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the contemporary
music magazine

downbeat

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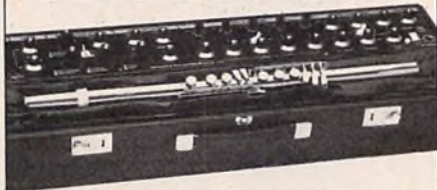
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down beat

March 27, 1975

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(on sale March 13, 1975)

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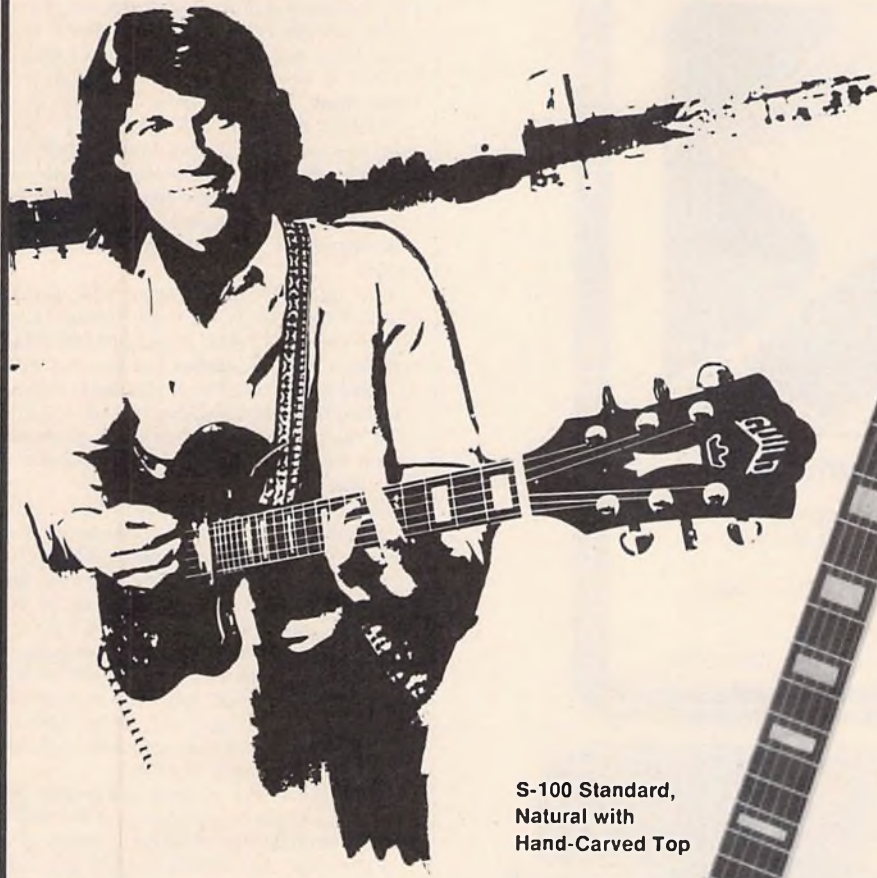
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the first chorus

By Charles Suber

This is the first time that **down beat** has devoted most of an issue to bass players. It's about time, too, considering how the role of the bassist has grown in contemporary music.

The bass has come a long way since it was a tuba. Early jazz used the nearest bass horn as the bottom rhythm instrument. When dixie became swing, the stolid horn gave way to the string bass. Early rock depended on non-skilled musicians and heavy sound, so the electric bass (guitar) was more suitable than the hard-to-play-and-amplify acoustic bass. But the music grew up and Leo Fender's creation became a real instrument in the hands of serious musicians.

Two players—Ron Carter and Stanley Clarke—best signify the "new" bassist. Each player was voted "best" in the latest **db** Readers Poll: Carter as number one acoustic player, number two on electric; Clarke as number one electric player, number two on acoustic. (The "electric bass" category was premiered in that Readers Poll.) Both are interviewed in this issue.

You will be struck, as I was, when reading their interviews to see how similar is their musical thought and expression. Of course, they are very separate persons, but what they have in common is almost a digest of the best of today's music. Both of them—Carter and Clarke—are dedicated to the proposition that a serious musician brings his best to bear on whatever he does, and lets someone else worry about labels and such. Even their approach to electronic music, so outwardly different, is really quite similar.

Carter favors the acoustic instrument. His academic and playing background demand it. But as a professional musician—possessed of a healthy ego that does not allow any challenge to go unanswered—he plays the electric instrument for all it's worth.

Clarke, the younger man in years, is more wired into the electric instrument especially in light of his connection with Chick Corea and Return to Forever. But he, and *his* healthy ego, cannot ignore the challenge offered by the acoustic instrument, the heart-beat of jazz ensemble performance.

Unlike some musicians and critics with limited vision, Clarke and Carter and their contemporaries do not see an irreconcilable conflict between creativity and electricity. They *are* strongly opposed to hype of any sort—anything that would get in the way of full involvement with their music. They each regard an instrument as a means to an end of their own choice.

Just as each man demands respect for his preferred instrument, so do they demand attention be paid to the bass as a solo instrument. Each is building on the solo pioneering of Scott LaFaro, Ray Brown, Charlie Mingus, and others. Each is intent on achieving a virtuosity on the bass similar to what Rostropovich and Starker have brought to the cello in another idiom.

Read for yourself what they have to say about themselves—and related topics, such as: Whither Miles Davis? ... problems faced by school bassists ... predictions of where it's all going ... Expansion as a way of life and so forth.

And while you're at it pick up on what Carol Kaye and Tom Fowler are talking about in the Music Workshop. It's all good reading.

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Skin Flak

After reading Mr. Zuckerman's comments about Billy Cobham in your January issue, I was struck with a humorous thought—what if sensible people wrote letters to down beat?

Anthony Fichera

Manteca, Cal.

I get tired of inexperienced readers and listeners saying that Buddy Rich is better than Billy Cobham, or in past articles, that Elvin Jones is better than Rich, or vice versa. All of this is ridiculous!

Buddy Rich, by all human standards, is a freak. He has got a right foot that can do anything and a left hand to match. His solo technique and structure are unsurpassed in his field.

If you have seen Billy Cobham in concert, you walk away much with the same feeling as when you walk away from Rich: one of awe . . . His intricate rhythmic patterns and control are also unsurpassed in his field.

Rich and Cobham are parallel in many ways. Although their concepts differ, they both have technique and showmanship.

There is no such thing as "the greatest drummer in the world."

Douglas N. Simon

Lansing, Mich.

I am disappointed with the two men who complained about Billy Cobham's selection as Readers Poll best drummer. I am sure they have listened to about half of a song on a Mahavishnu album and disdained it as rock rubbish. This is their privilege, but I am saddened that a lot of peo-

ple think that Cobham sounds like that at all times. I do not deny that all the drummers they listed are excellent, with the possible exception of Buddy Rich, who is an excellent drummer with a big mouth.

Scott A. Robbins

New York, N.Y.

In Defense Of Martino

I was thoroughly infuriated by the ignorance displayed by Gabor Bozo in his Blindfold Test concerning Pat Martino. I feel Pat (as do most players and readers who know) is one of the most underrated guitarists today.

Perhaps Martino did learn from the great Wes Montgomery, but he still manages to project a strong, individualistic voice that is as recognizable and fluent as George Benson, Ron Carter, Freddie Hubbard, and other such great "voices."

I admire Mr. Bozo's technique, but that's all I've heard from him. How does Gabor rate a Blindfold Test and tons of articles and reviews, when in reality he should be applying for a gig with the 50 Guitars of Tommy Garrett??

Daniel Smith

Northbrook, Ill.

Emotional Key

I'm tired of hearing jazz people put down rock musicians by saying that they are on an ego trip. Bull—emotion is the biggest thing in rock. Listen to songs like *Samba Pa Ti* by Santana, or Derek and the Dominoes' album *Layla*, and then try to say that they're being showboaty. Music is a way to express yourself and that's all that they're doing.

Paul Miller

Toledo, Oh.

Book Rebuttal

My letter is addressed to Mr. Don DeMichael, concerning his review of *Oh, Didn't He Ramble*, the life story of my husband Lee Collins.

Lee did work at the Victory Club and people of all classes came there to hear him. He did not work there continuously from 1945 to 1951, but he made a very good living by working in other clubs as well.

Lee came to Chicago at the request of Joe King Oliver, who was looking for the best New Orleans cornet player there. Oliver did not just hire Lee like you said, but specifically sent for the best there was in New Orleans. During the time of Lee's youth, people from all over the world came to New Orleans and he had plenty of work, so there was no reason for him to leave. I remember Sidney Bechet telling Lee and I in Paris that many times he wished he had stayed in New Orleans.

Concerning the statement that Lee only played in dives, that is not true. He played the Regal with Dave Peyton and went on tour with him. He played with Luis Russell, also. He was a musician's musician who did not have to listen to records to learn to play his trumpet.

Mrs. Mary Collins

Chicago, Ill.

A Personal Note

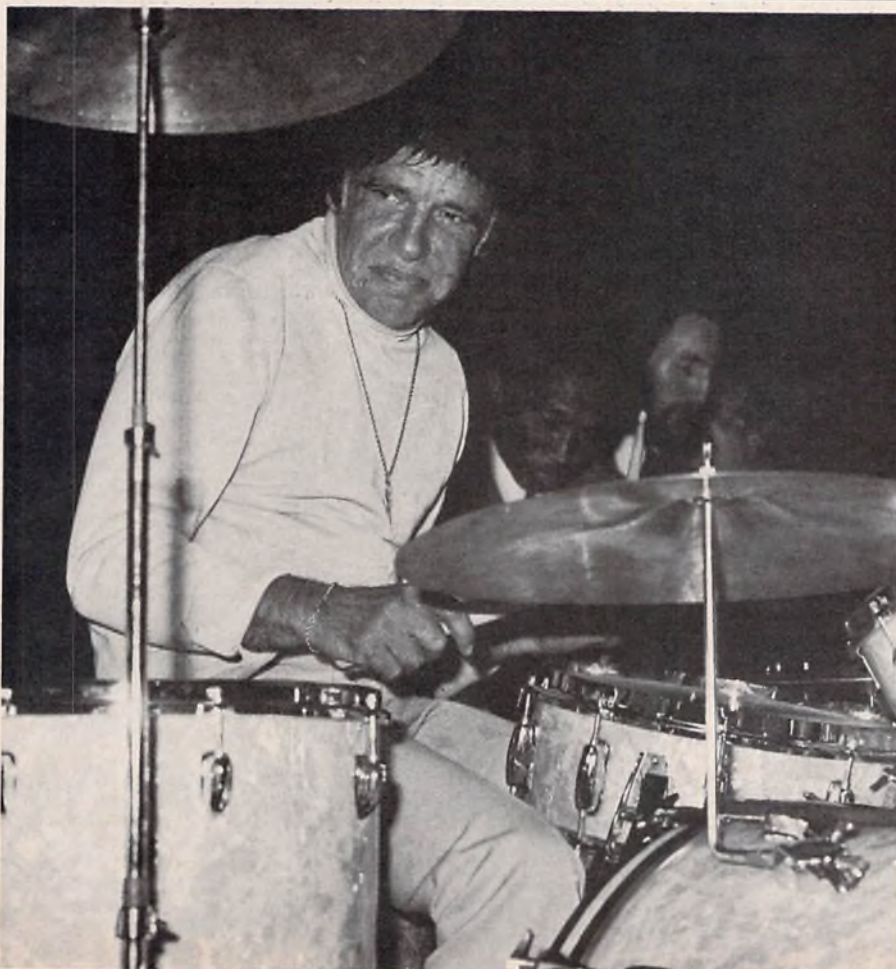
This letter is addressed to Herbie Hancock and Chick Corea:

Dear Herbie and Chick,

I appreciate your efforts to communicate to a wider and younger audience (I am 16), but you're boring me to death.

Andy Kirkendall

Bloomington, Ind.



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Izenzon Dedicates Opera

Bassist David Izenzon, whose son incurred brain damage at birth, recently asked for volunteers to help care for the boy during the daytime hours. It was for all those who came to his aid that David dedicated his new jazz opera, *How Music Can Save The World*.

The work was performed on January 19 at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in New York, immediately following the weekly jazz vespers services. Jim and Joan Wright were the lead vocalists, Charles Brackeen was on tenor and soprano sax, with Beaver Harris on drums, and Izenzon on bass.

Izenzon said that the performance was intended to say thanks, "from myself, my wife, and my son, Solomon, to those

who have been giving of their time to carry out a program of 'patterning.'" Solomon, now three and a half, was born with an intraplacenta oxygen deficiency that left him without certain functions, such as speech and sight. Volunteers assist the Izenzons one hour a week.

Solomon's training program was set up by the Institute For The Advancement Of Human Potential in Philadelphia. Invitations to the opera's performance were sent to only those who have been involved with the program. The opera was taped and a cable television airing is hoped for. Anyone who wishes to volunteer their services to the Izenzons should contact them at 212-AL4-1777.

—arnold jay smith

potpourri

Here is yet another sign of the economic times: **Kennedy Masters Ltd.**, London concert promoters who successfully negotiated tours for **Lionel Hampton, The World's Greatest Jazzband, Buddy Rich**, and the **Warren Covington-Sy Oliver Orchestra** last year, went into voluntary liquidation in January. This move put the skids to a March follow-up tour by Covington and Oliver, as well as springtime British dates for **Erroll Garner** and the **Hampton-Rich Quartet**.

Bass-baritone **William Warfield** will celebrate the 25th anniversary of his first New York appearance by performing in a benefit concert for the **Duke Ellington Cancer Center** at Carnegie Hall on Monday, March 24. The recital will mark Warfield's first New York appearance in five years.

The **Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Jazz Band** will celebrate the 72nd birthday of the famed cornetist on Saturday, March 15. Presented by the **Potomac River Jazz Club**, the special will be held from 9 PM to 1 AM in the Persian Room of the Marriott Twin Bridges Motor Hotel, Arlington, Va.

A definitive volume on the life of **John Coltrane**, to be titled *Chasin' The Trane*, will be published by **Doubleday** on April 18. The author is **J. D. Thomas**, host of a cable TV show called *Talking With Thomas*.

Don Ellis, who scored the music for the original **The French Connection** film, is currently working on a follow-up score for a sequel, **F. C. II**.

Guitarist **John Abercrombie**, who just completed work on **Jack DeJohnette's** second Mile-

stone album, has left **Billy Cobham's** unit. John has joined up with the **DeJohnette Quartet**, which plans a tour of Europe come spring.

Dear Chicago fans: the response to the Chicago photo contest was, to say the least, overwhelming. The first ten winners have been awarded four CTA tokens. As far as the rest of you go, thanks for taking our joke so seriously. Your enthusiasm was a most pleasant surprise.

The **Pointer Sisters** have really made it to the big time: they appeared on Hollywood fashion designer **Mr. Blackwell's** "ten worst-dressed women's list" for '75.

Hidden symbolism??? The **First Women's International Rock Music Festival** will take place in early April in the Tijuana bullring. The Mexican government has sanctioned the confrontation.

Chain Gang Blues: Folk singer **Chad Mitchell**, founder of the **Chad Mitchell Trio**, was recently sentenced to five years in federal prison for conspiracy and possession of 400 pounds of marijuana. The maximum sentence was handed down by U.S. District Judge Adrian Spears, despite pleas for mercy by Mitchell and his lawyer. The singer told hizzonor that he was at a low ebb in his life and was involved in marital problems at the time he was arrested at a San Antonio, Texas motel in October of 1973.

A 1975 **Jazz Calendar**, produced by **Swing Journal Magazine** of Japan, is available from **Jazz Interactions, Inc.** The 15" x

continued on page 30

FINAL BAR



JAN PERSSON

Louis Jordan, one of the most popular black entertainers of the '40s and early '50s, died February 4 of a heart attack in his Los Angeles home. He was 66.

Singer-alto saxophonist Jordan was a major figure in the early history of rhythm & blues, but his brand of happy, swinging jump blues and novelty tunes earned him acclaim outside the R&B circuit, too. He became popular with white audiences as well as blacks, and during his heyday recorded duets with Bing Crosby, Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong and others. Among Jordan's best known numbers were *Saturday Night Fish Fry*, *Choo Choo Ch' Boogie*, *Gonna Move To The Outskirts Of Town*, and *Ain't Nobody Here But Us Chickens*.

Born July 8, 1908, in Brinkley, Ark., Jordan learned music from his father. His first musical jobs were with the Rabbit Foot Minstrels and with a band in the resort town of Hot Springs in the late '20s. An invitation to play in the East took him to Philadelphia in 1930 and, after a few years' additional practice, to New York, where he eventually began working with Chick Webb. Webb got him a date with Decca Records, and soon Jordan and his combo, the Tympany Five, were national hit makers. As Leonard Feather wrote in the *Encyclopedia of Jazz*, "He broke into the front lines of show business through a unique combination of visual showmanship, good musicianship, a strong accent on humor, and a delightfully original and rhythmic vocal style."

