates by just walking in the door than any other musician. Liberace could probably play the blues if George Duvivier was playing bass (at least I'd be willing to listen to the attempt).

db

INTRODUCING NORMAN CONNORS

by Dan Morgenstern

"It's important for a drummer to keep time, for people to feel the rhythm. It's important for the drummer to hit the right nerve in people—when you hit the right nerve, it does something spiritually. It's like a natural reaction that makes for a natural acceptance of the music. If that doesn't happen, if it doesn't have that rhythm, it don't swing and it don't have that thing. It seems like everything is rhythm, rhythm . . ."

Thus, paraphrasing Duke Ellington's old adage (*It don't mean a thing*, etc.), speaks Norman Connors, a young man of 25 who has been supplying much rhythmic fire in Pharoah Sanders' group.

The softspoken, friendly and very much together young drummer was born in Philadelphia and has been playing since the age of 5 or so.

"I started in elementary school, played

and played in the orchestra in junior and senior high school.

"It was then," he recalls, "that I started working around Philly. A lot of the cats, Lee Morgan, McCoy Tyner, Reggie, and 15 or 20 others had left by then, so from early high school 'till my early 20s I was very active on the local scene.

"I worked quite a bit with the Dockery brothers (pianist Sam and bassist Wayne), who stayed in Philly at that time. I went to Temple University for a couple of years, majoring in music education, and had my own band now and then in little clubs."

Connors' next step was to move to New York, which he did about four years ago. He went to Juilliard for a year, then dropped out "and started working with Marion Brown and then Archie Shepp. Archie gave me my first record date. All through there I free-lanced

chance to really stretch out and do their thing. Whatever you have to offer him, he gives you a lot of room for.

"Since I've been working for Pharoah, we've played to capacity crowds . . . I never played to such big crowds before in my life. We've packed the Arena in Philly, and that's about the size of Madison Square Garden; the only other people on that bill were Alice Coltrane and Nikki Giovanni. We worked a club in Philly and they had to let people out to get others in—the only other times I've seen that happen in Philly was for Miles and Cannonball. The people can really get with the music, and I like that. I like playing for the people. Our audience is mostly young, teens up through 26-27, but then again, I'm starting to see a lot of different ages. "The majority of people who liked John like Pharoah. It's completely different than working with



CLARENCE E. EASTMOND

snare drums in assembly and things like that," he says. "When I was in the first grade, Bill Cosby and Lex Humphries were in the sixth. Lex was my idol in those days. In fact, he lived right across the street from me. That was the beginning.

"I grew up in the projects of North Philly, where Lee Morgan, Spanky De Brest and Reggie Workman lived. They and Lex and a few other people would have rehearsals at De Brest's house, and I would go there and sit and watch and listen: I guess I did that for four or five years, between the ages of 10 and 15. I learned a lot from that."

Connors also studied privately at Music City with Ellis Tolin and other teachers. Music City then was the site of many jam sessions ("Everybody who came to town used to play there"), offering the opportunity for further extracurricular study. He also studied composition at Philadelphia Music Academy and the Settlement School House of Music,

with Sun Ra, Sam Rivers—about 50 other groups."

The drummer then joined Jackie McLean, recording two as yet unreleased Blue Note albums with the altoist, did a couple of TV things (*Like It Is*, for which he recorded the theme), and then "hooked up with Carlos Garnett, with whom I worked quite a bit for a year-and-a-half, along with a lot of other groups." Then he was with Jack McDuff for about 15 weeks, and then came Pharoah, which has been his most rewarding association so far, he says.

"Pharoah is good to work with. We have a beautiful relationship. He learned a lot from John Coltrane in many ways, not just musically but spiritually. And then he has a lot of his own. He treats everybody good; wants them to be happy, economically and in other ways. He's a beautiful person.

"The job is like heaven, and I've worked with a lot of people. He gives everybody a

McDuff, which was a heavy grind, but a nice experience too. I'd worked with organs before: Larry Young, Lonnie Smith, and Luther Randolph, with whom I went on the road about two years ago. We played the same rooms with McDuff, and it's nice getting to those people, too."

Connors, not surprisingly, thinks it is important to be a flexible musician. But within certain limits.

"Some people are specialists at it, but whoever I work with, I just do my thing. I figure they hired me for myself. Sometimes people will hire you and have somebody else in mind and expect you to play like that person. That doesn't usually work out for me. If someone has Tony Williams in mind, they shouldn't call me.

"The nice thing about Pharoah is that he hires you because he likes what you're doing.

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elvin talk:

an

interview

with

elvin jones

by Valerie Wilmer

Ginger Baker challenged Elvin Jones to a drum battle in the columns of the London *Melody Maker*, and the cynics sneered. When Elvin accepted, the result of the duel was already history as far as they were concerned—but was it really as one-sided as they predicted?

When the two maniacal drummers finally got together in front of a keen-eared audience, the British rocker proved that it's not for nothing that he has been acclaimed for his rhythmic drive by most Africans who have heard him. Although his concept is simplicity itself compared to Elvin's—or to that of Max Roach or Milford Graves, for that matter—his actual rhythmic feeling is much more intense than that of many of his jazz counterparts.

Of course nobody *won* the battle. Elvin is and always will be one of the heaviest drummers of all time and should, theoretically, be able to wipe out any whippersnapper of rock with one swipe of his mighty fist, yet working out side by side with Baker, they ended up like a well-drilled team playing just for the pure enjoyment of it. For all their respective *braggadocio*, Ginger and Elvin just had themselves a good old-fashioned ball. Bearing their pure *simplicity* of approach in mind, I asked Jones to reiterate the role of the drummer.

E.J.: Primarily to keep time. Whether you think you are or not, always in one way or another, either consciously or subconsciously—or unconsciously—the drummer is keeping time, or implied time. Regardless of how abstract it may seem, if it's analyzed to its fullest extent, it will be ultimately a very definite repetitious rhythm.

V.W.: Would you say you were the first person to change the time around?

E.J.: I don't know whether I was the *first* or not! But I suppose so, because I know I was very conscious of doing it.

V.W.: How does it feel to be regarded as an influential drummer?

E.J.: There's no particular sensation from that—I'm serious! I get no particular emotional feeling, but I do have a certain knowledge, a satisfaction from having at least accomplished that—of having been recognized for doing that much in my musical field.

V.W.: Who do you consider the most important drummers around today?

E.J.: Well, if I knew all of them, I might possibly be able to tell you. There's quite a few. One thing I would say is that I don't think Buddy Rich is all that important as far as *drumming* is concerned. I think he's had—whatever he was going to do he's already done. He's been accepted and standardized and he's part of the past. And then there's some interesting so-called "rock" drummers. But I think what drumming is coming to now is lining up more to what we know to be standard percussion. It's more than what we used to call trap drumming or jazz drumming, it's all sort of evolving—or rather reverting—or coming up to the level of philharmonic percussion. I can see that kind of a trend. Drummers are beginning to be more intellectual in their approach.

V.W.: It's no longer a case of being "just the drummer with the band", is it?

E.J.: No, it's an essential part of the musical organization.

V.W.: Why do you think it took so long for people to take the drummer seriously rather than seeing him as just an



VERYL OAKLAND

instrumentalist sitting at the back of the stage making a noise?

E.J.: I think it was mainly just the assertion of the drummers themselves. It's not their fault so much as the fault of the educational system. The emphasis wasn't there until drummers began to be stronger people. For example, one of the finest percussionists/drummers that I ever knew was a former trumpet player. He had a very bad accident, he got tuberculosis, couldn't play trumpet any more, and he was a fine composer, and so he started to play drums. Now here was a man with *beaucoup* knowledge musically and this was many years ago. He was Denzil Best—you know, he played with George Shearing—and he was one of the first conversions, as you might say. Then of course, there's Kenny Clarke. He started out as a pianist, and he just switched to drums.

V.W.: Don't you think also, that in the West, people aren't



VALERIE WILMER

very serious about drummers? They don't have the kind of drum orientation that people have in, say, Africa.

E.J.: Well, that's true. You know, drums in Africa—I'm sure the drum is part of and a very essential and indigenous part of the culture all over the country, each nation, and so the people don't put it down. It has some kind of status to be a drummer, and not only in Africa but in other parts of the world.

V.W.: Do you think that being a drummer here doesn't have much status?

E.J.: Being a musician doesn't have much status—here. I think that here you'd have more status if you're an automobile mechanic or something like that.

V.W.: Why is this?

E.J.: As I said, it's all in the system of education. The fine arts are more or less left to chance and this is the basic

cause of a lot of these effects.

V.W.: It's a drag because people should really dig drums.

E.J.: I think so, too! (Strangely enough!) But I know when I was going to school that they didn't even pass out music to the drum section. It was always "just watch the conductor" and when he waved, you'd play along with him. The bass drum was really the most essential part, that's why school bands keep time and drummers like Baby Dodds—and Buddy Rich, Gene Krupa, Cozy Cole, Jo Jones, Davey Tough and guys like that—had a great influence over the recognition of drums as a musical instrument. People like Fred Weest—he was a drum major but people never heard of him—he was a great educator in the school systems of the Midwest. They did things that people right now are studying. If a young drummer wants to start to play, he'll pick up a book, and the things that he'll start to study are some of the methods that these people actually brought into the curriculum of study.

V.W.: Do you think, though, that Kenny Clarke and Max were the first people to really play a different kind of thing on the drums from what you're talking about?

E.J.: Well recognizably, yes. They were the ones that got the recognition for it, but there were other people. Not that many, but I think the first was probably Chick Webb or to go back a little further, maybe Baby Dodds. He was actually the first person who actually started using coordination and things.

V.W.: What about Ed Blackwell and Billy Higgins—do you like their playing?

E.J.: I do, very much so. I think that they made—and are making—a very significant contribution. And Milford Graves, he's another very interesting innovator, and there are a lot of people like that. Then there are a lot of rock drummers that are doing an awful lot, too. I was very impressed with Ginger Baker when I was in London, the way he did things not so much as what he was doing; it was just the way and the energy that he put into it. There's quite a few fellows 'round there—Tony Oxley, I like him, and Daniel Humair. I hear people. Although I don't know, I'm quite sure that there's a beehive of activity going on in the world of percussion that will have a profound effect upon the music to come, to make it better, more sensitive. It's possible.

V.W.: Yet the fact remains that Max Roach, Art Blakey and Buddy Rich apart, you are the only "name" drummer leading a group. Why don't more drummers lead bands?

E.J.: Maybe they don't want to! I don't know, that's a hard question—it's not for me because I can't answer why anybody doesn't lead a group, but I know that that's what I wanted to do, just like drums was what I wanted to play. So I'm doing it—I just put all my life into what I'm doing, so it's not something new . . .

V.W.: Have you always led your own group since you left Trane?

E.J.: I had a period with Duke Ellington, but since then, 1966, I've had my own group. That record by the trio, *Puttin' It Together*, sort of got it off the ground. I was stumbling around there for a while because we didn't really start as a trio; it was a quintet. I had a piano, Billy Green, and Paul Chambers was playing bass for a while. We used to work the Five Spot on Monday night—I dug that job out of Joe Termini—and it was very successful. It was like Monday nights at the Vanguard, only with three times as many people. We had a very big, nice crowd of people that were very interested and very kind to us at that time. There was an entirely new personality coming out on the music scene and I was really given a tremendous amount of support from the people here in New York and that was encouraging. It really encouraged me to keep on—other than the fact that I had to pay my rent, support myself and whatnot—but it was, and still is, very encouraging to me.

db

His awareness of the contributions of the artist to society and his understanding of the realities of his own experience and its relationship to music, history and culture have determined the evolution of Max Roach from famous percussion innovator to complete artist.

Possessing the multiple talents of master percussionist, band leader, composer, arranger, choreographer and educator, Roach is involved in realizing the full potentials of these varied but related pursuits.

"Black music," he explains, "has always played a great part in tracing the history of our existence in this hemisphere. My activities have given me direction and have substantiated what I felt about some of the things I'd already been involved in."

During the past year, Roach vigorously resumed activity as a player and leader, performing with his small group (ranging from quartet to sextet) in the U. S. and overseas. On his new Atlantic L.P. *Lift Every Voice and Sing*, his sextet combines with the 22-member J. C. White Gospel Singers in a program integrating spirituals and gospel songs with instrumental Afro-American improvisational music.

Roach arranged all the music, and the ovations at two recent concert performances in New York City demonstrated the success he achieved in blending the various elements involved.

The title of the album is derived from a famous poem by James Weldon Johnson, originally written for school children in Jackson, Miss. It became known as the Negro National Anthem during the black cultural renaissance of the 1920. The liner notes consist of another Johnson poem *O Black and Unknown Bards*, a re-evaluation of the spirituals which many Afro-Americans had rejected.

In his imaginative approach to the music, Roach, who like so many Afro-American musicians and singers grew up with a church background, has himself re-evaluated the spirituals and their historic and cultural importance. This indicates a musical direction contrasting with that taken by those instrumentalist-composers who have turned to rock for inspiration.

Roach has also been active on other fronts. "I was doing other things besides working in clubs and going on tours whenever they were available," he says. "I lectured on the history of black music at colleges — Yale, the University of Pittsburgh, Kalamazoo College, Nassau Community College. Many students were surprised to learn where the music really came from; how certain styles developed and who was responsible.

"With good musicians teaching on the campuses, such as Nathan Davis, David Baker, etc., the transfer of knowledge about the music will have to go in another direction. There aren't many clubs or

other performing places where a young musician can get all kinds of experience as he can on a campus, working with big bands and getting the history together.

"More Black Music courses such as now exist at Wesleyan and Berkeley and several other universities and in some of the colleges right here in Manhattan are needed. In Harlem, we are exploring new methods of teaching at the Harlem Music Center."

Roach, of course, is passing down the tradition and awareness he acquired from Lester Young, Charlie Parker and other giants in other, more direct ways. His present quartet includes trumpeter Cecil Bridgewater, tenor saxist-flutist Billy Harper and bassist Reggie Workman, fine young players to whom he is a respected guiding force. A partial list of other gifted players who spent formative periods with Roach would have to include Freddie Hubbard, Charles Tolliver, Gary Bartz, James Spaulding, Stanley Cowell, Alex Blake and the late Booker Little.

Of the men he himself learned from, Roach says:

"They were great creators, and they were individuals who personified the art-

the evolution of MAX ROACH

ist. It is better to be a good musician than to be a great instrumentalist, and it is even better to be an artist than to be a good musician. Bird and Pres could make people laugh and cry with their music; this is what they were and this is who they were and this is what they gave to us who were young at that time and were with them.

"It was just a world of total education—musically, spiritually, and philosophically. For instance, Lester Young had a way of saying goodnight to you. We would say, 'Goodnight, Pres,' because he was the President, and he would say something like 'Don't stumble, you might fall and hurt yourself.' He had different ways of telling you things that would help you along the way, as well as helping you with what you did musically. Charlie Parker, from the time he came through New York with the Jay McShann Band, was always astounding to me.

"One of the important things about those people is that in our music we learn from each other, from mouth to mouth. You didn't learn it in conservatories and universities; it was passed down to you by watching the man, not just as a musi-

cian, but as a human being. Theirs was the style of a man who'd let you know that he was interested in everything."

What of Roach's association with the legendary Clifford Brown?

"Clifford Brown was a most dedicated man. The group I had with him started in California. I was working out there, and Gene Norman approached me with 'Why don't you form a band?' So I came to New York and got Brownie and we returned to California. Brownie was certainly gifted. He played not only trumpet but also piano, and he was a great composer."

Throughout the years following Brownie's tragic loss, Roach's unique drum style has propelled notable musicians of different eras and backgrounds, always inspiringly. He has also performed with the Boston, Chicago, Monterey and Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestras, and the varied knowledge gathered from different fields has fertilized his own progress.

His involvement with new drum techniques as well as human values, socio-political ideas, and his cultural heritage has been documented on his recordings throughout the '60s: *Percussion Bitter Sweet; We Insist: Freedom Now Suite; Drums Unlimited*, and *Members, Don't Get Weary*.

About the concept of "free time" drumming, Roach has this to say:

"I've done a lot of free time drumming, as on *Members, Don't Get Weary*, and on the recent album there's no time on *Motherless Child* or *Troubled Waters*. But time is always prevalent, whether you play in 4/4 or in a mixed meter or in what is called *rubato*. Time is still in. I keep time in all kinds of ways. I think that meters, chordal structures and melodies are tools that should be used to create some kind of expression. If you want to make your point by creating a feeling, then that feeling would determine whether you'd play in time or not. As long as the point is made . . ."

Roach also commented on the socio-political references evident on *Freedom Now Suite* (which was adapted for film by the Italian Gianni Amici, winning 1st Prize at the 18th International Festival of Film in Locarno).

"It sneaked into South Africa until they heard the words Oscar Brown, Jr. had put to it. Then it was barred. Now, it's off the market and you can't buy it anyplace but in Japan. We started the work in 1960, for the centennial celebration of the Emancipation Proclamation, and the suite was only a section of a larger work we had developed. We never finished it, because Oscar and I both realized that we weren't free. There we were, talking of celebrating 100 years of freedom and we weren't free . . . so the work stopped of itself."

Roach's observations about the *Suite* dovetail with his constant awareness of

the unethical changes practiced on musicians. The industry, he feels, fails to promote the music. Instead, "club owners, agents, promoters have provided only bad contracts, low salaries, inferior working conditions, and cultural discrimination."

Cultural discrimination from writers, anthropologists, musicologists, etc. he interprets from the standpoint that "most of the things we've had we have never named ourselves. Our music suffers because of this. The creators have never accepted the word *jazz*, just as we have never really named it ourselves. We have always allowed somebody else that privilege, for many sociological reasons, and to protect ourselves.

"For myself, personally, I'd prefer to say that the music is the culture of African people who have been dispersed throughout North America. This may be a long title, but that's what I would call it."

In keeping with this is his opinion of such terminology as "the New Jazz," or just "New Music":

"The reason why it's categorized is mainly commercial. The music of Sun Ra or Cecil Taylor is placed in an objective category which means it is avant garde and separates them from the mass. It's like saying 'This is a 1960 car and this is a 1972 car', the implication being that the 1972 car is the better—but it's still a car. I think that Cecil Taylor and Sun Ra are innovators, though, because they have brought new things to the music.

"But for some reason, the mass of people has accepted dance music, to a large degree. Nothing wrong with that, but now you have to sit down and think out exactly where everything is, and if it's going to take you away from what you're really involved in. When I think about 'the New Music' and analyze

it—including the music of B.B. King—it's all together, from one end of the spectrum to the other. It's all black music."

For Roach, the relationship of black music to other aspects of black art is best realized through the theater. Recently, he has been conducting rehearsals for two plays in his capacity of musical director for the Negro Ensemble Company, but he has worked in this medium in the past. His musical show *Another Valley*, which he produced, directed and choreographed in the '60s, was hailed by the *New York Herald Tribune* as a production indicating a new direction for jazz. ("While some jazz musicians flirt with the symphony, others think in terms of an African heritage . . .")

In the related area of film, Roach has scored the music for *Black Sun* (Nikatsu Studios, Japan) and *Trail of Tears* (NET Productions).

Currently he is writing another musical, in which the action will be dramatized through percussive accompaniment, and as a lecturer in choreography to graduate students at New York University, he has been devising ballets based on such percussion pieces as his *A Love Silent* and *Attucks to Attica*, pointing up the feeling and significance of the music through dance expression.

Attucks to Attica is also being performed by a percussion ensemble conceived by Roach called M'Boom Re: Percussion. It consists of Roy Brooks, Joe Chambers, Omar Clay, Warren Smith, Freddie Waits, and Roach.

At a recent rehearsal in downtown Manhattan, the group's workshop was strewn with trap sets, tympani, tambourines, bells, congas, xylophones, marimbas—all manner of percussion instruments.

