MAY 22, 1975 50c

the contemporary music magazine

down beat®

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down beat

May 22, 1975

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the first chorus

By Charles Suber

Jazz cliches die hard. Applaud a tricky lick once and it will be repeated. Repeat it often and you have a style. Embellish style with myth and you have a tradition, such as New Orleans Jazz. The adversary of myth is an iconoclast; such as Dr. John, the angry young/old man of New Orleans music who—in a long interview in this issue—punctures holes in the hot-jazz balloon.

Dr. John, nee Mac Rebennack, tells of a N.O. music scene that is a funky melange of Coltrane-latin-afro-calypso-rockabilly influences—very different from the thin gumbo of Sharkey Bonano-Al Hirt-Dukes of Dixieland served to tourists. In the telling of his own background—piano boogie-woogies at the age of five, a&r man at 13—he portrays the reality of Southern white and black musicians sharing a common experience. It's the natural expression of this experience that he prefers: ". . . you never hear a new record that has an innocent quality about it. You never hear the true mistakes and things, like when a horn player makes a mistake or something, and he'd have to cover it up on the spot by creating something right off the top of his head."

That idea of spontaneous creativity is sought most by contemporary musicians, and understood least by record companies. This issue features three very individual musicians: Garnett Brown, Bennie Maupin, and Eddie Henderson—related to each other by their musical loyalty to the gone-but-lamented Herbie Hancock sextet.

Bennie Maupin accompanied Hancock into the phenomenally successful world of *Headhunters*, but can't help thinking back to the sextet. "They (the record company) didn't really try to sell the music. I mean they put it out there but they remained critical about it."

Eddie Henderson not only recorded in the Hancock sextet on Warner/Reprise, he tried a similar venture on his own. "The year I was with Capricorn (a Warner affiliate), they were a rock label and I was their only jazz artist. I don't think they knew how to promote a jazz product. It's not that they didn't want to. They just didn't know what to do."

Garnett Brown says simply: "Herbie's was the best small group situation I have ever been in." Brown is not putting down his Billy Cobham sessions. In fact, he was delighted with the freedom offered Cobham by Atlantic: "It was really done on the concept of lots of money being allocated for rehearsals like rock players."

Yes, it seems that the natives are restless, and vocal. They want a better understanding of their talent by the record companies and a fairer shake of the money tree.

For two positive responses by record company execs, turn back to our last issue, May 8 **db**. On page 37, Clive Davis lays out the direction of his new label, Arista. On page 6, Stan Cornyn, Creative Director of Warner/Reprise, is quoted on the desirability to better serve the record market.

●

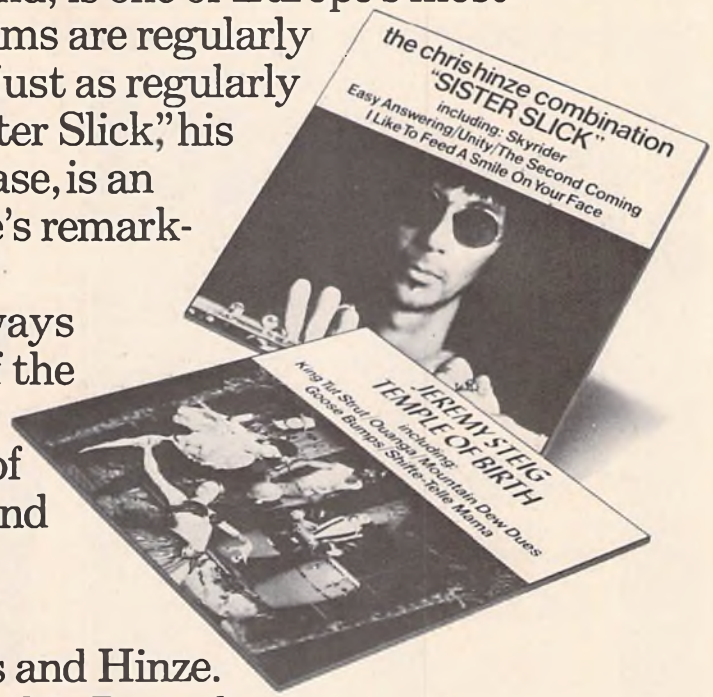
Next issue: On-the-bus with the indefatigable Maynard Ferguson . . . the delicate sure touch of Bill Watrous . . . very frank talk from the new Art Pepper . . . profile on pianist Jack Reilly . . . Tom Scott takes the Blindfold Test . . . Ladd McIntosh demonstrates his scoring system for "expanded jazz orchestra". **db**

The excitement of discovery.

What would happen if someone combined the impact of today's most mind-crushing rock with the swing and the taste of a superb big band? Ask trombonist Bill Watrous. He's created a whole new big-band sound on "Manhattan Wildlife Refuge."

Chris Hinze, of Holland, is one of Europe's most respected flutists. His albums are regularly imported to America, and just as regularly sold out within weeks. "Sister Slick," his first official American release, is an excellent example of Hinze's remarkable musicianship.

Jeremy Steig has always kept a step or two ahead of the crowd. "Temple of Birth" is his most satisfying blend of jazz, rock, middle eastern and free-form music yet.



Steig, Watrous and Hinze.
On Columbia Records®

chords and discords

The Neidlinger Furies

Contrary to what Buell Neidlinger says (**db**, 4/10), I did not review a solo piano concert by Duke Ellington at the Museum Of Modern Art. I did not comment on it verbally. Indeed, I never attended such a concert, nor any trio concert by Ellington. I wish I *had*. But I missed the one at the Whitney Museum. And it is one of my deep regrets that we failed to get that same trio evening done at the Smithsonian before Ellington's death, although I tried.

I have put some of my best thoughts on Ellington's music (up to about 1969) in an essay. If anyone wants to read it, it is in *The Jazz Tradition*.

Martin Williams — Washington, D.C.

When I read Buell Neidlinger's comment comparing Mahavishnu John McLaughlin to Jimmy Page, I thought I had misread it.

I stutter every time I hear Jimmy Page, especially in duo with Robert Plant. He hasn't played an original lick in his life.

About McLaughlin, Joe Pass said this: "The way he plays, his concept . . . he can play. He's really a guitarist."

I think Mr. Neidlinger, great though he may be, has his head up his bass.

John Sunderman — Torrance, Cal.

Buell Neidlinger's reference to Leonard Feather as "the greatest charlatan" is ridiculous. Along with John Hammond, Feather has been responsible for more good in the jazz world than any other critic.

Such a foolish comment doesn't seem to be worth mentioning in a fine magazine such as **db**.

Lorne Schoenberg — Fairlawn, N.J.

To call Leonard Feather and Bob Thiele charlatans may have been a bit harsh of Buell Neidlinger. But he did bring out a valid point, however, which is a thought I have echoed myself for quite a while. Congratulations, Feather and Thiele, you have succeeded in doing exactly what you set out to do—to make lots and lots of money, and present to a younger generation only one side of the jazz world.

Leonard Feather should broaden his scope to include at least some of the free jazz, since he is so widely read and people do depend on him to introduce them to good quality jazz. If he totally blocks out this area, then he is not really the critic of caliber that everyone says he is. He should learn to appreciate people like Cecil Taylor, Ornette Coleman, Albert Ayler. . . .

Feather's position is not as crucial as Thiele's, however. Thiele is the one that really angers me. As a producer, the *maker* of jazz albums, he is even more one-sided. He practices assimilation to the point of amalgamation, and his artists do the same. Let us remember that he was once a maker of free music, and a very good one, too. Whether he's currently frustrated due to not receiving fame and fortune for his '60s efforts, I don't know. Fusing jazz with rock is fine, but the market is being glutted. . . . A label that was once vitally important has now prostituted itself. The latest albums by Thiele are perfect examples of what the fusion music can turn into: boring and mediocre monotony.

Mike Lieberman — Sherman Oaks, Cal.

One And The Same

For the past two years I've been trying to find out whatever happened to that tremendous guitarist who used to play with Tim Buckley. Am I correct in assuming that Lee Underwood is now working for **down beat**? Or shall I keep on looking?

Ernie Buongiorno — Little Falls, N.J.

(Ed. note: You've found him, Ernie, guitarist and journalist Underwood are indeed one and the same talented dude.)

A Bass Is Like A Wife

Thanks for the article on Ron Carter. It reminded me of one day in fall 1964 in West Berlin. I came there as number one bassplayer with a poll-winning SH Quintet from Czechoslovakia to play at a major jazz festival. Someone walked in the dressing room and asked me whether I would let Miles Davis' bassist use my bass at the concert, since he hadn't brought his own.

Hell, no, I said. My bass is like my wife, you don't loan your wife. Hell, I had a 1734-made instrument, had just bought me a set of American strings and this guy comes here and doesn't even take his instrument with him.

Well, Ron may or may not remember that and it doesn't make any difference now. What I like, though, and would have answered in exactly the same way, is Ron Carter's philosophy of bassism. I think his is the only approach.

Jon Arnet — New York, N.Y.

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down beat NEWS

Wakeman Puts Self On Ice

The latest word on spectacle fetishist/keyboardist Rick Wakeman is even more outlandish than first feared. Wakeman has made plans to bring his new opus, *The Myths And Legends Of King Arthur And The Knights Of The Round Table*, to London's Wembley Pool for three gala nights, May 30-June 1.

HERB NOLAN

Brave Defender Of The Arthurian Tradition

The lineup includes the bashful Rick, accompanied by 17 professional ice skaters, the 58-piece New World Symphony Orchestra, the 48-piece English Chamber Choir, the 8-piece Nottingham Festival Singers, and his regular band, The English Rock Ensemble. Wakeman will portray Merlin The Magician, benedicting from atop a castle erected in the center of the ice, with skaters (including world champ twirlers outfitted as Arthur and Guinevere) interpreting the skeletal Arthurian adventures.

Rick will grace the scene for some three hours, lording over a sound system which will be suspended from the roof of the pool. His wall of keyboards will reside upon specially-constructed altars. The ritual will purportedly cost some $150,000, marking the event as the most expensive popsicle in world history.

Liberace has reportedly turned blue with envy.

Collector's Choice At Lincoln Center

The Museum Of The Performing Arts at Lincoln Center in New York will feature a special exhibit called "Collector's Choice" through June 28. The collection brings together the most historically important musical instruments owned by Americans. The collection spans five centuries and has been mounted by Jacques Francais, Inc., the nation's largest rare instrument dealer.

Among the instruments on display are a 16th century cello by Andrea Amati, nicknamed "the King" because it was made specifically for Charles IX of France; a 1612 sackbut trombone, the only one of its kind in North America; a 1619 guitar which Mary Queen Of Scots once owned; a Jew's harp that dates back to 1500 Saxony; the flute of Frederick The Great; the 1670 walnut Bentside spinet of Stephan Keene; Paganini's personal violin; and one of the earliest-known surviving lutes, a Venetian ivory nine-string.

According to mounter Francais, the priceless instruments are "all on public display for the first time, having been kept in playing condition so that they accurately recreate the sounds of the music of their individual periods."

New Knockout Label???

Heavyweight champ Muhammad Ali has decided to throw his gloves into the vinyl arena. Ali has been named co-chairman of a newly-formed label called Starway Records. The champ will have "total involvement" in the creative, administrative, and financial facets of the company.

The company's initial release is by a group called Best Ever, who perform a ditty tagged *The People's Choice*. True to form, the song applauds the virtues of Ali.

Watchout, Muhammad, remember Ernie Terrell and the Heavyweights?

potpourri

A recent addition to the **db** record reviewer staff is **Lars Gabel.** A transplanted Dane currently living in Chicago, Lars serves as a radio correspondent for Denmark Radio, is a regular contributor to various Danish journals, among them *MM*, and has co-authored *Rock: Who What & Where*, a rock encyclopedia recently published in Copenhagen by Politikens Forlag. The 28-year-old Gabel specializes in soul music.