Jordan's string of Decca hits lasted until 1951. In '53 he signed with Aladdin and had since recorded for Mercury, Tangerine, Pzazz, and other labels, performing both new material and remakes of his old hits, although he never made the national charts again. He reformed the Tympany Five in '63 and had been successfully working top night spots and festivals in recent years.

Among Jordan's last recordings were a *Great Rhythm & Blues Oldies* LP for Johnny Otis' Blues Spectrum label, and an album on French Black & Blue, *I Believe In Music*.

—jim o'neal

Johannes Rediske, Germany's leading jazz guitarist for more than 15 years (1950-65), died of a sudden heart attack on January 22. He was 48.

Born in Berlin on August 11, 1926, Rediske studied organ, piano, and violin as a child, later teaching himself the guitar. In 1948, he formed his own unit, which played the Berlin jazz club Badewanne (The Bathtub) for more than ten years, helping it to become the most prominent jazz club in Germany. While working the Badewanne he not only gave such young Germans as Rolf Kuhn a chance to sit in, but jammed with many U.S. musicians, including Barney Kessel, Louis Armstrong, Billie Holiday, and Lionel Hampton.

In 1954, he was voted No. 1 Jazz Guitarist by the German jazz magazine *Jazz-Podium*, and maintained that position for several years thereafter. Rediske recorded many sides for the Odeon label in the early '50s, later changing to Brunswick and Columbia. He disbanded his group in the early '60s due to insufficient interest in his style of jazz. He attempted a comeback at the Badewanne in 1970, but disillusioned by poor health and the prevailing jazz tastes, he concentrated on writing and performing for radio, film, and theatre.

Rediske is survived by his wife and a two-year-old daughter.

—klaus scholz



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THE ACOUSTIC COLORS OF RON CARTER

by Arnold Jay Smith

If you're a record collector, a personnel listing of "Bass—Ron Carter" indicates that the session includes a rhythm section approaching perfection. Carter is a bassist who rarely settles for less than the full measure. Now, Ron has finally achieved star status as a leader; he has even invented an instrument he calls a piccolo bass, on which he is the only soloist, "as of 20 minutes to eight," he quipped on the night we spoke.

Ron has been the rock-solid foundation of roughly 400 albums, working with leaders and sidemen who invariably are, or become, poll winners. But he refuses to name his own favorite musicians. "A poll is a way of finding out a magazine's circulation problems, but it's also a valid way of finding out readers' tastes," was his reply when asked about the juxtaposition between himself and fellow winner Stanley Clarke in *db's* electric and upright bass categories in last year's polls.

As a rhythm instrument with melodic tendencies, the bass is a different axe to each different player. The sources of ideas and influences are as varied as the changes in the breeze. It's on this subject that our conversation began.

Carter: I don't have a specific influence. Things influence me. I get different impressions from guitar players' chords: certain players' levels of consistency have an effect on my approach, the insistence of certain musicians on playing a certain type of music. I have to give that some consideration. All musicians are locked into rhythm, whether they are aware of it or not. Windshield wipers and turn signals describe a certain kind of rhythm. A subconscious awareness comes along like, "Hey man, you sang that along with the windshield wipers." I don't translate train tracks or windshield wipers into what I play; it just makes me more aware of all the rhythmic possibilities that are available.

Smith: Did any one, or any group of bass players influence you?

Carter: I listen to all the bass players, even today. They all see the bass having a different set of problems. It's always an education for me as well as a listening experience to see how they solve and adjust to the problems. One that has always caught my ear was the late Israel Crosby. A lot of people have slept on what he was into in the early '40s. He was playing melody lines before Scott La Faro in the '50s. His approach was very important in developing Ahmad Jamal's style.

Smith: It had to be; Ahmad played so little in those days.

Carter: In Ahmad's stage of development, if he had a bass player who couldn't fill in the spaces, he wouldn't have left those holes. Israel wouldn't have been a contributor to my kind of thought if the trio was active on piano. Ahmad would have been different today had he had a different kind of bass player



HERB SNITZER

than Israel, who was an amazing contributor to the trio format. I compare it to when I played with Herbie Hancock. He would lay out a certain chord because he knew that whatever was supposed to be there would be there. If the piano player voices a chord a certain way, and I play a certain note, then that makes it sound the way it's supposed to sound. Bass players do affect the styles of other musicians.

Smith: From what you just said, I have to feel that the job Ray Brown did with Oscar Peterson was that much more difficult because Oscar took up so much more musical space.

Carter: It is my impression from the recordings that Oscar did make it kind of difficult. He is an active player, a very good one. To do what Ray did, he had to put his shoulder to the grindstone and keep on getting on.

Smith: Do you think you have influenced other players?

Carter: Yeah. Buster Williams, Henry Williams, Cleveland Eaton, David Williams, Chuck Israels, George Duvivier says he has checked out what I've been doing. Sam Jones, Lyle Atkinson . . .

Smith: Have they told you this, or do you feel it?

Carter: It's 50-50. I've been asked if I've been on certain records that I haven't been on. I'm interested in hearing what the players mentioned are doing with their styles next year. Everyone develops from one point to another. It would be interesting to see what they come up with. For example, Jobim did an album with Frank Sinatra where Ray Brown did the same things I did on the original Jobim records.

Smith: You started on cello. But I also read that you played some brass and reeds. How did that come about?

Carter: In junior high and high school, you play whatever is around. In the marching band, knowing how to finger a clarinet and a tuba was paramount for football games. I kept my facility on them so if one guy didn't show up I could fill in, or I had to hide my head in shame for a few days.

Smith: Do you prefer acoustic or electric bass?

Carter: Unquestionably I prefer acoustic. Objectively, it has many more possibilities. And personally it has the sound that I'm accustomed to hearing, so I don't want to sacrifice for it. I recommend it to young players who ask me since, first of all, acoustic is not as expensive to own. I feel that there is a much wider range of music available to the acoustic bassist. In years to come, the electric bass repertory may pick up or go to minus five. But the scope of the acoustic bass is much broader. There are obvious arco differences. The range is so much bigger. There are so many varying tone colors from the instrument, without wires, or anything mechanical. There's no question that it takes a lot more work, but you're creating your own sound. It takes much more work to find out where the notes are. There are no frets and it's so large. By this time next year, the electric bass rage will have gone about as far as it can go, and the demand will be for those players to get back to or start on acoustic.

Smith: Do you think your better electric players are those that started on acoustic?

Carter: The players who have the best jazz concept are those who do play acoustic. It depends on what you want from the instrument.

Smith: Do you think that the players who play electric exclusively are lazy?

Carter: When younger players came in, that was all there was in rock bands, rhythm and blues bands. That's all they saw. Most of them play electric because they don't know anything else. I would be inclined to say that studio players who only play electric are on the lazy side for not sitting down and finding out what acoustic really is all about. I'm not so sure about the youngsters in the stage bands and college jazz groups who only play electric. The bandmaster doesn't insist on it; the clinics have no basses, so no acoustic players will go to them and learn what the instrument can do. There's not a teacher in town to show it. There are reasons why the amateur/semi-professional electric player doesn't play acoustic bass, but I don't find the same reasons acceptable for the major studio players.

Smith: Do you use the two basses interchangeably, or is there a specific function for each?

Carter: I think electric bass has a function. Up to this point, there haven't been enough electronic advances to make an acoustic bass perform at the same volume level as rock bands require. I think if someone would sit down with a good acoustic player and find out what his problems are when played live, at the 25-db level, a pickup could be devised that would handle this natural sound box at a very high volume. Then the acoustic bass could serve a better function in most rock bands. So far it hasn't occurred to anyone to do that. Is it time, or money, or lack of interest? The range itself offers a whole new set of colors. If some electronic company wants to find out the mechanical properties that must be adjusted to the instrument to make it sound as loud without the negative aspects of feedback, the others will be replaceable. All the electric basses have solid bodies. Acoustic basses are dealing with a gigantic sound box that has its own sound.

Smith: Do you have a preference about the size of the group you play in?

Carter: Right now I enjoy playing with a quartet. What I equally enjoy is getting in front of an audience and playing totally alone. The group can play a number or two and walk off and leave me alone. Then I'll do 15 minutes or so and they'll come back and close the set. In Toronto, I opened a set cold. The idea was to see if the instrument had the power to draw the audience away from a loud intermission roar and into a certain quiet communication without any preparation for it in front. In larger ensembles you can't contribute much. You have the arrangement. In a quartet you are forced to listen. Everyone's contributing all the time.

Smith: Is there interplay between you and any particular instrument in the group?

Carter: All of them. They may have different harmonic or rhythmic functions. That each member of the group must be able to interact is a mandatory function of any good musical group. Drummers even have different colors. There are percussion instruments along with the traps. On my last recording, Billy Cobham plays just drum rolls and sock cymbals; it's enough for that kind of music. I will translate what he might be doing with his sock cymbal into a note that the piano player

is playing. I will make sure that this note affects what the saxophone player does. I can't turn anyone off, otherwise my function is a total zero.

Smith: As a sideman, do you consider yourself pivotal?

Carter: I do whenever I play, with whomever I play. If a bass player knows his music and knows he has the respect of those he is playing with, it's very easy for him to be the pivotal and dominant force in a group of any size.

Smith: Do you draw the others together? Do you feel that without you there would be no bridge?

Carter: Certainly. Whenever I pick up the bass I feel I'm in charge. (Laughs.)



"Objectively, acoustic bass has many more possibilities. And personally it has the sound that I'm accustomed to hearing, so I don't want to sacrifice for it. I feel there is a much wider range of music available to the acoustic bassist."

Smith: Do you prefer arrangements or "head" things?

Carter: That depends on the circumstance. When the leader just points to his head and says make something up, I'm generally opposed to that kind of idea because he gets credit for an arrangement and gets some extra money. Generally when I'm called for a date it's because I can bring something special. A leader has to trust my judgment, whether it's a prescribed part or just a sketchy arrangement. I never feel locked in.

Smith: Do you like to jam?

Carter: Generally, no. I try to avoid it. It's like being in a Roman colosseum, like gladia-

tors. These promoters throw people together. I'm opposed to that kind of concept. If the other players were Herbie Hancock, Tony Williams, Ben Riley, Hubert Laws or Wayne Shorter, I know their attitude toward music would eliminate what is commonly referred to as a jam session. With their attitude toward playing and musicians, it would be like a prescribed session. They know when to stop playing; they know when to listen to whatever else is going on. A jam session is like blowing your brains out, with the rhythm section just trying to keep pace.

Smith: What do you call a Roland Hanna, Ben Riley, Frank Wess and Ron Carter get-together? (Ed. Note: *The New York Jazz Quartet is a steady working group made up of those players.*)

Carter: Highly enjoyable, organized, well-thought-out, warm music. I don't consider it a jam session. We work together enough to understand the direction a tune may offer us.

Smith: 4/4, in historical retrospect, has been considered the jazz meter. Do you think jazz should always swing in that tempo? Should it be that way at all?

Carter: Musicians have always played in other rhythms, even while playing in 4/4. You can play four beats to a bar in more ways than I can count in a computer. You can play three against four. You can play two in four. Jazz is going to be around, whether it's 4/4 or 8/8 or 2/4 or 6/8. 4/4 is the most common denominator. Don Ellis made some money off of 11 1/2/3. But the soloists were playing in 4/4. So it's kind of jive making money off the name 11 1/2/3 or whatever he called it. I enjoy playing in 4/4 because I can divide it in many more ways than 7/4 and 5/4. I can find more variations, probably because people are used to hearing 4/4 so they can still get to "one," no matter where it is in the bar. We do ballads with the quartet where there is no time at all, and that's jazz. Jazz is not 4/4; jazz is creativity, whether it's 4/4 or 14/14, or whatever the hell it is.

Smith: When you play varying rhythmic patterns, do you think, "This is a Latin pattern; this is a rock pattern?" Or do you just do it automatically?

Carter: Whatever rhythm I play, I mechanically analyze it as I do it. I play it because I hear it and I feel that at this juncture of the tune this rhythm has to be right here, whether it be Latin, rock, ballad. It fits because of that certain prescribed range of time. I don't have a Latin book and say, "This is page 3," or a rock book, "Oh, this is the fourth paragraph." All these patterns depend on who I'm playing with and their styles. One advantage a free-lancer has is that you get to try a lot of styles out, to find out the best of your ability. Connie Kay puts out a different kind of beat than Ben Riley, Billy Cobham or Tony Williams. The same rhythmic pattern will not fit each of their different rhythm beats. I have to adjust my count to their particular rhythm groove.

Smith: Is it a conscious effort?

Carter: I have to be conscious of the different beats they play on the cymbals. But what comes out is innate, subconscious. It just happens because it happens! It's automatic because I've learned to listen to the environment to see what fits. That's a little bit different than having it sound like a learned approach. If I play a G note with Art Farmer, that same note will have a different value with Miles Davis. It's the same on drums, piano, or guitar. Sometimes I will deliberately

play a note sharp because I want that kind of effect at that point. I try to tune the bass below the normal pitch, because the bass sounds better a little flat than sharp.

I play deliberately sharp because it catches the attention of the piano player, the listener. I don't do it unless I have something specifically in mind for him to get to. But that is a very conscious effort on my part. It starts the drummer saying, "Hey, here comes something. I'm not sure what it is, but be ready for it, whatever it is." If I play something out of tune, it's for a reason. Either I have fallen over, or it's because I want to set up a certain phrase.

Smith: What about on *Will You Still Be Mine* (a tune from the *All Blues* set on which Ron overdubbed both bass parts)?

Carter: That was deliberate. The rhythm was straight, but the overdub was sharp and purposely out of time. I made a record with Herbie Hancock and Freddie Hubbard. I think it was on the *Maiden Voyage* album, where Freddie plays some quarter tones. Some critics thought it was out of tune. But it was so hip: he was playing right in between the valves, and now it's in. That's the same with what I'm doing. Conservatory people can't see that.

Smith: What are your views on electric instruments other than bass?

Carter: In general, I'm opposed to them, despite enjoying what they do. Sometimes, electric piano is difficult to play with because the range and the color of the sound is very close to acoustic bass. It takes a lot of work to make the two sound different, especially live. It's a problem to have every note heard separately from the Fender Rhodes sound. When you hear an acoustic bass player playing with electric piano, he's doing a hell of a job . . . just to overcome the similarities. Other instruments have enough range, enough highs in their sound to overcome this. One of the problems of playing with Wes Montgomery was that his sound was so velvetlike that it was tough to find a note outside his range that would not be somehow encompassed by his round sounds. Then there's the point of view that says, "Is it more important to have everything I play heard, or to get into the groove?"

Smith: How about organists?

Carter: I've played with them all. They may go into their old habits or their normal approach for maybe the first half-hour and then realize, "Hey, that's Ron Carter over there, man. Let him do that kind of thing." Jimmy Smith did that very thing. I come to a session with something to offer. They all realize that, eventually.

Smith: What of electric mouthpieces like Eddie Harris, Miles Davis, Freddie Hubbard? Would you hire them on purpose?

Carter: With a specific thing in mind for

them, yes. Herbie Hancock did a concert with me awhile ago and I made the specification that he only play acoustic. He said, "Oh, man. I'd love to." Even players who are caught up in electricity, if given the opportunity to play with some quality acoustic players, would jump at the chance. And we had a ball, man. I would not necessarily endorse electric instruments, because the player gets caught up in playing electronics rather than playing the sound of an acoustic instrument. I love listening to Eddie Harris, but I think that if I asked him to play something for me acoustically, he would not be reticent about doing it.

Smith: Billy Cobham's group is all electric. Have you found it difficult to tell the instruments apart on all occasions?

Carter: That's why I'm against electronics in general. They can destroy one's musical personality so easily. It's not only hard to tell who's playing, but what they're playing. Unless you know a piano player's personal style, it's difficult to tell who's playing what. Joe Zawinul sounds good, but on electric he sounds like a lot of other people. Herbie, too. But it's hard to tell the difference between him and Chick and the major electrics.

Smith: What is a piccolo bass?

Carter: It's a bass that I had made about three years ago. It's about three-quarters the size of a three-quarter bass with the same proportionate dimensions. It's tuned like a cello upside-down—the top string is C, next is G, then D, and the lower string is A. A bass player would say it's tuned like a bass, only with a C-string added and an E-string taken off. For me it's much more logical to think of a cello tuned upside-down. It's not a direct shrinkage of a full-sized bass, like a school bass, or something. There are alterations that I wanted made in it. If this new record sells, I want to take it on the road with me.

Smith: Do you like playing with a bass accompanist?