"The basis of M'Boom," Roach explained, "is that it utilizes mallet in-

struments and every kind of percussive instrument. We lean heavily on instruments from the Third World. What we're coming up with is totally new and fresh. It not only involves powerful and innovative rhythmic aspects, but also moves into new melodic and harmonic variations. Everybody in the group writes."

Warren Smith's effective and unusual role in Tony Williams' Lifetime has already demonstrated some of the validity of M'Boom's involvement with the total usage and meaning of percussive music and its investigation of new roles for the percussionist.

Aside from functioning as a workshop collective, M'Boom has given performances at colleges (Adelphi, Swarthmore, Dartmouth), also conducting clinics.

At the rehearsal, the group went through the "battle" section of Roach's *Attucks to Attica*, which began with wall-thumping sounds realized on tympani. Assimilated pan-African rhythms were then superimposed as the players switched instruments, Max himself moving from trap set to xylophone to congas. Battle cries were heard from the ensemble, characterizing the work's theme: The struggle for liberation, and its martyrs from Crispus Attucks to the men of Attica.

Such themes have often been commemorated in Roach's music. Most of the selections on *Lift Every Voice and Sing* are dedicated to figures like Martin Luther King, Medgar Evers, Malcolm X, Patrice Lumumba and Paul Robeson. "These men," Roach explains, "gave of themselves for the sake of humanity."

Throughout his career, the name of Max Roach has been synonymous with progressive ideals. Many have benefited from his knowledge and dedication. Inspired by thoughts of the future, his evolution continues. db



JOHN VON OHLEN: "LET THE LIMBS FLY"

by Jim Szantor

My first exposure to John Von Ohlen is still a vivid memory. On a hot September night in 1967 at Chicago's now-defunct Plugged Nickel, he virtually lifted the Woody Herman Herd off the bandstand with his slashing, straight-ahead big band drumming.

After the first set, a bystander approached Cecil Payne, then the band's baritone saxophonist, and asked him to account for the band's fire, drive and swing.

Cecil chuckled. Then, he stabbed a finger at the man's lapel. Then he said: "Man, if you want to get a big band rollin', you've got to have John Von Ohlen."

Cecil's words, as accurate as they were poetic, are still good today. Since May of 1970 John Von Ohlen has, perhaps more than any other single factor, helped propel the Stan Kenton Orchestra to amazing new heights. And in unique fashion. Although he's the most powerful big band drummer I've ever heard, in many ways he's also the swiftest and most sensitive. He prods, stomps, cajoles, impales, dances and explodes—and all with phenomenal control, strength and feeling. He's the most electrifying big band percussionist since Buddy Rich debuted nearly 35 years ago.

Self-taught on drums all the way, Von Ohlen's musical background started with piano at 4 and continued at 10 with trombone. It wasn't until 17 that he took up drums.

He took them up in a big way, though—in the exclusion of virtually everything else.

"When I first started playing I was so turned on that I played literally all day. My parents didn't learn this until later, but I cut school for about two weeks straight. And I'd get on that drum set about 8:30 in the morning and wouldn't get off until my folks came home at night. I was playing along with records the whole time. There was a six-month period there when I played with records constantly."

After a short but unproductive stint at North Texas State ("school and me just didn't get along") following high school graduation in 1960, John went on the road, on trombone, with a unique band based in Florida. Backed by a wealthy aficionado, Leo Andrews, the band didn't work much but got paid for much rehearsal and even made a record. One of his fellow sidemen was Joe Riggs, former Harry James lead altoist now based in Las Vegas.

Then it was on to Ralph Marterie—his first drum gig. There was also an interesting record date with Don Jacoby's College All Stars ("dumb charts, but the band—with Dee and Willie Barton, Keith Jarrett, Gary Slavo and Carl Saunders—really got it on").

After Marterie, John did six months with Warren Covington's Tommy Dorsey ghost crew ("good band; Don Sebesky charts and it was fun"), four days subbing for Dee Barton on Stan's band (the mellophonium outfit), two years in Army bands, and then, upon discharge, nine months with Billy Maxted's swinging little Manhattan Jazz Band.

"I loved it and it was a drag to leave because we were just getting the thing rolling good when Woody called out of the blue. This was one of the biggest crises of my life. Here I was with a band where everybody got along so well and Maxted's such a beautiful leader. But I had to go with Woody. It was a beautiful jump for someone like me who loved big band jazz and you don't get that call every day. It really tore me apart to tell Maxted I had to leave."

John's first night with Woody was an auspicious one in an inauspicious place—a Moline, Ill. night club.

"It was a beautiful first night; couldn't have been better. In fact, I think I played the band better the first night than I did the whole rest of the time. Cecil Payne came on the same night I did.

"We literally had a brand new band just about every week, especially in the jazz chairs. It was a crazy turnover but you know—at the time that's where it was at. I dig having a band together all the time, there's no doubt about that. That's really where it is. But at that time it seemed like every guy that came on was hot. I just couldn't believe the players that came through there. Every week some guy would come on and he was just heavy. Then he'd leave and someone would come on who would turn you right around. When Al Dingley was on, it was out of it. There wasn't a one of 'em that was a dog—not a high school player in the bunch. Joe Alexander! The night he came on he just burned me off the stand. I didn't think I could keep up with him."

John left Woody in the summer of 1968. He was tired of the road and the other side of the fence—being able to get off by himself, at his own pace—looked good.

"I guess mentally it was time for me to leave the band and get off by myself. Woody was beautiful about it, too, he really was. Because he nurtured me along for a year and I finally started coming along, you know, and then I gave my notice. But he was nice about it. So I went back to Indianapolis and played summer shows.

Then came an entirely different bag—touring with the Holiday on Ice Show ("a beautiful gig, just wonderful."). Then back to Indianapolis and some hanging out in San Francisco.

"I didn't seem to have any direction at all when I left Woody," John recalls, "but when I was with him, I definitely did. I was going to be a studio musician in L.A. You know, 'If I go with Woody, I can write my own ticket'—that kind of thinking, which I no longer have. When I left Woody, all that broke. I didn't have that any more, because I split early. I was going to stay with him for two years. So I just sort of wandered. Went with John Gary for a little while; just taking gigs and knocking around. Then I got a pad out in the woods near Indianapolis—by a lake, by myself—which I had always wanted to do."

From the sylvan environs of Indianapolis we follow our hero to India, where he journeyed with a travel-study group that went around the world. He split in the fall of 1969 and returned in January of '70, and in between discovered what he was looking for.

"When I got over to the Orient, that's finally when I saw things in a good light. I was completely away from drums—no music—just traveling around and digging everything. And I started to see what my mainstream actually was. The problem before was that when I was out with bands, it was a selfish thing. I felt like I was doing it for my credits to go to L.A. But when I got away from the whole scene I started to realize that what I really loved basically was bringing good music to people. That may sound virtuous, but I dig seeing people out there digging that music. So I decided to come back and get into it. And when I did I had a lot more fire. The studio scene just didn't intrigue me any more. To me, 75 per cent of what those guys are playing is a drag. When I joined Stan (May 1970): 'I was lucky to get the gig'—we went to small towns and I got to see those people light up when we were playing. That's a hell of a lot more thrilling than saying, 'Well, at 11 o'clock I've got MGM...' I just can't make that scene at all."

With Kenton not only did John's style

come into its own but in the process he found himself caught up in the Kenton resurgence, brought about largely by Stan's never-ending vision of the musical potential of the big band idiom and by the enthusiasm of what could well be the most close-knit and dedicated big band ever.

This forum now gives John the opportunity to answer the question he's most often asked: What's the main difference in playing drums for the two bands—Woody's and Stan's?

"For me, the dimension of Stan's band is much broader. There's much more top and much more bottom. In all of the bands I've been on, not just Woody's, it's seemed that the scope was only so much. But with Stan, there are times—maybe you don't notice it so much out front—but back in the band it seems like there's no bottom to that chord. It's like a bottomless lake. So those big cymbals, things like that—you need them in Stan's band. Whereas with Woody it was more just swinging; a roaring, rolling swinging thing."

As far as playing satisfaction is concerned?

"I don't know. When I was with Woody, it was kind of a training ground for me—blowing that hard. That's hard blowing. I don't envy the drummer with that band—you've got to blow. He's got a bitch now, Joe LaBarbera. But my personal thing is Stan's band—always has been. I like that dimension. I don't have to hold back as far as volume is concerned. I let it all hang out. Completely. There are dynamics, of course, but when the time comes, I can let it all go with Stan. And I've never been able to do that on any other gig—except at times with Woody, but the dimension wasn't the same. I listen to Buddy's band and Woody's band: I can see the bottom and I can see the top. But with Stan sometimes there really isn't any. It's a whole universe sometimes. Really broad. I can get excited with Stan's band with just one chord. With Woody, I think it's more of a rhythm band."

"Woody taught me one thing I'll never forget—get your nose out of that chart. He says drum charts are guides to insanity. Especially in his band—it's a loose-type thing; you get the gist of it and you just go. If you run over a break, so what? The main thing is to get that energy going. Most of the time when I do read I'll read off a trumpet part. I don't trust drum parts. I just don't even read 'em. If I can set up next to a horn player I'll read his part. That's the best way because the figures are right there. The line goes up and down and I can tell where it's going...if he's going up to a high G I know it's going to be pretty strong. But on a drum part, it's just a static line of notes and I don't know what's happening musically from that."

"But Stan and Woody, they've got that hot magic; some intuitive instincts about the right thing to do, from hiring musicians to how they get that sound going in the band. It's unbelievable. Like Woody—we had those funky blues charts. When I was on we were just playing blues most of the time and when I first came on I used to wonder how he gets the band to sounding like it does. He didn't do anything you could really put your finger on... he was just himself. And finally after a while the band just started getting that sound of Woody Herman. And I was playing like that. I didn't play like that before! He didn't tell me how to play that way. It just happened, and it's his sound. And I got with Stan and all of a sudden I sound like Stan Levey—that kind of sound. Without trying to. It's just that subconscious communication with the leaders."

For much of the spring and summer of

1971 Stan was laid up with an illness and the Kentonites really learned about the phenomenon of leadership.

"You've got to have him up front, we sure found that out. He's got to be there. We thought we were playing loud and killing ourselves when he was gone. We had gotten 'used' to not having him around and were starting to get lazy; pulling up easier charts. But when he came back, boy, he had us blowing so loud we couldn't believe it. There are times, like on the *Macumba Suite*, where I feel the world's coming to an end. This is probably the strongest band he's had. There's nothing in the business like it. That's because Stan's a tower of strength. He propels the whole thing and his values are straight. He does everything honestly. Woody's the same. I look at your Hall of Fame and I say 'Where's Woody?' Doesn't make sense!"

What does make sense is John Von Ohlen's first rule of drumming—Let it all hang out.

"You've got to let the limbs fly—let 'em go just like rubber. Young drummers don't get into the meat of the drums enough. They seem to be afraid of them. Especially the bass drum—they're afraid of it. You've got to stand on that thing sometimes and they won't do it. It seems like when they get with a rock group they just really get it on. Then they go to stage band rehearsal and they take an academic approach to the drums. No good. You've got to get in there tooth and nail just like you do with a rock band. Let those limbs fly."

John's theories of drumming, culled from much woodshedding and intense listening to his all-time favorite, Mel Lewis, run parallel to his solo conception.

"A tune starts, and from the very first note to the end of the tune, to me there's a line all the way—an unbroken line. So a drummer just comes out of the tune and keeps it going. So if I'm doing a solo and concentrating on the cymbals I'm following along that line. It's like a humming thing, inside, and you're on that line and when it's time for your solo it's not like that band has played and it's time for your solo so you play all your licks. It's not that kind of thing. It's just a feeling, maybe building, bringing it down, or even stopping—but that line is still going. It's part and parcel of the chart and moves right along with it. In my solos I like sound, not tricks—I can't get into any of that. I've found that the most exciting solos are the ones that keep the line going.

"The thing about the line concept, which many cats prefer, is that it's hard to hold it. You have to concentrate. For some guys it's easy. Mel Lewis is *unbelievable*. I don't think he's broken a line all his life. He's just perfect; he's beyond me."

John views the line as the core with the sounds of the band emanating off of it—like hailstones bouncing off a sidewalk. It all relates to what he calls "now rhythm"—not last night's—but tonight's rhythm. He governs his fills accordingly.

"I play the same ones a lot of times but they still feel good and they're still exciting. As long as they have that, crazy. As soon as they start losing their effectiveness then I have to change them. When it starts losing that magic it's not good. But the ideal way is that if you let your limbs fly they usually come up with something different all the time. It's funny."

And what does it take to get one's limbs in that kind of shape? First, John says, you have to trust them. It's a new language called feeling. That's all it amounts to.

"Experienced drummers have found that they've got a feeling inside them that they'll follow through with. You've got to follow those feelings and trust yourself. If it's wrong—and there isn't any wrong, I don't

believe—you'll find that that feeling didn't work so well. So the next time you get that feeling you'll know what it leads to. That's kind of what happens. Then you'll find deeper feelings that are really genuine and after a while you can kind of tell when you're in a really good one and you can follow that. Sometimes one will hit me for no reason but I'll know I'm there. And I just follow that line. It doesn't matter what I play as long as I stay with that feeling inside me.

"It's probably best not to analyze it too much. But we do a lot of clinics and these kids want to know what goes on in your head while you're playing. It's interesting to try to discover what it is and still not lose it. I hate to say a guy is born with it but you see so many people that that seems to apply to. Like Mel Lewis. I've listened to his earliest stuff and it was there. That line was there and it always has been. You don't learn that. He's able to tap into that thing all the time—and it's simple, perfectly simple. I think when you talk about different musicians we're just talking about different levels. Some, like Mel, have attained more. All of us once in a while go to the top level, maybe once in a great while you go all the way up there, and you come back and you know it was hot. But the frustration is getting it again. There were nights with Woody when I'd really have a great night and then three months would pass—nothing! Really that long. It can be perfectly acceptable and sound great but that magic isn't there. As you're into playing, you find that the magic is all you care about after awhile. That's what you want to find and when you get it you want to hold onto it. The rest is just groping for the magic."

But still the basic thing is playing time. John just tries to get the time feeling good, and he'll get free once in awhile with a soloist—"just break it and start playing with him. Mainly it gets back to letting your four limbs go. They usually come up with the right answer as long as you don't impose too much on yourself from your head. You might think a great improviser is think-

ing of this or that when he's blowing. But usually he's not—he's just letting it go. And that way it's not a lie. Developing as a musician is really just getting into the now. What's now going to be. And the next now is different."

Von Ohlen's gig is unique in another respect. He's the only full-time big-name band drummer working with a conga player. His interplay with Ramon Lopez has been remarkable, especially when you consider that they don't rehearse together or have any real "game plan". But, somehow, they seem to be able to generate a Freddy Green-(fill in your favorite Basie drummer) kind of rhythmic wave that can serve a big band in so many ways.

"Ramon's got that good beat, that good feel, and he's always inspiring to me. He helps me all the time. The only time it gets funny is on swing things—especially a slower swing. On a fast swing it almost goes into straight eighths anyhow, so it's all right. But on a slow swing it's definitely a triplet feel. So we've found that he has to keep a basic simple beat and nothing else. Otherwise it gets in the way. But he doesn't notice that, I've found. In other words, somebody like Ramon will hear Latin rhythms the way we play them—like the guys back there are playing shakers and things and it sounds crazy to us, but Ramon can't stand it. He says, 'Oooh, it's wrong!' But that's the way he was brought up. But with me, I like a loose jazz feel, so when Ramon plays congas sometimes that puts a definite thing right there (snaps fingers) and it's hard to get loose. So then I start wiggling out and he can't understand it. But generally we have few problems. You respect the other guy's ability and let him work things out. But the main thing we try for is to get some spontaneity going. You can't rehearse that."

Working within the rhythm section, John's concepts still hold.

"It just happens," he says. "The limbs will come up with the right answer, more than if you think about it. I know Ramon does that. He lets 'em fly, and he's got perfect time. So we all let it fly and hope it'll come together. Then when you finally get into the realm of music, when it starts getting loose, then you can work with each other. The basic secret is that you're by yourself. I don't follow the bass player and he doesn't follow me. It's a paradox because you work independently yet together."

"It's really hard to talk about. We've found at clinics you say one thing but you find another's true. The opposite is just as true. It's such an elusive thing, time and rhythm. I've been doing it for 10 years and still, as far as set concepts are concerned, I just can't give you any."

John does have some solid advice for young drummers, which he freely dispenses at the famous Kenton clinics.

"First of all, get a drum set, not a practice pad. Then play records. Then you're into it. You're into big bands right now! You've got beautiful stereo sound, you're playing with those bands—it's literally just like playing with them. You know what it's like to play time and you're playing with the best groups. The enthusiasm is there; you get turned on from the record. If you play a fill that didn't make it, put the needle back. There's a hundred things you can get into with books, but I swear there's nothing like records. That's it. I tell the kids, 'You've got this medium of records, tapes and ear-phones—use them.'

"Then the real study is working up that enthusiasm for each gig. I tell the kids to remember two things: When you sit down to play, play the best you can and get that

Continued on page 36

VERLY OAKLAND



SOME



Zahir Batin

DIFFERENT



Jual Curtis

DRUMMERS



Buzzy Drootin

by Dan Morgenstern

Zahir Batin (a.k.a. Michael Shepherd) is a name that has been cropping up with some regularity in the *New York Ad Lib* and *Potpourri* columns of this magazine. This reflects the young drummer's active schedule. Though he hasn't yet had the lucky break all musicians wait for, he's always out there plugging away.

He was born in Baltimore on June 20, 1944. An uncle who played guitar and bass is, he says, "responsible for me playing." Though he started drums at 9, his musical activities took a back seat to baseball for some years. He had some basic musical training in high school, started to play around Baltimore in 1963, and came to New York two years later, getting his first gig with Sun Ra at Slugs'. ("He gave me a lot of pointers about different forms and types of music, and dynamics.") He also learned from Marshall Allen, "and Clifford Jarvis taught me a lot."

Among his more unusual early gigs in the city was a Christmas party in the mayor's office at City Hall, with Ted Curson, Ron Burton, and Ronnie Boykins. Batin went to Juilliard and studied with Morris Goldberg for two years, continuing to gig around town. He also lived and worked in New Jersey for a spell, becoming down beat's correspondent for that area.

He has worked with Buddy Terry, Johnny Hammond, Larry Young, guitarist John Ferguson, Jaki Byard ("A genius"), Joe Lee Wilson, Leon Thomas (with whom he appeared on TV), Archie Shepp and many others, covering a broad spectrum of the music. A frequent associate has been bassist Hakim Jami, and Kiane Ziwadi is another musician with whom he's often worked. When the opportunity arises, he leads his own Notorious Ensemble.

Batin's favorite drummers are Roy Haynes and Philly Joe Jones. "Roy Haynes is about the most perfect drummer I've heard," he says. He also likes Tony Williams. "When I left Baltimore, I had no idea I'd meet all these famous drummers and get to know them and

have them show me things," he says. But other things about New York are not so nice. "I'd advise any young musician who wants to come here to have some money in his pocket, a few good contacts, and to keep his mouth shut and his eyes and ears open," he says wryly.

What Batin wants more than anything now is a chance for a record date. He's got some music together, and feels he's ready. But he knows there's still a lot to be done. "There's so much you can learn," he says. "Never turn down a musical statement from anyone. Music is endless." That's a good outlook.

Almost the first thing Jual Curtis did when he came back to the States recently was to go to the Avedis Zildjian factory and get some cymbals. The Texas-horn drummer (Houston, Jan. 17, 1935) believes in taking care of business, on and off the bandstand.

Since January of last year, Curtis has made Copenhagen, Denmark his base of operations. What began as a vacation turned into a more or less permanent arrangement.