●

Trumpeter **Eddie Henderson,** who recently signed with Blue Note, is completing the mix on his first album for that label. Produced by **Skip Drinkwater** at Wally Heider Studios, the album features **George Duke,** piano and synthesizer; **Buster Williams,** acoustic bass; **Al Johnson,** electric bass; **Harvey Mason** and **Billy Hart,** drums; **Bennie Maupin,** reeds; and **Julian Priester,** trombone . . . **Billy Cobham** and his band were recently at San Francisco's CBS Studios recording *A Funky Thyde Of Sings*, a new album scheduled for fall release. Personnel on the session included Cobham, drums; **Alex Blake,** acoustic and electric bass; **Randy Brecker,** trumpet; **Michael Brecker,** tenor sax and flute; **Glenn Ferris,** trombone; **Milcho Leviev,** keyboards; and **John Scoffield,** guitar. Material on the album includes one piece by each band member, with the exception of Scoffield. After completing the session, the Brecker brothers left the Cobham unit to do a tour with their own group and singer **Minnie Riperton.** According to Cobham, a new album called *Shabazz*, which was recorded live in Europe, should be released sometime this month.

—*harry c. duncan*

●

Prodigal Sons, Cont.: Fresh in the wake of the earth-shaking news that **Sabu The Elephant Boy's** son **Paul** has embarked on a recording career, we received this chip off the old gossip block. It seems that **Spike Jones, Jr.** (yes, indeed, the son of the late bandleader) has headquartered himself in Chicago for purposes of putting together a sextet to be known as **Spike Jones Jr. And The Bandades.** Supposedly, the unit will be into the bizarre, a la dear ole Dad. Que sera, sera. . . .

●

Well-known Chicago musician **Kenny Soderblom** has been hired to oversee a jazz operation at the O'Hare Holiday Inn. Entitled *Jazz On A Sunday Afternoon*, the series of performances will begin June 15. Soderblom will be in complete charge of booking, and will headline his own band as well as various local and touring musicians.

●

The 6th annual **Chicago High School Jazz Festival** will be staged in the Kennedy-King College Gymnasium on Saturday, May 17. Serving as commentators and clinicians for the Festival will be three home-based musician/educators: **Bill Abernathy,** head of instrumental music at Kennedy-King; **Dr. Warrick Carter,** head of jazz studies at Governors State University; and **Roger Pemberton,** recording artist and arranger and reeds clinician for C. G. Conn.

●

A white art-deco synagogue turned Boston University auditorium was packed to the fire limit one night last month as **WBUR-FM** and **Columbia Records** collaborated on a jazz concert. **Stan Getz' Quartet** leaned heavily toward the Latin while **Stanton Davis'** ghetto-style mysticism favored Afro roots, all to the delight of the crowd.

The purpose of the concert and live broadcast was to raise funds for non-commercial WBUR's operating budget. The station has become the Boston area's top jazz outlet during the last three years.—*fred bouchard*

●

Sonny Rollins has been awarded the **Grand Prix du Disque** in the jazz division of the Charles Cros Academy Awards in France for his recent Milestone album, *The Cutting Edge*. These awards are the French counterpart of the American Grammies.

●

Rumor has it that promoter **Jerry Weintraub** is cooking up a really big one come this fall on Broadway. The proposed lineup will include **Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald,** and the **Count Basie Orchestra,** with the date set for two weeks sometime after Sinatra's upcoming European tour.

●

Soulschmaltz champ **Barry White** (all 300 pounds of him) has been signed to play the lead role in an upcoming Hollywood grosser to be based on the life of the late **Fats Waller.** The project is said to have a most ponderous budget.

●

Grunt Meets Groan: Record producer/gentlemen con artists **Sandy Pearlman** and **Murray Krugman** (the Siamese brain behind rock band **Blue Oyster Cult**) have come up with another goody. In an attempt to hype their latest sensations, a motley collection of New Joisey street punks known as The **Dictators,** Messrs Pearl and Krug have retained the services of heavyweight wrestling tag teamers the **Valiant Brothers** (Handsome Jimmy and Luscious John). The Valiants deliver braggadocio-laced-with-menace radio spots lauding the merits of the Dictators' first (and perhaps, last) album, *Go Girl Crazy*.

●

Inspired by the latest discotheque reincarnation, **Audio Fidelity Records** recently released what it claims to be the first belly dance single. The two tracks were extracted from an album called *Port Said* and are titled *Belly Dancers Of Port Said*

continued on page 35

WJA Hatched In LA

An organization known as the World Jazz Association was launched on April 4-5 at the Sheraton Universal Hotel in Los Angeles. More than 100 persons attended, including emissaries from England and most major American cities.

Founded for the purpose of bringing together "artistic and commercial aspects of jazz to promote the present, the future, and to recognize past contributions to world jazz," the WJA will be governed by a board of directors. The board includes Hal Cook, retired publisher of Billboard, president; Bob Summers, music director and disk jockey at Los Angeles' KBCA, executive vice-president; Leonard Feather, jazz critic and author, secretary; Dave Pell, musician and record producer, treasurer; Paul Tanner, professor of music, executive director; and John Levy, personal manager, chairman of the Board of Directors.

BLUEBIRD SET TO SOAR

JOHN HEDDON

Artie Shaw

JOSEPH L. JOHNSON

Count Basie

RCA has announced more plans for its recently reactivated Bluebird label. Last month's initial five-album release will be followed by more golden goodies, appearing at approximately one month intervals. Single albums will be priced at $4.98, with double packages set at $7.98.

Bluebird, which had its heyday back in the '30s and '40s, sports an extensive catalog dating back to 1933. Included are such artists as Fats Waller, Artie Shaw, Glenn Miller, Tommy Dorsey, Count Basie, Jelly Roll Morton, Bix Beiderbecke, and Coleman Hawkins. All reissues will be produced by archivist/historian Frank Driggs, with keen attention to comprehensive liner notes, discography, and historical photos.

RCA has also acquired manufacturing and distribution rights to Norman Granz' Pablo Records. The label has a roster that includes many top-flight artists such as Joe Pass, Count Basie, Oscar Peterson, and Ella Fitzgerald.

The first product issued under the new agreement will highlight releases by Joe Turner, Dizzy Gillespie, Pass, and Basie.

EASTMAN SETS JAZZ DEGREE

Eastman School Of Music in Rochester, N.Y., has announced a new degree program which will be initiated come September of this year.

The school will offer a Master of Music Programs in Jazz Studies and Contemporary Media degree, which will be under the direction of Professor Rayburn Wright and Assistant Prof Bill Robbins. The initiation of the program marks the first time that an American university has offered such a degree for jazz students. More info may be obtained by writing Eastman School of Music or **db**.

BANG A GONG

The smash box office movie *Tommy* has spawned quite a few interesting sidelights, but one of the more interesting was a recent Celebrity Pinball Contest. The contest was held in Korvette's Department Store in New York, with various big names attempting to reach the impossible score on a newly-designed Bally pinball appropriately enough called Pinball Wizard.

The following tabulation was assembled by Judge Ira Leslie, who officiated over the five-day electric debauch: first place went to Scott Simon, lead singer of nostalgic hoodlums Sha-Na-Na, for his high score of 174, 280; second place to that ole greaser David Clayton-Thomas of Blood Sweat and Tears for 168,960; third and fourth place to recordspinners Dave Herman and Joel Siegel; fifth place to *Pink Flamingos* sweetheart Divine; and sixth place to a collectively scientific effort by Chick Corea and Return To Forever, who split up the action yet still managed to eke out a respectable, but by no means, ethereal 66,000.

BLACK EAGLE SPECIAL

The Black Eagle Jazz Band, Boston's version of New Orleans jazz, trad style, will be featured in an upcoming TV special over the PBS system. To be called *Roaring Through The Twenties*, the hour-long show will be set in Bobby Short's Speakeasy. Featured are pianist Claude Hopkins, dances of the '20s, film clips of Al Jolson and John Barrymore, and plenty of music by both the Black Eagles and pianist Short.

New Releases

Recent platters from **Columbia** include the eighth opus by **Chicago**, spotlighting that strange **Harry Truman** tribute; a double package reissue of **Al Kooper**'s more memorable efforts, including half of the first **Blood Sweat & Tears** disc; the second solo effort by flash guitarist **Rick Derringer**, called *Spring Fever*; and the long-awaited return of **Jeff Beck** on *Blow By Blow*.

Columbia Special Products has also added ten albums to its collectors series. Jazz titles number eight and include the three-record set *Jazz Odyssey, Volume I—The Sound Of New Orleans*; **Woody Herman**'s *Three Herds; Jammin' At Condon's; Bunk Johnson; Johnny Dodds and Kid Ory*; and the Paris concert of **Art Blakey and His Jazz Messengers**. The other releases are a pair of Broadway specials, **Noel Coward**'s 1951 musicomedy *Conversation Piece* and the original cast album of *I Can Get It For You Wholesale*.

●

MCA Records has released 15 double LPs as part of its continuing twofer reissue plan. The albums feature music from the big band era. Spotlighted in the "Best Of" series are packages by **Charlie Barnet, Les Brown, Eddie Condon, Xavier Cugat, Jimmy Dorsey, Tommy Dorsey, Lionel Hampton, Glen Gray, Woody Herman, Gordon Jenkins, Louis Jordan, Freddy Martin, Artie Shaw, Guy Lombardo,** and **Bob Crosby.**

●

Fresh **Arista** items include the first solo album by **Randy** and **Michael Brecker,** formerly of **Dreams, Horace Silver,** and **Billy Cobham;** *Your Mama Won't Like Me*, from leather tigress **Suzi Quatro;** *Matching Tie And Handkerchief*, by English comic group **Monty Python's Flying Circus;** *Be True To You*, the first disc in two years from **Eric Andersen;** and the soundtrack from the rich man's skin flick, *Emmanuelle*.

Atlantic keeps pace with the initial album by New York nostalgia buffs **Manhattan Transfer;** another chapter in the **Eric Clapton** legend called *There's One In Every Crowd;* **Straight Shooter,** the second effort by English rock sensations **Bad Company;** and *Rubycon*, by electronic dabblers **Tangerine Dream.**

●

CTI's newest are *Two*, by composer/arranger **Bob James;** a double volume set capturing a reunion concert by **Chet Baker** and **Gerry Mulligan;** and *Polar AC*, by **Freddie Hubbard.**

●

New items from **Martin Davison**'s **Emanem** label, located in London, England, are: *The Crust*, with **Steve Lacy, Steve Potts, Derek Bailey, Kent Carter,** and **John Stevens;** and *Face To Face*, with the **Spontaneous Music Ensemble,** a duet group comprised of **John Stevens** on percussion and cornet and **Trevor Watts** on soprano sax.

●

VJ International has issued four albums culled from the voluminous vaults of **Vee-Jay.** The never-before-released tapes include *Second Genesis*, by **Wayne Shorter** (with **Art Blakey** on drums); *Home With Sweets*, by **Harry "Sweets" Edison;** *Please Send Me Someone To Love*, by vocalist **Bill Henderson;** and *Big Band Blues*, **Bobby Bryant.**

●

Larry Coryell is joined by three members of **Oregon** on his most recent effort, *The Restful Mind*.

●

A&M's current crop features *Right Or Wrong*, the third disc by English duo **Stealers Wheel;** *Frampton*, starring rock guitarist **Peter Frampton;** *Southbound*, **Hoyt Axton;** and something mysteriously tagged *Far Beyond These Castle Walls*, by newcomer **Chris De Burgh.** **db**

down beat NEWS

Keith Emerson talks with his hands about the Moog.®

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ROOTS CONQUER ALL

Dr. JOHN

LINDA WING

by Marv Hohman

Even in these days of the patently bizarre, the broad-bellied man with the crooked walking cane presents a unique image on the streets of downtown Chicago; so much that a rather conservatively-garbed dude in his 30s comes up and asks, "That's not who I think it is, is it?" When I give the guy a nod, he runs up and grabs the man with the walking stick, pouring out his admiration, how much he enjoys the records, etc.

But Mac Rebennack, alias Dr. John "The Night Tripper" Creaux, nowadays just plain old Dr. John, has heard the whole thing before. He modestly thanks the man for his attention, easing away as gracefully as possible, so that he can move on down Michigan Avenue in his rambling, albeit slightly lame, gait.

He has a few hours before his worn dungarees and flannel shirt have to make way for a more radiant plumage, one sporting any of an assortment of colorful headdresses, matched up with dazzling satin suits of sparkles and sequins.

When the good Doctor finally boogaloo-waddles on stage to the screeches of his fans, the theatricality of his act is impressive, an infectious spur to the good-timey, funk-laden New Orleans "bonaroo" music that he thumps out on his piano.