Carter: I avoid another bass player unless our attitudes are the same toward music. Clearly, another bass player has to be willing to sacrifice some of his shit to make it match. Occasionally, other players of the same instrument are not readily interested in doing that. To be a jazz player, you have to have a big ego to survive. It takes matching attitudes to take two people at a given point and have one of them submerge his concepts, so that someone else's bright spot, that may be more valid at that point, can come through. I find George Duvivier very, very musical about playing with other bass players. His willingness to lay back and let another bass player do what he can do is phenomenal.

Smith: About Miles: Is he really ahead of his time? Is it foresight, or copout? Is he a leader, lazy, or a bored genius?

Carter: Yes, he's really ahead of his time. I can't tell how far because I don't know how soon people catch up to him. I don't know what his logic is for doing what he does. That he does it is enough for me. He has foresight and people are following him.

Smith: Is he a leader if nobody follows him?

Carter: Miles recorded *So What* in 1958, which was a brand new conception, all the black keys and all the white keys for a blues. As far as I'm concerned, *Kind Of Blue* is a major jazz record—a leading record. Just because no one jumped on that case does not mean that those tunes are not leaders. That record was a major change in music that he was leading. Yet few, if any, followed. Therefore, he was a leader without followers at that time. When music gets around to being more acoustic, players will go back to the archives and say, "Look how we missed this music 20 years ago."

Smith: What were the rewards of playing with Miles?

Carter: People often assume that everyone learns from Miles. But they never reverse the situation, that Miles learns from the players he hires. I feel that we both gleaned a lot of knowledge from our relationship. All of us—Tony (Williams), Herbie (Hancock), Wayne (Shorter)—are trying not to have to answer for him any longer now that we're not connected with him and trying to get our own personalities off the ground.

Smith: Where do you place yourself in the musical spectrum?

Carter: As a person who happens to play bass, who can play whatever music is placed in front of him, and who always plays to the best of his ability, whatever style is demanded, without losing his ability to contribute.

Smith: Would you call yourself a contemporary musician in that regard?

Carter: I've played some non-contemporary music.

Smith: Would you call yourself a renaissance musician, then?

Carter: No, because I play contemporary music. I'm not afraid of the word "jazz" though. I didn't use that word here because we're trying to get a word that doesn't limit the musical area, but I don't get uptight when called a jazz player the way others do, people that do the hiring, give passports . . .

Smith: Parents . . .

Carter: Now, I don't know. Jazz is a lot more acceptable term than acid rock or glitter rock.

Smith: In that case, a toast to acid rock and glitter rock! Have you played classical music with Friedrich Gulda and Roland Hanna, since both have roots in that area?

Carter: I've rehearsed a couple of little things with Gulda at the Steinway factory in Berlin.

SELECTED CARTER DISCOGRAPHY

Featured

UPTOWN CONVERSATION—Embryo SD 521
BLUES FARM—CTI 6027
ALL BLUES—CTI 6037
SPANISH BLUE—CTI 6051

as Sideman

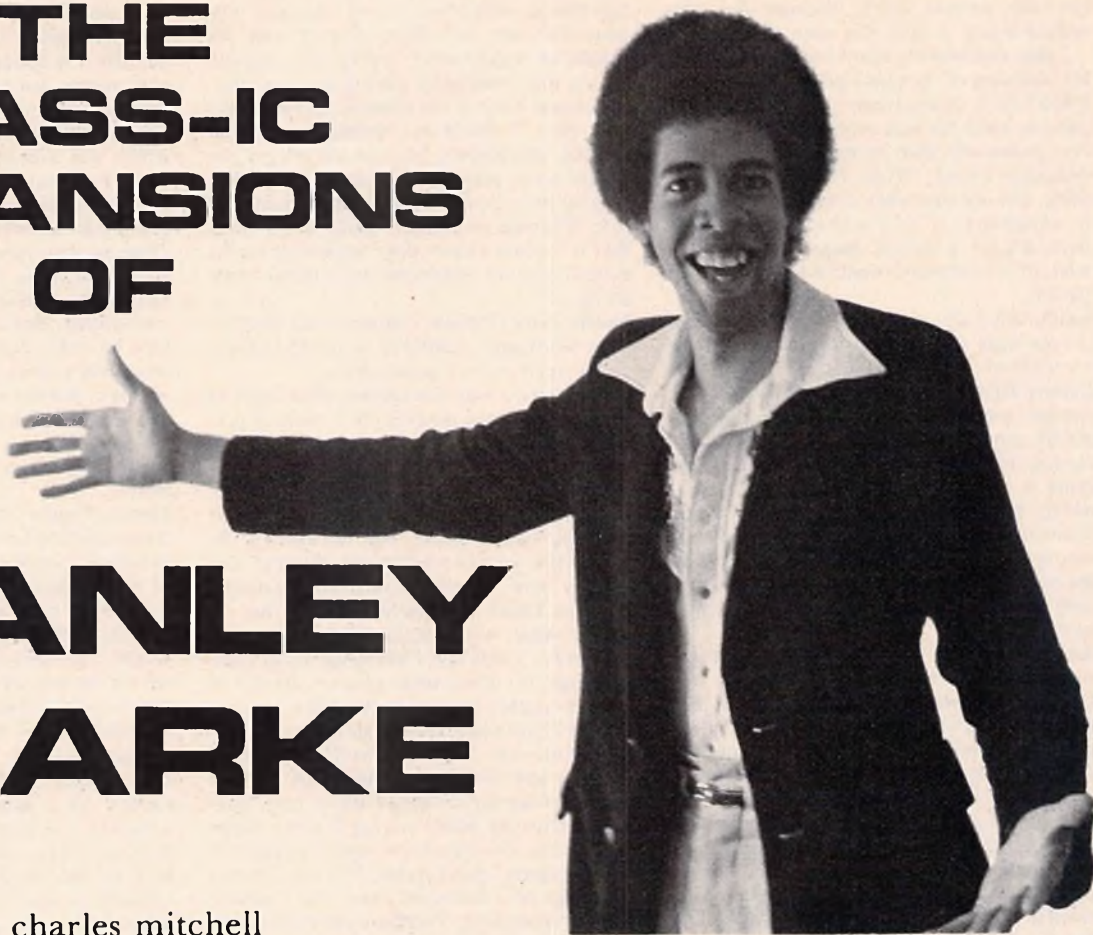
SEVEN STEPS TO HEAVEN (With Miles Davis)—Columbia CS 8851
IN EUROPE (With Miles Davis)—Columbia CS 8983
ESP (With Miles Davis)—Columbia CS 9150
MILES SMILES (With Miles Davis)—Columbia CS 9401
SORCERER (With Miles Davis)—Columbia CS 9532
NEFERTITI (With Miles Davis)—Columbia CS 9594
MILES IN THE SKY (With Miles Davis)—Columbia CS 9628
ERIC DOLPHY—Prestige 24008
FIRST TAKE (With Roberta Flack)—Atlantic SD 8230

QUIET FIRE (With Roberta Flack)—Atlantic SD 1594
SOUL '69 (With Aretha Franklin)—Atlantic SD 8212
IN CONCERT—Vol. I & II (With Hancock/Hubbard)—CTI 6044 & 6049
SKY DIVE (With Freddie Hubbard)—CTI 6018
BIG BAND BAGS (With Milt Jackson)—Milestone 47006
OLINGA (With Milt Jackson)—CTI 6046
THE RITE OF SPRING (With Hubert Laws)—CTI 6012
THE MANY FACES OF YUSEF LATEEF—Milestone 47009
LIVE AT JIMMY'S (With Michel Legrand)—RCA BGLI-850
A DAY IN THE LIFE (With Wes Montgomery)—A&M 3001
WHILE WE'RE YOUNG (With Wes Montgomery)—Milestone 47003
TEQUILA (With Wes Montgomery)—Verve 68653
STORIES TO TELL (With Flora Purim)—Milestone 9058
GIANT BOX (With Don Sebesky)—CTI 6031/32
SOUL BOX (With Grover Washington Jr.)—Kudu KUX 1213

THE BASS-IC EXPANSIONS OF

STANLEY CLARKE

by charles mitchell



Consider these four points about Stanley Clarke. He has reached a fully mature, utterly distinctive style on two instruments, electric and acoustic basses. He has further evolved that style to the innovative stage, altering and elasticizing the role of his instruments so that future generations of bassists will inevitably be influenced by his approach, as he himself was by the playing of Pettiford, Chambers, Mingus, La Faro, and Carter. He culled four firsts and one second place ranking in the 1974 *db* Critics and Readers Polls. He will not reach his twenty-fourth birthday until the end of June.

Jazz and contemporary music has always had its share of extraordinary young talent; Miles Davis, Clifford Brown, Tony Williams, Stevie Wonder spring off the top of one's head without even going back too many years. The list would grow with five more minutes' thought and the whole of jazz-pop history in consideration. Now Stanley Clarke joins the roll call, and like his predecessors, he's still moving in new directions, not content to rest on his laurels as one of the two or three top bassists around.

Expansion—as a man and musician—was the main theme of the conversation we had in a dressing room shortly after two exhilarating performances by Return To Forever, the group that's provided the creative environment for most of Stanley's growth. With Chick Corea, Al DiMeola, and Lenny White, Stanley is a member of one of the most commercially and artistically successful fusion

groups playing today. It's somewhat ironic that a single group—and the collaboration with Corea in particular—has formed the basis for Clarke's expansion of musical territory. In the jet age, such extended collaborations are relatively rare (Chick and Stanley have been playing together for about four years, since they first got together under the aegis of Stan Getz).

"Basically it's just because we have similar realities and similar goals, and we dig playing with each other," Clarke explains. "We dig each other as people—we're compatible. That's all; it's very simple. Our musical goals *can* be similar. That is, we can both decide to do this musically and not do that musically. At times, I decide to do something on my own."

Stanley's latest project on his own took the form of a new album on the Nemperor label of Mahavishnu manager Nat Weiss. Titled simply *Stanley Clarke*, it has a sound based in the present electric structures of Return To Forever, with some notable differences. "First of all," Stanley points out, "the compositions are all mine. Secondly, there's a piece on the second side that features me on solo bass with a group of about ten string players. It comes out sounding like an orchestra with lead bass. I've never tried anything like that before."

Clarke also produced his album, a task he prepared for when he handled the musical arrangements for Flora Purim's *Butterfly Dreams* album on Milestone. "I got the music together, wrote some things, arranged a lot,

helped it along. On my new album, I did the whole trip. It was difficult, but fun. There were a lot of people to deal with: the record company, the studio, the engineers, instrument rental, hiring all of the string players. Then I had to write all the parts to the music. I got the music together a month before the recording. Then we rehearsed for about three days, and recorded for five days. The mixing took four days."

All of this concentrated effort paid off in an exciting album that nonetheless sounds carefully planned and immaculately executed. Clarke uses guitarist Bill Connors, Tony Williams on drums (a welcome return to top form after a mysterious slump for a couple of years), and Jan Hammer on keyboards. In addition, there's a Michael Gibbs arrangement of Stanley's *Spanish Phases For Bass And Strings*; and Stanley further expands his own role by playing piano and vocalizing briefly on a tune called *Yesterday Princess*. About his singing: "Some cats say I sound like Johnny Mathis, other cats say other things, but it came out really well. It's kind of a personal thing now. It came out well; there's no effort involved."

THE QUESTION inevitably arises about what an artist who does a solo project feels he can't express in his ensemble, that leads him to do something else on his own. In Stanley's case, the question became slightly more difficult, since in both the new album and his previous solo effort (*Children Of Forever* on Polydor), the basics of the sound stick fairly close to the sound of Return To Forever,

right down to instrumental orientation. "That's kind of a touchy subject. When you belong to a band like ours, where everyone involved contributes so much, if one person leaves to do something else, it's only natural that some of the things he creates in other places with other people will be similar in certain respects. Anything that I ever do will always have similarities to Return To Forever. I really can't think of anyone who has left our band to go out on his own who has changed totally."

It's a case, apparently, of the solo work being an outgrowth of the ensemble experience. But despite Stanley's view that, "it's just me going and using my energies in another place," there's still the need to do just that. And that's what needs to be pinned down; what is it that *has* to be expressed independently? This question led us to the focal point of our dialogue: expansion.

"I think the ideal scene for any person is to expand as an individual. It's hard to expand in a group unless the collective attitude is oriented toward expanding. I was thinking about something today that I wanted to talk to you about. There are a lot of groups that play a funny kind of game—it's the leader-sideman trip. A bunch of sidemen support a guy. These bands are always temporary; they never last for a long time. But the bands that can last forever, or at least a lot longer, are the ones in which each individual is allowed to expand. You can still have a leader, but the leader will respect each player's ability enough not to crush or suppress him. He's going to let everyone blossom, even if it means he's going to have to lose some of his leadership, which is what eventually happens. As everyone expands to a certain point, you don't need a leader, or the leader becomes less of a leader."

Or perhaps within the same group, each member becomes a leader. "That's the utopian concept, the ideal scene. That's a real high plane. Nobody's gotten there yet, and I think it would take a little more than a lifetime to do it. No two people are the same in make-up or abilities. There's always one guy who's either better or worse in a particular area. But it is possible to have a group where all the individuals expand to such a high degree that you can get pretty close to that utopia: four really strong individuals who are known as individuals, but also as a collective name."

Thus, Stanley feels that all solo members of Return To Forever are strong enough to hang together as a collective ensemble, each occasionally spinning off on his own axis to do his own thing, whether individually or for the band. "I know Lenny's going to do a solo LP in 1975. Al DiMeola is getting into writing for the first time. The band is just going to get more powerful. That's the formula: to have everyone doing it without a slouch. If you perceive a guy in your band who's holding back for whatever reason, you have to give him a kick in the pants and say, 'Look, get something together—write a piece, learn how to notate, *something*.' It happened with

Lenny, you know. Lenny couldn't write music for a long time. He finally got this book I told him to get, and learned how to notate. He came in one day with this piece and we played it, and he felt so good!"

It seems that there are two ways in which an individual can expand. The problem can be viewed as being in one place and wanting to get to another; or expansion can be a more natural thing, organically growing like a child, almost without even realizing it. Clarke feels that, most of the time, expansion in his sense of the word involves a concerted effort to get somewhere you haven't been.

"The easiest way to expand, I think, is to find out what's needed. First of all, find out what you need in a particular area. Let's say that there's a guy in a band who plays trumpet. All he does is play his parts. If he's in a band that's into expansion and wants to see him do more things, then he'll start checking out what he's doing: he'll say, 'Well, I'm just playing parts.' The next thing he would learn

SELECTED CLARKE DISCOGRAPHY

Featured

STANLEY CLARKE—Nemperor NE 431
CHILDREN OF FOREVER—Polydor 5531

with Return To Forever

WHERE HAVE I KNOWN YOU BEFORE—Polydor PD 6509
HYMN OF THE SEVENTH GALAXY—Polydor 5536
LIGHT AS A FEATHER—Polydor 5525
RETURN TO FOREVER—German ECM 1022

with Norman Connors

DANCE OF MAGIC—Buddah (Cobblestone) 9024

with Joe Farrell

MOON GERMS—CTI 6023

with Pharoah Sanders

BLACK UNITY—Impulse S-9219

with Gato Barbieri

UNDER FIRE—Flying Dutchman 10156

how to do is improvise. He'll go home and practice scales for months, years, or whatever it takes. Then he'll check himself out again. This time, he might find that he needs to write, and the process will start again. After that, it might be scoring for large orchestras, or movie writing . . . it's endless.

"The principle extends to other parts of your life, also. I'll give you an example. I used to be part of bands that were never into communicating with anyone outside of the band. The music was esoteric. I was into drugs. It was great music, but I had to expand from that. I had to get away from the drugs, look out for what people liked, see whether I could relate to that and create music that they could like. All of this, and still remain

myself. That's another kind of expansion."

STILL, THE NEED for individual talents to expand often leads to divergent paths. During the first half of 1973, Corea and Clarke appeared with a new edition of Return To Forever, a much more highly charged, electrified format than the original group which featured the gentle Latin tones and colors of Airtio, Flora Purim, and Joe Farrell. Clarke comments: "Ever since the band has been together, anyone who's ever left it has done so on his or her own, because they wanted to. It's a policy that we've never fired anyone. I feel that it's possible to help a person in the band break through the barriers that might be encountered. All the musicians who've left have had other goals, other intentions. During the whole time we played with Airtio, he very much wanted to have his own group, so he went off and did that. Bill Connors, Earl Klugh also. With Earl, it was definitely family problems that caused him to leave."

What specifically caused the switch, then, from the previous style to the heavy electric approach? "I think that everyone realizes that electric music is very popular these days. It just works, because there's a lot of impact. People like to *feel* their sound, for some reason. We figured, why not?" Yet now the band does an entire set of acoustic music in their concerts, so the two forms are well-blended.