Curtis has been house drummer at the Montmartre, Scandinavia's leading jazz emporium, and at Tagskaegget in Aarhus, Denmark's second-largest city. Here, he has backed such greats as Dexter Gordon, Ben Webster, Johnny Griffin, Benny Carter, Lee Konitz and Brew Moore.

He has also toured with Dexter (most recently in Sweden with a band co-starring Benny Bailey), and gone as far afield as Ljubljana, Yugoslavia, where he worked with trombonist Richard Boone, another Copenhagener by choice.

Curtis' musical involvement started with singing, but when his voice changed, he began to look for an instrument and settled on drums.

He began to play professionally at 16 with r&b groups, then joined Al Grey's combo from 1953-55, returned home to work with Joe Turner, Percy Mayfield and others, then moved to Los Angeles where he met and studied with Frank Butler. ("A unique musician; we spent hours studying, but it was mainly Frank who taught and I who learned.") The association with Dexter started here, and others Curtis met and played with included Eric Dolphy, Harold Land, Carl Perkins and Ornette Coleman. Back to Houston for a while, where he formed a group with tenorist Don Wilkerson, then to the road with Dakota Staton (in a quartet with Jerry Coker), and finally to New York.

"No matter how well you've played before, when you come to New York, it sounds different," he says. There were many gigs with many different kinds of players, but all "musically inspiring" to the drummer. Mingus, Coleman Hawkins, Grant Green, Jackie McLean, Dinah Washington, Illinois Jacquet, Hank Crawford were just a few he worked with.

Here primarily to visit relatives in Houston, Curtis hopes in the future to be able to spend 10 months of each year in Europe and the two remaining months in New York, "so as to not lag behind." Recently, he has taken up xylophone and practices a couple of hours each day with Dexter, who has begun to play flute. "I'm trying to stay on top of it," he says.

Continued on page 38



Willie Ornelas with Sonny and Cher



Jay Osmond with the Osmond Brothers



Don Brewer with Grand Funk Railroad

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Ratings are: ★★★★★ excellent, ★★★★ very good, ★★★ good, ★★ fair, ★ poor.

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PAUL BLEY

THE PAUL BLEY SYNTHESIZER SHOW—Milestone MSP 9033: *Mr. Joy; The Archangel; Nothing Ever Was, Anyway; Gary; Snakes; Parks; Circles*.

Personnel: Bley, acoustic piano (tracks 4,7), ARP Synthesizer and RMI electric piano (all other tracks); Dick Youngstein (tracks 2, 6, 7) or Glenn Moore (tracks 1, 4, opening chorus of 3) or Frank Tusa (track 5 and balance of 3), bass; Steve Haas (tracks 1, 2, 3 (opening chorus), 4, 6, 7) or Bobby Moses (track 5 and balance of 3), drums.

Rating: ★★★

Herewith an album which tries to use the synthesizer as a truly musical improvising instrument. Contrary to the notes, Dick Hyman, among others, has tried this before, and of course there is a basic problem:

The synthesizer is not an unclumsy instrument. It can be set for one single voicing on one single melodic line and has to be reset to acquire another voicing.

Additionally, as opposed to acoustic instruments and even some of the electrified versions, it has a totally constant sound; vibratos, decay envelopes and all the other elements of tone and touch which distinguish individual artists are absent.

Therefore, whereas you can immediately spot the tone and attack of an individual musician on other instruments, on synthesizer one can rely only on the stream of ideas.

This means that one of the large elements of variability open to jazz previously in terms of emotional statement is cut off.

This is not to deny the use of the synthesizer per se in jazz, but merely to point out that it is cumbersome and does have limitations (though of course all sorts of other options) in the areas of what we have traditionally thought were emotional expression.

Bley thinks about what he is doing and makes it credible. However, the test of what he is trying to do emerges in the comparison of *Gary* and *Circles* to the other tracks, since here Bley is playing acoustic piano, on the others synthesizer combined with electric piano.

There is no clearcut victory for his efforts on the synthesizer, since what emerges is most often not too much more than an electrified piano line. True, on *Joy* and at the close in *Archangel* in the duct between bass and pipping synthesizer, for example, there are elements not available to a piano. The latter includes another passage which is highly organic in tonal quality and construction. *Nothing* too has elements which contain a tonal flexibility unique to the synthesizer. However, at this point they impress more as a pastiche of tonal quality than a developed jazz conception as such.

Snakes again falls more into the organ bag, including some elements which William Albright has used in his own organ works. *Parks*, set in a swinging four, finds Bley playing a reedily voiced single-line solo which

works well, modifying it as he goes into a more slurred oscillator-keyed tone. It works; the ideas are good and he plays superbly—but the contribution of the synthesizer, save for some guitar-like pedal shadings, is not that distinctive.

Bley is on his way to something with this album. He is trying to find a personal way to make the synthesizer respond to his own kind of statement and to explore the permutations of which it is capable, getting around the basic unwieldiness of the thing without over-dubbing.

An album to listen to, a musician to watch.

Just by the by, the acoustic piano wasn't always in the greatest of tune, and occasionally there was considerable distortion on the cymbals—which doesn't seem terribly necessary in this day and age.

—levin

EDDIE CONDON

JAZZ AS IT SHOULD BE PLAYED—Jazzology J-50: *At the Jazz Band Ball; Sister Kate; Royal Garden Blues; That's a Plenty; Muskrat Ramble; Ja-Da; When a Woman Loves a Man, You Took Advantage Of Me (medley); Squeeze Me; I've Found A New Baby*.

Personnel: Wild Bill Davison, cornet; Georg Brunis, trombone (vocal, track 2); Tom Gwaltney, clarinet; Don Ewell, piano; Condon, guitar, commentary; Bill Goodall, bass; Frank Marshall, drums.

Rating: None

Once upon a time, the so-called Condon Mob played jazz as it should be played, indeed, but now such a nostalgic appellation reflects only wishful thinking.

This reunion was held Dec. 1, 1968, at one of Johnson McRee's jazz festivals in Manassas, Va. The playing is very ordinary, despite the charisma the notes work to project. I suppose the attraction is having Bill, George, and Eddie together again on stage, living, breathing, playing; the men who made Those Commodore Records We All Memorized—a kind of Preservation Hall East.

E. Payson Clark, an old-line jazz collector, gushes through a lengthy text, romanticizing the Grand Old Days, but in the tradition of annotators he makes this an Immortal Session. He and producer George H. Buck, in some notes of his own, call more attention to the "humor" of the principals than to the music, which is not all that charming, either. Condon, somewhat thick-tongued, narrates in his time-proven way, but is continually upstaged by Brunis doing his Night-Club Band-leader Act, which he has polished to a dull finish over the past 20 years in several Chicago saloons (a pity we can't see him lower his pants and puff out his belly—that's the only hit missing). Moreover, he typically put his trombone bell over a microphone while playing, but chose a recording mike, and

nearly ruined everything in the process, probably including engineer Hank O'Neil's eardrums.

To his credit, Brunis still plays very well, despite several illnesses in recent years. Davison seems a bit off form, and Gwaltney has been better recently, too. Condon actually plays a bit, tasteful and rhythmic as ever, and Ewell and Goodall keep copasetic time. Marshall plays Drums As They Should Not Be Played (in this context) a good part of the time, making some childish licks and even dropping out part of the time, it seems. (There are only three drummers I can think of who should have been allowed to play in this setup, and Cliff Leeman is one of them.) He obviously was *not* one of those who memorialized the Commodore records. But, then, non-Dixieland drummers have been perpetrating sins in Dixieland ensembles for so long now that there hardly seems a point in noting another instance.

There are some misspellings (surprised?): "Georg" (he wants it that way) is often "George", except in the one sentence where it shouldn't have been; Davison plays a "coronet", and Milt "Gaber" is mentioned, too—in fact, this is labeled, front and back, as a "Stereophonic" record. Recording balance overfavors the front line, at the expense of the distant rhythm, piano in particular (though I don't wonder that Don was little impressed), in what has come to be known as the O'Neil-Manassas Syndrome.

Do not confuse me with a Sour Grape, please. I love the Commodores and the entire range of Condonia. Pee Wee Russell was my favorite clarinetist, George Wettling my idol. Condon's *We Called It Music* the funniest book I've ever read, etc. Eddie had the best men in the best jam bands at his concerts, on his records, at his club for over 20 years. But that day is OVER, and reunions like this only underline it. The music grows more and more diluted as it encompasses those who don't understand it. Four stars here, for a pot or two, no stars for many more spots (and a kick in the ass for anyone who doesn't understand the tags-around routine or any of the others that Condon initiated and/or developed), for an average of about two.

It would have been better, somehow, circulated through the Condon Underground on tape rather than dignified by national release on disc. Can you dig that?

—Jones

JIM CULLUM

ELOQUENT CLARINET—Audiophile AP-107: *Oh! What It Seemed To Be; Once In A While; I Remember You; Sugar Foot Strut; It's Easy to Remember; Every Day (I Fall in Love); Exactly Like You; Love Lies; Roses of Picardy; Drinking Again; Moonlight On The Ganges; September In The Rain; Moon Song*.

Personnel: Cullum, Sr., clarinet; Jim Cullum,

Jr., cornet (tracks 4, 11, 13); Spud Goodall, Curly Williams, guitars; Gene McKinney, bass.

Rating: ★★★★★

COLLEGE STREET CAPER (HAPPY JAZZ BAND, VOL. 9)—Audiophile AB-114: *Royal Garden Blues; Russian Roulette; Just A Little While To Stay Here; Ol' Man River; Black and Blue; Everybody Loves My Baby; Struttin' With Some Barbeque; Dark Eyes; Mississippi Mud; My Gal Sal; Shine; Bye Bye Blackbird; The Japanese Sandman; That Da-Da Strain.*

Personnel: Cullum, Jr.; McKinney, trombone; Cullum, Sr.; Gillette Cliff, piano; Goodall, Williams, guitars, banjos; Willson Davis, sousaphone; Harvey Kindervater, drums. El Curro, cuitar; Warren Lewis, bass on track 2 only.

Rating: ★★★★★

Clarinet and rhythm, the old formula; one rhythm guitar, the other amplified for solos and the single-string lines. A good, strong bass, and no drummer to cob up the act, and it all comes out reminiscent of the Quintette of the Hot Club of France, Hubert Rostaing edition (though I'm sure this never occurred to the players at the time). Junior's cornet, unbilled, pops in for a chorus here and a coda there, ever more Hackettish.

While is, happily, the Armstrong Hot Five number, not the ballad of the same name.

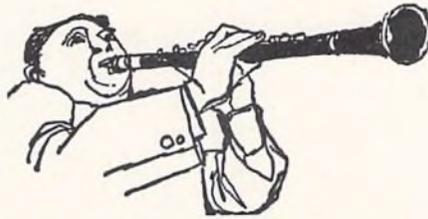
A shot of pure oxygen in a morass of ear pollution.

The HJB offers its annual offering; its custom of presenting "something new each time here affords us the opportunity to discover El Curro, a superb flamenco guitarist who has an Audiophile album to himself (AP-106).

Annotator Al Webber, for whom this series is a yearly gig, is still perpetuating the old crap about this band being descended from Lu Watters', when it's plain to the ear that the

sound is nearest that of some good New York Dixieland band of 12 or 15 years ago, banjos and tuba notwithstanding. Throughout its near decade of existence, the band seems to have gradually sluffed its pretensions to the West Coast-Traditional Revival persuasion and just allowed nature to take her course (it isn't nice, after all, boys, to fool Mother Nature).

The album's title owes to the episode wherein the session's tapes were stolen and subsequently recovered (a small-scale *Mission: Impossible*); the loss was keenly felt, for



the band was sure they had a "best yet" under their belts—and I'm inclined to agree with them. Echo-y acoustics minimize the awful presence of the banjo and drums on preceding albums, though the piano and tuba are undeservingly distant. The rhythm simmers along, with the two banjos jangling innocuously (I think both are playing simultaneously, but the acoustics put things a bit out of focus).

About 37 minutes and 45 minutes' playing time, respectively. Both good for dancing (for the Supp-Hose crowd, of course) and easy listening.

—Jones

BILL EVANS

THE BILL EVANS ALBUM—Columbia C 30855: *Funkallero; The Two Lonely People; Sugar Plum; Waltz For Debby; T.T.T. (Twelve Tone Tune); Person I Knew; Comrade Conrad.*

Personnel: Evans, acoustic and electric pianos; Eddie Gomez, bass; Marty Morrell, drums.

Rating: ★★★

Bill Evans has always left me faintly uneasy when it comes to discussing him as a jazz pianist per se. As a pianist, he is a delight to listen to. He knows, loves understands and employs the piano as a melodic, harmonic and percussive instrument. This can be said of too few operators on the instrument who too often shuck away enthusiastically at one leg of the triad, leaving the other two bone bare.

At melodic development of a ballad, Evans weaves quiet, tasteful and thoughtful spells, making you think as he delights the ear. His use of interharmonic lines is skilled, facile and challenging—a constant demonstration of what the piano can do.

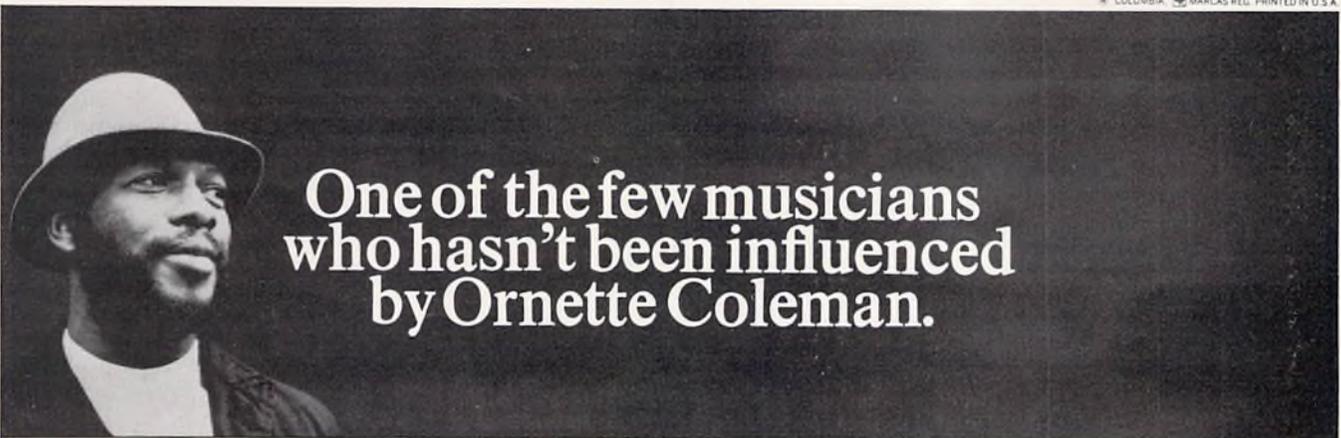
But when it comes to straight exposition of time, the element which sets a jazz musician off as something unique, there are occasions when he bothers me badly.

For example, listen to *Funkallero*. At points, Evans savagely rushes the time, and at many other places he feels uncomfortable against the framework which Eddie Gomez is setting up with considerable skill on bass.

Toward the end of the piece, he takes refuge in that classic hideaway of the good pianist: playing too much when he can't be comfortable playing sparsely.

If you believe, as do I, that a jazz solo strips

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That would have to be a musician by the name of Ornette Coleman. "Ornette was the catalyst, the energy source that helped make acid rock possible," says Don Heckman in *The Village Voice*.

Ornette Coleman's influence on contemporary music and its musicians is profound. Total. The critics say it. The musicians say it. And for the first time, an unusual num-

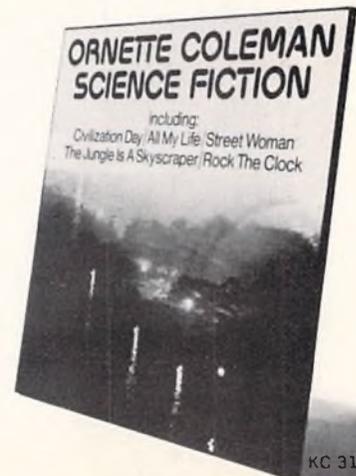
ber of people are saying it. Ornette Coleman's time has come.

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"Science Fiction" is Ornette's first album for Columbia. And the first time he's included lyrics on one of his albums. Lyrics written by Ornette Coleman.

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In 1971, one album called "Chase," from a group called Chase, was enough to convince *down beat* voters that the Number-One pop group and the Number-Two jazz-rock group both had the same name.

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A former big band lead trumpet, Bill Chase and the eight musicians he teams with have now recorded their second album on Epic. It's called "Ennea." And it's got all the energy and excitement that put Chase at the top of the polls with just one album.

Which goes to show, you don't need a lot of albums. Just great ones. One at a time.

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26 □ down beat

a personality in public view, then you would have to say that Evans as a complex person finds it now always easy to get down to happy unrestrained shouting.

Waltz: he has recorded at least three times before (solo, with his trio and with Cannonball). You might find it useful to relisten to the first trio recording made 10 years ago with Scott La Faro and Paul Motian. It was done almost completely in 4/4 after the opening. This newer version starts with Steinway in 3/4, shifts to electric (still in 3/4) and finally goes to a straight 4 back on Steinway. Interestingly enough, it is in the last third of the cut that the feeling of pressure about time develops again.

For some reason, when he starts to cook these days, Evans also starts to push—and in a trio above all other groups, that can be death to the beat.

As a pianist, Evans is so far ahead of most others that it is bothersome to encounter this feeling of unease about time. On *T.T.T.*, for example, his inventions around the tonal row are interesting and pianistic but wobbly, even at times rushing.

Gomez is always tasteful, always searching, always something more than a fill between the leader's efforts. He is also faster than hell. Marty Morrell performs the difficult function of tying things together yet staying out of the way, adapting his drumming to the different tonalities needed.

On this album, interestingly pianistic ideas, but little sense of easy acceptance of a rhythmic home. —levin

ART FARMER

HOMEcomings—Mainstream 332: *Homecoming; Cascavelo; Some Other Time; Blue Bossa; Here's That Rainy Day.*

Personnel: Farmer, fluegelhorn; Jimmy Heath, soprano&tenor saxes; Cedar Walton, piano; Sam Jones, bass; Billy Higgins, drums; Warren Smith, percussion; James Forman (Mtume), conga drums.

Rating: ★★★★★

A joyous homecoming, indeed, documented last summer during one of Farmer's infrequent trips to these shores from his adopted home, Vienna.

Farmer and Heath are two of the best-matched hornmen at work in the idiom today, and the rhythm section is unreservedly into the essentially extrovert approach they take here.

Farmer has his brooding moments on Leonard Bernstein's beautiful *Some Other Time*. Otherwise, the order of the day was to swing happily. Even the second ballad of the date, *Rainy Day*, is given decidedly un-balladlike treatment at the tempo of a fast walk.

Jones, always strong, always in tune, always impeccably tasteful, surpasses himself on *Rainy Day*. He takes charge of the piece with a stomping eight-bar introduction and remains inspirationally in command throughout. Heath is very strong on tenor here and on Kenny Dorham's 16-bar *Blue Bossa*, which has a flawlessly-executed solo by Farmer that contains some passionate high-note passages.

Walton seems to have a special feeling for the Latin things. His solo on *Bossa* has the flavor of the barrios, a kinship with the work of Eddie Palmieri that is evident in the playing of a very few non-Hispano musicians. Walton's comping on *Some Other Time* is strong but sensitive and would appear to have some-

thing important to do with Farmer's soaring solo.

Farmer is one of the most eloquent inheritors of the Coltrane tradition. His performance on this piece shows considerably more understanding of Trane's harmonic and rhythmic approaches to improvisation than do most of the saxophonists who consider themselves Coltrane disciples. It's not Farmer's way of playing, but the Coltrane strain is an important part of his heritage. This is one of Farmer's best recorded solos.