The majority of his audience is probably unaware of the lengthy history that lies beneath the glittery veneer of the Dr. John persona. Only a small fraction of them are old enough to remember the golden days of Ace Records, a tiny but influential independent record company based in Jackson, Mississippi that thrived from the mid-'50s up through the early '60s. It was there that a young Mac Rebennack got his start in the recording game, immersing himself in the styles of his hometown heroes, people like Roy Byrd (better known as Professor Longhair), Smiley Lewis, and Huey "Piano" Smith.

It was this apprenticeship, which included stints as session guitarist and pianist, and eventually arranger and a&r man, that provided Rebennack with the comprehensive background he has utilized to such advantage. When he finally (and reluctantly) split from New Orleans in the mid-'60s, he had no intention of shrugging off the city's considerable influence on his musical directions.

Yet Mac felt that it was time to make a move on his own by becoming a headline artist. The result was the creation of the Dr. John The Night Tripper guise. The initial *Gris-Gris* album confounded many people because it was difficult to ascertain whether the whole production was a strange, psychedelically influenced foray into Purple People Eater and Dinner With Drac land or a slightly twisted tribute to the origins of gumbo-cum-spiritville musicology.

A follow-up album called *Babylon* confused the issue further. Although the Dr. stayed within his natural funk perimeters on such cuts as *Barefoot Lady* and *Black Widow Spider*, the morbid, apocalyptic tones of *Lonesome Guitar Strangler* and *Twilight Zone* caused many listeners to incorrectly lump Dr. John in the same rather unsavory bag as such momentary media grabbers as Zodiac (he of the unsolved murders), Arthur Brown (the English rock God of Hellfire), and other such offspring produced from Tim Leary/Vampirella mutated couplings.

Even though his third and fourth discs, *Remedies* and *The Sun, Moon And Herbs*, featured several memorable cuts and more of that inimitable Rebennack funk, it wasn't until the release of a package called *Gumbo* that the Doctor was able to parlay his bayou boogie into a steadier commercialism. Returning to his New Orleans roots, *Gumbo* found Rebennack recreating some of the notable efforts from the heyday of his long-time tribesmen. The voodoo mannerisms and mysterious appeal were consciously deaccentuated in favor of a more refined image, the music suffering not one iota in the process.

When *In The Right Place* appeared a year later, both the title song and the classic *Such A Night* rose to Top Ten stature. Dr. John was no longer regarded as a rock sideshow act, but had begun to finally gain well-deserved recognition for his songwriting, hoarsely compelling vocals, and keyboard abilities. Such recent efforts as the pulsating *Quitters Never Win* and the raucous *I'm Qualified* (both from the *Desitively Bonaroo* album) have solidified his reputation.

A showman of the highest order, Rebennack has seen the music business from every aspect. He has accepted his rock success with an easy whimsicality, undoubtedly tempered by his almost 20 years of sidelining and odd-jobbing for the slimmest of bucks. New Orleans continues to be the inspiration for everything he does, and he has remained loyal to all the musicians who nurtured him in his youth.

Now in his mid-30s, Dr. Rebennack already boasts a history of memories and associations that seem endless. Regardless of whether one approves of his penchant for theatricality (another direct carryover from that whole Mardi Gras atmosphere), Dr. John has been one of the most influential personalities on the American music scene for the better part of two decades.

This interview began with a rap about the old days in New Orleans, when such legendary pianists as Professor Longhair, Smiley Lewis, and Archibald were turning out regional hits that were later metamorphosed into diluted versions more palatable for national consumption.

Hohman: Of all the New Orleans keyboardists, the one that seems to have faded into deepest obscurity is Archibald. What happened to him?

Dr. John: Well, in '48 or '49 he had a million seller, and in those days a million seller was . . . shit, man, that was *unheard* of. Arch got paid somethin' like 25 dollars to do a date and that was it. He had several other successful records after *Stack-o-lee*, but that was his *big* record. I wanted to record him for Ace Records when I was producing, but he was so bitter over *Stack-o-lee* that he just wouldn't do it. Then when Lloyd Price and Harold Logan stole *Stack-o-lee* from him it got even worse. I got pretty bitter myself when Lloyd stole *Lady Luck* from me, but I don't really blame it on Lloyd. I gotta be frank, I blame it on Logan. He's dead and gone now and I don't like to knock the dead, but I don't like to have to think of other artists as being crooks.

Hohman: Were there a lot of examples of that kind of freewheeling ripoff?

Dr. John: Well, a lot of the things that developed are really *Tee-Na-Na* by Smiley Lewis played sideways. But eight-bar blues is a traditional thing, whereas *Stack-o-lee* had a little different chord progression than a lot of those tunes. But man, it just disgusted me, that thing with Archibald and all, and the fact that after a million seller he couldn't get nothin' out of it money-wise. Like when the Spiders stole *I Didn't Want To Do It* or *You're The One*, I forget which one, neither one of 'em was giant sellers but they were Top Ten records. That group never had another record as big after that and of course, they fell apart after awhile. They never knew that the record companies was the crooks, the guys in the group was always blaming each other for making no money. The whole thing would make you want to say shit on this business, I don't want no part of it. In fact, I retired from this business for about four months but I just couldn't stay away from it, man I'd have to go back to gigging and jamming. You know that's something, you always see people that's in and out of this business, but they can never stay out of it, I don't know what it is. It damned sure ain't appealing from a financial standpoint and it damned sure ain't appealing from the ugly part of the bullshit that goes down between the record companies and these jive-ass guys that they call record producers these days.

Hohman: How does that scene differ today, that whole relationship between artist and producer?

Dr. John: Well, in the days when Alvin "Red" Tyler was schooling me to be an A&R man at Ace, my job was to find the artist, get him hooked up with the company, if he didn't have his own material write it for him, arrange the material, hire the musicians, cut the date, master the date, and do all of the work up to the pressing of the record itself. Then my job would be finished.

Nowadays, they call a producer a guy that they pay more money who can't even do that. You know, like Al "Red" Tyler was our junior A&R man at Ace when I was about 13, under Red Tyler, who was the senior A&R man. He schooled me to do the whole record, from front to back. When I had an A&R date, the whole thing was my responsibility, even teaching the artist the songs and rehearsing the band was all part of making that record.

Today a record producer is generally the guy who finances the record. He don't do shit. And man, does he get more money. When I was an A&R man, I got paid $60 a week, plus some session money. But really there's no fairness in it if you know what I mean, the compensation for the amount of effort that was put into those records years ago. Now they got 32 tracks and some sucker can just come in and overdub forever and turn out a record, with little or no talent at all. And that pisses me off, frankly.

I'm a traditionalist as far as my beliefs go on how a record should be made. The thing that I love in the old records as opposed to the new, though I love the new recording techniques and all, is that other than the guitar sounds, you never hear a new record that has an innocent quality about it. You never hear the true mistakes and things, like when a horn player makes a mistake or something, and he'd have to cover it up on the spot by creating something right off the top of his head. Those were the little moments of greatness that just ain't here no more. Everything is so slick, that whole thing has been lost, it's been gone ever since the advent of the four-track. Even when it was two tracks and Huey Smith and the Clowns would come in and cut a track, we'd put the voices in later. But at least the band was all right there and playing at one time.

When the four tracks came in, first you did the rhythm section, then the horns, then you added the singer. Man, I miss those days when the singer, the band, everybody, had to get it down *together* on the same take. Shit, maybe the trumpet player's chops was gone by the final take, maybe the tenor player had blew the part till it didn't even make sense to him no more, but there was a quality about them records that is sorely lacking today. Even though I'll listen to some of those old records and they sound horrible today, I can appreciate them from the fact that they was done not to be a hit but to be a record.

Hohman: Ace Records recently went back in business, for the purpose of rereleasing some of the more commercial stuff in its catalog. In fact, they've issued a record of the better stuff by Huey Smith and the Clowns and an album featuring you as well, calling it *Dr. John and his New Orleans Congregation*.

Dr. John: My days with Ace and Johnny Vincent are long gone. He still owns so many songs that I wrote and Earl King and Huey Smith wrote that the only way any of us could collect off them would be when he sells the publishing rights to somebody like Jerry Wexler.

Hohman: What instruments did you play on those dates?

Dr. John: Well, on those Ace sessions I mostly played guitar. We had three different cliques. When I was working with Red Tyler I was playing guitar and Allen Toussaint was playing piano. When I was working with Huey Smith, myself and Earl King would play guitar: that was like the home clique with Charlie Williams, myself, Justin Adams, and Earl. Huey was one of the original cats to use two guitars on a record, even though you could never hear them. The thing in those days was to try and make Huey's piano loud enough. So naturally, a lot of shit got buried. Like we used a baritone sax and four tenors on a lot of records and the bari would always get lost. It was real hard to get it because they was all blowing in one mike and the two guitars was both in one mike, so if you ever got it all it was a real rarity.

I think that only one or two times, maybe on the last records Huey cut, could you really hear the guitar. But like to me, some of the hippest things that Huey ever cut was things when Earl King was playing guitar. Earl at the time wasn't a chording kind of guy, he didn't play no changes, he was a real true traditional blues player like Guitar Slim. He'd just play some little fills and stuff. Those were the few classic things that ever took place out of it all.

Hohman: What about some of your own parts back then?

Dr. John: I remember one session we did with Charles Brown and Amos Milburn. They was both my idols when I was growing up. When I did my first album with Charles Brown, he did a lot of his old tunes over and I was supposed to try and play Johnny Moore's guitar parts, or something similar to them. Man, I panicked and got juiced on the date. Then when I heard the records I couldn't tell what I'd messed up on and couldn't hear the parts that I played, except for the solos where they had turned me up a little bit. First of all, you didn't have amplifiers like you do today. Like all the guys used to use that one old little ten-inch speaker and a Gibson or a Gretsch amp or some oddball brand like nobody uses these days, or else something like Sears & Roebuck would put out. Not only couldn't you be heard due to the lame amplifiers, but when you had one mike for two or three guys, the guy that was standing closest to the mike was the guy that got heard.

And then the amp would never be set right near the mike cause they usually hummed. One of the first cats that was hip to miking guitar amps was Dave Bartholomew. Listen to a lot of old Fats Domino records, you'll hear that guitar come through loud and clear. But the main reason you could hear it was cause he was doubling the bass line or playing a bass line on a guitar rather than chording. On a lot of those records you can hear Papoose cutting through, he was the first cat to come up with a hip guitar amp. He had a hornspeaker, the kind those politicians use on a car.

Hohman: How did you get involved at such an early age with the whole New Orleans black music scene?

Dr. John: Well, it came from two or three accidental things that happened. I'd been playing piano since I was maybe five or six years old, playing boogie woogies. My father used to repair radios and televisions and p. a. systems at the local clubs. That's how I came to meet Professor Longhair. When 'Fess was playing at the Pepper Pot, my father went over there and repaired a p. a. system. I used to love to go wherever he'd go cause I'd get to hear the bands. The group was on a break because the system was broke and that's when I first saw Professor. So I told him that they wouldn't leave me sit in the club cause I was too young. But I noticed that if I sat on this log outside of the window and I looked on in, I could see Fess' hands on the piano. That's more or less when I started sneaking out of the house and going to the Pepper Pot every night, so I could watch how old Fess'd place his hands on the keys.

And I did the same thing when I first started playing guitar. I studied with Fess' guitar player at the time, Papoose, who later on went with Fats Domino. Papoose used to let me go on and stand right in front of him and look at how he put his hands on the guitar. Then he finally took me on as a guitar student and Papoose was like *the* top blues guitar player in the city. By him taking me under his wing and schooling me, it got me to a place

where guys like Justin Adams and them would accept me.

Besides that, my father worked with Cosmo, a guy who owned a studio and an appliance store that sold records which at that time were still called race records. Cosmo took records to all the black hotels in New Orleans. So I was able to hear Memphis Minnie and all the current records. Then I just started hanging around the studio. I was a real pest, like everyday before I went to school I would run downtown and catch Paul Gayten's last set at The Brass Rail. As soon as I'd get off of school, I'd hang out at the recording studio till all the sessions was over and then I'd run and check the clubs, like The Cadillac and hear Papoose and Fess play. I was around the cats so much that they more or less just put up with me.

Then all of a sudden one day I got a call asking me would I make a date on my own, not so-and-so can't make it and we're gonna use you instead. Somebody actually called me, for me, man. I think Paul Gayten was the cat that did it, had enough faith in me as a musician. I was about 13 or 14 and it was right around this time I got the gig at Ace.