It seems that whenever creative people discuss the problems of communication, no two have the same ideas on what communication is. Stanley offers his own definition: "Start with two people. One person passes something along to another. Joe will say 'Hello' to Frank. Frank understands that message, and sends him back an acknowledgement that the message is received. That's the simplest form. It gets bigger. Musically, a really good performance will project qualities that the audience can pick up and understand. It could be any or all parts: the energy of it, the technical aspects of the playing, or anything else. The key thing is that the audience receives what we're doing and responds in some way." Sometimes, especially with Return To Forever, the intercommunication within the group on stage will gas the audience in and of itself. "That's very true," replies Clarke, laughing, "You get to the point where even the communication communicates."

As Stanley pointed out, gaining the ability to communicate arises out of the need for expansion in a certain direction. But expansion is a process that often needs facilitation. Many contemporary musical artists have sought methods to increase their awareness of the directions in which it's possible to move. The study of Scientology has affected each member of Return To Forever, and Stanley credits it with a great influence on his whole life. "I've studied Scientology for about two years. It's basically an applied philosophy, founded by a man named L. Ron Hubbard, who took a lot of basic truths that he came across or discovered on his own, and put them all together in this great big subject. It's a vast system; within it, a huge amount of territory is covered.

It's put in such a way that it can actually work for an individual . . . to explain why he's here, about his environment, other people, and himself.

"Musically, it's helped me become aware of a lot of things. It's only natural that when a person becomes more aware, he's able to do more things. When a musician feels that he's

"When you belong to a band like ours, where everyone involved contributes so much, if one person leaves to do something else, it's only natural that some of the things he creates in other places with other people will be similar in certain respects."

Charles Earland:

FED UP WITH THAT FUNK

by vernon gibbs



DAVE HUBBARD

Charles Earland likes his plateau. "I think *Leaving This Planet* is a definite new plateau for me," he says from the comfort of his Englewood, N.J. home. "They don't want to give me any credit for it because they say I filled it up with superstars, but who is there to play with? I thought I was playing with people of my own caliber, but obviously the critics don't think so. They've done and said everything, except admit that I really sound good. They've said, 'Well you're getting it together baby, but we gonna see what you're gonna do on this next LP, when you ain't got Freddie Hubbard and Joe Henderson.' What they don't realize is that the reason Freddie and Joe play so well is because there was so much feeling on it. I wasn't playing with them; they were playing with me and they dug it.

"Now maybe I wouldn't fit in as well on one of their sessions, but they were really fired up for mine. Joe Henderson particularly. Every time he stuck his horn to the mike I was amazed. I always knew he was a bad mother, but I couldn't believe he was playing like this on my session. I also consider Freddie Hubbard the greatest trumpet soloist in the world, and I was honored to have him on my record."

The subtle bits of self-deprecation indicate that Earland's new plateau has been the result of a constant struggle for recognition. As one of the leading organists in jazz, he still does not see himself as having won his struggle. He 16 □ down beat

acknowledges his popularity with the nightclub audience, but for him that isn't enough.

"Jimmy Smith was *the* cat as far as I was concerned, but I don't think I've replaced him in terms of recognition. If I had, I wouldn't be sitting here arguing with you about being a funky organ player. In terms of popularity, I find myself *the* popular organ player right now, but it's just what the people want to hear. I've been fortunate to survive

"I've been classified so long as just a funk organist and it's really sad that they classify all organ players as just funk cats. I'm not a funk organist, I'm into music completely."

because my music is always changing. I can dig getting into what Miles is into and then doing some ballads and then getting into some McCoy Tyner. I definitely don't see myself as just a funk organist."

Earland admits that the history leading up to this classification might lead the casual observer to such a mistaken impression. Starting as a saxophonist in his high school band in Philadelphia where he took lessons from Jimmy Heath, Earland soon became proficient enough to quit school at age 16 and began making a living playing in local bands.

"It was the day of the big tenor player," he recalls, "cats like Red Prysock and Gene Ammons, cats who were into that kick, that type of swinging blues. There was always a certain type of feeling I got behind a Red Prysock solo. Gene Ammons had the same type of thing, as well as cats like Sonny Stitt who came from that style, but were more technically involved. A cat like that could rock a house down, he could come into a club and upset the whole thing. Cats like Ben Webster, Lucky Thompson, and Willis Jackson were making all the bread during that particular time. You'd get three or four cats at a dance all at once, and they'd be trying to blow each other off the stand. It was cats like that who kept the people's ear away from Bird. They would be saying that cats like Bird were too far out."

Earland found enough employment around Philadelphia to sustain him until he landed a gig with Jimmy McGriff's band. He signed on as a sax player, but when he quit after three years he had something else on his mind.

"When I left Jimmy McGriff I had been brainwashed by the organ. With Jimmy, all we played was blues and that's all I could play on sax. Half the time I couldn't even play my own axe because I was so busy watching Jimmy play the organ. So I just laid my axe down and decided that I'd learn to play the organ. I started flat 12 years ago, and it was very difficult because I didn't know anything about the instrument. I still consider myself a relative newcomer to the organ and I feel as though I'm just beginning to find myself, just beginning to come into my own. When I had my first hit with *More Today Than Yesterday* from *Blacktalk*, I think that's all I could play. But I've grown along with the music and I think I've surpassed that point."

That album was recorded after the close of a three-year association with Lou Donaldson, a period Earland regards as "some of the best years of my career." He was discovered by Donaldson after emerging from six years of woodshedding with his new instrument, earning a precarious living from the organ trios he formed with local musicians.

"Guys like Pat Martino really carried the weight for me when I was just learning to play. They would be soloing all night and I'd be mostly backing. I played in various trios until I thought I sounded like an organist. One night I was playing at a club in Philadelphia and a dude came over to me and whispered, 'You better play your ass off tonight because Lou Donaldson's in the house and he's checking you out.' The next night, Lou came back with some of his albums and asked me if I wanted a gig. I told him, Hell, yeah," and he told me to learn the music off the albums.

"It was like being in school. I had never had any jazz training before and I really didn't know where jazz was coming from. But Lou was the kind of cat who would look at you and say, 'Hey man, you know *Cherokee*?' I'd have to tell him I didn't, and he'd say, 'Well, that's too bad, because I just got a request for it.' And he'd kick it right off. I had to learn it right there on the stand."

Earland found himself with such a reputation that he was soon offered a record contract with Prestige, a company with a definite

continued on page 34

crescendo, then a sudden diminuendo and segue into a faster, brighter rock feeling. Collins has the lead again here until another diminuendo leads into a new melody statement in unison by Collins and Charig. A crescendo furthered by the whole group, a reprise of the melody, and then another abrupt ending, which is the only major defect in 12 minutes of a complex, driving, emotionally uplifting and intellectually satisfying performance.

For those who increasingly regret the evanescence of the gains made by popular music between, say, 1966 and 1970, King Crimson has remained one of the bright spots in the ever more homogeneous pop music spectrum. It's very comforting to know they can still get it on, even for only half an album's worth. Your best bet is to tape side two and avoid side one altogether, but you shouldn't miss *Starless*, however you manage to get at it.

—heineman

SHORT SHOTS

ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL

ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL—Epic KE 33097: *Choo Choo Ch' Boogie; You And Me Instead; Jumpin' At The Woodside; Last Letter; Don't Ask Me Why I'm Going To Texas; The Kind Of Love I Can't Forget; I'm Gonna Be A Wheel Someday; Our Names Aren't Mentioned Together Anymore; Miss Molly; Bloodshot Eyes; Dead Man.*

★ ★ ★ ★

For years the debate about western swing has raged on—what exactly is this style of music spawned by the late Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys? Is it legitimate jazz, bastardized country, is it a hodge-podge of both?

Regardless of the answer, the best western swing is a compellingly enervating, happy

breed of music that has all-too-unfairly faded into obscurity. One of the sole remaining champions of the genre is Asleep At The Wheel, an eight-piece unit transplanted from West Virginia to the heart of deepest Texas. Lanky ringleader Ray Benson looks convincingly like a home-bred longhorneer and the rest of the band are musically authentic, if a little less so in appearance.

It may not be the most experimental, but there is a lot of jazz in Asleep At The Wheel's repertoire. This album, their second, features a rollicking version of Basie's *Jumpin' At The Woodside*, a retake of Wynonie Harris' r&b hit *Bloodshot Eyes*, and a westernized version of *Choo Choo Ch' Boogie*, made famous by Bill Haley and his Comets in the '50s.

There are also the obligatory tearjerkers, most of them being reserved for Chris O'Connell, whose croonings are more than a little reminiscent of country queens Patsy Cline and Loretta Lynn. The instrumental hot licks dazzle throughout, with the pedal steel work of Lucky Oceans and the keyboard of Floyd Domino demanding mention.

This band crosses over so many boundaries that they don't deserve to be saddled with a category. They are definitely for the light-hearted and unprejudiced ear.

—hohman

BOBBI HUMPHREY

SATIN DOLL—Blue Note (U.A.) BN-LA344-G: *New York Times; Satin Doll; San Francisco Lights; Ladies Day; Fun House; My Little Girl; Rain Again; You Are The Sunshine Of My Life.*

★ ★ ★ ½

More than jazz, I would call Bobbi Humphrey's new release a disco album. It has an impressive beginning with heavy bass and drums. However, Humphrey seems to be overwhelmed by the army of accompanists on

the tune. The title track is an up-tempo reworking of the Ellington standard with voices. *San Francisco Lights* demonstrates finely executed tempo changes and breaks, superlative synthesizer and breathy flute solos. *Ladies Day*, perhaps the best cut on this side, brings Humphrey's truly fine flute capabilities to the foreground. She's delicate yet strong, hitting cool, clean notes and clear, precise tones which are a joy to experience.

Side two starts with a laugh—significant perhaps? *Fun House* is the title of the cut, and it relies heavily on background vocals and strong synthesizer effects. *My Little Girl*, a pretty tune written for Humphrey's daughter, again demonstrates that clear flute all too infrequent on this album. *Rain Again* has a funky piano and could be termed a "danceable" number. Last but not least, the Stevie Wonder tune, standard fare on jazz and rock albums these days. Larry Mizell has done a fine arrangement of this standard: it's a piece which has vitality and subtle nuances while managing to maintain the Wonder flavor. If only there were more flute solos . . . perhaps next time around.

—antalin

THE BLACKBYRDS

FLYING START—Fantasy F-9472: *I Need You; The Baby; Love Is Love; Blackbyrds' Theme; Walking In Rhythm; Future Children, Future Hopes; April Showers; Spaced Out.*

★

The Blackbyrds, six of Donald Byrd's Howard University students, have connected with the contemporary sound in funk music. They're fine on the car radio or at a party, but repeated listening becomes aurally fatiguing. The simple tunes, which probably began as exercises, lack melodic interest, while almost

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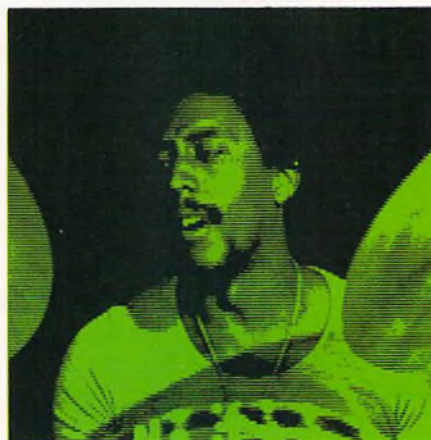
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AVEDIS ZILDJIAN CYMBALS

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ers, and really could claim to represent the post-La Faro bass nearly exhaustively. The larger pretensions, however, cheapen the album, making it seem almost fraudulent.

There are few highlights on the first three sides. The Blanton and Pettiford selections, as I've said, are most unrepresentative: *Tri-croism* is a bop classic, but not in this version. Both Pettiford tracks are voiced the same, Pettiford in unison with Thompson on the melody statement, and Pettiford doesn't even swing that great here, his decay seeming overly rapid and his tone choked and forced. Ray Brown's solos on *Very Thought* are sensational, but the cut is a decided non-sequitur, for this isn't the Brown of the Gillespie band who would logically follow (or even precede) Pettiford, but rather the Brown who has adapted to new directions with taste and facility. His unaccompanied solo which begins the track includes strummed chords, in-and-out-of-tempo phrasing, and a generally abstract approach which, while it isn't really "free" playing, would've been unthinkable for Brown prior to the mid-1960s. But the playing, chronology aside, is beautiful; proof of the pudding is that this is a live club date on which the crowd is quite audible at times—but during Brown's solo, there's utter silence.

II BS is one of my all-time favorites; it seems to me as good a definition of soul as ever existed. In the context of this album, however, it's not even close to the best Mingus available. The leader's opening cadences couldn't be more beautifully powerful: he calls the children home irresistibly. After that, though, his accompaniment, while propulsive and strong, isn't as inventive as Mingus has been elsewhere, even on this album (*Mingus Mingus Mingus Mingus Mingus*), and especially on some of the Atlantic sides immediately preceding this session. The same criticism can be made of the Chambers tracks. *Blues and the Abstract Truth* is a gassy album, this cut is fine, there's a gorgeous transition from Oliver Nelson's alto solo to Eric Dolphy's. Mr. PC walks like a funky rock throughout—but as a showcase for Chambers' great empathy for musicians with whom he was accustomed to playing, it's merely average.

Finally, when we get to the last cut on side two, we get a bass performance unarguably worth memorializing. La Faro's with Bill Evans and Paul Motian on *Gloria's*. The solo is typical La Faro, largely in the upper register and largely dependent on triplet figures; it's a fine solo, and La Faro also demonstrates in his accompaniment why bass playing was irrevocably changed by his sadly foreshortened career.

Not much on side three, either. Hinton, a strong, multi-talented player, is miserably represented by some ordinary walking accompaniment and a banal one-chorus solo on *Conversations*. Duviol gets a little more variety into his playing on *Sicks*, but except for some interesting effects by Eddie Costa on vibes, notably some strangely affecting choked notes on the out-chorus, it's a very ordinary track. Finally we get to the contemporaries, beginning with Garrison on *Praise*, which is, of course, another wild non-sequitur. Garrison's unaccompanied intro is a joy—he has been for many years the most compelling a cappella bassist around—and here, he employs much of the instrument's total range, using a pedal point and strums alternating with single-stop patterns that establish the tonal center of the piece. Once Coltrane, Tyner, and Jones enter, however, he's badly underrecorded. Still, the intro is worth the

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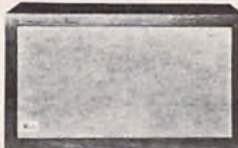
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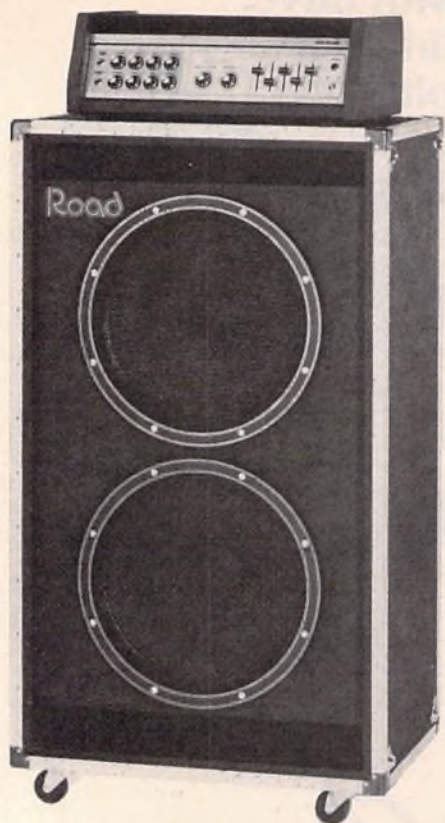


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price of admission. I'd make almost the same analysis of Haden's work on *Che*: the intro absolutely *sings*, as only Haden at his most lyrical can sing, but even though his ensemble work behind Barbieri, Cherry, *et al.*, has more density and sinuousness than Garrison's, it's not Haden's most inventive playing. The track as a whole, and the album it comes from (*Liberation Music Orchestra*) are among the high-water marks of the last decade, and if you don't have it, you should.

Actually, some of the best playing on sides three and four is done by two of the least "important" musicians on the album, Grimes and Sirone, who, needless to say, are fine players nonetheless. Grimes' walking on *Wharf* is fluid, strong, and sure at a breakneck tempo, and he uses some interesting substitutions for the standard changes. Sirone's good here, too: his interplay with the horns, especially with Dewey Redman, on *Walls* is remarkably empathetic.