Heath is as fluent on soprano as on tenor. He has hard-driving and characteristically witty solos on *Homecoming* and *Cascavelo*, both full of phrases that recall his abandoned nickname of the early '50s, "Little Bird". Farmer is daring on *Cascavelo*, but everything he tries works. His ear for harmonic possibilities is remarkable. And I can't recall him playing more cleanly; his mastery of the fluegelhorn seems complete.

This piece swings like mad, thanks in no small measure to Higgins, a drummer who apparently can't do otherwise. If his playing is an extension of his personality, he must walk around smiling. The conga drums don't seem to get in his way.

Charles Mingus once said Farmer was an old-fashioned trumpet player, and he meant it as a compliment. If old-fashioned means sticking with the solid values and using the best lessons of the past to build a personal style of integrity while shunning fads and foolishness, Mingus got Art Farmer just right. —ramsey

CURTIS FULLER

CRANKIN'—Mainstream MRL 333: *Crankin'; Maze; Black Bath; Ballade; The Spirit.*

Personnel: Bill Hardman, trumpet; Fuller, trombone; Ray Moros, tenor sax; George Cables, electric piano; Bill Washer, guitar; Stan Clark, acoustic and electric bass; Lenny White, drums, electric percussion.

Rating: ★★★★★

It's been about nine years between albums for Curtis Fuller. Now as then, he's the fastest trombone out there. To this skill of execution he has added an emotional depth not always present in his earlier work.

Fuller has always had a talent for writing, and he composed and arranged all the material. There is an admirable freshness and variety to it.

Of the others, Bill Hardman stands out. His once shaky intonation is completely under control and his facility is outstanding. His is a delicate yet firm style, and he should be heard by anyone who digs good trumpet. What Hardman plays here puts to shame the work of many of his more famous colleagues.

Cables is fine, with a nice spot on *Ballade* to his credit. Clark is outstanding—a bassist to check out. The guitar in the rhythm section is a little annoying.

Welcome back, Curtis Fuller! —porter

BOBBY HUTCHERSON

HEAD ON—Blue Note BST-84376: *At The Source (Ashes & Rust; Eucalyptus; Obsidian); Many Thousands Gone; Mtume; Clockwork of the Spirits.*

Personnel: Oscar Brashear, trumpet, fluegelhorn; Harold Land, tenor sax, flute; Fred Jackson, piccolo; Hutcherson, vibes, marimba; Todd

Cochran, piano, arranger; William Henderson, electric piano (added on track 2); Reggie Thomas, bass; James Leary III, bass (added on track 4); unidentified reed and percussion players.

Rating: ★★★★★

Head On, an album introducing the sizable young talent of Todd Cochran, is doubtless the best thing Hutcherson has done since moving back to the West Coast some years back.

Those Hutcherson Blue Notes from the middle '60s had an inspiration spark not found often in his recent work—perhaps working with Dolphy, Shepp, Hubbard, Tony Williams and so many other New Yorkers pushed him to those early heights.

Anyway, he's found here with some of his usual combo mates, plus added horn and rhythm players. Hutch's playing, still not as adventurous as during those NYC years, has made strides since his previous Blue Note and Land's recent Mainstream offering. His sound is more personal and is more jagged and rhythmically exciting. And his marimba work is most tasty.

Cochran, 19 at the time of the recording, plays strong piano, much in the style of McCoy Tyner's sound swirls. His compositions (he wrote all but Hutch's *Mtume*) are fresh and his orchestrations have bright, brittle yet beautiful textures not unlike some of the works from Dolphy's *Iron Man/Conversations* sessions (of which Hutcherson was a part). He establishes overlapping and seemingly unrelated horn, vibes and rhythm section lines which come together in very pleasing and intriguing ways.

The solo work by Land is uneven, though

generally good. His crying, yet graceful tenor lines are a nice contrast to Hutcherson. Apparently Land doubles oboe, in addition to the liner-note-listed flute.

Brashear solos on a couple of tracks, sounding a lot like Hubbard. He plays nicely. Jackson may be doubling bassoon (he's only listed on piccolo, however). Henderson is fragmented but okay in his brief spot. And Reggie Johnson is a wailing bitch throughout. Leary plays a subordinate role.

A trap drummer, conga player, and perhaps an African drummer all are unidentified.

—smith

THE JPJ QUARTET

MONTREUX '71—Master Jazz Recordings MJR 8111: *Montreux '71*; *I'll Be Seeing You*; *Contrast in Blue*; *The Best Things in Life Are Free*; *Tribulations*; *West of the Wind*; *Oliver's Twist*; *Down By The Riverside*.

Personnel: Budd Johnson, tenor&soprano saxes; Dill Jones, piano; Bill Pemberton, bass; Oliver Jackson, drums.

Rating: ★★★★★½

The JPJ Quartet was born in August 1969 at a concert sponsored by the New York Hot Jazz Society and included the present personnel with the exception of Dill Jones, whose seat was then occupied by Nat Pierce. The Johnson-Pemberton-Jackson lineup had previously formed three-quarters of the Earl Hines Quartet.

Although its billing is highly democratic, there is little doubt that from a musical point of view this is really the Budd Johnson Quartet. He is the focal point and his are the

shoulders upon which the group's already considerable reputation rests.

Looking back across Johnson's remarkable career, one finds there is not one Budd but many, and they have emerged over a span covering more than 40 years. In spite of his ability to keep pace with his art, however, he still remains to many only a footnote in jazz history. This record may help to correct this. It is representative of his finest latter-day work. His tone on tenor is full-bodied but smooth. His swift, quicksilver attack produces lines so tightly constructed there is no room for a superfluous note or dangling phrase. On soprano, which he plays on half the eight tracks, his sound is rich and forceful—not unique but emotionally powerful. His vocabulary on both horns includes occasional scoops and slurs and tremolo passages in graduated half-steps.

Montreux and *Free* show Johnson's tenor at its charging best. He seems particularly propelled on the latter by the triphammer attack of bassist Pemberton. The unusual chords of *Tribulations* show the extent of which Johnson has absorbed the language of the '60s. *Contrast* has something of the feel of Ellington's *Come Sunday*. *Seeing You* and *Riverside* are emotional soprano statements in the Bechet tradition, but all Budd Johnson.

The only ringer on the album is *Oliver's Twist*, which includes a six-minute drum solo. Jackson is an excellent drummer and performs very well in context, but is a bit over-extended in this solo piece and fails to sustain interest. Dill Jones contributes many stimulating solos full of fine imagination. An inventive player, he is rooted in the Hines



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school, although somewhat less iconoclastic than his mentor.

Recorded in concert in June 1971, the LP is superbly engineered and captures a rich full timbre that serves the musicians well. Engineer Stephen Sulke knows how to record jazz.

—*medonough*

LED ZEPPELIN

LED ZEPPELIN—Atlantic SD 7208: *Black Dog; Rock and Roll; The Battle of Evermore; Stairway To Heaven; Misty Mountain Top; Four Sticks; Going to California; When The Levee Breaks.*

Personnel: unidentified, but presumably Jimmy Page, guitar; John Paul Jones, bass; John Bonham, drums; Robert Plant, vocal; Sandy Denny, vocal (track 3).

Rating: ★★★

The point is this: even the most trivial art offers some virtue, even the most evanescent entertainment, even the most utter jive, even Led Zeppelin.

To hear a retrospective of their music is to recognize a variety, or simply a musicality, that never before seemed evident. Not that their fourth LP proves all that exhilarating but in listening I realize a certain jadedness in myself; too often I've accepted their more egregious Top-40 like *The Lemon Song* (possibly the worst rock song ever) as their noisome hallmark—and this is not always so.

Yet there is some excuse for this: amid the as-many-as 20 new “hard” rock releases every week, virtually every LP either imitates the band in power (lately Grand Funk) or simply stinks in and of itself. As a consequence, the patience required to discern beauty within so much tumult becomes so monumental that even a middlin’ good band like Led Zeppelin, or now and then an excellent band like Gentle Giant or Argent, is eclipsed among insufferable product.

I do not intend by this to pooh-pooh the cruel duty of a music critic, but only to introduce the idea that despite all the vile humors I've spewed upon the band, the music of Led Zeppelin is at least amusing.

As before, most of the songs on the new LP are ponderous: “heavy” rock ‘n’ roll with incessant thunders from Jones and Bonham, irrespressible screeches from Plant, and interesting solos by Page—nothing substantial, but energetically adequate enough to shake one's butt to.

Then on *California* and *Evermore*, the band plays well acoustically, on the latter with the lithe-voiced Sandy Denny; and on *Heaven*, Led Zeppelin prove to be far more than din-makers, with delicate recorders and 12-string guitar rising into true electric hot stuff.

The album compares unfavorably to the more stylized and/or simply more creative recordings of Jack Bruce, Zappa, the Beach Boys and others. But Led Zeppelin nonetheless remains an original “heavy” band, far better than the horde of noisy nothings it spawned, especially the leprous Grand Funk—and in that there must be some value.

—*bourne*

TAJ MAHAL

HAPPY JUST TO BE LIKE I AM—Columbia C 30767: *Happy Just To Be Like I Am; Stealin'; Oh Susanna; Eighteen Hammers; Tomorrow May Not Be Your Day; Chevrolet; West Indian Revelation; Black Spirit Boogie.*

Personnel: Mahal, electric guitar, steel guitar,

banjo, mandolin, fife, harmonica, penny whistle; Hoshal Wright, electric guitar; John Simon, piano, electric piano; Bill Rich, bass; James C. Otey, Jr., drums; Kwasi “Rocky” DziDzournu, conga, percussion; Howard Johnson, tuba, baritone sax; Joseph Daley, tuba, trombone; Bob Stewart, tuba, flugelhorn; Earle McIntyre, tuba, bass trombone (horns added on tracks 1, 2, 5 only); Jesse Edwin Davis, guitar, added for tracks 3, 6; Andy Narell, steel drums, and unidentified female singers added for track 7.)

Rating: ★★★

It would be far too easy to put down Taj Mahal as merely your everyday young blues eccentric. What's more to the point is that Taj's thing makes it often, but also frequently falls on its roots.

This second Taj-with-tubas album, pleasing as it is in minor ways, is not the mind-blower some might lead you to believe. The music gets down to it, but also gets hung up here and there in a too-hip “revealing” of roots.

Of course, the horn background are found on less than half the tracks and, as it turns out, the cuts with horns contain the best moments (particularly *Tomorrow*). Howard Johnson deserves an equal share of credit with Taj for any of the music's successes. His ensemble of tubas/horns and his arrangements are superb, driving and stimulating. It would be nice to hear his horn group on its own, sans vocalist.

Taj is always at least adequate as a singer, and often is inspired. More than anything, he conveys fun times. His slide steel work is a joy.

The large-group stuff features the same band members as Taj's previous album, *Real Thing*, except that Otey replaces Greg Thomas and Wright replaces John Hall.

—*smith*

GEORGE RUSSELL

ELECTRONIC SONATA FOR SOULS LOVED BY NATURE—Flying Dutchman 10124. (Recorded in concert at the Sonja Henie Center for the Arts, Oslo, Norway.)

Personnel: Manfred Schoof, trumpet; Jan Garbarek, tenor sax; Russell, piano; Terje Rypdal, guitar; Red Mitchell, bass; Jon Christensen, drums, plus pre-recorded tapes.

Rating: ★★

This composition, which Russell bills as “pan-stylistic”, was inspired, he reports, by a quote: “Nature likes those who give in to her, but she loves those who do not.”

One assumes Russell views himself as un-giving. The composition itself certainly isn't openhanded, either with personal ideas or musically laden structure. Electronic elements are interwoven with free form addenda from the sextet, the redoubtable Mitchell and Christensen, a good drummer, moving it along.

Russell says he wanted to have a tape “composed of fragments of many different styles of music: avant garde jazz, ragas, blues, rock, serial music, etc., treated electronically upon which non-electronic musical statements of a pan-stylistic nature could be projected.”

Fair enough as a depiction of cultural shock, but when does this move from an object of musical interest to becoming an anthropological signpost? Or, in other words, an art form has to be that: a creative idea contained within a form available to the perceiver.

A ragbag instead of ragtime, fine—but to what musical purpose? Russell may be getting at an interesting commentary on the present state of culture, but it is just that—a com-

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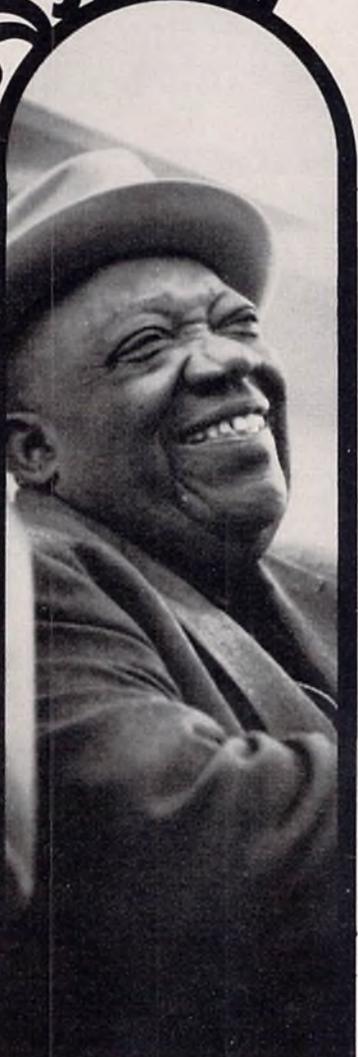


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mentary rather than a valid musical statement per se. (This includes the Uganda voices recorded with African lute.)

There is an interesting line between creative synthesis and the dodge of hodge podge. Russell has tried valiantly but the game plan disappears in the welter. —levin

SHIRLEY SCOTT

MYSTICAL LADY—Cadet 50009: *Mystical Lady; Your Song; Hall of Jazz; Proud Mary; Love Dreams; Let It Be.*

Personnel: Danny Turner or Pee Wee Ellis (tracks 3, 6), tenor sax; Ms. Scott, organ, vocal (track 2); Wally Richardson or George Freeman (tracks 3, 6), guitar; Ron Carter or Richard Davis (tracks 3, 6), bass; Bobby Durham or Freddie Waits (tracks 3, 6) drums. Track 3 only, add George Patterson, alto sax.

Rating: ★★½

Ms. Scott has always had an identifiable sound. The stops she favors differ from the standard Jimmy Smith setup, and it is to her credit that she has been able to adapt her sound to more contemporary material without sacrificing individuality.

She has also been accustomed to having a bass on her recordings, and thus seems more at home with this instrumentation than other organ players might. Her vocal on *Your* is attractive.

The long title track has an appealing groove. Ellis has a hard-driving solo on *Hall*, but Freeman is not quite together on the head of *Let It Be*, which brings that track down somewhat although he and Ellis have good solo moments.

In all, a better than good album. —porter

BOBBY SHORT

BOBBY SHORT LOVES COLE PORTER—Atlantic SD 2-606: *Rap Tap on Wood; You've Got That Thing; You Don't Know Paree; Pilot Me; Katie Went to Haiti; How's Your Romance; At Long Last Love; By Candlelight; So Near and Yet So Far; How Could We Be Wrong; Hot-House Rose; Let's Fly Away; Why Shouldn't I; Once Upon A Time; Weren't We Fools; Do I Love You; I've Got You On My Mind; Where Have You Been; I Hate You, Darling; I'm In Love Again; Just One of Those Things; Why Don't We Try Staying Home.*

Personnel: Short, piano, vocal; Beverly Peer, bass; Richard Sheridan, drums.

Rating: ★★★★★

Bobby Short almost single-handedly maintains the tradition of cafe society music: sophisticated song stylings, clever repartee, and too-too-elegant showmanship.

Nowadays, the appeal of Short seems virtually cultist, but is hopefully expanding. *Loves Cole Porter* is by far his best solo album and is almost as poshly sublime as his two Town Hall concert LPs with Mabel Mercer.

Except for *At Long Last Love* and *One of Those Things*, the repertoire is mainly unfamiliar: super-saucy love ballads or urbane novelty numbers with typically disarming Porter lyrics (Who else could get away with "I hate you, darling, because I love you so!") taken from various revues and films, with even three unpublished songs.

As such, this album is charming, witty, eloquent, tongue-in-cheek, scintillating, swinging, tasty, in fact delicious and all other such superlatives, plus very very hip and certainly *de rigueur*. —bourne

**MAXINE SULLIVAN/
DICK HYMAN**

SULLIVAN, SHAKESPEARE, HYMAN—Monmouth-Evergreen MES 7038: *When I Was and A Little Boy; O Mistress Mine; Will You Buy Any Tape?; Winter and Spring; It Was A Lover And His Lass; Take, O Take Those Lips Away; Blow, Blow Thou Winter Winds; Under the Greenwood Tree; Sigh No More, Ladies, Sigh No More; Come Away, Come Away Death; When Dallodils Begin To Peer; Lawn As White As Driven Snow; Take O Take Those Lips Away* (second version).

Personnel: Rusty Dedrick, trumpet, fluegelhorn; Dick Hyman, piano, harpsichord, arranger; Bucky Pizzarelli, guitar; Mill Hinton, bass; Don Lamond, drums; Maxine Sullivan, vocal.

Rating: ★★★★★

God save us, there is no "significance" to this album. It is merely totally professional, totally unornate and a total delight.

Hyman has created light, refreshing music to the various Shakespearean lyrics. His four musical associates calmly, with great expertise, dispatch the accompaniments with no sweat and great dexterity. The highest compliment that can be paid what they do is that it swings softly as a homogeneous unit.

Maxine's singing is really something quite unique. For years she has been remembered as the lady "who swung the Scotch" in the mid-30s. This has always been a faintly disparaging putdown of a most interesting talent.

Those of you lucky enough to have heard



her on some of the Claude Thornhill records on Vocalion or with the John Kirby small band know differently.

Maxine sang with a clear-bell lyric quality quite unlike anyone else save Mildred Bailey. Her *Nice Work If You Can Get It* remains a classic of what to do with a lyric line as a development rather than a variation.

This kind of simple, self-contained art-singing is the closest thing to Lieder singing Americans have ever developed and Maxine is one of our few but most successful exponents.

True, almost 40 years have thickened the vocal quality slightly, dropped the range, made the "float" seem a bit more effortful—but migawd, this is after four decades!

And the dexterity, the intelligence and the total integrity of personal dignity is still made completely manifest. Maxine is her own woman, and how nice a person she is to view.

The album is trying for nothing earthshaking; because of that it succeeds more than 95 per cent of the wax found on the current scene. It amuses, bemuses and seduces the most casual listener. Plaudits to erstwhile Thornhill arranger and longtime music lover Bill Borden, who put the date together.

Those of you who have lost all hope of finding understatement in music will find this one a delightful antidote to the hyperacidity of self indulgence. —levin

blindfold test

by Leonard Feather



VERYL OAKLAND

bobby colomby

1. MAHAVISHNU JOHN McLAUGHLIN. *The Awakening* (from *The Inner Mounting Flame*, Columbia). McLaughlin, composer, guitar; Jerry Goodman, violin; Billy Cobham, drums.

Well, that's not the kind of tune that you would hum after your first listening unless you had an incredible memory. It's John McLaughlin, I think; it sounds like his group anyway.

It's a great violin player, but he didn't sound like a jazz player as much as the rest of them. That's Cobham, I think, on drums, and he's incredible! I think if he's ever recorded right he's going to frighten every other drummer out of playing, because he's really that good. It's just for some odd reason, on record—and he's worked with great engineers—he does not come across as clear as he should, as he plays in fact. And if that's not who's on the record, I apologize to the drummer.

I'll give that four stars for great playing, for what they were doing; and three as far as how I enjoyed it. As a musician I loved it, especially as a drummer.