Hohman: Were you the only white guy involved in the New Orleans scene?

Dr. John: No, there was about three of us that was involved. Bobby Charles, the singer who wrote *See You Later, Alligator* and *I Don't Know Why I Love You But I Do* and a lot of other hit tunes for Fats Domino and Clarence Frogman Henry and other singers—well, Bobby was the first singer that was touring with the black groups. Like myself and Jimmy Clanton, this guitar player who came in the picture a little later, he and myself was two white boys who were able to play guitar on the records. Jimmy was basically a singer, too. Wallace Davenport brought me out to Lincoln Beach to play, (they had two beaches, a black and a white one in New Orleans), and he called me up to make a gig at the black beach. He said to bring along my trombone player to back up this show with Bo Diddley, Clyde McPhatter, I forget all, you know, one of them old traveling package shows.

Through that I got a gig with Roy Brown who was making his comeback, from the time when he had cut all them great blues records. On this comeback, he was singing rockabilly records. He'd recorded *Be-Bop-A-Lula* or some stupid thing, but it was helping him to make a comeback. Roy and a fellow that was his piano player accepted more of the studio musicians that was gigging around. I guess they just decided that this is a dude that's just hangin' around, cause I wasn't nothin' but a little teenybopper, a sort of groupie guy. But one thing led to another and my first real big break was to work on Fess' session of *Mardi Gras In New Orleans*, which is the big standard record that's played everywhere in New Orleans for the Mardi Gras. After we did that record, that more or less tied the whole thing up, where from then on I was accepted by the clique.

Hohman: Around what year was that?

Dr. John: That was right around 1956. That was the same year that Allen Toussaint joined the union; we both got in, and I didn't have to do all of them bootleg sessions. I was able to work with the legit guys like Lee Allen and all those cats from the funk clique, which was the real group of the cats that made all the hit records. There was Shirley and Lee and Fats, though I never cut with him, and Dave Dixon, Bobby Marchan, and Joe Tex, all of them was artists that were cutting in New Orleans at the time.

It was around '56 too that I cut my first album as an artist for Cosmo. It was half guitar instrumentals and half piano instrumentals and one of them, a tune called *Storm Warning*, was a little hit that helped me. At the time I had a small band that would back up a lot of the r&b package shows that traveled in the south, which was mainly why the chair in the studio band would change a lot. When Justin Adams was the first guitarist in the studio chair and he would have to leave on a gig, the chair would be open for another guy. That's like when Earl Palmer left New Orleans, they tried out a whole lot of drummers before they found Charlie Williams, who I consider the first cat to really start the whole funk trend.

Hohman: How much of the funk syndrome can be tied to New Orleans and its folklore, its whole cultural background?

Dr. John: Well, you can't separate no part of nothing, the cultural folklore, the ritual, the pageantry, that's all part of New Orleans. Myself, I got more into the hoodoo part of the culture through guys like Alvin Robinson, Jesse Hill, Papoose and all the fellows from the 9th Ward of New Orleans where it was very strong and deep in the culture.

When I first met Sister Catherine and them all, I started thinking that, man, them hoodoos, they'd mess you up in a minute. See, I'd been raised as a Roman Catholic. But when I saw them curing people and all . . . well, like with them other faith-healing churches that I'd played for, they had these shuck prophets where a guy would run around crazy-like and have 30 stooges out in the audience that'd come up and testify they're healed and all. But when I actually saw the real McGillicuddy I said, "Man, there's somethin' beyond this hustle here." It wasn't like these cats who would come up on crutches with bandages and all that stuff and then they'd all of a sudden throw that junk away and everybody that was in on the hustle would be laughin' the whole time, the scene was so carny.

But yet the people would always eat that up cause the music would be goin' and the prophet would be hootin' and hollerin'. And I really got turned off from all of that. So when I started seeing people who was not hip to that whole show bizness scene and here would be a lady who was running a home for unwed mothers and helping hustling broads that was in trouble with the law and trying to help other people with social services, somebody that was really interested in human beings and not just in passing the plate around, I started getting a different outlook on the whole thing.

Now it's got to the point where I've become a priest in the church, man, and I'm still studying and everything because I don't have all the time I need to put into it.

Hohman: What's the name of the church?

Dr. John: It's called the Church of Voodoo and Witchcraft. It's chartered by the state of Louisiana. Right now I'm trying to get a charter through in California and tie this thing up all over the country so we don't have to be underground no more, it's nothing that has to be hidden in alleys and somebody's backyard no more.

Hohman: There are many different regional tribes that play a huge role in Mardi Gras, lending that special flavor of celebration. What do you like most about Mardi Gras?

Dr. John: To me, Mardi Gras consists of two things that make it special. The uncommercial part of it is made up of the local people like the Zulus and the Mardi Gras Indians. All the street parades that the tourists see, just them certain lily-white parades, that's totally another thing. But when you get down to hear the Buzzards band and see the Zulu parade and all the other soulful things, that to me is Mardi Gras, the beauty and the culture of the whole thing can only be seen there.

There's all the tribes like the Golden Blades and the Wild Magnolias and the Wild Creations, all them tribes are Mardi Gras. When I go take my kids to see Mardi Gras, I don't go to the big parade, I just take them to the Zulu parade. Generally, I don't even go to that, I just go to the breakfast and hang out with the fellas. Anybody that goes to Shakespeare Park in the morning, Mardi Gras morning about six o'clock, can see all the actual ritual of the tribes. I don't know, things like the beautiful pageants are being lost in modernism. But at least some of the music is finally being recorded since the Wild Magnolias did their record.

Hohman: How about the various influences on New Orleans music? Let's trace back funk. How did that genre evolve?

Dr. John: The basic thing about New Orleans music has always been the rhythm, not so much melodic music. Now I'm not saying it *isn't* melodic, but the *essence* of New Orleans music is rhythm. Over the years it's developed. Like there's a lot of Afro-Cuban influences in the music. When I first started playing with Edward Blackwell and Edward Franks and those cats and started hanging around with that clique of fellas before Edward Blackwell went on and got hooked up with Ornette Coleman and that scene, he was one of the first cats I knew who was in that back to Africa thing. Their gigs were basically like putting on African shows and playing that Afro-Cuban music. That music had a strong relation to second-line music, both of them were like second-line with stresses on a different accent. See, in the basic Afro-Cuban music, one is established as the beat and everything after that beat is basically free. In Latin music, one is the hit and is always established and everybody plays around it.

But in second-line the beat is four/one, and there are two accents, as opposed to the one in Latin. Just that little fine difference is so small that it's easy to overlap the two and mix 'em, it's just a natural thing to combine the essence of the groove.

But what really made the thing in New Orleans step out and away from where rock music was in general was when Motown picked up on what was happening. Berry Gordy brought one of the New Orleans bands back to Detroit and then they took all those tapes and analyzed what was going on in New Orleans music. Then they had the sense to use little bits and pieces of the natural funk in their records. You can hear very easily in the earlier Motown records, before they got so slick, that influence they had copped from New Orleans.

And all of this would never have developed but for Charles Williams. He started it all with alternatin' and trick-footin' his bass drum and his snare. Charles had a severed nerve in his hand where he could roll with his

left hand and he had the same thing with his right foot where he could roll on the bass drum. And by being so fast with his bass and snare, when he would do all these alternatin' things, he could play chorus after chorus of bass drum stuff that when those guys in California and New York heard these old New Orleans records, they'd hire two and three drummers to play one part.

Hohman: What about the influences of calypso and rhumba music on New Orleans?

Dr. John: When the calypso influence came in, it had a two-way effect. When the craze hit all the fellas like Jamaica Johnnie and Cabana Joe, all the guys that was into that, they all hit New Orleans at the same time and started making a lot of records with David Bartholomew and Smiley Lewis. New Orleans just happened to be the launching place for it, they didn't actually call it calypso rock, but if it would have been today, that's what they'd have tagged it. What they did was use a regular calypso band plus a studio band on dates and that craze lasted a long time, I'd say around the time Louis Jordan was a big hit act.

Louis Jordan covered *Junko Partner*, which was already a hit record in New Orleans many times over. I think this was in the early '50s, '52 or '53, around there, but the calypso thing stayed going until around '55 or '56. I mean it lasted a few years *strong*, cause lord, *everybody* had a hit record at that time. You could look at the old r&b magazines with the words and find every other song was one of them *Mama Look At Bubu* things, or one of them somebody-bad-shot-the-stud-at-the-wedding-bell-things. *Stone Cold Dead In The Market*, all them tunes was a hit around that era.

But to me, calypso changed its form when it hit New Orleans and became a little more funkier. Not what we call funk today, though. In fact, Earl Palmer was the studio drummer then and he was very well-versed in all the Latin rhythms. He added a little touch of New Orleans to it all. At the time, the music had a very strong backbeat and a syncopated bass drum, as opposed to the regular calypso music that had no bass drum and had no backbeat to it. Also there was something called the rhumbalero and the rhumba boogie. That era all took place around the same time, but it never had any effect on New Orleans music, with the exception of Professor Longhair and Lloyd Price's records. But it didn't have a lasting effect like calypso. That stayed on in a lot of ways, including what they call reggae music today, which to me is still the same thing they were calling calypso back in the early '50s.

Now in '56 when Earl Palmer left New Orleans to go to the West Coast, we tried out Edward Blackwell as studio drummer but he was always too foreign to backbeat music, he refused to play it. But he did play on an album I cut with just four pieces that to me is the finest record I've ever recorded, and it was never even released. We cut four sides that was like ribs at other songs, we cut a rib at all the popular themes of the day, like for instance *Peter Gunn* came out *Peter Pistol*.

Hohman: What happened to that record?

Dr. John: Well, I was producing acts for Johnny Vincent at Ace when I cut this particular album. The stuff was all instrumental, in fact I never recorded any vocals at all until I did the first Dr. John album for Atlantic. Booker was playing piano, I was on guitar, and we did a song on that session called *Crosswinds* that was very close by accident to the stuff they call the funk of today. Like we started off cutting one of them Bo Diddley-type tunes and it came out like modern funk. That stuff I would like to see released since it has some bearing on today as well as then.

Hohman: As far as New Orleans goes today, do you think there is still a distinctive beat akin to the city? Are the drummers still as influential?

Dr. John: Let me put it this way. You can go anywhere in the United States, into any studio, and you'll find a New Orleans drummer playing in the studio band. The top studio drummer in L. A. is Earl Palmer, one of the top studio drummers in New York is Idris Muhammad. Go to Nashville, there'll be two top New Orleans drummers there that they've even been using in Memphis. Some of these kids came up after I left, like the Meters. I didn't know Zig Modeliste until he came in and played on one of my sessions. Freddie Stafford is playing with me, Zigaboo, Smoky Joe Johnson, they got so many bad drummers in New Orleans it's ridiculous. Guys like James Black, he's well known as a jazz drummer from playing with Yusef Lateef, to me he helped make Yusef's best records, *Live At Pep's* and *1984*.

Hohman: With all the people you mention, it seems like you must have been on a couple thousand sessions.

Dr. John: I did more sessionwork from 1954 to '63 than I have since, but I've done sessions with more varied people since then. I can only rave about the ones I enjoyed and usually they weren't hit records. I used to love cutting records with Bobby Heeb. Johnny Adams had a few hits; he was one of the first artists I had the pleasure of producing that made me some money as a songwriter. He had this tune that myself and Leonard James wrote, plus about five or six big regional r&b hits. One of them, *Losing Battle*, was covered by Junior Parker and almost all your major blues artists. That made me a little money.

Hohman: What's the mystery about Allen Toussaint anyway? He really manages to keep out of the public eye.

Dr. John: Allen has stayed out of things after learning a lesson years ago. He got his first break by signing with RCA Victor when they put me and a lot of other New Orleans acts in the union and recorded us. The thing turned out to be a bad deal for everybody. Allen was hooked up for years where he had to write songs under his mother's maiden name. It was a burn all the way around. I guess that put him in a bad frame of mind as far as being an artist went. This was in '56, '57, and ever since he's made records under different names. We took him to Europe to perform and he just wouldn't do it, so we used him as a musical director. I don't know what the whole story is, you'd have to ask him, but I think he gets off on being a producer.