I hate this version of *Syeeda*. The way Shepp has reworked Trane's chart ought to be classified as felonious assault: all the rhythmic playfulness and siney surprise is ironed out. The changes are still there, but the tune dies on the table. There's some wonderful dialogue between Shepp and Roswell Rudd and Workman's okay. The less said about this abomination the better. *Sophisticated* highlights Shepp's Webster/Hawkins/Carney pastiche, amusing and even moving for a few moments, then tiresome: Carter, who, with Mingus and Davis, is one of the three premier bassists of the contemporary era, in my opinion, does nothing very exceptional except to catch much of the elastic spirit with which Shepp informs the original: he plays the changes a bit off-center from time to time, which creates a pleasantly disorienting effect, and does so in a subtler way than Shepp's wildly bent tones. But Carter should be represented either by one of his many incredible performances with Miles or by his work with his own or Eric Dolphy's groups.

Davis is luckier: Backer and Michel had access to one of the non-pareil performances on bass, *Summertime*, from the Elvin Jones-Davis collaboration *Heavy Sounds*. I tried to describe this incredible performance about six years ago when I reviewed the album for *db*. I failed miserably then and I ain't about to embarrass myself again. Suffice it to say that if you want a living catalogue of The Compleat Contemporary Bass, this 11-minute cut supplies it.

McBee has two chances on the album: he's linked with Stanley Clarke on *Unity* and is the sole bassist behind Pharoah on *Love*. Poor Stanley: a fine player, he's relegated to the repetition gig on *Unity*, articulating the modal scale while McBee gets off some interesting filigree work in the upper register. But McBee really distinguishes himself on *Love*. He's unbelievably fast, but after his bravura beginning statement, he ritards and constructs a thoughtful, craftsmanly, solid abstract structure, which he then simultaneously departs from and builds on in some brilliantly harmonic arco work.

All in all, then, I recommend this album precisely in ratio to your unfamiliarity with the music on it. The more you've heard, the less you need the anthology, because as an anthology, it has crippling weaknesses. But some of the music here—*Gloria's*, the intros to *Praise* and *Che*, *Walls*, *Summertime*, and *Love*—is priceless, and taken all together, these tracks serve to illuminate the extent to which the forms of modern music are indebted to explorers like Mingus, La Faro, Haden, Davis, and Carter.

—heineman

Reviews continued on page 38

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Elvin Jones



by herb nolan

blindfold

test

There's one thing Elvin Jones does everytime he works in Chicago (where this Blindfold Test was conducted), he plays a free concert for Warden Winston Moore and the prisoners at Cook County Jail. This trip was no exception: on a cold, overcast Wednesday afternoon, Elvin and his band (including Junior Cook, tenor, Roland Prince, guitar, and David Williams, bass) drove out to the county courts and jail complex at 26th and California. The concert was held in a long, aging, one-story building with low beams and a concrete floor. Elvin's group played for more than an hour to a capacity crowd of about 1200 inmates, as many as the building would hold and about 25 percent of the total prison population.

The Cook County concert was just one of a series he's done in the past couple of years, and they are among some of the most personally satisfying performances he gives these days.

On his way through the double, barbed wire topped gates, Elvin took a guard's name and address so he could send him his newest album.

Elvin Jones, who just signed with Vanguard Records after ending his long association with Blue Note, is as musically active as when he started leading his own bands about nine years ago. On the road more than ten months out of the year, Elvin plans to tour Italy and Japan this year, as well as make another trip to South America for the USIA.

He was given no information about the records played.

1. JELLY ROLL MORTON. *Wolverine Blues* (second take) (From *Mr. Jelly Lord*, RCA). Morton, piano; Johnny Dodds, clarinet; Warren "Baby" Dodds, drums. Recorded June 10, 1927.

Yeah! That was something. The style is early jazz just when it was beginning to become the sophisticated art form it is now. I won't even begin to guess who it is, but I will say it's a recent recording or a good recording of an old record. It's a shame that this sort of redoing isn't done more so people can really get a clear idea, a clear impression, of what things were like.

That record took three or four minutes, all that music in three or four minutes. It's like some of the old Duke Ellington recordings; the whole thing would only last two minutes and 15 seconds or somethin' like that, and you'd have a complete composition, a symphony, a concerto, or whatever, and everything would be perfectly matched—the musicians, the composition, the sound.

I think as far as classification, that's live in my book. I don't know who it is, and I don't care who it is. All I know is it's beautiful music and I love it.

Nolan: I'm going to tell you anyway, the drummer is someone you talk about quite often.

Jones: Baby Dodds? And who's that clarinet. Bunny Bigard? No, Johnny Dodds with *Jelly Roll Morton on piano*. Jelly Roll Morton, there you are, the master. The first thing that comes to my mind is I'd like to have a copy of that. This is what you should hear on the radio when guys are getting ready to go to work at five o'clock in the morning and then build up, or down, to the rest of the music

that's current. When I go to a museum, the things there are selected from thousands of sculptures and paintings worthy of public attention, and this is what should occur when you turn on the radio to listen to a music program. Who cares who makes the most money? The fact is this should be available so the proper attention can be paid to it—so it is part of everybody's life. That's the way I feel.

Here I am, I'm supposed to be a musician and that's a record I never heard. I never had an opportunity to hear that. Maybe I would have been a little better if I'd had a chance to hear that when I was ten years old; maybe I would have been a better drummer.

2. DIZZY GILLESPIE. *Two Bass Hit* (From *The Dizzy Gillespie Orchestra At Salle Pleyel; Paris, France*, Prestige). Gillespie, Benny Bailey, Dave Burns, Lamar Wright Jr., Elmon Wright, trumpets; Al McKibben, bass; Kenny Clarke, drums; Chano Pozo, conga drums. Arranged by John Lewis. Recorded 1948.

I know that's Dizzy Gillespie with that first big band with Fats Navarro, Miles, and all the cats. I think Tad Dameron did that arrangement. It's a lousy recording but a good reproduction. The lack of attention and sophistication in recording I think reflects on people's feelings and the whole atmosphere involved in producing this art form. Maybe the guys were thinking "well, we won't make much money on it anyway, so the hell with it. But we like Dizzy, so, okay, we'll throw a couple of bones to the dog, right?" That's what pisses me

off. This is a masterpiece. It's a live recording too, isn't it?

Whoever the drummer is, he's a hell of a one. Could be Teddy Stewart. Ray Brown on bass? This is another one you should hear on the radio every morning. This is one of the best records ever recorded and it was live, it wasn't contrived. John Birks said that Gillespie is a master of his instrument. And I think a lot of people in the world—except perhaps in this country—have the utmost respect for this man. I think this is a contribution, a real contribution.

3. BUDDY RICH. *Two Bass Hit* (From *Rich In London*, RCA). Rich, drums; Pat LaBarbera, tenor sax; Bob Dogan, piano; Paul Kondziela, bass. Recorded at Ronnie Scott's club.

That's my buddy, Buddy... ha ha ha... Shit, that can't be nobody else but Buddy Rich. Listen to this, that sonofabitch can play his ass off. That's one of the best bands... I saw them in London when I was on tour and we ran into each other at Ronnie Scott's Club. Isn't that Pat somethin' on tenor? I like that bass player, see how the bass and piano work together so intricately.

Suppose that all these cats had been listening to the radio in the morning when they were young and heard the other version that Dizzy recorded, then started going to school on that. There might have been ten Buddy Rich bands, that's the point. Look at the incentive. But here's Buddy Rich, I don't know anybody who can play any better. What can you say? Stars? 20.

4. MILES DAVIS. *Trane's Blues* (From *Workin' With The Miles Davis Quintet*, Prestige). Davis, trumpet; John Coltrane, tenor sax; Red Garland, piano; Paul Chambers, bass; Philly Joe Jones, drums.

Up against the wall! Coltrane, Miles, Philly Joe Jones, and Red Garland. That's one of the best bands Miles ever had, I don't know what he's doing now but makin' a lot of noise with that electronic shit... There isn't anything wrong with it, but there's a lot of cats that just don't know anything about electronics. It's a good idea to have a P.A. system that you can carry around with you and use in a room wherever you happen to be but electronics is another thing; it's a little different than setting up speakers at vantage points so everyone can hear what you are doing on stage. That's the difference... And I think that's where a lot of people have made an error. It's simply a matter of someone using an area of technology and not being fully informed. Where else but in the jazz field can someone experiment in that fashion and get away with it.

I like this, John, play baby... I'd like to hear a radio program start with that Baby Dodds record. Then before seven put this on, then bring in a couple of Beatles records and the rest of the cats and filter it right on down—get the music really interesting. Put it on the airwaves.

I like that tune. Coltrane, yeah man. That sonofagun, he's probably the biggest contributor to our contemporary understanding of music. Okay, I like Ornette. I like Ornette Coleman, but Coltrane to me, at least after my brothers, my mother and father was the best teacher I had. The communication was there, the rapport was there. If anything, it was a relationship of mentor and pupil.

5. BILLY COBHAM. *Moon Germs* (From *Totale Eclipse*, Atlantic). Cobham, drums. Recorded at Electric Lady Studios, New York.

That couldn't be Billy Cobham could it? Lord have mercy! That sonofabitch can play. Now there's a drummer for you. That's a funky mother. Give him 18,000 stars. Billy's all right. I love him, man. He's a nice guy, and as far as innovation is concerned—I suppose he can afford it—he's made innovations that nobody's attempted. I give him credit for being astute enough to utilize the available technology. I bet this record was recorded at Electric Lady or something... That's all I've got to say. db



and on stage, he plays three of the keyboards and I play three. I stand on the left end of the stage and play the Hammond A-100, a Fender stage piano, and mellotron. On the other side, Dave plays an ARP synthesizer, a clavinet, and an RMI piano.

"In the middle is Tony with all his added bass effects, while Andy McCulloch is in the back playing a large Ludwig double drumkit with all kinds of gongs and kitchen utensils.

"I never really wanted a guitarist for this band. The majority of them, at least this is true insofar as English ones go, I haven't liked very much. Rock guitarists tend to be extremely loud and raucous. They have more opportunity to move around and gain attention, a thing you can't do when you're surrounded by keyboards.

"Although we do use guitarists Clem Clempson and Andy Roberts in several spots on the new album, we don't have any intention of using one on stage. We more or less just added them for color."

Dave feels that the band has continued to grow throughout its brief duration. *Spyglass Guest*, their third album, is comprised of eight tunes, three of which are totally instrumental and might be termed somewhat uncommercial in corporate jargonese.

"Well, I don't see why we shouldn't do what we want to, unless there are commercial pressures. I heard a terrifying story while visiting the Phonogram offices that unless you have a hit single, it sometimes is almost impossible to get played on the vast networks of American radio. That does worry me.

"In England, there is a large pop market. If you're a musician and you want to play that kind of thing, fine. Basically it's just there to make money. As far as glitter and such, we're not really into that at all. We do carry our own environment around with us, since we use a big PA, a backdrop, our own lighting, all that kind of thing. This keeps us from playing small clubs because we just can't physically fit into them. We're not exactly relegated to amphitheatres, there are halls that seat about 4000 we can squeeze in if we want to.

Greenslade's recent material evidences a global influence. *Spirit Of The Dance* is described as an "international" piece, not particularly Irish in inspiration, while *Little Red Fry-Up*, among others, incorporates some of the elements of modern classicism via Zappaesque mutation. The members of the band try to keep abreast of the rapidly metamorphosing music scene.

"I love Todd Rundgren especially. We were thinking of asking him to come and give us a hand producing. I think he's one of the better current artists. I also listen to a lot of John McLaughlin and his Orchestra, although I was slightly disappointed in *Apocalypse*, only because I think he's changed his format, not that there's anything wrong with that.

"I like a few of the things Deodato's done, not his *Whirlwinds* album, but *Deodato 2* is quite fine. Apart from that, I listen to the English classical composer Vaughn Williams, who is probably one of my strongest influences. As far as jazz pianists go, my favorite is Bill Evans. I've seen him in London three times and he's amazing."

Finally on the verge of a full-scale American tour, Dave Greenslade and his mates should be a cinch to use their considerable experience and seasoning to the wisest advantage. **db**

caught

JEREMY STEIG QUINTET

Tin Palace, New York

Personnel: Steig, flute, bass flute, Ab piccolo; Richie Beirach, electric piano; Rick Laird, bass guitar; Joe Chambers, drums; Ray Mantilla, congas, percussion; Diana Shukys, dancer.

The '60s witnessed an explosion in the use of flute as a leading voice in jazz. Herbie Mann was the instrument's main popularizer with pop hits such as *Comin' Home Baby* and *Memphis Underground*. Saxophonists added flutes to their arsenals—Frank Wess and Frank Foster with the Basic band, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, James Moody, Yusef Lateef, Joe Farrell, Charles Lloyd are just a few of the names that snap immediately into focus. Then came the specialists—those musicians who devoted their major efforts to the flute family, like Jeremy Steig and Hubert Laws.

Jeremy Steig (picked in the '74 International Critics Poll as the top flutist in the TDWR category) burst upon the music scene in 1963 with a brilliant debut album for Columbia (*Flute Fever*, CL 2136). His next landmark was the 1969 collaboration with Bill Evans which resulted in a *Camera Three* appearance for CBS-TV and the exciting *What's New* (Verve, V6-8777). His most recent recording is *Montium* (Columbia, KC 32579).

The late set that I caught at the Tin Palace (Bowery and E. 2nd St.) exemplified the stylistics of Steig's latest work. At one structural level, the set consisted of one seamless hour-long performance of contrasting dialogues between Steig and Beirach, straight ahead ensemble playing, unaccompanied solos, rhythm-backed solos and an assortment of connecting tissues. At another level, the set contained a variety of free segments set against metrically stable episodes cast in varying meters and tempos. Harmonically, Steig has abandoned the more complex changes in selections from his repertoire of standards (such as *Willow Weep for Me*, *What's New*, *Autumn Leaves*), in favor of modal and bi-chordal palettes. This is not a capricious deviation. It represents Steig's earnest exploration of his music's rhythmic and textural dimensions.

Rhythmically, the Steig ensemble provides a weaving fabric that oscillates from rubato interchanges to mainline swinging to poly-rhythmic montages. Laird's bass provided a steady, yet flexible, foundation. Chambers' drums pushed and punctuated the flow. Mantilla's congas, bells, and assorted percussion instruments added an assortment of tasty accents, while Beirach's piano functioned as the rhythmic and harmonic cement for the rhythm section. On top, Steig's flute played with, against, over, and under the pulse. Steig's rhythmic inventiveness and playfulness recalls the approach of tenor titan Sonny Rollins.

In an era where overamplification and monodynamics (i.e., LOUD) seem to prevail, it was refreshing to behold the group's sensitivity to dynamics and texture. Even though the *forte* end of the dynamic continuum was where the majority of the playing fell, the full range from ppp to fff was employed to underscore the music's dramatic and emotive dimensions. The opening exchange between Steig and Beirach, for example, included not only flute and piano but also the whirring of



LEE TANNER

the overhead fans and the clicking of the flute's keys. (John Cage would have been delighted!)

Interconnected with dynamics is texture. Steig's quick changes from piccolo to flute to bass flute and from reverb to straight amplification to echo-delay shifted the texture in terms of range, dynamics, and tone color. These shifts were in turn reflected and elaborated upon by the *listening* rhythm section. The various strategies for accomplishing these textural changes represent another exciting aspect of Steig's explorations. These included gradual evolutions (from one player to two and so forth), dialogues (flute/statement, rhythm section/response), and sudden entrances and exits.

One can only conclude Steig is a virtuoso. His command of tonguing techniques (from flutter to triple), his variety of tone colors (from the classical sound-ideal to a raging howl), his mastery of the flute family (from bass to piccolo), his ability to hum and sing along with the articulated notes from his flutes, and his success in integrating electronics combined with his harmonic, rhythmic and melodic imaginativeness, all stamp him as an original.

An interesting departure from the standard presentation of serious music in club settings was the surprise entrance of dancer Diana Shukys toward the end of the set. Exuding sensuality, the dynamic Ms. Shukys, finger cymbals aloft, meshed beautifully with the ever-expanding spirals of musical agitation. My initial negative reaction ("well, here's a little something for the folks not into the music") was soon reversed by the sincerity and talent of Ms. Shukys and the musicians. Again, Steig has dared to be different, to explore, to probe.

—chuck berg

CHARLES MINGUS In Concert Club, Montreal

Personnel: Mingus, bass; George Adams, tenor sax; Jack Walrath, trumpet; Don Pullen, piano; Dannie Richmond, drums.

There is a marked contrast between the current quintet of Charles Mingus, and the group he brought to the In Concert Club in Montreal in July, 1974. The July group consisted of George Adams (tenor), Bunny Bluit (baritone), Don Pullen (piano), Mingus (bass), and

Dannie Richmond (drums). In the current group, Bluit has been replaced by Jack Walrath, a strong funky young trumpet player whose style is laced with bebop phrasing. He has worked with Ray Charles and Paul Jeffrey, and had only been with Mingus for a few weeks previously.