2. CHICAGO. *Once Upon A Time* (from *Chicago III*, Columbia) James Pankow, composer; soloists not credited.

The melody was—well, when you hear a flute you immediately think in terms of pretty—but the melody was nondescript, it didn't seem to go anywhere. I sensed—when the whole band came in—it sounded exactly like Chicago—yet I've never heard them play out of tune on a record, and I heard things out of tune on that. So I tend to think that it's not them, because they're a great group. It really sounded like Chicago, but that trumpet was out of tune, and the flute overall sounded as if he could not hear what was happening on piano.

I don't know what to say, because our band has been compared with them constantly, and it's very unfair to analyze people who are playing completely different music. But as a separate entity, subjectively, if it is Chicago, I love Chicago. This is not at all indicative of their music. It's something else that they're doing: like the melody on a thing like this has got to be the most important thing to hear, because that's all it was; I don't think it really got off the ground, and I apologize to the writer. I'd rate it three stars, though; it didn't hurt me, I didn't get angry.

3. LOUIS BELLSON. *3 x 5 + 16* (from *Breakthrough*, Project III). Bellson, drums; Bellson, Freddy Thompson, composers.

I haven't heard this before, and it's the kind of thing where the guys in the horn section go out and have coffee and come back and play five more . . . in the meanwhile . . . I'm not sure who it was; it could have been an old record of Rich or Bellson . . . I think it was Rich, but an old record though.

It's very hard to really organize an opinion on this. What I heard was a drummer—like in a drum contest, that's the winner, without a shadow of a doubt, for technique. I heard things in there that were for superhuman chops, really fine drumming.

As far as the music, it was a background for a drum solo, so I didn't enjoy the music. I might just as well have started with him and gone right to the end, because everything else in between was really unimportant.

I know it's not Elvin Jones or Philly Joe or any of those people; they just don't play that way, that style. But I liked that technique. I'd give five stars for the chops of the drummer . . . and zero for anything else.

4. GENE KRUPA. *I Hope Gabriel Likes My Music* (from *Swing*, Vol. 1, RCA). Roy Eldridge, trumpet; Benny Goodman, clarinet; Krupa, drums. Recorded 1936.

I did not know the name of the melody; it could have been any one of a thousand, because the chord changes were very familiar. I do not know the names of the musicians in this band. But I would give it five stars because there was not one bar that did not make sense in the entire thing and that I didn't enjoy.

One, they all listened to each other, which is something that I'm afraid has been lost through the years as far as band playing. They played with energy throughout, and it was the kind of thing, without doubt, where when a person was soloing, no one went to sleep—they were all really listening to what he was playing, because it all made sense. If a guy would start his solo, it was not say 'Well, here I am,' but it was to say, 'Okay, that's where you left off, now this is where I'm going to begin.'

The guy on trumpet may have been Louis Armstrong, or someone who was strongly influenced by him—except that the range was more than I ever heard from Louis Armstrong.

Bobby Colomby, the intense, energetic drummer and catalyst with Blood, Sweat & Tears, was born in 1944 in New York City, a member of a family of jazz aficionados.

Raised in an atmosphere conducive to the appreciation of good music, he was 14 when a brother gave him a drum set, originally owned by Max Roach.

Colomby never intended to become a professional musician; at the age of 22 he was working on a Master's degree in psychology. Around that time he sat in one night with a group led by folk singer Eric Anderson, whose drummer had just quit. He joined the combo immediately.

Later, while touring with Odetta, he became friendly with Steve Katz and later with Al Kooper. The three of them discussed the idea of forming a jazz-rock band, and it was from these discussions that BS&T evolved.

At the time of the following, his first *Blindfold Test*, Colomby was in Los Angeles to complete production of a solo album by David Clayton-Thomas, who had just left the group.

The clarinet was fantastic; I'm not sure who that was, but he was the standout, in fact. As for the drummer, that was in the days of 4-4 bass drum. The only drummer of that time that I really got into was Sid Catlett. He and Webb were the only two drummers I paid any attention to, because of where I had started from. And at that time the role of the drummer was really the timekeeper, and this fellow whoever he was did that very well. It was perfect.

5. CHASE *Handbags & Gladrags* (from *Chase*, Epic). Ted Piercefield, lead vocal; Jay Burrid, percussion; Alan Ware, Piercefield arrangers.

By virtue of the high notes and the overloading of trumpets, I would think that was Chase. There's something about arranging that I think a lot of people should be clear on. There are certain notes on an instrument that are *for* that instrument, and certain others that are not. If you're going to be an acrobat, or you want to highlight or feature an acrobat . . . fine. But I guess except for maybe Snooky or Maynard in his prime, those notes don't sound good on a trumpet to my ears. They go into register where flutes and piccolos play. But a trumpet—except on let's say a cascade, an exciting cascade; but again it borders on acrobatics again. The band that's playing was guilty of all the bad things that I felt our band did when it went away from the melody, when it showed off—and it did do that in its early stages. I believe that at this point we've learned what is musically right.

A lot of that stuff is fun to play, but I'm sitting here as a listener, and I'm trying not to be a musician listening to this. I did not get the point of the song as I should, and I was distracted by the horn section. They really laid down a nice feeling at the beginning and then it just seemed to not know where it was going. It seemed every section was arranged, as opposed to the song itself.

But this band is excellent, there's not a bad musician there, and there's no reason at this point—because they are known—that they have to remain in that bag. The drummer is a very competent drummer, and yet he was playing things unrelated to everything else that was going down . . . he was just chugging, chugging, chugging . . . just laying down the whole notes . . . the first part of the tune made sense, but then it went away from that and he remained there. I suppose he was trying to keep it together. Two stars. **db**

caught in the act

Midwest Blues

Stepan Center, Univ. of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Ind.

Personnel: Friday night: Fred McDowell, guitar; Carey Bell-Eddie Taylor Blues Band with Homesick James: Bell, harmonica, vocal; Taylor, James, guitar, vocal; Joseph Martin (Joe Harper), bass; Richard Plunkett, drums. Howlin' Wolf Blues Band: Wolf, harmonica, vocal; Eddie Shaw, tenor sax, vocal; Little Beau, tenor sax; Sunnyland Slim, piano, vocal; Hubert Sumlin, guitar; Andrew McMahon, bass; Willie Williams, drums.

Saturday Night: Shirley Griffith, guitar, vocal; Little Brother Montgomery, piano, vocal; Otis Rush Blues Band: Rush, guitar, vocal; Jim Conley, tenor sax; Ernie Gatewood, bass; Charles Hicks, drums. Muddy Waters Blues Band: Waters, guitar, vocal; Paul Oscher, harmonica; Samuel Longhorn, guitar; Pinetop Perkins, piano; Fuzzy O. Jones, bass; Willie (Big Eye) Smith, drums.

Sunday Afternoon: Buddy Guy, guitar, vocal; Junior Wells, harmonica, vocal; Johnny Littlejohn Blues Band with Jimmy Rogers: Littlejohn, guitar, vocal; Rogers, guitar, vocal; Bill Lupkin, harmonica; Bob Reedy, piano; Steve Lupkin, bass; Richard (Hubcap) Robinson, drums; Mance Lipscomb, guitar, vocal; Buddy Guy-Junior Wells; Philip Guy, guitar; A.C. Reed, tenor sax; James Green, bass; Roosevelt Shaw, drums.

Midwest Blues was probably the biggest blues festival of 1971. The Ann Arbor Blues Festival (1969, 1970) had failed to recover from the financial beating it had taken, and *Midwest Blues* was a brave attempt to revive the campus blues festival scene. It did and it didn't; artistically, it was a success, financially it was a failure. In both regards it could serve as an object lesson to planners of future festivals.

It began Friday night, a mere 15 minutes late, in a manner that prophesied of things to come. McDowell was greeted warmly by an enthusiastic crowd, many of whom clearly remembered him from an appearance at Notre Dame a year earlier. But the crowd was small, no more than 400-500 at the outset and that boded ill. Although its size swelled steadily, reaching perhaps 1000 by the time McDowell finished his set, the brows of student promoter Bob Brinkmann and festival chairman Perry Aberli were furrowed.

As far as the music went, however, that was fine. McDowell can make tuning-up sound good. And when he had adjusted his sunglasses, straightened his snakeskin-patterned vest and trousers, and come to terms with his flamboyant red electric guitar, he lit into a well-paced set that made an hour pass in a hurry. *Shake 'Em on Down*, the up-tempo opening tune, gave way to a mournful blues. The standard, *Baby Please Don't Go*, was interrupted with applause; and the opening chords of *You Gotta Move* (made familiar to many by the Rolling Stones' *Sticky Fingers* version) brought shouts of recognition.

Song followed song. McDowell, seated on a folding chair, began tapping alternately with both feet on the "up" numbers and rocking from side to side on the slower ones, his pinched features tightened into a grimace. Memorable moments included a series of agonizingly delayed runs on *Louise* and some amazing bottleneck effects on *My Babe* (*Don't Low No... My Babe*). A 14-year-old girl, obviously a latecomer, leaned over to another 14-year-old girl and said, "He is really great! Who is he?" Wouldn't you know it: McDowell broke into *Good Morning, Little Schoolgirl!* That closed his set, but a standing ovation brought him back for *Fred's Ramblin' Blues*.

McDowell's guitar, aggressive but subtle,

32 □ down beat

was in top form. My remarks have concentrated on his playing rather than his singing because the latter suffered from dreadfully bad amplification. Vocals were distorted everywhere in the hall, and in parts of it were completely inaudible. A bad sound system, in fact, plagued the entire festival, although adjustments before the Saturday night session improved matters.

Notre Dame's Stepan Center presents acoustical problems under the best of circumstances. The only time it really sounds good is when the Collegiate Jazz Festival moves in each spring—and that is only because a dedicated crew of jazz-nut engineers from nearby Electro-Voice drag in special equipment in order to conquer the Center's manifold echoes. It is a tribute to McDowell's playing that he captured and moved the crowd as he did.

The two-hour middle set Friday night, really three sets in one, was something of a comedown. It began and ended well enough, but the middle was something other than a success. The over-long set came about as a result of a squabble over who (among Carey Bell, Eddie Taylor, and Homesick James) was the featured attraction. Each, as it turned out, took a turn as vocalist.

Bell is a competent singer and a good harmonica player. His six or seven songs were easy to take, the more so because the backing was solid. Eddie Taylor and drummer Robert Plunkett stayed onstage the entire two hours, while Howlin' Wolf's bassist (Andrew McMahon) subbed for Joseph Martin (otherwise known as Joe Harper) only during Homesick James' tour of duty. Particularly with Martin aboard, the band cooked.

Homesick, following Bell, came across as

an uninventive jive artist. His vocals (mostly tunes made famous by Elmore James, reputedly his cousin, e.g., *The Sky Is Crying* and *Dust My Broom*) lacked distinction; and his bottleneck guitar, especially following McDowell, was dull.

Taylor's turn at the microphone was a welcome relief. For one thing, he alone that night managed to make his vocals perfectly audible. For another, his unpretentious styling, in which one could pick up a little of Jimmy Reed's influence (understandably: they've worked together for years), suited the material well. On tunes such as (I'm taking a stab at the titles) *Big Town Playboy* and *Bad Boy Long Way from Home*, things came together. Taylor's amplified acoustic guitar gave suitable accompaniment to his singing; the rhythm section was right there; and Bell provided effective harp fills. Bell's short solo on *Standing 'Round Crying* was the harmonica highlight of the festival until Junior Wells arrived on Sunday. Taylor, too often a sideman, deserves wider exposure out front.

Howlin' Wolf's set was one of the best-put-together and most professional of the weekend. Eddie Shaw, acting as the group's musical director (though clearly taking his cues from Wolf), started things off by singing (and playing some good, nasty sax) on *Mojo*. He's a dynamic singer, as he proved anew on *You Gotta Help Me*.

Sunnyland Slim (Albert Luandrew), playing electric piano, added a pair of vocals: *Depression Blues* ("something about the times now,") and a stop-time rendering of (another stab) *She's Got a Thing Going On*. Slim is a tall, silent figure offstage and a capable pro onstage. What else would you expect from

Fred McDowell: Aggressive but subtle



one who, in his long career, has worked with the likes of Ma Rainey and Robert Johnson, among countless others?

Then the main attraction lurched forward, wolf-like, from the back of the stage; he stood, snapped to a salute and held it. The crowd came to its feet and stayed there for the duration. Midway through the first song the greying bluesman took a seat. Though he remained seated until it came time, on *Smokestack Lightning*, to emit the wolf's howl, this was the only acknowledgement he made to years. Actually Wolf looked better, physically, than he did several years ago. He's trimmed down a bit, his deeply-creased, handsome face hasn't aged, and his patented way with a song—that's certainly unimpaired.

Highway 49, Spoonful, Evil ("Another mule kicking in your stall—that's evil!"), *Little Red Rooster, Smokestack*—the familiar songs came, one after another. Sunnyland Slim filling, the ebullient Shaw blowing—a helluva band backing a helluva man.

The Saturday night session was, if anything, better than the preceding one. Although the Fifth Dimension was also playing on campus that night (to a sold-out house of 8000 or so), a near-capacity crowd of 1500-2000 turned out for blues. Apparently, few expected things to start on time (though they did). At any rate, more than half the audience came in during the first set, by Shirley Griffith. That was unfortunate, because Griffith's quiet music is not geared to compete with a noisy, milling throng.

It was a good set nonetheless. Griffith put his mellow voice to good use on half-a-dozen songs—including *Jealousy on My Mind* and *If You Want My Loving (You Gotta Treat Me Right)*—and added a couple of instrumentals on his amped acoustic guitar. But one couldn't help wishing he had encountered Griffith in more intimate and quieter surroundings.

Little Brother Montgomery followed. He had been scheduled to appear with Sippie Wallace, but illness prevented her appearance. Montgomery carried on alone, and capably. His 40-minute set was the most varied of the festival. He started with a boogie-woogie, shifted to a slow, gospel-flavored vocal, rendered a reflective *After Hours* and a melodic *Going Up the Country* (not the one the kids know), and moved into straight blues with *Vicksburg* ("the only tune from 1930 I know," he said). His piano was poorly miked for bass, but the hoarse-throated vocals sounded fine. He closed with two strictly non-blues numbers: *Indiana* (a bow to the locale) and *I'm Sure of Everything but You*.

Though they enjoyed Montgomery's versatility, the customers seemed to be waiting for blues in stronger doses, and when Otis Rush took the stand just after 9:00 p.m., they got it. Oh, did they get it! Rush started, typically, with a pair of instrumentals on which he and the tenor player, Jim Conley, were working at times toward free-form jazz. They warmed themselves up, and the crowd too. Rush had brought his own equipment along and the sound was good.

"I don't know much about gambling," Rush's vocal on the third tune began. "I don't know much about love", and it was clear that he was dealing basic blues. He sang with powerful effect on *I Can't Quit You Baby, All Your Loving* and *Let's Get Down to Business*, Conley adding rhythm-and-bluesy comments.

On through several more numbers, working

the crowd up and up, until an exchange of solos by Rush and Conley on an instrumental charges the air. A minor-key blues to catch one's breath, and then a boisterous, mid-fifties r&b-sounding *Honky Tonk* blows the place apart. For an encore, *I Fell So Bad, Just Like a Ball Game on a Rainy Day*—a gem. Though the audience knows Muddy Waters is to follow, they don't want to let Rush go.

But Muddy does come on (it's nearly 10:30) and Rush has primed the house for him. Paul Oscher and Pinetop Perkins lead the band through several numbers before the maestro appears. When he does, he proves to be at his best. Like Wolf the night before, Waters works sitting down; also like Wolf, his

voice is strong and sure. He starts with the marvelous openings lines of *(I Had the) Blues Before Sunrise*:

Blues stopped a rollin', and they stopped at my front door.

I said the blues stopped rollin', stopped at my front door.

Change my way of livin', won't have to worry anymore.

The band stretches out: Samuel Longhorn on guitar, Oscher on several harmonicas, Perkins on piano. The boss gets his bottleneck working on *Honeybee*, and he gets that pleased look like he's half surprised himself. *Hoochie Coochie Man*, done slower than usual, produces the inevitable shock of recogni-



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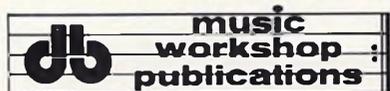
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tion; then the tempo is stepped up for *Walkin' Down Broadway*.

Now it's *Mannish Boy*: "Everything's gonna be all right this mawnin'"—and, even on a stool, Muddy's beginning to get animated. His hooded eyes take on a glint. He has set aside his guitar and his hands clap excitedly in oddly-timed series. His pointing fingers begin to punctuate the air.

Now the guitar is retrieved and all stops are out for *Long Distance Call*. Oscher cuts loose, the bottleneck is whining; the protracted ending brings everyone to his feet. It's time for *Mojo*—once, and then the obligatory repeat. A second encore brings Muddy back to his stool (he had stood for *Mojo* and even thrown in a bit of the old "Waters shuffle"); and, though he's obviously relating to the crowd, it's really as if he's singing this one for himself:

*Have you ever been mistreated?
Then you know what I'm talkin' about.*

*I've been mistreated;
You know what I'm talkin' about.*

Execut omnes.

The Sunday afternoon session was a mistake. Not that it didn't produce some fine moments. But it started more than an hour late, ran until nearly 7:30, and a good third of what was heard during the four-hours' plus was expendable. Above all, perhaps, the last session was anticlimactic: the more so because only the hardest blues freaks come out on Sunday, and by then exhaustion was beginning to tell.

It needn't have started late. Though Mance Lipscomb, slated first, had been delayed, the other performers were on hand by 2 p.m. The schedule was eventually juggled, and Buddy Guy and Junior Wells kicked things off at 3:10. It was a short, tasty set: no band, just Buddy (with acoustic guitar) and Junior (with harp). They did *Short Haired Woman* (at least that's what Lightnin' Hopkins calls it), *I'm Ready*; *Good Morning, Little Schoolgirl* (providing an interesting point of comparison to McDowell's version on Friday), and *Hoochie Coochie Man*. They started cold, voices initially hoarse and low-pitched (they shared vocals, if memory serves, on all four numbers); but soon warmed to their task.

There was none of the foolishness that sometimes mars these great artists' appearances (as it did, to some extent, when they came on later to close the festival). Guy, hunched over on a stool, and Wells, next to him on a folding chair, just played and sang. Each is, of course, a monster on his chosen ax; both are virtuoso vocalists; and both—this really became apparent—enjoy working together. They complement each other perfectly, both as personalities and as musicians. Well's rich, husky singing on *Schoolgirl* was perhaps the highlight of this all-too-brief set.

Johnny Littlejohn and Jimmy Rogers followed, and played well but much too loud. With a proper mix it would have been enjoyable; but guitars and bass blasted everything else into oblivion. Rogers sounded good on *Walking by Myself* (his own composition) and *Sloppy Drunk*. Littlejohn (sporting the only "do" of the festival) scored with a very B.B.-ish *Sweet Little Angel* (each did about eight numbers—these stood out.) But the din finally drove me outside the hall.

Mance Lipscomb came onstage at 5, and in 50 minutes sang 18 songs from his vast repertoire. There wasn't a lemon in the bunch: *So*

Different Blues; *Texas Blues*; *Baby, You Don't Have to Go*; *You Are My Sunshine*; *Nobody Cares for Me*; *Going Down Slow*; hillbilly standard, *Alabama Jubilee*; Memphis Minnie's *I Want to Do Something for You*; *Baby Please Don't Go*; *Keep on Truckin' Mama*; *Shake, Shake Mama*; *C. C. Rider* (the slower version, which Lipscomb remembers from "when I was a teenage boy"); followed by just a chorus of the more familiar version "in fast time"; *Tom Moore* (with "that's a bad man" and such comments interpolated *sotto voce*); *Ain't You Sorry (That You Done Me Wrong)*; *Shine on Harvest Moon*; *Motherless Children* (pocket knife used as slide); *When the Saints Go Marching In*; and *Old Time Religion*. (Thanks to Leroy Pierson for identifying many of the titles.)