To me he is such a fine piano player in such a unique style, he mixes classical up with funk and mixes things just like James Booker, but in a way of his own. Like he'll play some of Booker's piano instrumentals and you can't even tell it's the same song, their styles are so different. He's really a fine singer too. A lot of Lee Dorsey and Irma Thomas records and my records, my favorite parts are the background where he's singing. But he's seen what's happened to Booker, what happened to Ernie K-Doe and all the fellas like Jesse Hill. It seemed like a conspiracy for a long time, that each New Orleans act that had a million seller or a number one record had one hit and never a follow-up.

Hohman: When did the scene really start to leave New Orleans and move out west?

Dr. John: In 1962 the beginning of the end started. The union was clamping down on bootleg records and they were also harassing the companies that were coming in to do union gigs. I still belong to the union, so it's hard for me to say somethin' too bad. They're liable to fine me again. The last big deal that came down where I was concerned was in '62. I was doing a session and some fellas and the guy from the white musicians' union came down and busted the session. That was a bootleg date and being the union guy didn't know any of the black musicians on the date, I gave him the name of fellas that I knew was in California at the time so they couldn't fine anybody but me. When they found out I'd lied to them, they doubled my fine and kicked me out of the union. It was about then that the whole show was folding; record companies were startin' to cut in Muscle Shoals and Tyler, Texas—anywhere but New Orleans to avoid the union hassles. At the time, there was only one studio still recording in one and two track and already New York had 16 tracks and L. A. had 8 or 16 and the rest of the country was way advanced over New Orleans recording techniques.

Hohman: Did you have trouble adjusting to the California recording scene when you moved out there?

Dr. John: Well, when I first went out to California I got turned off to the whole recording scene. I fell in out there right in the middle of the Sonny and Cher thing. We were doing dates with what later became the Allman Brothers; they were recording for Liberty at the time. It was awful, man, all the sessions I did with Frank Zappa and everybody else was a real turnoff to me and I was ready to split and go back to New Orleans immediately. But finally I started getting to do sessions with Plas Johnson and Earl Palmer, Rene Hall and H.B. Barnum, fellas I like to work with.

Hohman: How did you get into the Dr. John Creaux persona? Did you really think it would work or what?

Dr. John: Well, I never thought I'd ever make more than one album as Dr. John. I first got signed up through Sonny Bono's managers. Sonny and me were doing this movie, *Having A Good Time* or somethin' like that, that we were doing the background music for. Because they was hung up on the studio lots, Sonny and Cher would miss a lot of the recording dates. So me and Harold Battiste got together and he let me produce one of my tunes for a record by Cher. So I said, "Next time let *me* have some studio time and start cutting somethin' by myself." When we got the go-ahead sign, we went ahead and did the first album.

Hohman: What exactly is "voodoo" or "hoodoo" rock?

Dr. John: Man, that's a name somebody else made up. When I first did the *Gris-Gris* album, Ahmet Ertegun came in and said to me, "Hey, what is this package you give me? I mean what do you call this shit, coonass music or what?" So I said, "Man, I don't

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Bennie Maupin

Not To Be Confused With Bernie Taupin

by Ray Townley

While Bennie Maupin speaks in soft, unhurried tones, the result of chanting the morning gongyo. "Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo," the primary chant of Nichiren Shoshu Buddhism. Bassist Charles Buster Williams first turned him onto the salutary effects of daily meditation and sutra recitation over three years ago when the Herbie Hancock Sextet was still in high gear. Today, after the calm and inner assertion of the hypnotic *recto tono* chant has taken its slow, organic course, Bennie Maupin has become a confident, sensitive person, one much more in tune with the rest of the world.

The outstanding composition *Mappo* on Maupin's first album under his own name (*The Jewel In The Lotus*, ECM) brings on a discussion of his religious-philosophic beliefs. "That word is a Buddhist term; it implies a certain period in Buddhist history—*today*, this period. According to Nichiren Shoshu Buddhism, there has been the *Shoho* period, the *Zoho* period, and the *Mappo* period. The *Mappo* period is the period when people all over the world realize the power in Buddhism and the power in the chanting of 'Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo.' It's a very strong word.

"The practice of the chant affects my life in every way. It's interesting to be able to study a philosophy that makes sense and you can actually feel some beneficial effects from doing it day to day. Buster encouraged me to get into it. As a result, I tried it and then Herbie started. Occasionally, Patrick Gleeson would chant with us. Billy Hart. I mean everybody did it, but only the three of us got into it everyday. It's done primarily to get your life in rhythm. If you do it twice a day, you will definitely feel the effects of it. We do it in the morning before we start our day and we try to do it again around seven o'clock in the early evening.

"The more I do it, the better I feel. With the Sextet, I would rest for a couple of hours before work. I wouldn't necessarily go to sleep, but I'd lie down and just relax. But after I started chanting, I found myself not relaxing like that any more. I mean it wasn't necessary to do that to be relaxed. The effect of the chanting was so exhilarating and I felt so good and full of energy after doing it a few times, I just decided to continue. Now things seem much more simple, easier to get into. The rhythm itself is such a basic rhythm that I feel I'm getting more in tune not only with myself but with other people too."

LINDA WING

Bennie Maupin, of course, is well known as the multi-reed player in Herbie Hancock's present Headhunters group. His variety of instruments—saxello, soprano and tenor saxes, clarinet, bass clarinet, piccolo, flute, alto flute, and even the hum-a-zoo (used on *Sextant*) . . . run the gamut of pitches and timbres. Within the new electronic funk of Headhunters, he has come more and more to rely on the saxello, tenor, bass clarinet, and occasionally, the alto flute. But a careful distinction must be made: Maupin has *not* electrified his instruments; he is still an acoustic player.

"Whenever you do something, if it's public, if it's out there, you automatically are going to be criticized. People are going to say it's some kind of a compromise when you go from one area to another. But the proof is in the people who listen to the records."

"I'm using a Sony mike, that's all it is. It's just a condenser microphone. It's very tiny and eliminates my having to play into a standup microphone during a concert. A lot of regular mikes are directional and when you move out of the range, you lose the sound totally. Then nobody can hear what you're playing.

"I like the acoustic sound of the horn, you know, and I think that for myself I would rather keep it that way, because when you start amplifying it and using transducers, you lose a certain tone quality. Amplification is good for certain things, I'm not against it, but I like the contrast of the acoustic horn sound within all that other electric stuff. So it's another dimension. It's really the best thing I've ever used because it's so sensitive and it's not hooked onto my horn—I haven't drilled any holes into it. I've got a piece of gaffers tape on the bell and I just clamp it on. The sound is the best I've ever gotten, it's super clean, and I don't have to worry about bumping into the microphone."

Like the majority of reed players of any significance, Maupin employs circular breathing to allow himself to sustain certain individual sounds or a group of phrases he may want to connect. "A very positive way to warm up is circular breathing. The idea is to keep whatever sound you have going so that it doesn't appear to lessen in its volume or intensity as a result of your having to breathe. It's not always possible to go through a long warm up process and play long tones, arpeggios and scales.

"It's something that happened to me as a result of playing long sustaining tones, which is something all horn players do. At every stage of a player's development there is nothing better than sustaining notes, like in the long tone studies. It really helps to enrich your embouchure. For wind players, it's something that you learn at the very beginning of your development and something that you should concentrate on daily. In performance many times when we get really intense as a result of something that's being sustained, it really gives people a tremendous lift. It creates a strong wave of energy that is very easy to feel."

Speaking of Maupin's sound and his embouchure, the discussion turns to the pros and cons of hard-rubber and metal mouthpieces. "I started studying saxophone at the Teal School of Music, run by a saxophonist named Larry Teal. One of his students happened to be Joe Henderson, who was going to school at Wayne State at the time. Yusef Lateef was also one of his students. When I started taking private lessons at 13, the whole orientation was to expose young people to legitimate saxophone. One of the things that was really stressed then was the necessity to develop your embouchure through the use of the hard-rubber mouthpiece. It was just the norm. The Selmar C Star was one model. Joe Henderson had a mouthpiece that he plays on now that he's had for years. It's hard-rubber, and he gets the most fantastic sound out of it!

"The metal mouthpiece gives you a bigger sound, but there's a lot less need to develop your embouchure to get your sound. When I first started, I found it very difficult because the hard-rubber had a tendency to be a much more shallow sound, especially for the beginner. It's a very difficult sound to control. A

lot of young people go right into the metal mouthpiece as a result of exposure to people like Trane, Newk, Pharoah, even myself. I eventually changed (**Ed. note:** *Maupin uses metal only on his tenor sax)* because I wanted the harder sound. The hard-rubber mouthpiece was very difficult to hear in an amplified group, but as far as development for the younger player, it's invaluable experience."

Maupin is typical of the current crop of jazz contemporaries in that he's got his hands in a half-a-dozen different projects at once. First, and most importantly, there's his reed chair in Herbie Hancock's group, which records for Columbia. Then there's the Headhunters Group (the same band *sans* Hancock and plus guitarist Blackbird McKnight, formerly of Charles Lloyd), which just released an LP on Arista, *Survival Of The Fittest.* Then there are the numerous recording sessions for others that Maupin sits in on, like Jack DeJohnette's recent album for Prestige. Then there's his own personal task, the development of Bennie Maupin as a solo artist on ECM records.

Any discussion of ECM records quickly gravitates, or more appropriately, elevates to a discussion of owner/producer Manfred Eicher. "We recorded *Jewel In The Lotus* at the Record Plant in New York City. It happened at a nice time, for we were all on the East Coast, Herbie too. Then later I went to Europe with Manfred. First to Munich, where the ECM offices are. There I rested and just talked about how we were going to mix the tapes.

"To me, Manfred was completely cooperative. He's very mellow and when we started to work together, there was no tension. He didn't know what was going to happen because I never prepared any tapes for him. I mean I've never worked with him before, but after we were in the studio for one day I felt very good knowing that he was back there in the booth. He doesn't let anything get by. He's got great sensitivity. I haven't met any producers who understand as much about it as he does. He's always on top of it, and all the records he's ever done sound good to me. *(Maupin produces a tape cassette of a future release on ECM.)* I heard some of the recent things he'd done. Listen to this. It's an album with Keith Jarrett arranging the string orchestra and Jan Garbarek the solo voice on tenor sax. It's fantastic!"

The musical life of Bennie Maupin crisscrosses that of Joe Henderson's quite uncannily. Besides their mutual studies under Larry Teal in Detroit, Maupin and Henderson both played with Lee Morgan, Horace Silver, and Freddie Hubbard under the Blue Note banner in the '60s and, ironically, it was Henderson that Maupin replaced in Herbie Hancock's group.

"Herbie started the original Sextet in '68. I was working with Horace Silver at the time. Horace was getting ready to go on a European trip, and I had sort of obligated myself to do that. The group Herbie did finally get together had Joe Henderson, Garnett Brown, and Johnny Coles. I worked with Horace for about a year and a half. Then in the fall of 1970, Joe Henderson decided he was going to start his own band and he left. Herbie called me up. We played a few gigs together, then he asked me to join the band on a regular basis. The whole band sort of changed at that time. When I joined it was still Garnett, Woody Shaw, Buster Williams, and Billy Hart. But it soon became a sextet of Julian Priester, Eddie Henderson, myself, Buster and Billy."

However, the famous *Bitches Brew* recording session was the first time Maupin ever performed with Hancock. It was yet another famous tenor saxophonist who introduced them in the beginning. "The first time I met Herbie was through Sonny Rollins. I knew Sonny real well. Before I really started working or getting into the scene, I was doing a day gig in New York City. I worked in the Jewish Memorial Hospital for about three years. The only gigs I would get were like calypso ones, or rock things up in Harlem, little organ trio affairs.