The key to the change in the sound lies in Mingus himself—his influence on the development of the musicians who play with him, and his choice of the music they play. The aspect of development is most marked in the playing of George Adams. There is an increased discipline and authority in everything he plays. In July he was a very free player—but this very freedom, applied to every number irrespective of its character and mood, risked becoming an indulgence—an easy way to avoid really digging into the structure of the tune. George now has this depth, and though he still plays free at times, he now can benefit from the contrast with his more controlled moments. His free forays are only employed when appropriate.

The other aspect of the change is in the music being played. Music parts were very much in evidence on the bandstand. One typical set comprised *Peggy's Blue Skylight*, *Just For Laughs Saps*, *Sound of Love* (Duke Ellington's tribute to Sarah Vaughan), and *Wee*. Another set had *Flowers For A Lady*, *For Harry Carney* (a Mingus tribute), *Sue's Changes*, *Autumn on Neptune* (by Jack Walrath), and *Peggy's Blue Skylight*. The overall sound is of a quintet of highly gifted musicians rediscovering previously played pieces (*Peggy* and *Flowers*), and feeling their way into new challenges (*Sue*, *Laughs*, *Neptune* and *Carney*).

No review would be complete without praise for the deeply felt and superbly fluent piano solos of Don Pullen—an unsung giant of his instrument—and the constant inspira-

tions of the crisp, creative and supportive drumming of Dannie Richmond. Mingus is composing again and he and his men are creating sounds which are full of exciting promise for the future. —ron sweetman

A TRIBUTE TO QUINCY JONES

Shrine Auditorium, Los Angeles

Personnel: Richard Pryor; Billy Eckstine; Sarah Vaughan; Airtio Moreira; Slappy White; Aaron and Freddie; Cannonball Adderley/Freddie Hubbard/George Duke; Roscoe Lee Brown; Joe Williams; Marvin Gaye; Early Spring; The Whispers; The Ghetto Dancers. MCs: Sidney Poitier, Clifton Davis, Lincoln Kilpatrick, Don Cornelius, Ken Jones.

In spite of almost snow-cold rains, the Brotherhood Crusade fund-raising benefit concert, "A Tribute to Quincy Jones," packed the massive Shrine Auditorium, and was a resounding success for performers and audience alike.

Let it be said right off the bat that Richard Pryor stole the show. He was *funny*. That he has become a kind of black Lenny Bruce perhaps goes without saying. He punches out street language with all of the verve and initially shocking vitality of a short, hip, skinny, and lovably incompetent truck driver. Whether he's portraying a shouting Baptist preacherman or an angry-then-remorseful lover, he hits home time and again with laugh after laugh.

Billy Eckstine and Sarah Vaughan, friends and co-workers for almost 35 years, held each other close and sang a swaying ballad early in the show that raised goosebumps on the neck. It was a sentimental mood, yes, but at the same time Sarah and Mr. B performed with all of the warmth and radiating happi-

ness of a couple of young kids. It was a frankly tender and beautiful moment.

Throughout the course of the evening, Eckstine appeared several times. He sang the duet with Sarah, soloed *For The Love Of Ivy* and his own *Jelly, Jelly*, announced a couple of acts, and participated in a comedy routine as "Vocal-chords Victor," who was called upon to substitute for a missing member of The Main Ingredient. In each context, Eckstine proved himself to be the smooth and eminently capable pro that we have known him to be for years—a true showman.

Percussionist Airtio opened the show by himself, rattling his gourds, whacking his sticks, playing his wide array of bells, tambourines, and cymbals, oftentimes chanting and dancing while he did it.

One of the most unexpected highlights of the evening came from Aaron and Freddie—really from Aaron, a first-class ventriloquist, whose act involves putting a plastic bag over the head of his dummy and creating the appropriate muffled sounds, including the transitions from completely muffled to open-air clarity. He also conducts a phone call to President Ford, perfectly creating the telephone vocal effects. ("Hey, Prez! What's goin' on?" "Oh, I don't know." "Yeah, well, we know that.")

Cannonball Adderley, Freddie Hubbard, George Duke, Airtio, and a drummer and bass player whose names I didn't catch, played a Quincy Jones tune, *Stockholm Sweetnin'*, and a Hubbard original, *Six For Q*, both of which were relatively bland in terms of improvisational energy, imagination and complexity.

Actor/poet/director Roscoe Lee Brown, who has for years been instrumental in helping to introduce black culture to the white world, did a partial turnabout with his poetry readings of Jerry Jeff Walker's *Mr. Bojangles* and Leonard Cohen's *Suzanne* (changing *Suzanne* to *Quincy*, appropriate for the occasion, but literarily disastrous).

Joe Williams rendered *Huggin' And Kissin'*, a blues number which the crowd enjoyed. Minnie Riperton sang *Lovin' You*, her gimmicky and grating high notes forcing me to hold my ears at times.

The crowd had long awaited the appearance of the one and only Marvin Gaye, and when he emerged from the wings wearing a bright mint-green suit, the crowd absolutely exploded with released tension and fulfilled anticipation. The man who is terrified of performing was met with a sheer wall of screaming love and adulation.

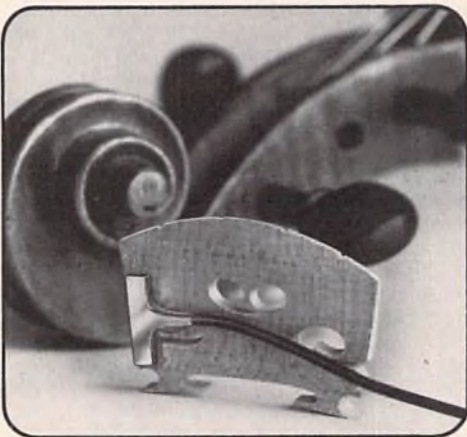
Perhaps there is no way anyone could come on cold and match that kind of hysterical energy with only two songs, and Marvin Gaye was no exception. He sang *Come Back Home* and *What's Goin' On*, criss-crossing the stage, occasionally playing the piano, and at one point going down on his knees, all of which the fans adored.

Following Marvin Gaye's performance, the stage suddenly overflowed with all of those artists who had played and sung during the course of the concert, and then the house-lights flared up, and the spotlights shot over to one of the raised box-seats on the far wall, illuminating the composer himself. He stood and waved to the cheering crowd, who rose to their feet with a roar of recognition and appreciation, giving him a genuine and sustained standing ovation. On stage, the orchestra immediately launched into *We Can't Stop Lovin' You*, which all of the performers and all of the audience sang together for Quincy Jones, the man of the hour.

—lee underwood

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HOW TO develop today's approach to the bass guitar

by Carol Kaye, Tom Fowler, and Ed Fowler

Carol Kaye, widely experienced in teaching clinics and in studio playing, here gives advice to young electric bass players.

The electric bass has changed the style of the rhythm section more than any instrument since the invention of the electric guitar. All bass players are acutely aware of its impact, since the late '60s brought a general shift among musicians from acoustic bass to the electric instrument in order to get the work that demanded the then current sound and execution. I say "then current," because players are using acoustic bass more now, establishing a better balance between the two instruments.

Since the rhythm section is the foundation of a big band or small combo, I want to discuss goals, direction, and attitude. On technique, remember these two points:

(1) Left hand accuracy and speed depend on the left thumb being used as a pivot in the middle of the back part of the neck, pointing towards the nut. The first finger should not be held down; when the hand moves, all of the fingers lift off, and only the thumb remains to turn.

(2) All fingers should be used independently, with the exception of the third finger assist on the fourth.

How much practice time you take is a personal decision. Don't bore yourself into the ground—once you get past the "I hate to practice stage," take a break if you get into a rut, and come back.

Sit down and decide what your musical goals are. Most of you will not be satisfied with anything less than full use of your utmost talents. Study various techniques, but be wary of boring studies—interesting lines will help as much, if not more. Listen to all the great bassists currently active.

When you listen, write out bass lines you like and "incorporate" them into your own style. Use them on the job, even if it's a dumb Top-40 gig. Always play your best; never let a

negative player bring you down; if the group stinks, leave it and find another gig. A bad group can't make money for too long, and if it did, you'd hate yourself for "selling out." You have to eat, of course, but balance it out with what you need in your soul. Personalities have every thing to do with playing. A good group is like a family: you love, have your fights, try to communicate. But it's *respect* that builds togetherness.

A well-defined sound prevents you from swallowing the group. Set the amp so you can hear the group and the audience. Improve your sound by:

- (1) Using more treble on bass and amp.
- (2) Placing a piece of felt on top of the strings, covered loosely by the bridge plate cover. This technique cuts down your overtones and undertones.
- (3) Playing with a pick (optional).

A bass player must have another vital characteristic: *good time*. You can have fantastic chops and ideas, but if your time is off, you won't groove. The electric metronome beating on 2 and 4 (not the tedious 1-2-3-4) helps you establish a groove. Most drummers rush in fills; go with them a little. Keep a good forward pulse going, work hand in hand with the drummer, and keep your ears tuned to the soloist always. Your own soloing can be fun once you get some confidence. An electric bassist should be able to play a sax-type solo; most of the notes are on the instrument. Remember, no matter what somebody plays, you can play it.

There are some excellent books to help you in jazz exercises. It's good to take some lessons to establish good technique, but experience is the best teacher. Becoming a professional student will weaken you. The electric bass is not a lifetime study instrument. Finally, learn to read—this opens all doors to further education.

Above all, keep the I-CAN-DO-IT going. Then you can't miss. Good Luck.

Tom Fowler, bass player with the Mothers of Invention, discusses cross-picking for electric bass:

Fast passages between different strings pose problems in selecting the direction of the pick stroke. To avoid extra pick motion and loss of strength, one should pick in the direction of the cross whenever possible. For example, when picking from the E string to the G string, or from any lower string to any higher string, the lower string should receive a down stroke (∩) and the higher string an up stroke (∪):

Ex. 1 4 1 1 3 4 1 4 4 3 1 2 4 1 1 3 4

If a passage begins on an upper string, and then crosses down to a lower string, picking should begin with an up stroke:

Ex. 2 ∪ ∩ ∪ ∩ ∪ ∩ etc. ♯

Not all passages can be laid out as conveniently as examples 1 and 2. Sometimes one will find a line with one critical accent or cross which will determine the way it should be picked:

Ex. 3

continued on page 30

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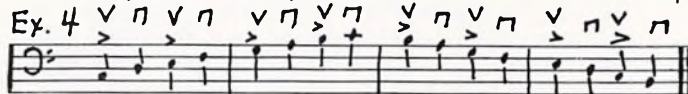
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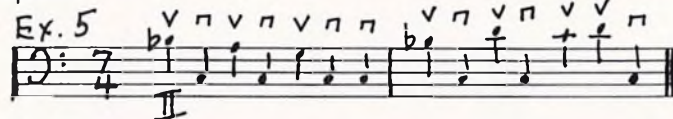
HOW TO

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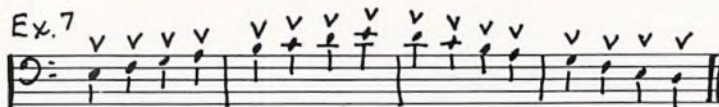
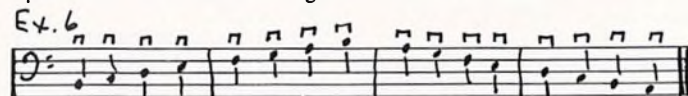
To develop even picking technique, practice picking backwards on scales, accenting the first and third beats. This practice will help correct the innate weakness in the upstroke:



Sometimes it will be necessary to play two strokes in the same direction to set up a proper picking sequence:



Playing scales, or other exercises, with all up-strokes and all down-strokes will develop the picking independence needed for stroking in the same direction:



Ed Fowler, Tom's younger brother, illustrates finger-style electric bass playing in a portion of his Bass Enumeration.



This excerpt is to be played finger-style at ♩ = 66 tempo. Right hand fingers are indicated by: i = index, m = middle, and a = anular (ring finger). In many instances *m* can be used instead of *a* and sometimes *m* or *a* can be used instead of *i*, according to individual preference. But in fast passages the alternation of right hand fingers is essential.

I keep my right hand fingers approximately perpendicular to the strings. And I use a thumb rest on my bass.

Left hand fingering is indicated by numbers; strings are indicated by Roman numerals.

CARTER

continued from page 13

He brought some duos written for cello that were transposed for bass. Nothing heavy. With Roland, we've read through some cello and piano music. He's written a couple of cello sonatas. I'm reluctant to get into the question of "classical music being the basis for good jazz players." People say that because you went to Eastman School, or Juilliard, that's why you play so well. That *may* be the case, but that's not where they're coming from. I just classify Roland as one of the best players I've ever played with.

Ron Carter: bassist, piccolo bassist, but most of all professional musician. "I will do whatever has to be done to make a date go as smoothly as possible, even if the empathy is lacking," he stated flatly. "You can't improve if you're going to play at your level all the time. Good bass players are going to learn from good bass players." Speaking of his recent *Spanish Blue* album on CTI, Ron closed with this: "My objective is to re-investigate acoustic sounds and to give the public a viable listening option not at their command recently."

POT

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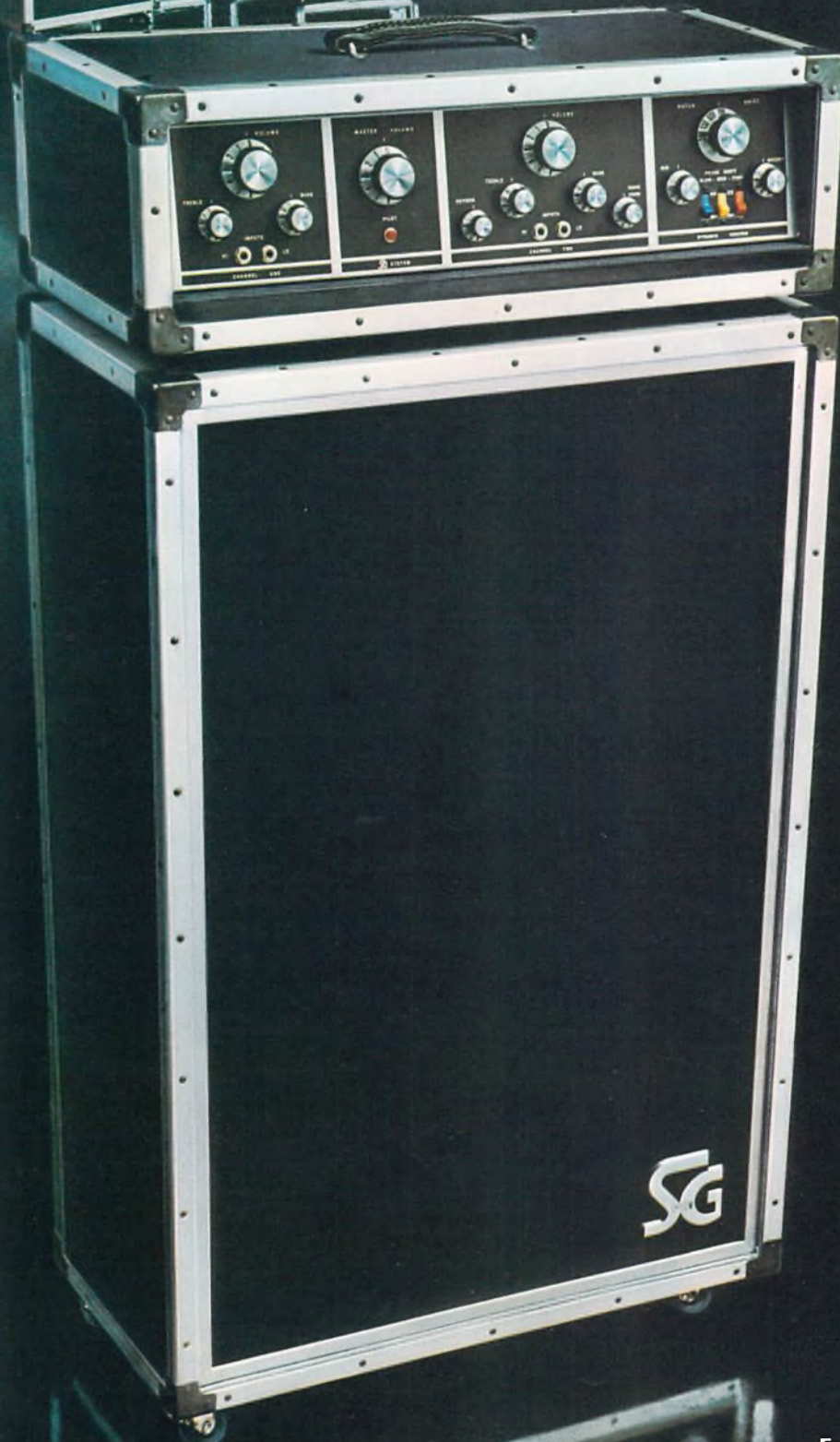
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Violinist **Don Harris** is now touring with **John Mayall**. His famed nickname of "Sugarcane" has been temporarily abandoned at the request of Mayall. Harris also is no longer under contract to BASF/MPS Records and is shopping around for a new label.