The ancient songster was in great shape. His high-pitched singing, is as they say, reminiscent of that of the late Mississippi John Hurt. And, if one listens carefully, one can hear as well occasional similarities to the work of Lipscomb's near-contemporary, Huddie Ledbetter (I'm thinking particularly of Leadbelly's Library of Congress recordings). But the resemblances take nothing away from that which is distinctive about Lipscomb's art. Age aside, he's a wonder; age considered, at 76 he's incredible.

By the time Buddy and Junior's band came on it was dark outside. The crowd, never larger on Sunday than about 500, had dwindled to 300 at most; by the time they were through, no more than 150 were still in attendance. This was no reflection on Guy and Wells: hunger finally drove people away (there were no food facilities at the festival).

The band did a 12-minute Sly-Stone Chambers Brothers-Santana-sounding thing (wah-wah pedal, sax throughout, tough bass). Then Guy appeared, played great guitar on *One Room Country Shack*, followed with a falsetto-cum-scat number (scatting in octaves with his guitar), and built *I Can't Let Her Go* from a plaintive blues up to a violent, exploding blues. Then it was time for Guy to go out into the audience and play. Yawn. Though some of Guy's licks were impressive, they'd have sounded just as good from the stage. Besides, who wants to hear Buddy Guy play Cream (*Sunshine of Your Love*)? Junior Wells joined Guy back on the stand, sounded sharp on four last songs, and the festival was over.

It's difficult to assess three days, some 13 hours, of blues—it's hard to generalize about 135 (give or take a few) songs, done in a myriad of styles. One is tempted simply to concentrate on a few vignettes and let it go at that: Muddy Waters playing cards backstage with a circle of children; A. C. Reed, sax player in the Guy-Wells band (and Jimmy Reed's brother), decked out in cowboy duds; Mance Lipscomb's false teeth resting on a table, the plate inlaid with silver shaped into the silhouette of a guitar, engraved with "MANCE". Or one could reflect on such things as the variety of bottlenecking techniques one had witnessed during the weekend: ring finger or little finger; metal cylinder, pocket knife, or actual neck of an actual bottle. But some general observations, about an event which, for blues, was of ambitious magnitude, seem to be in order.

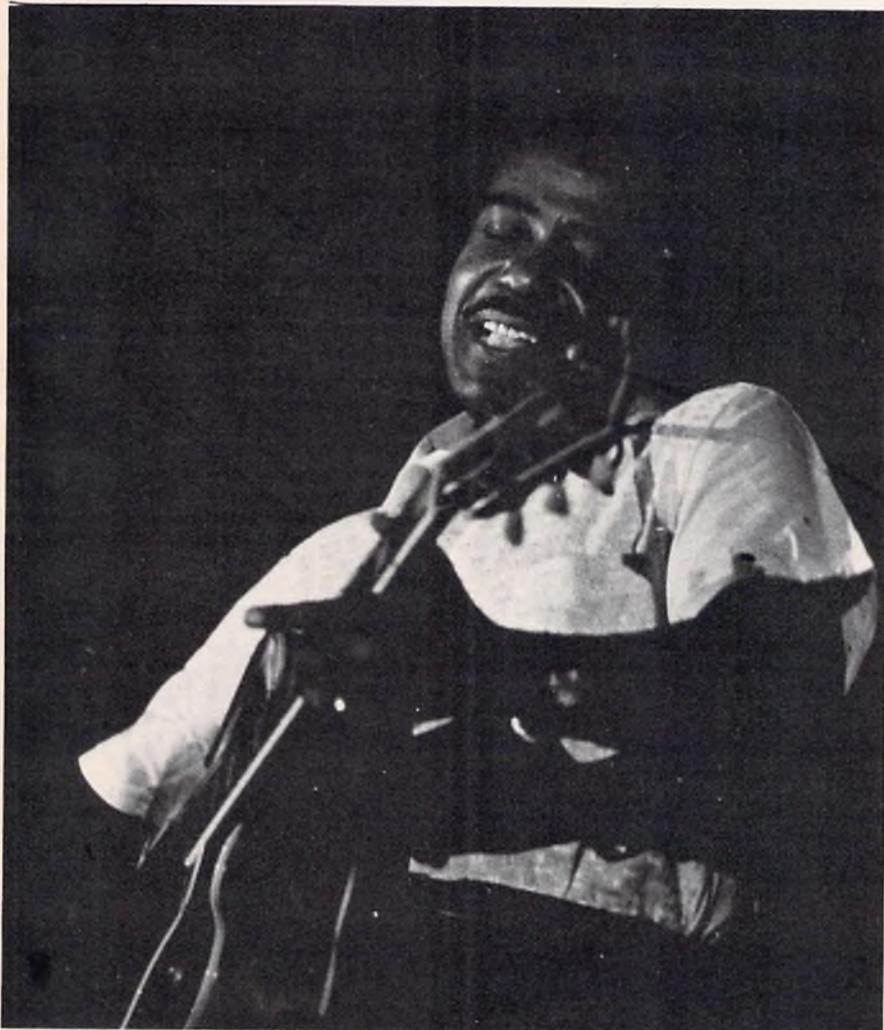
It should have lasted two days, not three. There comes a saturation point which, when reached, renders everything that follows in some degree anti-climactic. Moreover, most

of the \$6300 loss which Midwest Blues incurred can be attributed to the under-attended third session. An endearing characteristic of blues festivals is that they are *too* ambitious. It's understandable: starved for live blues most of the year, eager young entrepreneurs try to cram as much as possible, but more than is practicable, into a single weekend. Endearing and understandable, but in the long run hazardous to the health of a festival.

I think the thing that ought to be looked into most closely is the idea of a festival itself. Need it, for example, be a marathon, an endurance test for the audience? Does it have to be a kind of junior (and specialized) Woodstock in order to qualify as festive? The Ann Arbor Blues Festival, perhaps inadvertently,

how no more exhausting than the decidedly shorter ones at Notre Dame. Season and setting make up part of the difference, to be sure. Outdoors and on the turf, rather than indoors on concrete. Ann Arbor was simply more liveable.

Put a blues festival indoors and you're already halfway to a concert or a series of mere concerts. I don't mean to suggest that that's all Midwest Blues was. The ambience in Stepan Center was actually pretty good. At times on Friday and for most of Saturday, the vibes were terrific. This had much to do with the music itself, of course; but it also had a lot to do with the setting. All the hard work of Perry Aberli and his staff (headed by his wife, Karen) was anything but for naught. That's



Eddie Taylor: Unpretentious styling

set that sort of a pattern during its two incarnations. Midwest Blues, though lacking a tent city and sans grub, followed the pattern to some extent. And therein lies a lesson.

Ann Arbor could perhaps afford to be a blues-athon. (Well, not literally "afford": it took a bigger financial bath than Midwest Blues. But I'm not referring here to finance.) People were actually living there, many of them taking up temporary residence on immediately adjacent grounds for the weekend. People ate and slept and conducted virtually every bodily function, while the blues rolled on. Ann Arbor began early in the afternoon (or even in the morning) and sometimes went straight through until past midnight. Yet its seemingly interminable sessions were some-

the last thing I mean to suggest.

But certainly there was room for improvement. If there should be a next year for Midwest Blues, and there's a reason to think so, its producers will do well to look upon the 1971 excursion as a shakedown cruise, and profit from the experience. Anyone else thinking of venturing into the blues festival business should do the same. If Notre Dame can make a go of it, so could any of four-score other campuses (and blues festivals will be confined to campuses until someone in Washington realizes that blues, as one of our most precious natural resources, deserves to be subsidized). Shakedown cruise or not, Midwest Blues was a trip worth being on.

—richard bizot

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VON OHLEN
Continued from page 19

energy going. It may not be the "best" according to academic standards but something has got to happen, some magic, every time you sit down at the drums. If it doesn't that should be rare. That'll happen and it shouldn't frustrate you. And the second thing is: Don't ever stop playing. The cats that don't become good drummers are the cats who quit. Keep doing it—you'll make it."

John also stressed the value (and the pitch) of the all-important bass drum, which should be pitched as low as possible. As he puts it: "If you want to make it with a big band, you've got to get that bass drum down in the cellar. In a big band, the drums should be low. Get that bootin' low sound. Guys who play tight drums can be the greatest but they won't be able to get that sound. Stan says the bass drum should sound like hitting your fist into a pillow. With me, the drums have to be tuned extremely loose, almost wrinkled. It's just the feeling; of going *into* the thing. That's unusual for most drummers. They like a little tone and I don't."

On the concept of time, Von Ohlen relates an interesting experiment.

"At a school once we got a bunch of records with our favorite drummers on them and put a metronome on all of them. None of them even came close to the metronome except one—and I couldn't believe it because he was right with the metronome—and that was Shelly (Manne). It was amazing—he was right with it.

"But there's a feeling of steady time that I do like so I don't of course, think it's anything to disregard. Mel Lewis—I keep going back to him—he's the master. He's steady—not like a rock—but just steady. Just lays right in that slot and keeps it there. And that's frustrating for me because I've looked for it half of my life and he's got it in that slot all the time. Teddy Wilson told me that Mel's different because he's got a traditional feel.

"This time thing is really a bugger for drummers. I've had it screamed on me so much that you finally get paranoid after a while. The best thing I can say about it is that it's elusive and you can't put your finger on it. I don't think anybody ever has. Not that I want guesswork when I'm playing but you can't let yourself get too wrapped up in it. It's a completely relative thing."

Though he never studied with him, John thanks Lewis for his thing. He was just so much into his style on records that he understood it—it made sense to him. He tried to sound like him for a long time, back in his Maxted/Herman days. He felt that everything Mel did in every dimension was the ultimate—and still does. But after a while your individuality has to come out.

"Stan helped a lot there, and so did Woody. I started to see that you've just got to forget imitating. I finally had to realize that even though Mel can do so much without playing loud that I was just a loud drummer and that's it. I'm super loud, so I just had to face up to it because when I felt good it was *this*—loud—and not Mel. Now my own thing is built on the strong concept even though guys like Mel can get a band going without that. I really have fun playing now whereas it used to be *dues*. In the Army, when I was playing along with records, everything I played was exactly Mel. My drumming was together but it was him, not me."

When a big band drummer has his style and chops together and gets on a big band, shazam! He meets his most important ally, the lead trumpeter, who just might have a completely different conception. Another

challenge and herewith another Von Ohlen solution.

"Jay Saunders is playing lead now and we're into it every day—we're always talking about it. I sat down with Jay one day and told him that I've been playing a while now and I'm to the point where I want no guesswork. I figure there has to be a reason why this isn't really hot—so why isn't it? What is it? So we've been hashing it out. If you've got the right feeling toward each other you can do that.

"We just think alike. We took the book up the room one night and sang every phrase in the book to each other. Jay'd whistle something like he was blowing and I'd sing it just like I'd play it. We did that back and fourth and we'd narrow down to even the slightest differences of conception. Those short notes—how long or short are they going to be? Etc. We have to be right together. It's really the lead trumpeter and the drummer that shape the whole thing. The bass player, especially in our band, is pretty much the timekeeper; more so on slower things. Stan likes to say that the drummer just reinforces it. I've seen gigs where the bass player was strong and the drummer weak and it still sounded good. But it doesn't seem to happen the other way around. That's why I loved working with Gary Todd and now Woozer (John Worster). They're so consistent. Some nights when I was erratic they'd be with me and I didn't even know I was being erratic. John is a joy because he loves big bands. He prefers them."

In the course of our five-hour discussion, John talked enough on drums, drummers and related topics to fill the greater part of a book. So here is a selected summary of his views on drums, drummers and related topics.

—On playing the same tunes every night: "It never does get me down too much. As long as it's necessary, it presents a good opportunity to study feeling and how to get a chart moving."

—Student drummers: "They've got that competitive thing going and don't appreciate a guy for who he is. They're waiting for him to trip up rather than listening for his good points."

—Elvin Jones: "The number one jazz drummer for me. He's got that nitty gritty jazz feel that I love."

—Rufus Jones: "God, do I love Rufus! When I heard him at Newport last year he was the best thing I heard all night. He had me hypnotized with that beat. He had it *trucken*", I tell you. They don't call him Speedy for nothing. He did a thing in about two beats and he was all over the drums. Cross-overs and everything."

—The road: It's changed. When I first went out in 1961, the road was a hard life. It was kind of dark. Now, at least with Stan, it's the way.

—More road: "Having Stan on the bus helps. He's different from other leaders. He's with the band all the time. He never takes a better room, he sits right there on the bus, he goes through the same dues we do. Only more so because he has all the business things and the people to talk to. He's a constant joy on the bus."

—Clinics: "You get a rapport going with them and you hate to leave when it's over. It's like you've got good friends all of a sudden. We get such beautiful letters that show how much those kids get turned on by those clinics. I didn't think I was going to like doing them but I look forward to them now."

Stan Kenton has given John a nickname—"The Baron"—"because he looks like a baron."

I just call him The Monster—because he sounds like John Von Ohlen. **db**

CONNORS

Continued from page 13

He tries to bring the best out of you."

Nonetheless, Connors can play in different styles when the occasion demands it. His influences in his formative years were drummers of different and very personal styles, and he studied his models assiduously.

"Lex Humphries was my early idol, and then it was Max Roach, from 11 or 12 to about 18 or 20. We became close. He treated me like a son, and everytime he came to Philly, he'd let me play. It was Max for a long time—I even went through a stage where I tried to walk like him and everything.

"After Max, Elvin was really my greatest influence; Roy Haynes too, in a way, but mostly Max and Elvin. And Philly Joe, of course. I knew him back home; he used to put holes in my drums. I admired quite a few drummers in Philly. Specs Wright, who died, taught me quite a bit, and Ronald Tucker, who also passed away.

"I would play Max's stuff almost word for word because I loved him so much, and I'd play like Philly and try to play like Elvin; all the different styles.

"My greatest ambition was to work with Trane, so I always practiced in that way to maybe someday get that job. When I was just about ready for it, he died.

"I played with him once in Philly, and sat in with him at the Village Vanguard a couple of times. But it was in Philly I really had a chance. Elvin's wife had just had a baby and he couldn't make the gig, so John had different local drummers come up and play with him, sometimes two at a time. I would have had the chance to play with him all week, but this was at Pep's, and I'd been barred from the club a week before—I always used to come around but never paid—so even though the people who did the booking had called me, the bouncer wouldn't let me in. By the time I did get in, someone else had been hired.

"But I did get to play with John one night after Elvin had come back. We met and played together, and that was one of my greatest experiences in life so far. John said that when I felt I was ready I should come to New York and contact him, and he'd see if we could get together, but the way things worked out, it never happened . . ."

It seems very logical, then, that Connors should now be with Pharoah Sanders. Before leaving the subject of other drummers, however, he did want to mention Tony Williams.

"I love Tony," he says. "He's a young genius. The group he has now with all the percussion is out of sight—he's really doing it now. He's one of my favorites, and so's Roy Haynes."

Not unexpectedly, Connors would like to make an album of his own. He did some gigs with his own group early last year and says they were very successful, with audiences very receptive. He used such first-rate players as Woody Shaw, Carlos Garnett, Khalik Al Rouf, Danny Mixon, Stafford James, Junie Booth and Tyrone Washington. He's gotten calls for other jobs with his own outfit, but has been too busy working with Pharoah.

"I don't know what the future holds," he says, "but I think things are really opening up more. Music is starting to bloom again."

Meanwhile, he is adding to his arsenal of sounds, having acquired a gong and some bells. He's also using his voice while playing, and at the time of this interview was looking

"for some other kind of drums, maybe a hand drum—I'll know when I hear it or see it."

Unlike most drummers, Connors likes to play ballads. "I have a great love for standards," he says, "especially ballads—the way Sonny Rollins plays ballads, John, Clifford, Miles. I've always had a great love for pretty ballads. Maybe that comes from my being sentimental.

"I love pretty music, bossa nova . . . it's not difficult for me as a drummer to bring out the gentleness in the music. Drums can be a gentle instrument, too. I love to play hard and loud and drive, but you can do so many different things on the drums. It's like life. I'm still working on that."

The work includes studying harmony and composition, and writing music; when that record date comes along, Connors wants to have some of his own tunes on it. But his ambitions for the future do not keep him from being happy in his present job, which offers him the chance to grow and develop.

"I like it when a drummer is original instead of doing what someone else has done," he says. "A lot of followers of, say, Tony Williams have a lot to offer in themselves but they don't go inside themselves and try to bring it out. They have a lot of talent and play someone else's style well, but that's good primarily for whomever they try to play like. I'm always listening and learning." **db**

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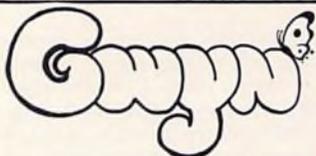


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DIFFERENT DRUMMERS

Continued from page 20

"When things are not too good, smile through. If you're crying the blues, when it happens you're left behind." But I'm through playing 'with' people. I'm ready for equal billing now."

Buzzy Drootin, says the *Encyclopedia of Jazz*, was born in Russia in 1920 on a date he doesn't know exactly. When he was 5, his parents took him to the U.S., and he was raised in Boston. His father, two brothers and a nephew are all musicians.

After some local experience, Buzzy went on the road with Ina Ray Hutton, then spent a couple of years with Al Donahue's band. He stayed in Chicago for a while, working with Jess Stacy and Wingy Manone, then came to New York, where from 1947 to 1951 he was the house drummer at Eddie Condon's club, then in its heyday. He left to work with some of the many musicians he'd backed there, including Bobby Hackett, Billy Butterfield and Jimmy McPartland.

Then it was back to Boston, where a gig similar to the one at Condon's materialized at George Wein's Mahogany Hall, with such companions as Vic Dickenson, Doc Cheatham, Claude Hopkins and brother Al Drootin on clarinet.

In 1955, he returned to New York, gigging with Wild Bill Davison, Ruby Braff, Condon, and quite often Bobby Hackett, among others. A stint with the Dukes of Dixieland (1962-63) and several tours with the Newport All Stars (including Europe) ensued, and in the summer of 1970, Buzzy played with an almost all-Drootin band on Cape Cod.

More recently, the pickings have been somewhat lean, and Buzzy has taken a day job at Manny's Music Store, becoming very popular with the kids who go there to buy drums but know little about what they need.

Buzzy knows a lot about drums. His inspiring beat, occasionally captured on such records as *Jazz Ultimate* with Jack Teagarden and Hackett, and *Paris Concert* with the Newport All Stars, sometimes reminds this listener of Dave Tough, though he's got a style all his own. Though his associations have mainly been with musicians of the mainstream persuasion, with the Condon-Chicago gang to the fore, he is not a "traditional" player.

In Boston, he often played with the then young modernists, among them Serge Chaloff, and it was accident rather than choice that put him in a certain bag. In any situation, his presence will make the band swing (and that includes some pretty sad as well as pretty great ones I've heard him on).

His accents are as stimulating as they are unexpected, and he changes his patterns and attack to fit the soloist. He is one of the *listeningest* drummers I know, and in addition to being a great man for the band, he is a phenomenal soloist. When he comes up for his turn, you won't hear a collection of rudiments, but a musical, well-constructed statement employing every portion of the kit when he feels that way, or maybe just snare and cymbals. (The sound he gets from his snare is something else, and his foot is one of the best in the business.)