BENNIE MAUPIN DISCOGRAPHY

Featured
THE JEWEL IN THE LOTUS—ECM 1043 ST

with Headhunters
SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST—Arista 4038

with Herbie Hancock
MWANDISHI—Warner Bros. 1898
CROSSINGS—Warner Bros. 2617
TREASURE CHEST—Warner Bros. 2807
(compilation of cuts from FAT ALBERT ROTUNDA, MWANDISHI, and CROSSINGS)
SEXTANT—Columbia KC 32212
HEADHUNTERS—Columbia KC 32731
THRUST—Columbia PC 32965
DEATH WISH—Columbia PC 33199

with Miles Davis
BITCHES BREW—Columbia GP 26
JACK JOHNSON—Columbia KC 30455
ON THE CORNER—Columbia KC 31906
BIG FUN—Columbia PG 32866

with Jack DeJohnette
THE DeJOHNETTE COMPLEX—Milestone MSP 9022
HAVE YOU HEARD?—Milestone MSP 9029
SORCERY—Prestige P-10081

with Eddie Henderson
REALIZATION—Capricorn 0118
INSIDE OUT—Capricorn 0122

with Michael Howell
IN THE SILENCE—Milestone 9054

with Horace Silver
SERENADE TO A SOUL SISTER—Blue Note 84277
YOU GOTTA TAKE A LITTLE LOVE—Blue Note 84309

with Freddie Hubbard
HIGH BLUES PRESSURE—Atlantic 1501

with McCoy Tyner
TENDER MOMENTS—Blue Note 84275

with Lonnie Smith
THE TURNING POINT—Blue Note 84313

with Lee Morgan
CARAMBA—Liberty 8946
LIVE AT THE LIGHTHOUSE—Blue Note 2-89906

with Marion Brown
AFTERNOON OF A GEORGIA FAUN—ECM 1004

with Woody Show
BLACKSTONE LEGACY—Contemporary 7627/8

"But I knew Sonny because I had met him in my hometown of Detroit. He came to Detroit after one of his sabbaticals with a group that included Don Cherry, Bob Cranshaw, and Billy Higgins. It just so happened that I played opposite him at a concert there that also included art work by Prophet Jennings; we had a local Detroit band. It was the first time I had ever seen him in person.

"Anyway, I met Sonny and practiced with him. He encouraged me to come to New York. So when I finally got there I called him up. He was working at the Half Note on Spring St. at the time. It just so happened that that particular night that I went to catch a set, Herbie was playing the gig. He was still with Miles, but he was off and Sonny had called him.

"Being in New York, I guess eventually, if you're there long enough, you're going to work with Miles. Miles is the kind of guy who knows about everything. He knows who's doing it, because he'll go out and listen. I had a gig one time, it was funny because it was a strange gig. It was in a place called Sugar Ray's, a club that was run by the boxer, Sugar Ray Robinson, up on Lenox Avenue in Harlem. I was playing there with a guy, I can't even remember his name now. He called himself something like Moon Dog, but he played organ. And it just happened that one night we were in there and in walked Miles. Later I found out he was really good friends with Sugar Ray. He knows a lot of the boxers. That was the first time I ever saw him. I don't think my playing made any kind of impression on him. But later, when I used to work with McCoy Tyner a lot, doing Slug's, he used to come down and listen. I can remember seeing Miles as many as two or three times in one week.

"I never worked with him until my friend Jack DeJohnette did. I think Wayne Shorter was sort of in the process of leaving the quintet after having been in it for some four or five years. Jack was talking to him about perhaps hiring me for the gig. *Bitches Brew* was the first time I played in a fully electric band. Most of the others had all acoustic instruments, with the exception of Fender bass guitar. But I had never played with electric piano before."

When Maupin joined the Hancock group, Herbie was going through a series of abrupt changes that would eventually affect his entire musical output. "What had happened was that Herbie had taken a long layoff. He was going through different management problems. They were going to get him into this thing with the Iron Butterfly; it was going to be a whole different kind of trip. Because of the *Fat Albert* thing, they thought he should be into rock.

"Herbie took such a long layoff waiting for these management things to be worked out that the band fell apart. It was such a great band, guys like Joe Henderson, Garnett, Johnny Coles, they weren't about to sit around and wait. He took off for so long that Johnny Coles started working with Duke Ellington and Joe was off doing a lot of his own things.

"What happened was Herbie had a concert and at the last minute Joe couldn't make it. So Buster (Williams) told him to give me a call, and it just happened I was available. I had been working a lot then with Lee Morgan. Herbie didn't even know that Joe was actually thinking seriously of leaving the band. It was never stated. Everything was very esoteric. Before I even played with Herbie I heard stories about Joe not making a gig for one reason or another. He would never tell anyone; he'd just send a replacement. Sometimes he'd send Joe Farrell, sometimes he'd send Pete Yellin, it had to be someone who played flute and saxophone. But he never gave Herbie the option to pick who he wanted. Finally, Herbie realized he wasn't going to make it anymore. By then, I was

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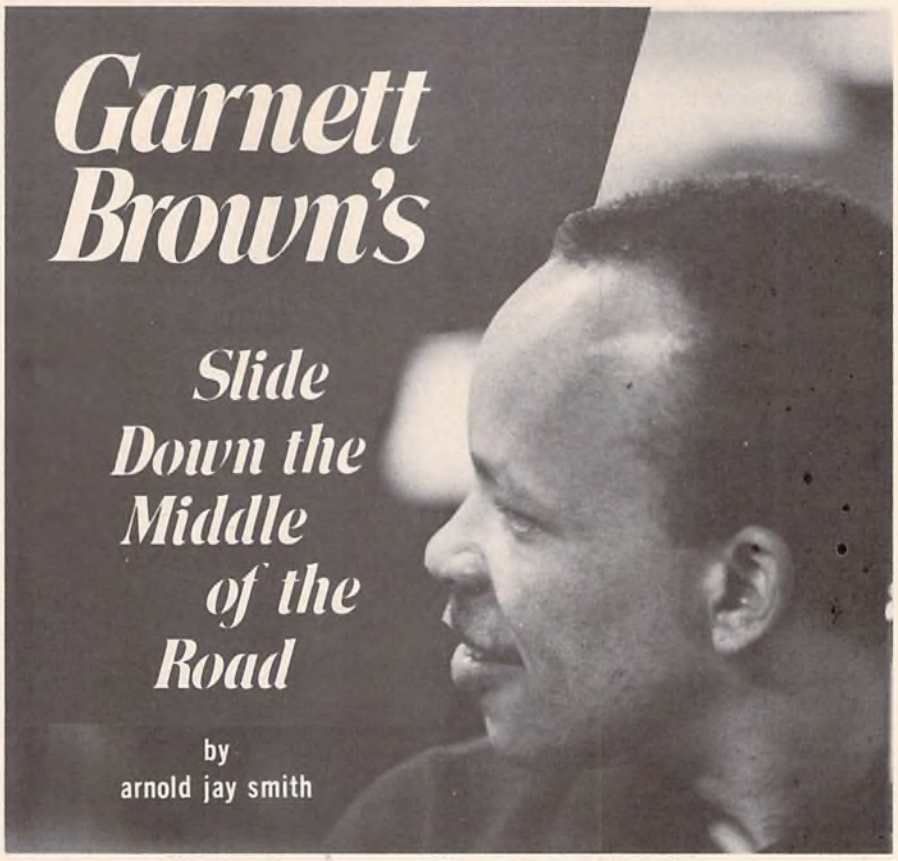
Garnett Brown's Slide Down the Middle of the Road

by arnold jay smith



DON SCHLITTEN

Garnett Brown is a household name. Of course, the household is his own, but look out! His win in the 1975 **down beat** Readers' Poll, his appearance as a sideman on Billy Cobham's second album, *Crosswinds*, and his emergence as an arranging talent to be reckoned with, have all come in rapid succession over the last few months. He has taken it all as a matter of due course, and has no designs on "cornering the market on money." Garnett likes fine wine (his friends Marvin Stamm, Bernie Glow and Paul Faulise recommended 1971 Mouton Cadet. "It's Frank Sinatra's favorite.") Like the wine, the trombone in his hands has mellowed slowly into one of the most sought after in New York.

In addition to appearing on some of the most diverse selection of albums imaginable, he has appeared on stages with the likes of Michel Legrand, Tony Bennett, Sammy Davis, Jr., Lena Horne and Frank Sinatra. The contractors for these extravaganzas choose their men carefully, as good readers, sectionmen, and unitmen, those that can work together for the whole, not just for a solo spot. To a lot of readers, Garnett Brown has spurted from nowhere, sprung whole from the head of J. J. Johnson, who has seemingly stepped aside to allow the younger players a try at the top.

Smith: How early did the trombone take your fancy?

Brown: I picked it up mainly because my sister played it. *(Laughs slightly)*

Smith: Don't laugh; think of Melba Liston and Janice Robinson.

Brown: OK, but they probably didn't have anyone else in their family that played trombone. Anyhow, I played in high school, in Mississippi and Arkansas, while in college.

Smith: Who were your major influences, either on trombone or as a soloist?

Brown: My first influence was Frank Rosolino with Stan Kenton, that I got on my little radio in-between stations in 1950. I hadn't really made up my mind what I was going to do, being in high school. But I can remember being impressed by that trombone player. I was impressed by that band, period. There were a lot of people at that time. That lasted for quite awhile. I stayed out of school for a year and played with a local band, Luther Steinberg. Then college. After my first year, I went to California with Charles Lloyd. And again I fell over Rosolino. This time he was singing on an album with Mel Tormé. So I discovered him all over again.

On other instruments there was Dizzy Gillespie. We were all listening to him, you know—*Salt Peanuts*, and all that. We would try to imitate him. After Rosolino there was Jimmy Cleveland and J. J. In the end, the man that epitomized all that I was trying to say on the trombone was Slide Hampton.

Smith: How did you come to Billy Cobham's group?

Brown: In late 1973, Billy called me about an album he was going to do. I said of course I would like to do it. There was no talk about group action or anything like that, as far as live work. It was a different kind of recording scene for me because there were extensive rehearsals and you had to be at all of them. But commitments made that impossible for all of us, all the time. We had some interesting rehearsals because the rhythm section rehearsed even before we came in. It was really being done on the concept of lots of money being allocated for rehearsals like rock players. When it was completed, and it was a lot of fun, I found that I hadn't been in as interesting a musical situation, recorded or live, before.

Smith: Where did you first meet?

Brown: I used to play a lot of Latin gigs when I came to New York, with all kinds of leaders. Barry Rogers, Mark Weinstein and Herbie Mann were into that thing. Hubert Laws brought me around to Latin bands.

Smith: How come you didn't tour with Billy?

Brown: My wife was pregnant and I wanted to be close. But it would have been nice to come home to all this freelance work.

Smith: How do you compare your work with Herbie Hancock and Chico Hamilton with your brief stint with Cobham?

Brown: Herbie's was the best small group situation I have ever been in.

(The group was together from 1970 through 1972 and included two sets of personnel. The touring segment, and the one that was originally formed by Hancock, was Johnny Coles, trumpet and fluegelhorn, Pete La Roca, drums, Ron Carter, bass, Clifford Jordan, reeds, Hancock and Brown. The second recording sextet *(Fat Albert Rotunda* and *The Prisoner)* was Joe Henderson, reeds, Albert Heath, drums, Buster Williams, bass, Coles, Hancock and Brown.)

"I view myself as a middle-of-the-road trombone player who likes his family. I don't view myself as any kind of star. I'M NOT THAT. I don't delude myself, and others don't delude themselves, about the polls."

It was a most sensitive and aware group. We sparked each other in ensemble and solos. Things were happening in the middle with the talents of Buster, (or) Ron, and Herbie. I had a great time listening. You felt like you were contributing by listening.

Chico's group was my first job of any musical significance. Charles Lloyd introduced me to Chico while I was working in Houston with Don Robey. We went to California, made a record called *Drum Fusion*, the first professional record I made, then up to San Francisco, where we did some nice business. It was there I got my first bonus in my life on a job. We were at the Jazz Workshop at the time.

(The personnel of the 1962 Chico Hamilton Quintet included Gabor Szabo, guitar, Albert Stinson, bass, Lloyd, reeds, Hamilton, percussion, and Brown. It was the first trombone voice in a Hamilton group, but not the last: George Bohanon followed Garnett.)

We were together for only about eight months, and I left in June, 1962, to take up residence in New York, rather than go back to California with them.

Billy was obviously disappointed when I told him I couldn't go with him. We both were disappointed. I think I would have enjoyed the different feeling Billy gets.

Smith: You would have been the only acoustic horn in the group. How do you feel about that, specifically, and electronics, in general?

Brown: I've played electric hook-up. You must if you want to be heard these days. I've even heard Bill Watrous play one. It's not new. It works like the Varitone that Eddie Harris uses. I like what he does; he's tasteful enough so as not to overdo it. I have written

for electronic instruments, and would do it again. I think they are as viable a means of expressing the music as acoustic. But bear in mind that if you haven't the chops for acoustic, you're not going anywhere on electric. I was first introduced to the synthesizer by Oliver Nelson some years before it became the thing. I was then, and am now, impressed with its capabilities. There's nothing you can't do with it. But I still can't tell the difference between some electric keyboards. Only Rhodes and Arp stand out to me.