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THE WITCH

THE WITCH
 from the album, *Threshold* by Pat Williams

Instrument lineup: Violins I, Violins II, Viola, Cello, Bass, Piano, Drums, Percussion (xylophone)
 Here are sixteen measures of extremely rhythmic string scoring. Bowing is detached; tempo is quarter note equals 130.
 Points to consider are piano and xylophone rhythmic slashes with cello support; chromaticism of melodic lines; and contrary motion, both simultaneously and alternating. -Fowler

Musical score for measures 1-8. The score is written for Violins I, Violins II, Viola, Cello, Bass, Piano, Drums, and Percussion (xylophone). It features complex rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and dynamic markings such as *f*, *mezzo*, *arco*, *avco*, and *diviso*. The notation includes various articulations and slurs, indicating a highly rhythmic and chromatic piece.

Musical score for measures 9-16. This section continues the complex rhythmic and chromatic string scoring. It includes dynamic markings like *f*, *mezzo*, and *avco*. The notation shows intricate melodic lines and rhythmic patterns across the string sections.

Musical score for measures 17-24. This section features a variety of rhythmic textures, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes. It includes dynamic markings such as *f*, *mezzo*, and *avco*. The notation is dense and rhythmic, with some measures showing a change in texture.

Musical score for measures 25-32. This section includes dynamic markings like *f*, *mezzo*, and *avco*. It features a variety of rhythmic patterns and melodic lines. The notation is highly detailed, showing the complex interplay of the instruments.

BOOKS

The Evolving Bassist, by Rufus Reid. An aid in developing a total musical concept—for the double bass and the four and six string electric basses. Myriad Limited, Chicago; 146 pp.; illus., musical transcriptions; \$12.50.

This is an important book, and a must for every serious student of the bass. The book is attractively packaged and the format excellent. It is spiral bound for the practical reason that it is intended to be used on a music stand. In addition to musical materials it contains useful information relevant to maintenance and care, how to choose strings, electronic pickups, amplifiers, rosin, bow, how to use the volume pedal, how to develop callouses, how to practice and (dig this) even how to put your bass on an airplane.

The book is replete with excellent illustrations which demonstrate among other things how to position oneself for playing acoustic or electric bass, the position of the hands with relationship to the strings, how to approach and release the strings in a pizzicato, how to use both the French and German bow and how to adjust the mechanism on the electric bass.

Chapter II is concerned primarily with teaching the student how to get the best possible sound—pizzicato or bowed. The exercises are all on the open strings. The etudes move very rapidly from simple to very complex rhythmic configurations. Unless the student possesses a pretty solid background I suspect that the latter will be a problem.

Chapter III consists of a number of etudes designed to acquaint the student with the finger-board. The etudes are essentially chromatic and diatonic scales in all keys and as such are quite effective in producing the projected results. This chapter would be even more effective if some verbal explication vis-a-vis the whole principle of fretted playing were included (i.e., like constructs such as scales, chords, patterns when played without resorting to open strings can be fingered in the same way.)

Also, since the dominant 7th chords are given with the specific mixolydian scales which accompany them, in the interest of consistency the same information should be given for the major, dorian, minor, and whole tone scales (i.e., d minor 7th = d dorian scale etc.) Personally I would like to have seen the diminished and lydian augmented scales included because of the frequency with which they are used.

Chapter IV consists of etudes designed to show how to construct functional bass lines. This is a particularly strong chapter but again verbal explication would be invaluable to the less advanced student. Such information would assist the student in transferring specific information to generalized situations.

Chapter V addresses the blues and *I Got Rhythm*, two of the most used sets of changes in jazz. The material included is direct, incisive and generally excellent, but again verbal explication would be helpful. For instance, some information about the beautiful turnarounds used in almost every example would enable the student to utilize turnarounds in similar situations. Perhaps examples of lines built on progressions to standard tunes (copyrights permitting) might have been beneficial.

Chapter VI would have to be expanded drastically to have any real impact. The Latin section should include examples of the most commonly played rhythms such as bossa nova, son montuna, calypso, tangos, etc. The same could be done with the rock section to include boogaloo, twist, shuffle, etc.

Chapter VII consists of dexterity exercises, and the etudes in this chapter are among the best and most comprehensive in the entire book. The material on 10ths, octaves, and 5ths might have been more effectively presented in the same chapter. This goes also for the augmented and diminished patterns which, in fact, deal with the same kind of thought and physical processes.

Chapter VIII on soloistic concepts, is ex-

cellent despite a somewhat curious contradictory statement (in light of the purpose of the book) that "learning to improvise is something that cannot be done by all people".

Chapter XI should either be expanded or omitted.

The transcribed solos and bass duets are attractive, interesting, and fun to play. (The solos are a bitch).

In closing, a few minor points. It would be less confusing to use either Roman numerals for chapters and Arabic numbers for etudes or vice versa. A bibliography would also prove helpful to the aspiring bass player. Minor gripes aside, this is a first rate book from a first rate musician, teacher, player, and human being.

—David Baker

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idea of what they wanted from him. "I was classified as a funk organ player, and at that time, I was a funk organ player. Idris Muhammad and Melvin Sparks were my rhythm section; we were signed to do funky music like we had been doing with Lou. Funky music was what was selling at the time. On *Black Talk*, *Black Drops*, and *Live At The Key Club*, they just about told me what to play. When it was time to record *Soul Story*, I decided it was time for me to try to do something on my own. I made money for (Bob) Weinstock (president of Prestige). He had become a multimillionaire and I decided it was time to come into my own and play some music that I thought was me, instead of what they expected from me. When Bob Porter (producer for Prestige) heard my arrangement for *Love Story*, he came out of the control room and banged his fist on the organ and said, 'God-damn it man, what are you trying to do?' He was fired a few weeks after that." (Ed. Note: When db checked with Bob Porter, he denied having banged his fist on the organ or making any such comment, though he does admit to a disagreement over *Love Story*. Moreover, Porter insists that most of the music on the three previous LPs was of Earland's own choosing. Bob Porter did leave Prestige shortly after the *Love Story* incident, but attributes it more to "politics" than anything that had to do with the Earland date. He has since done occasional work for the label in an independent capacity.)

Earland marks that as the point at which he transcended the limitations of the funk organist to become a singular interpreter and composer. He now feels proud and confident of the new maturity in his ever-reaching style.

"I've been classified so long as just a funk organist and it's really sad that they classify all organ players as just funk cats. I'm not a funk organist, I'm into music completely, and I'm experimenting and trying to find myself. All the magazines have always knocked the instrument and I could never understand what it was they had against it. To me, the organ has more to offer than the piano. Okay, the piano is a beautiful instrument and I love acoustic instruments just as much as anybody else, even though all the cats always talk that acoustic junk to me. I know that every electric instrument is not of high quality, but there are some electronic instruments out there that are just phenomenal.

"The organ is not a very easy instrument to play. You can take 15 of your best piano players and put them down to the organ and ask them to play my conception of playing: I walk a bass with my left hand, chording and soloing with my right hand at the same time. Only seven would be able to play that way, stumbling. The other eight wouldn't be able to play at all. But out of ten organ players, at least half of them would be able to play the piano. If we're such jive, funky cats, how come we need so much more technique to play? If you want to classify us, give us the right recognition. It takes coordination to play like Jack McDuff and Richard "Groove" Holmes and Jimmy Smith. Even a cat like Larry Young has gotten no recognition."

Earland makes it clear that he wants to be the first organist since Jimmy Smith to earn that recognition with both popular and critical acclaim. Having proven himself a capable organist and composer, he is at the point where such a goal must be regarded as a statement of ironclad intent.

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stopping, he's having problems . . . I get this a lot when I travel. A musician comes up to me and he says, 'I just can't get it together. I can't go any further. What is it?' And what's happening is that something's going down that he's not aware of, personally or environmentally. Once he becomes aware of it, he can do whatever he wants to do with it. When you confront it, you've got control over it: you can accept or reject it." For Clarke, there are ways of expanding, and there are blocks to that expansion. Scientology is a way of making one aware of those blocks, so one can get them out of the way.

John McLaughlin eventually felt it necessary to surround himself in his orchestra with followers of Sri Chinmoy. Does Stanley feel that Return To Forever's musical well-being is contingent upon all of its members being Scientologists? If the band had to replace a member for whatever reason, would a Scientologist be sought? "No," insists Stanley, "The way I see it, if a person comes into the band, our main interest in this guy is that he just gets better and better—again, he expands. I don't care how he does it. First of all, if he's just around us he'll get better, because that's what we're into. It would be *quicker* if he got into Scientology; that's the only thing that I've found that works quick enough."

Elliot Meadow's previous article on Stanley in the February 15, 1973 *down beat* gives a complete rundown on Clarke's musical history. Briefly, Stanley has recorded with just about everybody currently making any kind of music on today's scene. He's probably

most well-known for his work with Joe Henderson, Horace Silver, Stan Getz. Gil Evans, Pharoah Sanders, Gato Barbieri, Art Blakey, Norman Connors, and Dexter Gordon

"Horace taught me a lot," recalls Clarke. "Aside from musical things, he got me used to the idea of playing in a band. I was a wild teenager back then, and to me, Horace was the old man; he showed me what to do. I've listened to all the bassists at one time or another. The ones that really stick out are Paul Chambers, Charlie Mingus, and Scott La Faro. On electric bass, I like Billy Cox, who played with Hendrix."

Stanley originally was drawn to the bass out of a physical thing. He first chose the violin, but his hands were too large. His long legs couldn't get the cello together, and the bass seemed to fit just right. Our discussion grew into further Clarke commentary on his chosen instruments. On approaches to acoustic and electric basses: "The electric bass is a guitar first of all. The only difference is that you usually play less than a guitarist; you play more roots, more basic stuff. It's like learning a different instrument than the upright bass, and what you can bring from the upright to the bass guitar is limited."

CAN STANLEY FORESEE a lead guitar situation in the future? "It's possible, though I don't know if I really want to do it. I have an instrument that I just had made. I guess you could call it a piccolo bass. It's an electric bass with a range in between a bass and a guitar. I haven't tried a six-string bass."

Stanley's style can be viewed as a logical extension of the role of the ensemble bassist, a role which has become increasingly more elastic since Oscar Pettiford began to liberate

the instrument from its previous role as a foundational time keeper and tonal base-board. Succeeding innovators—Paul Chambers, Scott La Faro, Ron Carter—have each done their part to upgrade the contrapuntal and melodic character of the bass. With Clarke, the instrument shares an out-front, equal melodic position in the ensemble sound; yet it still maintains its traditional role. Again, it's a case of expansion.

"There really isn't any way I like to hear the bass. When I play, I operate off a very basic idea of the bassist's role in the ensemble: he plays rhythm and roots. If there's a C chord in a particular passage, the bass player's usually playing a C. But I like to jump roles, too; while being a bass player, I'll also play melodies. I can go in different ways, but still maintain that thing of being the bass player. That's expansion again—expanding the role of the bassist."

One of the better examples of Clarke's approach can be heard on his own tune, *Blue*, performed on Norman Connors' *Dance Of Magic* album. Here, the listener deals with two melodies, one voiced by the reeds, one played by Stanley. Clarke's glib, many-noted style can be sorted out individually as a lead melody; and it simultaneously blends in with the ensemble to get a bottom sound. Stanley's impeccable rhythmic sense pushes the tune along gently. Clarke plays a dual role on the piece, and plays it well.

"I really think it's important," Stanley concludes, "for people to become as aware of as many possibilities as they can. It makes you feel good when you have a new awareness." The perpetually new musical awarenesses of Stanley Clarke will be making people feel good for years to come. **db**



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CITY SCENE

New York

The Jazz World Salutes **Lionel Hampton** will be **Jack Kleinsinger's** next Highlight In Jazz at NYU's Loeb Student Center March 17. Proceeds go to the **Lionel Hampton Foundation**. So far the list looks like: **Buddy Rich, Teddy Wilson, George Duvivier, Frank Foster, Milt Hinton, Paul Jeffrey, Budd Johnson, Harold Mabern, Stella Marrs, Jimmy Nottingham, Bob Rosengarden, Herbie Hancock** and **Miles Davis** at Hofstra U. March 22. Those jazz puppets, courtesy of the New York Jazz Museum and Poko Puppets, scored at Carmi Hall, made every major TV network, and are now touring the Public Schools of the City and environs. . . . Town Hall's Interludes (5:45 PM) has **Teddy Wilson** March 19. . . . Jazz Vespers, St. Peter's, 64th St. and Park Ave., will present **Carol Mitchell** March 16 and the **Vera Auer Quartet** March 23. Both at 3 PM. The jazz lecture series at the Church continues with **The History of Jazz Piano** a **Dick Hyman** on March 16, and the final lecture, **The Universality of Music** with **Leonard Goines** March 23. They hit at 6:30 PM. . . . Speaking of lectures, Jazz Interactions announced another 12 week series at Hunter College. It started on February 14 and will run thru May 2. March 14 it's **Singers In Jazz** by **Dan Morgenstern**; **Rhythm Sections** with **Jo Jones** follows on March 21. There's a tuition so call 212-866-6316. . . . JJ resumed its weekly musicians' workshops last month at Intermediate School 44, 100 West 77th Street at 7 PM. It's open to all with some playing experience, free. The staff includes **Joe Newman**, trumpet; **Barry Harris**, piano; **Reggie Workman**, bass; **Billy Mitchell**, reeds; **David Lee**, drums; **Roswell Rudd**, trombone; and **Ted Dunbar**, guitar. . . . **Stan Kenton** comes into the Riverboat March 17 under JJ's auspices. . . . It's not too early to reserve your deck chair on Showboat 3 aboard the SS Rotterdam, leaving June 7 for a week to Nassau and Bermuda with **Lionel Hampton, Dave Brubeck, Mercer Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie, Earl "Fatha" Hines, Carmen McRae**, and others. Call your travel agent. . . . **Max Gordon** is still at the Village Vanguard where he will host the tenth year of Monday nights with **Thad Jones' and Mel Lewis' poll-monopolizing Jazz Orchestra**. **Jon Lucien** comes in for a week March 11; **Milt Jackson** on March 18; and **Keith Jarrett** March 25. . . . The Tin Palace, on the Bowery, has **Lloyd McNeill** weekends in March while **Amaury Tristao and his Brazilian Roots** hold down Tuesdays thru Thursdays for that period. . . . Mikell's is soulful with **Gordon Edwards, Richard Tee** and **Cornell Dupree** sharing March with **Joe Beck's Quintet**. . . . Michael's Pub expects **Joe Venuti** in March. . . . **Sonny Fortune's Quintet** remains at Boomer's thru March 22. . . . It's called **A Tribute To Leadbelly** and it will be held at the Assembly Hall of Hunter College March 15 with **Pete Seeger, Arlo Guthrie, Sonny Terry** and **Brownie McGhee**. . . . **Joe Williams** plays the Rainbow Grill beginning March 22. . . . **Helen Humes** and **Ellis Larkins** continue at the Cookery. . . . Town Hall presents the **Collective Black Artists** March 22; **Yma Sumac** (talk about vocal

range, whew!) on the 22nd and 23rd; and **New York Nights** starring **Mercer Ellington** and **Cab Calloway** on the 25th. . . . The Creative Music Studio of Woodstock, N.Y. presents **Karl Berger** and **Friends** featuring **Ing Rid** March 16 at 2:30 PM at Riverside Church. . . . Fisher Hall's Great Performers for March 21 are **Loudon Wainwright III** and **Buffy Sainte-Marie**. . . . The Hey Brother Coffee House features **Jothan Callins** and the **Sounds of Togetherness** every Sunday at 4 PM. . . . Harlem's Afro-American Studio Theatre presents the 127th Street Repertory Ensemble's **A Hand Is On The Gate** and **El Haji Malik**, poetry, music, and a play with music by **Tom Foster**, piano and **Larry Richardson**, bass, thru March 15. Call 212-866-5391 for exact times. The Studio also presents "Black Sundays," jazz sessions. March 16 it's the **Shamek Farrah Quintet** featuring **Sonelius Smith, Milton Suggs, Ron Warwell** and **Norman Person**; March 23 the **Charles Tyler Quintet** with **Carl Hutson, Mel Smith, Steve Reid** and **Earl Gross**. . . . Gregory's now has **Warren Chiasson** from 6-9 PM Mondays thru Fridays, **Ms. Frenni Burke** Saturdays and Sundays. **Brooks Kerr, Russell Procope** and **Sonny Greer** hold down the 9:30 Wednesday thru Sunday spot with **Lee Konitz, Dick Katz** and **Wilbur Little** Mondays and Tuesdays. . . . On Long Island: The Westbury Music Fair continues with **Chuck Berry, The Crystals** and **Fats Domino** March 14-15. . . . In New Jersey: Marshmallows, Woodridge, brings in **Stan Kenton** March 23. . . . Gulliver's, West Patterson, features **Teddy Wilson's** trio March 21-22; and **Richie Cole Quartet** March 28-29. . . . **Sonny Rollins** plays Rutgers University, New Brunswick, March 12-14 at the Livingston College facility. . . . **Jackson Browne** and **Phoebe Snow** are expected at the Capitol Theatre, Passaic, March 22. . . . The State Theatre, New Brunswick, will present **Buddy Rich's** band with **Jimmy McGriff** March 15. . . . Jazzline tells all: 212-421-3592.