It's ironic that Buzzy Drootin isn't better known, and that he has to work selling drums when he should be selling drumming. But better days must come. Meanwhile, if you get the chance, check out one of the great jazz drummers—and I do mean great. **db**

AD LIB

Continued from page 12

two heavy cats, rounded out the group. Singer Fran Jeffries followed Miss King, who had guitarist Joe Puma among her accompanists . . . Randy and Mike Brecker, Ralph Towner, Jeanne Lee, Dave Holland and percussionists Jack DeJohnette, Juma Santos, Barry Altschul, Bob Moses and Armen Halburian provided lots of music at Space (344 W. 36th St.), a nice place to listen, on Feb. 2 . . . Chris Connor was set to open Feb. 22 at Nico's, following George Benson's swinging group. The singer, long absent from these parts, is backed by Mike Abene, piano; Lynn Christie, bass, and Horacee Arnold, drums, with whom she also did a Feb. 18 Jazz Adventures gig at the Maisonette. Other JA February action: James Moody Quartet with Eddie Jefferson (4); Atilla Zoller and Prism (11); Dave Berger's 18-piece band (25) . . . Sonny Stitt was at the Club Baron . . . Count Basie was set for a one-nighter at the Roseland Ballroom March 10. Woody Herman was there Feb. 4, drawing a big crowd . . . Herbie Hancock's sextet did the Village Vanguard Feb. 8-13, following Leon Thomas. On the afternoon of their last day, the Jazz Contemporaries (George Coleman, Clifford Jordan, tenors; Julius Watkins, French horn; Harold Mabern, piano; Larry Ridley, bass; Keno Duke, drums) did their first matinee of the year. The next day, Coleman did a concert at International House . . . McCoy Tyner's estimable group did the 1d in Brooklyn the first weekend in February . . . Three former members of the Master Brotherhood, reedman Joseph Rigby, pianist-organist Les Walker, and percussionist Stephen Reid, have formed their own trio, Sadka (Swahili for "our offering"). They've done concerts at Rutgers, Bronx Community College, Queensborough Community Center, and over radio station WKCR-FM . . . Freddie Hubbard's quintet concertized for International Art of Jazz at the Elks Lodge in Port Jefferson Feb. 6. The Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Band did a free concert for IAJ at Suffolk Community College Feb. 3 . . . Art Blakey followed Gil Evans at Slugs', with Woody Shaw, Hank Mobley, George Cables and Stanley Clarke as the Messengers . . . Eubie Blake was honored on the occasion of his 89th birthday at the Overseas Press Club Feb. 11 . . . Bobby Jones and drummer Joe La Barbera gave a duo recital at St. John's Church Feb. 3. Jones also subbed, on clarinet, for Joe Muranyi with Roy Eldridge's group at Jimmy Ryan's, revealing yet another facet of his amazing musicianship. Roy's birthday (Jan. 30) was celebrated with a surprise party, complete with cake and candles, at the club. Drummer Jackie Williams and tenorist Bobby Brown sat in, and Jonah Jones stopped by to wish Little Jazz a happy. down beat's audio expert Charles Graham instigated the event . . . Earl Hines had Bob Mitchell, trumpet; Milan Rezabek, bass; Bill Moody, drums and vocalist Marva Josie at his Feb. 4 Carnegie Recital Hall concert . . . Chuck Mangione brought his concert package to Carnegie Hall Feb. 1, and among the listeners was a fully recovered Dizzy Gillespie . . . Pianist Ted Saunders, who worked with Zoot Sims in Boston, was at Bradley's. Zoot continued at the Half Note, still with Roy Haynes on drums and Jimmy Rushing on weekends . . . The Joe Beck Trio was at Boomers . . . Altoist Noah Howard, with Rick Colbeck, trumpet, and Selwyn Lis-



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The main reason for this is that most students start out on a snare drum alone (or practice pad) and get in the habit of "hands only" practice. Unfortunately, many drummers keep that habit, and rarely if ever, practice on the whole set.

Practice routine for the whole set exercises: Play each line over at least eight times, until it is smooth. Then play all the lines, one time each as a complete exercise. Watch your tempo, the tendency is to rush the time a bit as the exercises get more "busy". Don't let that happen. Keep it rock steady with a strong hi-hat on two and four. When you've got that together, practice them all again with the hi-hat on *all four beats*.

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Both the above practice devices get the drummer to play on all the drum positions and use the bass drum foot at all times—both facets of practice that must be included at all times to really gain mastery of the whole set.

Look for books that have exercises like those above: an excellent one to start with being *Rhythmic Patterns for Drum Set* by Joe Cusatis. Remember again, that keeping a steady, steady beat while practicing "around the set" is first—speed will come later.

jazz on campus

Festival News: Roy Burns and Bobby Herriot were the clinicians and performers with the Univ. of Wisconsin-Green Bay Jazz Lab Band, directed by Lowell Ives, at the recent second annual UW-GB Jazz Festival. Jerry Abraham, director of Jazz Studies at UW-GB, was festival director. Twenty HS bands participated in the non-competitive event . . . Eight HS bands participated at the recent fourth annual Duquesne Univ. (Pittsburgh) Jazz Festival, directed by Dan Cervone, Phi Mu Alpha. The winner of that event will participate in the 10th Annual Mid-East Band Clinic Stage Band Contest, March 26, held in Pittsburgh. Festival director is Benny Benack, Clairton HS (Pa.) . . . Villanova Univ. (Pa.), after a three-year hiatus from the jazz scene, will once again host its (10th) Jazz Festival, April 14-15. The contact is Stephen Ryan at the VU Student Activities Center.

The winners of the recent Stephen F. Austin State Univ. (Nacogdoches, Tex.) Jazz

Notice to Colleges: *The down beat guide to College Jazz Studies*, a new publication, is currently in preparation. It will list all junior and senior colleges and universities in the U.S. and Canada that offer jazz-oriented courses for credit. The Guide will also feature a descriptive list of jazz-oriented courses under the general headings of Theory, Arranging, and Composition; Improvisation; Instrumental Studies, Literature and Materials; Business of Music; Vocational Music. Send descriptions of jazz-oriented courses currently offered, or to be offered, in 1972-73, to *down beat*/Guide, 222 West Adams St., Chicago, Ill. 60606.

Festival were: Jr. HS—Scarborough (Houston), Mary Thompson, dir.; Class A—Union Grove HS, Roy Semar, dir.; Class AA—Midway HS, Don Filgo, dir.; Class AAA—Lancaster HS, Carey Smith, dir.; Class AAAA and Outstanding Band—Kashmere HS (Houston) Conrad Johnson, dir.; Outstanding Instrumentalist—Mike Hendly, guitar, Tyler HS; Selmer Award for Excellence in Jazz Performance—Byron Wooten, trumpet, Kashmere HS. SFA jazz-oriented courses currently include: two lab bands (a third will be added in 1972-73); Jazz Improvisation; Jazz Arranging (primarily big band); Afro-American Music (a perspective in jazz course taught by Gene Hall); Jazz and Pop Vocal Seminar.

The winners of the 13th annual Oak Lawn (Ill.) Jazz Festival as chosen by judges Rich Matteson, Dom Spera and Bob Morgan from 10 high school finalist groups were: Combo—tie between Maine East HS, Robert Diehl, dir., and Ottawa #1, Douglas Sisler,

dir.; Jr. HS—Cooper (Buffalo Grove), Dave Leigh, dir.; Class B-C-D—New Berlin, Gene Haas, dir.; Class A—Champaign Central, Dick Dunscomb, dir.; Class AA and Best Band—Elk Grove, Doug Peterson, dir. Sixty jazz bands and 17 combos participated. Matteson was the clinician with the Univ. of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Jazz Band, Dom Spera, dir. Ken Kistner was the festival director. The 1973 date for Oak Lawn is Feb. 3.

Dick Grove, Hollywood composer-arranger-conductor and contributor to the *down beat* Music Workshop, has just published (First Place Music Publications) two simplified stage band arrangements for junior HS and HS beginning bands. The Grove originals, *Ripped and Wired For Sound*, have practical brass range of F or G concert with recurring rhythm patterns and specific articulation markings which define every note. The instrumentations are flexible. Although written for 19 pieces, they can be satisfactorily played by as few as six horns and three rhythm.

New charts: *Timeless* (intermed.) by Robert Ojeda—20 (plus cond.): 5 sax; 4 tp; 4 tb; g. p, b, d, 3 perc. (Creative Music, Glenview, Ill., \$4.50) . . . *The Truth* by Robert Ojeda (grade level and all details same as for *Timeless*) . . . *Para Los Rumberos* (not graded) by Tito Puente (recorded by Santana)—19 (plus cond.): 5 sax; 4 tp; 4 tb; p, b, g, perc., d, voc. (Big Seven Music Corp. N.Y., \$5.50).

New Publications: *First Chart* by Van Alexander (editor and contributor, Jimmy Haskell). Criterion Music Corp., N.Y., 1971. 9 x 12 paperback, 144 pp., \$6.00. "A step-by-step introductory course designed to help the musician through his 'first chart'. Contains elementary necessities, charts of 'hit sounds', including a record (45 rpm) of two of the charts" . . . *Complete Handbook For The Music Arranger* by Mickey Baker (Amsco Music Publishing Co., N.Y., 1972), 9 x 12 paperback, 128 pp., \$3.95 . . . "explains the techniques of composition and orchestration, and how to create musical arrangements that really work—in any idiom, for any combinations of instruments."

Ad Lib: Maynard Ferguson and his band are booked for afternoon clinic and evening concert March 7 at Bowling Green Univ. School of Music, Wendell Jones, Director of Jazz Studies . . . The Elon College (N.C.) Music Festival will be held June 25-30. Jack O. White, Festival Director, will supervise the Jazz Ensemble session. Dr. Charles Colin is again Festival Administrator and Associate Brass Clinician. San Ulano and Russ Hoy will conduct the Percussion Sessions. Lipton Nemsler will conduct sight-reading sessions of new band works .

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FENDER BENDER (A) by Billy Byers. 19; 5 sax; 4 tp; 4 tb; p,b,d, perc, 2 g. Especially written to explore the jazz-rock possibilities of the Fender guitar. Powerful trumpet ensemble passages. All parts demanding. (PT 4') MWX 902 . . . \$7.50

RHODES ROYCE (M) by Benny Golson. 19; 5 sax; 4 tp; 4 tb, p,b,d, perc, 2 g. A Rhythm & Blues big band sound that combines jazz and Mo-Town. Featured solo on electronic piano (acoustic piano optional). (PT 4 1/2) MWX 903 . . . \$7.50

SUMMER SNOW (M) by Bob Enevoldsen. 19; 5 sax (asl dbl. fl) 4 tp; 4 tb; p,b,d, perc, 2 g. Lovely, slower arrangement featuring sax section with lead alto doubling flute. First half has prolonged rubato feeling; last seven bars long crescendo to final chord. (PT 3') MWX 904 . . . \$7.50

HOME FREE (A) By Benny Golson. 19; 5 sax; 4 tp; 4 tb; p,b,d, perc, 2 g. Guitars treated as small orchestra; pianist and Fender bassist read parts as written or ad lib to fit. (PT 5') MWX 905 . . . \$7.50

GREEN SUNDAY (M) by Chico O'Farrill. 19; 5 sax; 4 tp; 4 tb; p,b,d, perc, 2 g. In 12/8. All dynamic and articulation markings very important for clean execution. Challenging solos divided between lead alto and piano. (PT 3') MWX 906 . . . \$7.50

RED BUTTERMILK (A) by Billy Byers. 19; 5 sax; 4 tp; 4 tb; p,b,d, perc, 2 g. Power trombone ensemble passages dominate this country-jazz-rock chart. Solos split between trumpet II and tenor I. (PT 4') MWX 907 . . . \$7.50

OUTTA SIGHT (A) by Benny Golson. 19; 5 sax; 4 tp; 4 tb; p,b,d, perc, 2 g. Extremely challenging chart with frequent signature changes. Highlights include fiery tenor sax solo and catchy soli with guitars and saxes playing in unison. (PT 5') MWX 908 . . . \$7.50

DRIP DRY (M) by Bob Enevoldsen. 19; 5 sax; 4 tp; 4 tb; p,b,d, perc, 2 g. Exciting drum solo paces medium tempo jazz-rock arrangement with Mo-Town sound. Of particular interest is baritone sax, bass soli. (PT 4') MWX 909 . . . \$7.50

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MAHALIA

Continued from page 11

and, oh, so wondrously rich of voice. And Willa Jones. Or Big Alice from upstairs. Or Brother John Sellers. Or Robert Anderson, young and gifted and black.

It was nothing more than a matter of reflex for ministers from all parts of the country, gospel singers, whom she knew and didn't know, to drop in on Mahalia. She belonged to them.

She belonged to the people she passed on the street. The old lady with the heavy shopping bag, who effusively greeted "Mahaly." The cabdriver, the waiter, the garage mechanic, the young schoolteacher, the pretty girl who made sandwiches at the drive-in. They'd stop to tell her they'd heard her at such and such a church, that she was a friend of an aunt or a cousin or a neighbor that they'd worn out her recording of *Move On Up a Little Higher* or *Even Me or Didn't It Rain or His Eye Is On The Sparrow*.

These are the people who, years before, packed the Ponce de Leon baseball park in Atlanta far beyond its capacity to hear her. These are the people who filled Carnegie Hall on five different occasions, who broke whatever records Toscanini and Benny Goodman had set there.

These are the people who, in Dayton, Ohio, greeted her with a parade that outswelled the one held for President Harry S. Truman on the same day.

But her most profound moment of exaltation was yet to come. Sure, she had become celebrated in all quarters of the world. Paris, Copenhagen, London's Albert Hall—in regions where many could not understand the words, they understood the artist. She touched them all.

A whimsical story is told of Europe's most eminent jazz critics, Hugues Pannassie and Charles Delaunay. Theirs was a bitter feud, but on this given day, unbeknown to one another, they appeared at the airport to greet Mahalia. As, with Gallic gallantry, they escorted her to the city, each realized that the other's enthusiasm for the singer matched his own. Thus ended the feud. They anointed her "The Dove of Peace."

It was, however, with the civil rights movement that Mahalia Jackson's spirituals and gospel songs assumed grandeur. During the Montgomery bus boycott, a call came from the Rev. Ralph D. Abernathy. Would she sing for the people down there? Dr. King has asked for her. Mahalia's response was immediate: "Sure, I'll sing for the walking people." From that moment on, her songs were of a piece, with the words of Dr. King.

How green is the memory of the 1963 march on Washington! With the Lincoln Memorial as backdrop and the reflecting pool ahead, she preceded Dr. King's memorable celebration of life and plea for mankind. As she sang his favorite hymn, *Precious Lord*, an airplane above was impiously buzzing. She looked up and outsang the flying machine. Even now, I see those scores of thousands of white handkerchiefs waving as triumphal banners.

She lifted up all the hearts with singing to help His truth endure to all generations. And now, her work is done and she is free at last. Great Almighty, free at last.

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Continued from page 39

sack, drums, did a show for WNYC-TV . . . Music, Inc. (Charles Tolliver, trumpet; Stanley Cowell, piano; Reggie Workman, bass; Elvin Queen, drums) did Rafiki's first week of February . . . Marian McPartland did the fourth in Town Hall's series of 5:45 p.m. *Interlude* concerts . . . Bobby Scott, with bassist Frank Williams was at the Holiday Inn in New Haven . . . Frank Cappy's 14-piece band, which plays "on the order of the Glenn Miller orchestra, but with an up-to-date sound" has been gigging around Greater New York and will be at Carl Hoppl's, 100 Sunrise Highway, Baldwin, on March 24.

Los Angeles: The Grove is back in business, and although it may have come a bit later than anticipated, the plush night club in the Ambassador Hotel is a welcome sight and sound in Los Angeles. Opening the '72 spring and summer roster of attractions was the prime mover behind the Grove: Sammy Davis, Jr. He played 10 nights there backed by George Rhodes' orchestra, but every entertainer who is scheduled to follow will be preceded by the phrase "Sammy Davis, Jr. Presents . . ." Among those that Sammy will present are: Duke Ellington, Billy Eckstine, Sarah Vaughan, March 1-11; Dionne Warwick, March 29-April 8; Ella Fitzgerald, May 24-June 3; Count Basic, Sonny and Cher, June 7-17 . . . Disneyland, a facility that never

misses an occasion, especially in terms of promotion, presented a Valentine Party featuring the likes of B.J. Thomas, Carla Thomas, and Rufus "Funky Chicken" Thomas. They should have called the evening "Heart and Soul." . . . Talk about heart and soul and looks, Abbey Lincoln followed Gene Ammons into Shelly's Manne-Hole and stayed two weeks until replaced by another beauty contest winner, Thelonious Monk . . . Eddie Harris followed Cal Tjader into the Lighthouse with Reggie Andrews' group UJIMA, doing a Sunday afternoon jazz workshop; and the Bobby Hutcherson-Harold Land Quintet gigging on a Monday night . . . Gene Shearing returned to the Hong Kong Bar of the Century Plaza Hotel for a three-week engagement: the tenth date for the Shearing combo in that lounge. No other group has worked as often in the Hong Kong Bar as Shearing's yet the regulars in the room will be seeing a couple of new faces: Ron Anthony on guitar and Rusty Jones, drums. Others include Charlie Shoemake, vibes and Andy Simpkins, bass . . . Arthur Prysock returned to one of his favorite Los Angeles stomping grounds, Memory Lane, displacing Esther Phillips in the process . . . The Fox Theater, in Long Beach, just inaugurated a Wednesday night jazz policy, and if their opening night was any criterion of the caliber of jazz names, Long Beach is in for good mid-week sounds: Jimmy Smith, his trio, and Gerald Wilson and his orchestra shared the stage . . . Jimmy Smith had the stage all to himself in Los Angeles when he recorded a

live album at the Bombay Bicycle Club. That club is the latest in a series of ephemeral discotheques that have been opening in Los Angeles. They enjoy "in" status briefly then the in crowd seems to weary and they move on. In the meantime, some jazz groups and many rock groups have been finding employment there, turning on the so-called beautiful people . . . Donte's began the open week of February with familiar names from their repertory groups: Jack Sheldon, Joe Pass and Barney Kessel; plus a new name (for Donte's), Jack Wilson and his trio . . . The Irv Warren Quintet is at R.J.'s in North Hollywood on Thursdays and Saturdays . . . Dick Shreve is now at Room At The Top in Hollywood . . . Dave Mackay and Ted Hughart are duo-ing their thing at the Samoa House in Encino . . . Dick Hyde, better known locally as Slyde Hyde, is fronting a sextet for a series of Tuesdays at the Baked Potato, in North Hollywood: Conte Candoli, trumpet; Hyde, trombone, bass trumpet; Jay Migliori, reeds; Joe Lettieri, piano; Frank De La Rosa, bass; Maurice Miller, drums . . . Don Ellis and his 22 odd-metered men played two local dates before hitting the road for a long tour: Upland High School, in Alta Loma; and the following night at the University of California, in Irvine—a gig he shared with Willie Bobo and his group. Prior to the Irvine concert, Ellis and his sidemen gave a clinic/concert at Estancia High School, in nearby Costa Mesa . . . Billy Brooks, back in Los Angeles after trying Cincinnati on for size, led his band, which he calls **The Happy Warriors**, in a one-nighter at The Summit (the old Marty's On The Hill). Personnel: Bob Comden, Mike Conlin, Tom Howard, Bob Faust, Brooks, trumpets; Paul Hawthorne, Ray Jackson, Alan Kaplan, Carl Hammond, trombones; Edwin Pleasants, Tommy Vigil, Bill Carter, Ron Rogers, Amule Murphy, saxes; Irving Brown, guitar; Dave Dyson, bass; Clarence Johnston, drums . . . Pianist Dick Horne led a quartet at Rick's Bar, in Venice, for a one-nighter: Oscar Brashear, trumpet; Daryl Clayborne, bass and Woody Theuss, drums . . . The 20-piece jazz-rock band of John Price gave a concert at the Hollywood Palladium under the overall name of "California Jazz." Guest soloist included Jerome Richardson, and the Aldebarts (Louis and Monique) formerly with the Double Six of Paris. The vocal duo (Louis plays piano) was backed by Chuck Berghofer, bass and Earl Palmer, drums. At present, the Aldebarts are working at the Riviera Club in Redondo Beach. Chuck Niles emceed the John Prince concert. Personnel included: Ron King, Cal Lewiston, Bob Faust, Johnny Madrid, Larry Lippold, trumpets; Jeff Apmadoc, Tom Baker, Bob Payne, Ken Sawhill, Stu Udem, trombones; Walter Woods, Mike Vaccaro, Leo Potts, Jim Snodgrass, Adrian Tapia, reeds; Eddie Arkin, guitar; Gary Owens, bass; Ruth Ritchie, vibes, percussion; Scott Von Ravensberg, drums . . . Another one-nighter, this combining jazz and classical, was given at The Egg and The Eye, in Los Angeles, by the Baroque Jazz Ensemble (Ira Schulman, reeds and flutes; Jocelyn Sarto, harpsichord; William Rene, bass; Frank Blake, drums). Their repertoire ran a gamut from Vivaldi and Handel to Roger Spotts and Danny Newmark. Three of the four (Blake excluded) play each Thursday at The Egg and The Eye . . . Leroy Vinnegar, bass, Tom Albering, drums, have been working out of town with different pianists: first with Joan Steele, at the Royal Coach Inn in San Mateo