Smith: You are an extremely busy New York musician. Do you prefer studio work to live dates?

Brown: Winning polls is nice, as is merely watching for who comes in where. A recording, *Crosswinds*, did it for me, so the exposure was good. But you must get out and be before the people. I do lots of studio things now as that's where a lot of varied activity is. I also love concerts. A week here; a week there. I might do a Sammy Davis show at a theatre, work some in the daytime (studios), then do Michel Legrand's backup for a couple of days.

It's a challenge to read and play anything. It keeps one's head nailed on. The New York Jazz Repertory Company asked everyone in on their first season. Those of us that came back for more are seeing more freedom. I was also in on the first National Jazz Ensemble season. I'll play dances, too. In fact, Seldon Powell leads a dance band I'm in. It's good to see the reactions to what you're doing.

Smith: In what context do you like to work most often, bands or smaller groups?

Brown: Either way, makes no difference. If you're talking about opportunities of musical expression, small groups are my choice, of course. You get a greater chance to stretch out; eight bars for a solo spot may tend to frustrate all the time. Even 32 may be too short for what I may want to say. And yet sometimes I'll finish one of those brief spots and get back to my seat in a hurry only to hear the audience screaming. You never know what will turn them on from one moment to the next. Strictly speaking, I get greater satisfaction within the smaller groupings, more freedom, more space for me.

Smith: Where do you feel more interplay between instruments? Do you develop ideas easier when you hear many colors, like a band, or close harmonies, as in, say, quintets?

Brown: That's different. Sure I get greater thoughts about what I can do while I'm sitting in a section listening to all that's going on around me. There's more calling at me, so there's more I can get back at. As far as recognition is concerned, the smaller the group, the more you are an integral part. You can align yourself with a scene and roll along with it; not to say that's what is happening. You still have to do what you have to do. I only had one solo on *Crosswinds*, but it was the whole thing that made the date. Everybody's contribution is important. It's almost like symbiosis; we complement each other's existence.

After his stint with Chico there was a fallow period for Garnett. He played 12 dollar rehearsal gigs, or 21 dollar Birdland spots. During times like these the family responsibilities weigh more heavily than the musical ones. Garnett had help.

Brown: There were three people who helped me in my trials, Britt Woodman, Stu Scharf and Jack Gale. Britt, a trombonist of vast experience, went to bat for me in certain kinds of jobs. Jack, another trombonist who I met in the army, showed me what strong trombone playing was. Stu is a guitarist who also helped with certain kinds of gigs. Others helped too. Like friends Frank Strozier, Bill Lee and Harold Mabern, great spiritual uplifters.

Smith: When did the Latin experiences begin?

Brown: After I had been in New York City about a year, I met Hubert Laws. Latin was the craze then, so I played with them all and liked it. Learned a lot, too. You can appreciate what someone like Chick Corea is into. The things he does are genuinely Latin. It goes deep. That's why it flows so beaufifully and hits so hard.

Smith: When did Thad Jones enter your life?

Brown: Oh, another beautiful experience. George Russell, unsung hero of modern music, was getting ready to make a recording and go to Europe. He later added Thad.

Of my personal involvement with the orchestra, the album with Joe Williams was one of the best I was involved with. That's a tremendous record both from Joe's vocals and the music. Tremendous marriage; fantastic effort.

Smith: Then the studios?

Brown: Yes and no. I would do some shows like Lena Horne and Tony Bennett. Not too much after Thad and Mel. Herbie Hancock came along and that was fine. While Herbie's was the best group experience, Thad's was by far the best band situation. Slide Hampton's Octet, with which I'd played, never truly showed on records. None of the excitement and energy came through. He really personifies the true jazz feeling of anybody I know because he tried anything.

Smith: Why did you leave Thad and Mel?

Brown: I began playing more and enjoying it less. I've often thought about it and wondered what I'd say if anybody asked me. It's a paradox if I say "that's the best big band situation I've ever been in" and then say "playing more, enjoying less." But the problem lay with myself. I wasn't accomplishing what I thought I could musically as a person, for my own personal development. As long as I allied myself with any regular situation, and possibly any regular big band, I probably would still be in the same kind of thing. I started to get bugged with having the responsibility of sending in a sub whenever I couldn't make it. The little things began to bug me. So I decided, if I divest myself of this situation, maybe I can feel a little freer and accomplish a little more within myself.

Smith: You have spoken to me privately about writing. Now the secret's out; you've done the collage, *Pieces Of Miles*, for the New York Jazz Repertory Company's Miles Davis concert.

Brown: I wanted to accomplish what Andrew White did with John Coltrane's music in 1974. If you remember, he took Trane's tunes and wrote a lengthy work around them. It was difficult to do the Miles piece and the pressure of time didn't help.

Smith: If that was the last thing you wrote, let's start with the first.

Brown: It was in Memphis; Phineas Newborn, Jr. was in town with his brother Calvin. I thought I would like to write something for that band and Phineas gave me constructive criticism. I was on my way.

In college, the craze was to write like Shorty Rogers. My fraternity was putting on a show and they asked me to write something.

When I met Jack Gale, he really set me into the real solid playing. He was an all-around musician. He'd done arranging as well as playing all kinds of instruments. We were in what was called the Navy School of Music, Army Element. We came from different areas, but arrived together. One of the instructors asked me to do something before graduating. I did, but I didn't want to hand it in. That was before Xeroxing charts. I never saw it again.

Peacock and Duke Records was next with Robey. I was a&r man for three companies —Peacock, Duke and Back Beat Records. And Charles Lloyd found me. I wrote some things for Chico, but I guess it was Lloyd's turn to be up and none got played.

Then came some things for Booker Ervin. I wrote two notable items: *Not Quite That* and *Bachafellin* (pronounced like the composer and the Vice President). This last number got into Thad and Mel's book on the album *Live At The Village Vanguard*.

Smith: Do you write for certain instruments? Do you favor your own or similar brass?

Brown: Not at all. In fact, I have to consciously avoid NOT writing for trombone. Sometimes I'll use a piano. Most of the time I merely think it. I have a working knowledge of the instrument for harmony and chords, but I can write in the void without it. I never

continued on page 42

SELECTED BROWN DISCOGRAPHY

as Sideman

THE OUTER VIEW—Riverside RM 440 (out of print)
(with George Russell)
SLIGHTLY LATIN—Limelight LM 82033 (out of print)
(with Roland Kirk)
HEAVY!!!—Prestige PR 7499
(with Booker Ervin)
IT'S ALL RIGHT—Prestige PR 7522
(with Teddy Wilson)
EASTERLY WINDS—Blue Note BST 84270
(with Jack Wilson)
MANHATTAN FEVER—Blue Note BST 84278*
(with Frank Foster)
LIVE AT THE VILLAGE VANGUARD—Solid State SS 18016
(with Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Orchestra)
MONDAY NIGHT—Solid State 18048
(with Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Orchestra)
JAZZ FOR A SUNDAY AFTERNOON, VOLS II & IV—Solid State 18028 & 52
INTRODUCING DUKE PEARSON'S BIG BAND—Blue Note BST 84276
NOW HEAR THIS—Blue Note BST 84308
(with Duke Person)
FAT ALBERT ROTUNDA—Warner Bros. WB 1834
(with Herbie Hancock)
THE CISCO KID—Groove Merchant GM 523
(with Reuben Wilson)
BRAINS ON FIRE, VOL. I—Labor Records LRS 7001
(with Heiner Stadler)
SPIRIT OF THE NEW LAND—Black Jazz BJQD 8
(with Doug Carn)
CROSSWINDS—Atlantic SD 7300
(with Billy Cobham)

*The transcribed solo on the title tune is published in *Jazz Styles and Analysis: TROMBONE* by David Baker (**db** Music Workshop Publications).

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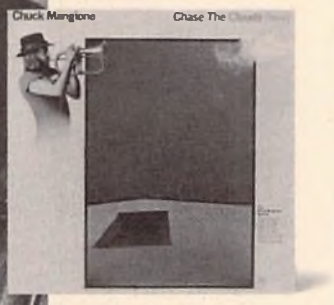

"Chase The Clouds Away" Chuck Magione's first album on A&M Records

Also available CD-4 quad.

RECORD REVIEWS

Ratings are:
***** excellent, **** very good,
*** good, ** fair, * poor

KEITH JARRETT

DEATH AND THE FLOWER—ABC/Impulse ASD 9301: *Death And The Flower; Prayer; Great Bird.*

Personnel: Jarrett, piano, soprano sax, Osi drum, wood flute, percussion; Dewey Redman, tenor sax, percussion; Charlie Haden, bass; Paul Motian, drums, percussion; Guilherme Franco, percussion.

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

Cecil Taylor is committed to the idea that an "artist's first responsibility is to communicate with himself." Herbie Hancock attempts to figure out "what music is going to do [the audience] the best and then starts the music from there." These positions represent the two branches of the dichotomy an artist in any medium faces. And it's nearly axiomatic that an artist who opts for the "high" road is necessarily going to finish, as Taylor has, literally "out of the money" and with limited popular recognition, let alone success. The extraordinary thing about Keith Jarrett, an artist determined to bring his audience "up" to the level of his music, is that more and more people are hearing and buying his uncompromising records all the time. *Death And The Flower* is Jarrett's latest small ensemble effort and his most demanding to date.

The title cut, which consumes all of the first side, is a brilliant, flowing construction, the lines of which unfold only during sustained, concentrated listening. Jarrett opens playing an eerie, stately, Chinese-sounding theme on wood flute while Motian and Franco kick in spare percussion comments. After the flute drops out we're treated to six or seven minutes of pure percussion magic—a master's exercise in dynamics and space that would do Sun Ra's Arkestra proud. Indeed, the entire tune is a study in subtle contrasts as the poignant theme develops into frenzied improvisation (dig Motian's most *insistent* drumming in years) and returns to peaceful resolution.

Prayer, a piano/bass duet, is a theme so soulful as to border on the sentimental—it recalls Mancini movie themes. Jarrett and Haden dance through it in delightful counterpoint as the tune develops in that sprawling, mostly breathtaking, occasionally repetitious manner peculiar to Jarrett's solo work.

Great Bird is musical algebra—a nostalgic melody stated by soprano and tenor floats in on furious double-time timbales: the same theme reappears compressed and out of rhythm. A diverting idea, executed with fervor.

Death And The Flower is not music to wash dishes to. While it retains much of the far-famed Jarrett lyricism, it is also far freer, less readily accessible, than much of what the ensemble has previously recorded. Read past the pompous liner poem, sit down, and listen. You'll be rewarded with beauty in direct proportion to the effort you make to hear it.

—adler

LES McCANN

ANOTHER BEGINNING—Atlantic SD 1666: *Maybe You'll Come Back; The Song of Love; When It's Over; Somebody's Been Lying 'Bout Me; Go On and Cry; My Soul Lies Deep; The Morning Song; Someday We'll Meet Again.*

Personnel: McCann, vocals, piano, electric piano, Arp synthesizer, clavinet; Roy Gaines (tracks 1&2), Miroslaw Kudykowski (all other tracks), guitar; Chuck Rainey (tracks 1 & 2), James Rowser (all other tracks), electric bass; Paul Humphrey (tracks 1 & 2), Harold Davis (all other tracks), drums; Buck Clarke, percussion; background vocals, strings, and horns.

★ ★ ★

Another Beginning? Perhaps; but don't confuse that with a return to the roots. McCann, who established himself long ago as a funk-drenched pianist, and more recently as a tough, terse, truth-telling vocalist in a gospelish vein, has produced his slickest album to date. The keyboard work is reduced to a synthesized framework with a few piano embellishments. Seven of the eight tracks are vocals: sentimental celebrations of loves, present and absent, delivered in a surprisingly smooth, controlled style. The customary power isn't entirely leashed, though; torch singer and preacher make compatible bedfellows, and the result is a voice that's more urbane than before, but still warm and enormously compelling. The tunes themselves reflect McCann's versatility, sometimes in abrupt successions of mellowness and urgency *(Go On and Cry)*, sometimes in a more effective and indivisible meld of silk and soul.