Los Angeles

Howard Rumsey is busy preparing for the opening of his new "jazz room" at the Ambassador Hotel, and assures local jazz aficionados that it's not gonna be strictly for the diamonds and fur crowd, just because it's the former home of the Cocomat Grove. . . . Meanwhile, **Eddie Harris** will be in residence for three weeks at Concerts By The Sea, from March 4-23. . . . Downtown, the Music Center will be presenting "intimate jazz" at the Mark Taper Forum throughout March with **Sylvia Syms** on March 17, and **Marian McPartland** on March 24. . . . From the east side of town, we head west to Century City, where the Schubert Theater will feature the dynamic duo of **Tony Bennett** and **Lena Horne** March 17-30. . . . In Beverly Hills, Ye Little Club features **Lori McCormick** for the month of March. . . . At UCLA, jazz is alive and well at Royce Hall with the **Gato Barbieri Ensemble** and **Keith Jarrett** on March 13, and on March 16, the **LA Four**, with **Laurindo Almeida, Shelly Manne, Ray Brown** and **Bud Shank**. . . . **Tower of Power** is due at the Roxy in mid-March, and down at the Troubadour, **Bobby Blue Bland** will sing the blues March 11-16; **Melissa Manchester** is due March 18-22; and making a rare Southland appearance March 23-30 will be the **Wailers**. . . . **Maxine Weldon** returns to the etc. for the month of March. . . . Out on Cahuenga Pass, the Baked Potato is still cookin' with **Don Randi** and the

Baked Potato Band Wednesdays thru Saturdays. **Harry "Sweets" Edison** will sandwich a Carnegie Hall gig between his Sunday night sessions, alternating with **Teddy Edwards**. . . . Donte's continues to feature top local musicians, and is planning a unique Persian New Year party on the first day of spring, March 20, featuring jazz, Persian cuisine, and belly dancing. Don't forget your pillow! . . . In Studio City, on Ventura Blvd. is the Times, a unique supper club that features nightly entertainment. **Blossom Dearie** will be there March 14 and 15, with **Victor Feldman & Trio** alternating Sundays with the **Warne Marsh Quartet**. On March 25, 26 & 27, local singer **Al Jarreau** will appear with the **Dave Mackay Trio**. If you head south to San Diego, keep in mind that Sunday is the time to catch **Joe Marillo** and **Equinox** at the Catamaran Hotel. Out at San Diego State is the Back Door, a campus concert club that offers a monthly mixed bag of folk, soul and jazz, on most weekends. March 17 brings **Bobby Blue Bland**, and on March 24, **Eddie Harris**.

CHICAGO

Chicago's AACM, a musical power still too lightly taken by most audiences and writers, both nationally and locally, announces a series of concerts to take place on Sundays in March and April. **Ajaramu** and **Sarnie Garrett** have already appeared, with **Henry Threadgill** and **+X-75** March 16; the AACM **Big Band** March 23; **Fenix**, featuring **Chico Freeman, Turk Burton**, and **Charles Walker** March 30. The concerts all take place at 4 p.m. every Sunday at All Souls First Universalist Church, 910 East 83rd Street. Watch this space for the April announcements coming up. . . . Wise Fools Pub on Lincoln has featured **Cass Siva, Orbit, Dave Remington's Big Band, Bobby Christian's Band, Forefront**, and the best blues lineups on the North Side, such as **Otis Rush, Sam Lay**, and **Mighty Joe Young**. You can expect all of the above to return regularly as Spring awakens; some even get weekly gigs together, so check out the papers. . . . More about that **Forefront** aggregation: They're a jazz trumpet quartet, featuring **Art Hoyle, George Bean, Russ Iverson**, and **Bobby Lewis** on the lead horns, with **Rufus Reid** on bass and drummer **Jerry Coleman**. Their repertoire is wide ranging, including works by Miles Davis, Oliver Nelson, and Chuck Mangione. The group only gets together between engagements, so keep an eagle eye out for announcements of their gigs. . . . The Quiet Knight on Belmont is busy with **Cecelio and Kapono** March 12-16; **Rosalie Sorrels** and **U. Utah Phillips** March 26-30; **Gil Scott-Heron** April 2-6; and **Melissa Manchester** April 9-13. . . . The Jazz Medium features **Rahsaan Roland Kirk** and the **Vibration Society** March 12-16; **Dizzy Gillespie** March 19-23; the **Basie Wing** with **Jimmy Forrest, Al Grey**, and more to be announced March 23-27. The first weekend in April will feature **Jack McDuff's** new seven-horn ensemble "in the vein of Supersax, only hipper," according to the leader; after that it's **McCoy Tyner**. . . . Don't forget **Miles Davis, Herbie Hancock**, and **Bobbie Humphrey** March 19-20 at the Arie Crown Theater. Also on March 19 at the Auditorium Theater is the **Average**



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White Band with Brian Auger . . . The Arie Crown brings in **Harry Chapin** for taxi-dwellers March 31 and the **Ohio Players** for maxidancers April 5 . . . At Otto's on Halsted north of Armitage it's **Vassar Clements** March 13-15 and fiddler **Rusty Weir** April 2-6.

St. Louis

Herbie Hancock and **Miles Davis** bring their national tour to St. Louis March 27 at Kiel Auditorium. Two days later at the same venue, it's hard rock with **Blue Oyster Cult**, **Man**, and **The Dictators**. **Nektar** and **Pavlov's Dog** from Germany are in April 2-3 with **Frank Zappa** and the gang a not-so-distant May 13 . . . **Josh Rifkin** will perform **Scott Joplin** rags March 15 in the Penney Auditorium of the University of Missouri at St. Louis . . . **Count Basie** at Grant's Cabin March 16, with **Woody Herman** following on April 13 . . . **Con Alma**, featuring **Gordon Lawrence**, **Larry Newman**, **Bill Weber**, **Thomas Hamilton**, **Bill Ingram**, and **Jessie Hauck**, will hold forth at the Upstream March 14-15 and 21-22 . . . March 21-24 sees the opening of a music festival at Washington U. entitled *Rising*. Check the school for further details . . . This year's Newport Stars tour, featuring the bands of **Clark Terry**, **Gary Burton**, and **Gerry Mulligan**, moves through the area March 31-April 2. Performances will take place at the Jefferson Hotel, Southern Illinois University's Edwardsville Campus, Webster College, and U-Mo. at St. Louis. Workshops, symposiums, and concerts are all on the schedule.

KANSAS CITY

The Kansas City Jazz Festival moves to the Music Hall for the twelfth annual show on March 16, with headliners **Clare Fischer**, **Gary Foster**, and **Barney Kessel**, and the winners of the March 15 Mid-America Jazz Contest at the University of Missouri—Kansas City . . . **Count Basie** plays the University of

Kansas on March 21 . . . The fourth Wichita Jazz Festival, April 20, will be the season's major jazz event in the Midwest, with **Gary Burton**, **Bill Evans**, **Clark Terry**, **Max Roach**, **Dizzy Gillespie**, **Jerry Hahn**, **Woody Herman's Young Thundering Herd**, and **Supersax** . . . The Mid-America Arts Alliance will sponsor three-day clinics with **Evans**, **Terry** and **Roach** at Ottawa University, the University of Kansas, and the University of Missouri—Kansas City following the Wichita Festival.

HOUSTON

La Bastille on Market Square has **Stanley Turrentine** March 13-18 . . . **Barry Manilow** will play the Music Hall on March 21; **Jerry Lee Lewis** on the 23rd. Also on the 23rd will be **Humble Pie** in the Coliseum . . . **Nektar** will be at the Coliseum on March 26 . . . In Austin a new jazz-rock group has cranked up called **Zilker**. It is led by guitarist **John Wheelock**. Also in the band is vocalist "**Hutch**" **Hutchinson**; **Shannon Briggs**, trombone, vocals; **Scott McIntosh**, trumpet; **Will Kidd**, drums; **Louis Harliss**, bass; **Bert Ligon**, piano, vocals; and **Dave Riekenburg**, sax. After about two months of steady rehearsal they recently played their first gig (a week in all) in the home of Cosmic Country sounds, Austin. Watch for them . . . On March 13th, saxophonist **Lou Marini** will be in his final day of workshops at the High School for the Performing and Visual Arts.

SOUTHWEST

PHOENIX: If you missed the **Cal Tjader Quintet** at the Boojum Tree recently, you can still catch him in Tucson at the Double Tree Inn thru March 15. Meanwhile, the Phoenix Boojum has the **Armand Boatman Trio** as regulars during March, with the **Kenny Burrell Quintet** slated for the 16th, and **Milt Jackson** for the first week of April . . . **George Shearing's** long-awaited return brings him to

the Safari thru Mar. 15 . . . the Playboy Club follows **Charlie Byrd** with a couple weeks of comedy, then **Cannonball Adderly** from March 24 to 29 . . . Balcony Hall features **Jerry Riopelle** thru 3/15, **Tim Weisberg** 3/19 to 3/22, **Hans Olsen** singing intermittent blues, and unannounced surprises . . . Vogel's Lounge has changed their Sunday night music policy by scheduling **Jeff Woodhouse's** Dixieland band . . . Tempe Community Center presents a morning folk concert on 3/15 . . . **George Carlin** (3/15) and **New Riders of the Purple Sage** (3/21) are due in at the Celebrity Theater . . . **Grant Wolf's Night Band** hits the Varsity Inn on alternate Monday nights . . . the **Arizona State Stage Band** plays 3/27 on campus . . . CLUBS: **Charles Lewis Quintet** at Hatch Cover, Sunday-Tuesday, **The Vanguard** at Reuben's nightly, the **Lou Garno Trio** at Giovanni's.

SAN DIEGO: The Friends of Old Time Music sponsor a monthly record swap out in back of Folk Arts, the last Sunday of the month. Fridays and Saturdays have them sponsoring concerts, and the five day San Diego State Folk Festival is coming up in late April . . . FOTM chairman **Lou Curtiss** ("Bird Lives") does two radio shows on KGB (101 FM), a gospel/bluegrass hour on Sunday morn, and an oldies show at 2 AM (oomp!) on Monday nights . . . **Kirk Bates & Foxfire** at Palais 500 . . . Jazzers wishing to get involved in the India Street Art Colony's summer jazz fest should contact **Kay Schwartz** at Triad Gallery . . . The Ancient Mariner has some light rock nightly . . . The Safety and The Sportsman have soul and occasional jazz . . . Crossroads has been a meeting place for **Equinox**, nominated in KSDS (88.3) recent jazz poll . . . Sunday afternoon jams continue at Aspen Public House . . . The Purple Turtle has some nostalgic jazz sounds . . . call Cal State San Diego's Back Door for late breaking info on their entertainment (286-6562) . . .



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RECORDS

continued from page 24

ELVIN JONES

THE IMPULSE YEARS—Impulse (ABC) ASH-9283-2: *Pursuance* (excerpt); *Impressions*; *Your Lady*; *Vigil*; *Shiny Stockings*; *Attaining*; *All Or Nothing At All*; *Dear John C.*; *We Kiss In A Shadow*; *Aborigine Dance In Scotland*; *Serenity* (excerpt).

MILT JACKSON

THE IMPULSE YEARS—Impulse (ABC) ASH-9282-2: *Frankie And Johnny*; *I Love You*; *One Mint Julep*; *Sermonette*; *Braddock Breakdown*; *Who Can I Turn To*; *Queen Mother Stomp*; *A Beautiful Romance*; *If I Were A Bell*; *Enchanted Lady*; *Here's That Rainy Day*; *Gingerbread Boy*; *Evening In Paris*; *Put Off*; *Bugs Groove*.

*** 1/2

Two more Impulse twofers by artists who've left the label. For awhile Elvin Jones was practically the Impulse house drummer, so one approaches this anthology with trepidation: some of those dates were plain mistakes. No fear, though—this set is mostly work with Coltrane, the high point of his career, and as reliable a cross section as you'd hope for.

Coltrane was the perfect medium for Jones' art. He had a built-in metronome that urgently stated or implied the beat no matter how far Jones' polyrhythms deviated from the music's thrust, or how erratic Jones' placement of 1-2-3-4 (which often sounds like an afterthought). This is important, for this drummer is peculiarly sensitive to others' conceptions of time, and often sounds stifled with other musicians. Rollins' time (*We Kiss*) is far freer than Coltrane's, for example, and the drummer's response is first a kind of faceless conservatism, then complete confusion. Though he's usually uninterested in group interaction, Jones has an uncanny way of returning to ensemble time when convention demands, even in the long *Impressions*, where the players unconsciously pick up the tempo.

By avoiding group interaction, by concentrating on density and multiple rhythms to such an extraordinary extent, Jones' art comes across as curiously Puritan in its own way as Coltrane's. The best of Elvin Jones, then, is that with the most sonoric color. This leaves out, for my taste, *Impressions*, which theoretically should have been outstanding. Coltrane's structure is precisely what Jones usually relates to. Imaginative and dull passages mingle; Coltrane's lines are frequently shaped in a repetitive near-parody of thematic improvisation. James Isaacs' liner notes are both illuminating and misleading, and while I don't share his ecstasy over *Pursu-*

ance, it is an outstanding solo. The exchanges in *Dear* with Charlie Mariano are perhaps equally remarkable, the playing with McCoy Tyner and the ensuing solo moment in *Attaining*, plus the solo on *Aborigine* nearly as rewarding. There are interesting percussion timbres in an otherwise mediocre *All Or*, but Elvin's brushes and Frank Foster's tenor aren't enough to tame Richard Davis' *Shiny* excesses. Including *Serenity* was a mistake.

At this late date, there's surely no point in laboring Jones' immense significance. Milt Jackson is more arguable, for his most important work was done some time ago, and he's often taken the easy road in ensuing years. The Bags anthology includes part of an unusually fine club date, with the leader, tenorist Teddy Edwards, and bassist Ray Brown near the height of their considerable powers. *Frankie*, *Bags* (excellent Edwards) and *If I Were* are thus continually lively and imaginative. Jackson plays long solos on *Who Can* and *Rainy Day*, transforming their plastic changes into genuine melody.

There's the popular yarn that playing with the MJQ washed out Jackson's earthy creativity, and the quartet bits with Hank Jones and Connie Kay—organized in low-grade MJQ fashion—tend to confirm this. But a fledgling Art Farmer and, especially, Lucky Thompson cut the vibist in two 1956 tracks, also. The *Memphis Jackson* date, theoretically an ideal medium for dramatizing his funky qualities, is even constricting. I rather think that time has mellowed this artist, who even in his best years was erratic. The strong accenting so evident in his early work is definitely missing here. And his melodic sense is precarious: Bags is ever willing to substitute even-note, double-time runs for more rhythmically inspiring developments.

Mainly, the soul-funk suit never accurately fit Jackson: at his best, as with Edwards here, he's a bebopper. Beyond that, he reveals himself as a sentimental, often decorative, sometimes even shy inventor. It's fair to say that his art exists at the qualitative level of his surroundings. Other musicians who play well (Miles' All-Stars) or perform striking material (Monk's songs, early MJQ) bring out his more imaginative side. But that has often been wonderful music, and we can surely hear more of it in Milt Jackson's career to come. —litweiler



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BILL EVANS Mar. 15. San Jose Symphony San Jose, Ca.	BARRY MILES AND SILVERLIGHT Mar. 13- 15. Shibo Club Mansfield, Conn. 18-19. Main Point Bryn Mawr, Pa.	ANDREW WHITE Mar. 9. Top O'Foolery 16. Washington, D.C. 23. 30. Apr. 19. Town Hall New York, N.Y. 24. Univ. of Massachusetts Amherst, Mass.
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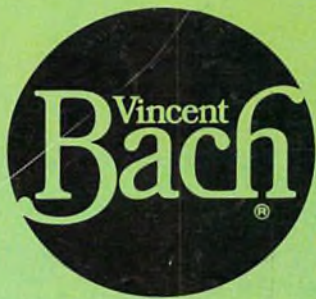
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