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(northern California) and currently at Helms' Nightclub in Portland, Oregon, with Dick Blake . . . Also in the northwest: Duke Ellington and his orchestra. Sarah Vaughan and Billy Eckstine played two concerts at the Seattle Opera House, Feb. 20; The Doubletree Inn, also in Seattle, where Eddie Harris just closed, brought in Cal Tjader from Feb. 21 through March 4 . . . Going way out of town: Billy Preston is currently in England after concertizing through Germany and France . . . Sonny Criss is putting on a series of concerts for Los Angeles elementary school youngsters. The series is underwritten by Government Title I Funds. Criss' regular group consists of Dolo Coker, piano; Wilfred Middlebrooks, bass and Mel Lee, drums. In addition, they've been joined by ex-Earl Bostic trumpeter Joe Mitchell, who is currently a school teacher in Los Angeles . . . Jimmy Lyons, "Mr. Monterey," has been named executive director of the American College Jazz Festival. That event will be held at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, May 28-29. From that presentation, a festival all-star band will be formed and invited to perform at this year's Monterey Jazz Festival, September 15-17 . . . Chuck Weisenberg is presenting another UCAL extension

course in jazz, this one focusing on Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Charlie Parker and Ornette Coleman. As is his custom, Weisenberg will take his class to Shelly's Manne-Hole for four of the meetings, where they will discuss aspects of jazz with the headliners who are appearing there . . . Joel Leach, director of the jazz ensemble at San Fernando Valley State College in Northridge, gave a concert with his 21-piece orchestra at the SFVSC campus . . . Sammy Davis Jr. and Isaac Hayes whooped it up at Lake Tahoe, in Nevada, then flew to Los Angeles for a special recording session. Hayes produced a single and an album for Davis, and among the items is a special *Shaft* lyric written by Hayes . . . One of the less publicized jazz shows emanating from the San Fernando Valley is heard on Saturdays over KVFM in Panorama City. At least it begins on Saturday, 9 p.m., and ends Sunday, 3 a.m. It's called *The Jim Keelmen Show and All That Jazz* and Keelmen uses his own collection of jazz goodies (mostly bop) for his programming. Among his recent guests: June Christy, Warne Marsh, Irene Kral, Gary Foster . . . On the rock scene, three performances by Neil Diamond at the Valley Music Theater had to be cancelled due to the production schedule of his TV special .

. . . Among the concerts that went unmolested: Chicago did a one-nighter at the Forum; Alice Cooper did one night at the Hollywood Palladium; Deep Purple and Buddy Miles played the Swing Auditorium in San Bernardino and the Long Beach Auditorium; T. Rex was at the Palladium for a one-nighter; John Mayall and Taj Mahal teamed for a concert at the Long Beach Auditorium, then Taj Mahal did it all alone at the Four Muses for three nights. The Four Muses is in the shadow of the western White House, in San Clemente . . . Ballin' Jack followed Rita Coolidge into the Troubadour, with Curtis Mayfield due there next . . . Kris Kristofferson spent one night at the Music Center; Gladys Night and the Pips spent one each at the Swing in San Bernardino and the Shrine in Los Angeles; the Johnny Otis Show was at the Santa Monica Civic along with Cheech and Chong .

Chicago: Though Carmen McRae's long-awaited opening at Mister Kelly's was unfortunately delayed one week by the death of her mother, O.C. Smith filled in so admirably the night life columnists of the local press even managed to come up with some new praise phrases, many adding that hopefully Smith



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will be back for a full-length stint of his own. When Ms. McRae did open, she was joined several nights later by the Count Basie Orchestra for a one-night, three-show stint—the first big-band appearance ever at Kelly's and/or its sister club, The London House, where Stan Getz' Quartet opened a three-weeker Feb. 9. On opening night, Getz was presented his 1971 Down Beat Readers Poll award by managing editor Jim Szantor. Following Getz was the Oscar Peterson Trio . . . The February schedule for the Modern Jazz Showcase's Sunday session included the McCoy Tyner Quartet with special guest Clark Terry, Randy Weston's African Rhythms with Cecil Payne on hand, and the Harold Land-Bobby Hutcherson Quintet. Watch for the announcement of the new MJS site. The Land-Hutcherson gig Feb. 27 was the last at the North Park Hotel . . . Alice's Revisited continues to showcase the best of blues and rock with recent bookings Otis Rush, Chicago Slim and Sunnyland Slim and Short Stuff, a Milwaukee, Wis. blues-rock group . . . Pianist Wallace Burton's group, featured Mondays and sometimes on Tuesday at the London House has Chester Williamson, bass and John Lillybridge, drums . . . Erroll Garner did two weeks at the Blue Max of the Regency Hyatt House . . . Sarah Vaughan was heard for a week at an unusual location, the Balmoral Park racetrack lounge in nearby Crete . . . Judy Roberts' popular trio works at Alfie's on Rush Street Sundays and Mondays and moves to Le Pub, 1932 Clark St., for Tuesday and Wednesday gigs . . . The Marion Brown-Steve McCall Jazz Duo was heard in concert at the University of Chicago (Ida Noyes Hall) and at Alice's Revisited on a recent weekend.

Boston: Lennie's-on-the-Turnpike started off the New Year with two Dixieland groups, the New Black Eagle Jazz Band and Bill Batten's Riverside Jazz Band. Mose Allison followed for a week with Harvey Schwartz, bass and Alan Dawson, drums. Buddy Rich's big band with Louis Bellson substituting for Buddy played next, followed by Stan Getz' Quintet (Chick Corea, piano; Stan Clark, bass; Tony Williams, drums; Airto Moreira, percussion) . . . The Caulwell Winfield Blues Band did a week at the Jazz Workshop. Larry Coryell then took over for two weeks with Steve Marcus, tenor sax; Mike Mandel, piano; Mervin Bronson, bass and Harry Wilkinson, drums; McCoy Tyner followed with tenorist Sonny Fortune, bassist Calvin Hill and drummer Al Mouzon . . . Mark Harvey of the Old West Church has organized the Jazz Coalition, which acts as a clearing house for jazz activity in the area . . . Richy Caruso's big band is playing Monday nights at the Kismet Lounge. Playing exciting charts by Paul Konzuela, Jack Stock and Mike Crotty are Larry Pyatt, Emil Canteas, Dennis Collier, Claudio Roditi, Tony Klatka, trumpets; Keith O'Quinn, John Zawislak, Roger Hock, Rod Hansen, trombones; Caruso, Jim Perry, Carl Hosbond, George Garzone, Jan Konopasek, saxes; Allen Zawod, piano; Jerry Cahill, bass and Cedric Jensen, drums . . . Trumpet Bob Summers is now playing one of the jazz chairs in Woody Herman's Herd . . . An adaptation of *Jesus Christ Superstar* staged at the New Theater in Cambridge was put together by jazz writers Bob Bockholt, Gary Anderson, and Jack Stock. A few of the musicians were Lenny Johnson, Ray Kotwica, trumpets; Stock, trom-

bone; Mick Goodrick, guitar; Rich Appleman, bass and Cedric Jensen, drums . . . *The Me Nobody Knows* has been playing for over three weeks at the Open Circle Theater (formerly the Charles Playhouse) with musical director Ray Santisi on electric piano, organ; Mick Goodrick, guitar; George Mraz, electric bass and Harry Blazer, drums . . . The Mahavishnu Orchestra appeared at Symphony Hall promoting their new album on Columbia, *The Inner Mounting Flame*. With leader John McLaughlin on guitar were Jerry Goodwin, electric violin; Jan Hammer, electric piano, organ; Rick Laird, bass and Billy Cobham, drums . . . Berklee's Thursday Night Dues Band and Papa's Night Life appeared for Operation Headstart at the Sheraton-Boston.

Baltimore: The Left Bank Jazz Society opened their 1972 season Jan. 23 with Sonny Stitt, followed the next Sunday by Groove Holmes. Woody Herman's band was due in Feb. 6 . . . Elzie Street, local promoter and clubowner, is attempting to bring jazz on a regular basis back to the Royal Roost on York Road. Etta Jones played the club for several weekends in January and James Moody, with Eddie Jefferson, and Sonny Stitt with Don Patterson were due in in February. Miss Jones, accompanied by the house band (pianist Claude Hubbard; bassist Phil Hubbard; drummer Gary Wilmore) delivered an especially fine set the night I was there. A true jazz singer, and unfortunately a somewhat neglected one, she phrases like a horn, probably the result of singing with some of the best hornmen in jazz over the years since 1944. Leonard Feather's *Blow Top Blues*, and a multi-tune tribute to Billie Holiday were particularly effective . . . Richie Havens performed a brilliant concert Jan. 21 at Painters Mill, and Alice Cooper, a bizarre band of rock vaudevillians from the West Coast, performed a less then brilliant one, musically speaking, at any rate, at the Civic Center.

CHORUS

Continued from page 4

that he recognized some of the quiet authority and confident dignity of the Snare Drummer in all of them. The boy heard and felt *it* in Chick Webb and Davey Tough; Sid Catlett and Zutty Singleton and Cozy Cole. He recognized *it* in Jo Jones (oh, that wicked profile smile) and in Raz, the drummer with the Savoy Sultans. Later on he heard *it* in Buddy Rich and Alan Dawson, Max Roach and Elvin Jones; J.C. Heard and Ed Shaughnessy; and Mel Lewis and Philly Joe Jones.

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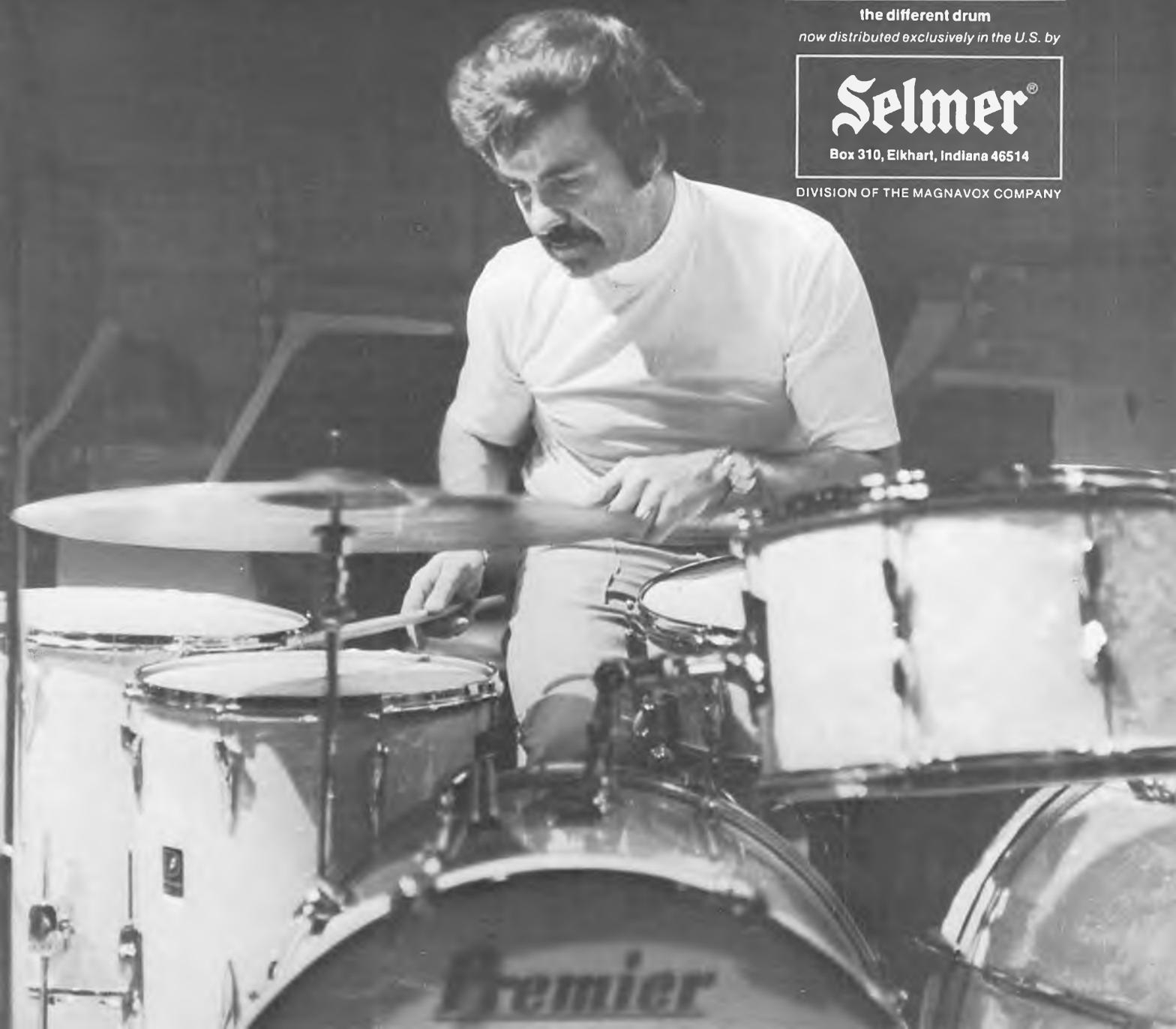
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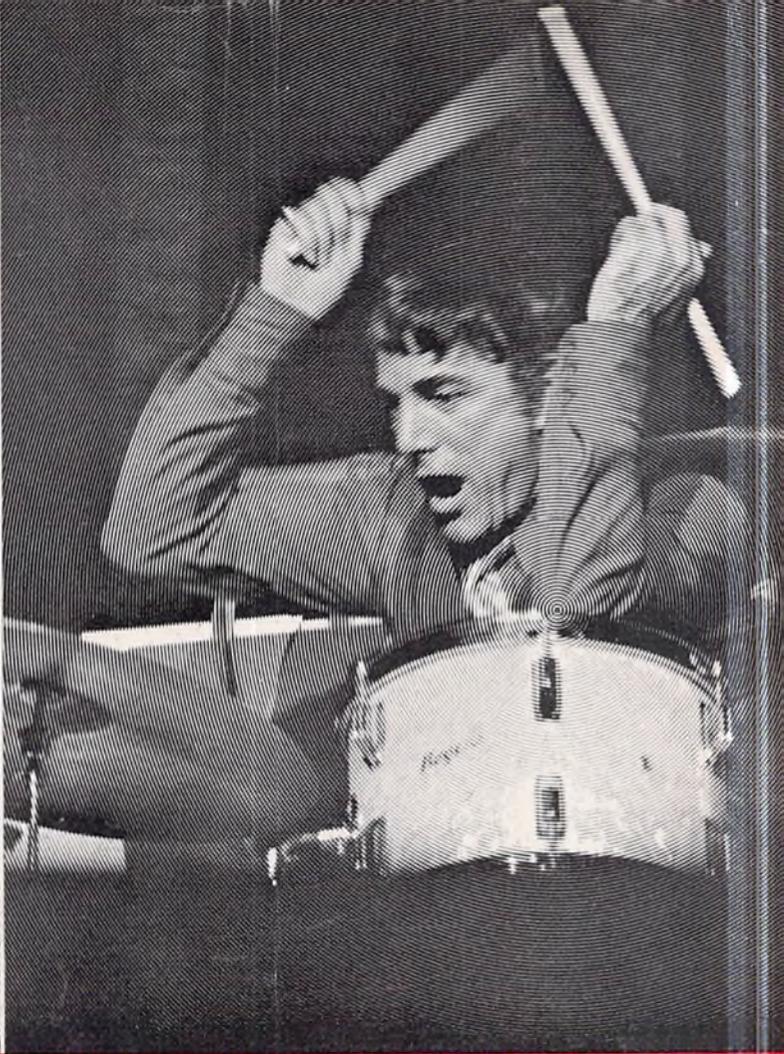
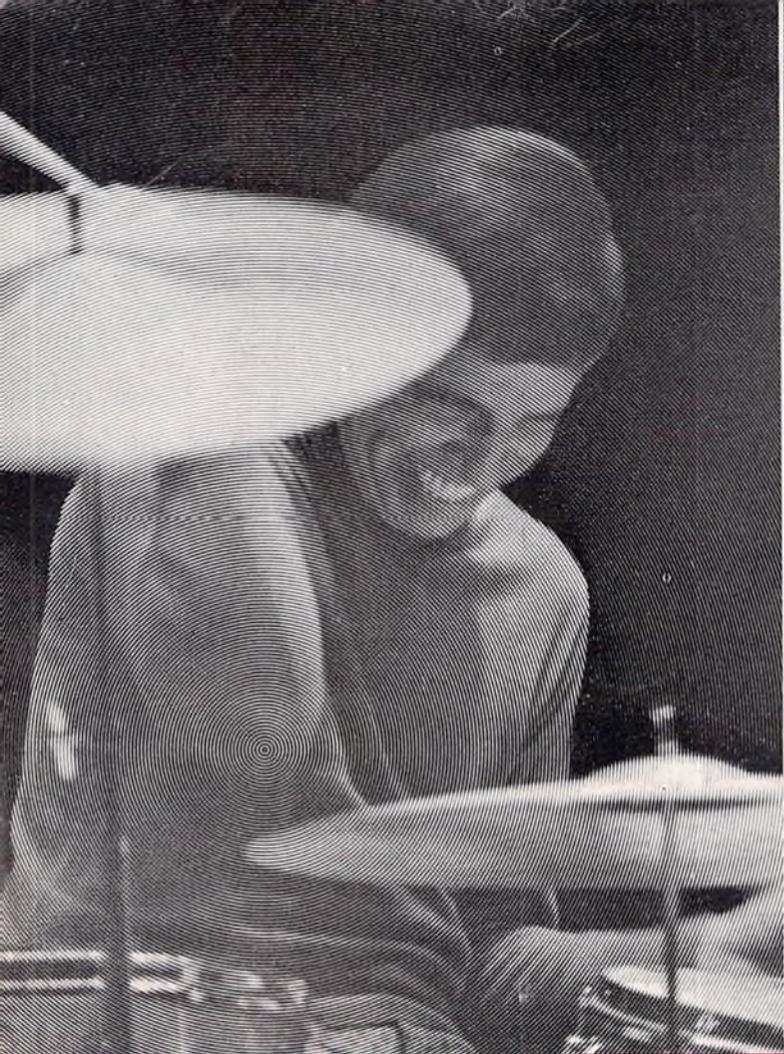
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