But as good as McCann's singing is, there's not much else to listen to here; and the result is a pleasant but hardly exciting album. The tunes are functional, but not, on the whole, memorable. *When It's Over*, demonstrating once again McCann's hypnotic touch with what seems to be an uncannily slow tempo, is a possible exception. The leader's lyrics, though apparently deeply felt, tend toward triteness; too many of the rough edges are softened into pathos, for my taste at least. The contributions of the strings, horns, and background voices are generally effective, and the arrangements as a whole sound remarkably unconstraining; but perhaps that's because, instrumentally, there's nothing to constrain. There's no extended soloing; the leader, whose synthesizer work on his previous *Layers* album promised new vistas, limits himself to atmospheres here, while guitarist Kudykowski, who steps out briefly on the instrumental *Someday*, leaves you wanting to hear a little more.

If this is truly *Another Beginning*, it's hard to see what direction the next step will take. It's more hopeful to view this set as a plateau, a serene summation of the artist's present conception, comfortable but not challenging; and to remember that musicians of McCann's energy and talent don't always stay comfortable for long.

—metalitz

STAN GETZ

CAPTAIN MARVEL—Columbia KC 32706: *La Fiesta; Five-Hundred Miles High; Captain Marvel; Times Lie; Lush Life; Day Waves.*

Personnel: Getz, tenor sax; Chick Corea, electric piano; Stanley Clarke, bass; Tony Williams, drums; Airto Moreira, percussion.

★ ★ ★ ★

This "new" album—three years old and long awaited—has a romping, melodious brilliance brought to it by a distinguished quartet of supporters no less than by the marvelous Captain Getz.

Corea's compositions, five of the six songs performed, suggest the exuberance of Latin rhythms and romanticism of South American melodies, which Getz, familiar as an importer of Brazillian sensualities during the '60s, handles with dexterous warmth. Drummer Williams adds fire and iron to the suretoned, flexible throb laid down by a young Stan Clarke. Airto applies his spicing with restraint, and is appropriately mixed in the forefront of the background. The result is a joyously energetic side one, and a somewhat more contemplative side two.

The tenorman's blowing has seldom been pushed so far by his sidemen. On the up tempo *Fiesta*, the album's opener, Getz turns on a hot stream of short phrases, modified within each churning chorus to lead into the next fresh, surprising, open-ended phrase. Chick and Stan play ensemble lines with the expertise of flamenco partners, while Williams bathes them in cymbal splashes. The celebration rages at full intensity towards an almost exhausted halt.

Chick solos with his usual dazzling single note runs, and comps perfectly with his electric box turned way down behind Clarke's complex bass stringings on *Miles*. Seen in the context of his own career, this record is either a rehearsal or recasting of Corea's first popular album, *Light As A Feather*. But the pianist sounds even more inspired in the context of this well balanced group.

Williams propels and excites throughout, his hands as fast at playing as his ears are at picking up the nuances of space left by his colleagues to filigree. His breaks behind Corea's spare climax on *Marvel* remind us how fast fast is. The fierceness of his attack displays his commitment to this session as surely as Getz' imaginative improvisations on the newer-styled tunes show his own involvement.

Subtle time games on *Lie* are figured and refigured, first in waltz time, then in 4/4, with Airto knocking rhythm sticks and cowbells, and squeezing airhorns. Billy Strayhorn's classic *Life* gets the Getz ballad treatment, a confident reading and brief but lovely interpretation. The saxist's tone *can* be light as a feather, but Getz also has the full range of overtones and strength of vibrato, a mercurial way of jumping octaves and skipping through time changes.

One cannot imagine why Columbia held this album from release as long as it has, unless contractual difficulties arose with the artists signed to other labels. Though fresh and enjoyable, *Captain Marvel* is no daring space exploration, no questionable lapse of the sophisticated Getz taste or leap ahead of his smooth, professional conception. It *is* an LP of strong quintet jazz played with cohesive grace, played for fun.

—mandel

BUDDY RICH

THE LAST BLUES ALBUM VOLUME I—Groove Merchant GM 3303: *Soft Winds; Sweet Georgia Brown; How Long; Courage; Alright.*

Personnel: Illinois Jacquet, tenor sax; Jimmy McGriff, organ; Kenny Barron, electric piano; George Freeman, guitar; Bob Cranshaw, bass; Rich, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

A straight ahead, goodtime gathering for the purpose of swinging and getting down to essentials. No frills, nothing to prove, no nonsense; just some righteous preaching on proven texts.

Though this is very much a collective effort, with everyone pitching in for the cause, Illinois Jacquet emerges as the focal point. He doesn't do any grandstanding but makes the most of every opportunity. A past master

of the blues and one of the creators of tough tenor sytle (from Gene Ammons to Stanley Turrentine, they all learned from Mr. Jacquet), he is in his element here.

McGriff plays a different brand of organ than Jacquet's customary cohort, Milt Buckner, yet feeds the tenorist just right. In his solo turns, McGriff sounds refreshingly like a pre-commercialized Jimmy Smith (in terms of drive if not virtuosity). Freeman is in fine form; in keeping with the spirit of this session, he stays inside throughout.

Kenny Barron, the baby of the bunch, also keeps on regulation track, but what he has to say is fresh and full of life. What a fine musician! I wish they'd found solo space for him on *Winds* and *Courage*, too. (Incidentally, organ and electric piano, in the hands of Messrs. McGriff and Barron, make a very tasty combination.)

Of the blues things, *How Long* and *Courage* are funky and down; *Winds* and *Alright* swinging and fly. But it's the ringer, *Sweet Georgia*, that really takes off. From Jacquet's unaccompanied opening to the slam-on-the-brakes finale, this is a joyful hymn to the lasting appeal of reach-out-and-grab-you music.

Buddy Rich, though the nominal leader, is content to make the others play (and with Buddy behind you, you've got to deliver). Two rounds of eights with Illinois on the whirlwind *Sweet Georgia* is all the soloing he does, and all he needs to do; maybe he misses the big band, but he plays his ass off nonetheless.

Let's not leave out the redoubtable Mr. Cranshaw, who always does his best to keep things moving.

How Long, by the way, is credited to Jr. Parker but is Leroy Carr's old classic, and Kenny Barron's last name is misspelled front, back and centerfold. Otherwise, no complaints. *—morgenstern*

MAHAVISHNU ORCHESTRA

VISIONS OF THE EMERALD BEYOND—Columbia PC 33411: *Eternity's Breath (Parts I and II); Lila's Dance; Can't Stand Your Funk; Pastoral; Faith; Cosmic Strut; If I Could See; Be Happy; Earth Ship; Pegasus; Opus 1; On the Way Home To Earth.*

Personnel: John McLaughlin, guitar, 12-string guitar, vocals; Bob Knapp, trumpet, flugelhorn, flute, vocals; Russel Tubbs, soprano & alto saxes, vocals; Jean-Luc Ponty, electric violin, electric baritone violin; Steven Kindler, first violin; Carol Shive, second violin, vocals; Phillip Hirschi, cello; Gayle Moran, keyboards, vocals; Ralph Armstrong, bass, bass guitar, vocals; Michael Walden, drums, percussion, clavinet, vocals.

★ ★ ★ ½

The rating is relative to past efforts by this orchestra, in its various avatars, and also to those of Ponty, a marvelous player who is oddly subdued on this session. The album contains some lovely music, but the energy seems low and the texture muddy. Partly this is due to Walden, a solid drummer but not up to the standards of his predecessor, and partly to the uninteresting nature of many of the tunes.

Rhythmically there are some pleasant discoveries. One of the subtly unifying factors is the pervasive quintuple meter of much of side one: Part I of *Breath* has two bars of five punctuating the line of four, and Part II uses the five figure as a base; *Lila* is in a smooth, lyrical five, *Funk*, which is, not unexpectedly, funky, is in what sounds like 10/8, and *Pastoral* also is in 5/4 primarily. This consistent thread combines with some fine section writing and playing, notably in Part II of *Breath* and in *Lila*, where the strings and horns play off sharply against each other. McLaughlin,

who seems almost incapable of playing badly, has good solos on each of the last two cuts mentioned.

But side two is oddly vacuous. Mahavishnu's solo on *Strut* is attractive, as are Moran's vocal on *See*, the drifting, laconic setting of *Earth Ship*, and the sort of fuzz-tone rock and roll thing Mahavishnu gets off in *Way Home*, where Walden does his best playing on the album. And there's some impressive interplay between the leader and Ponty on the Zappaish *Happy*. Still, there is neither the emotional intensity nor the musical virtuosity one expects of the Orchestra, and the atmosphere that permeates the album is hovering, transitional: tentative is too pejorative a word, since the playing is generally quite self-assured, but—heretical as the thought may be—the sound is somehow uncommitted.

—heineman

LESTER YOUNG

NEWLY DISCOVERED PERFORMANCES, VOL. 1—ESP Disk-3017: *Lester Leaps In; Ghost Of A Chance; Just You, Just Me; Sweet Georgia Brown; How High the Moon, Be Bop Boogie; Confessin'; I Cover the Waterfront.*

Personnel: Young, tenor sax; Jessie Drakes, trumpet; Ted Kelly, trombone; Freddie Jefferson, piano; Tex Briscoe, bass; Roy Haynes, drums. On track 5 only: Add Kai Winding, trombone; Allen Eager, tenor sax; Hank Jones, piano; Ray Brown, bass; Ella Fitzgerald, vocal. Recorded 1948.

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

The old canard that Lester's playing declined after 1944 is just that; it changed, to be sure, but he was still the one and only Prez—one of the indisputable geniuses of the music called jazz.

These broadcasts from the Royal Roost in New York City ("Released in cooperation with the estate of Lester Young," the cover states) contain some of the best late-'40s Lester I've heard, and the sound and mastering are above average for airshots.

The sextet heard here was a working group, and while drummer Haynes was the only heavyweight (budding, then), the guys were together and in Lester's corner. He always believed in giving his "kiddies" solo spots, but when the band was on the air, they kept them brief, and did no harm.

The Roost was a congenial place—much more than Birdland, which took its place but never replaced it—and the vibes must have pleased Lester. Fast tempos are to the fore, and Prez was a master of coherence at high speeds. This *Lester* really leaps in, and *Sweet Georgia* (always a good line to blow on) even more so. *Waterfront*, usually a ballad, is taken at a brisk clip, climaxing in sensational fours with Haynes, and *Just*, *Bop*, and *Moon* are swingers, too.

That leaves *Ghost* and *Confessin'* for the ballad department, and on the former, Lester says it all in two gorgeous choruses. The lassitude that would sometimes overtake him in later years had not yet set in, and a sinewy resilience holds the mood of resignation in check.

Lester's unique and wonderful sense of humor is much in evidence; broadly on *Be Bop* (which is really *Lester's Be Bop Boogie*, not the Benny Carter piece credited), more subtly on *Georgia* and elsewhere.

How High is a bonus, a party occasioned by announcer Symphony Sid's birthday (Sid was very much a part of this scene, and it's fitting that his jive has been left in). Triple bills were customary, and Winding and Eager were no doubt working with Tadd Dameron, while Brown and Jones came from Ella's group. Prez starts it off but is still the last word.

Lester Young was a poet, a dancer, an acrobat and one of the blessed few artists whose every utterance is worth preserving. This is a very nice record, including the cover (with Bob Parent's good photos) and special label design. *—morgenstern*

HERBIE MANN

FIRST LIGHT/THE FAMILY OF MANN—Atlantic SD 1658: *Toot Stick; Davey Blue; Daffodil; The Turtle And The Frog; Muh Hoss Knows the Way; Music Is A Game We Play; Sunrise Highs; Thank You Mr. Rushing; Mexicali; Lullaby For Mary Elizabeth.*

Personnel: Mann, flute, alto flute; David Newman, tenor sax, flute; Pat Rebillot, keyboards; Sam Brown, guitar; Tony Levin, bass; Steve Gadd, drums, kalimba; Armen Halburian, percussion; Carlos "Patato" Valdez, conga.

★ ★ ★ ★

As a practitioner of popular, easy listening jazz sounds Herbie Mann has always been an astute and aware musician who consistently brings into his groups superb players who can flesh out broader album concepts with their writing and arranging skills. *First Light* in that sense is truly a communal effort with almost everyone in Mann's family contributing at least one composition to a session that is varied and unpredictable.

Although generally dominated by Herbie Mann's velvet sound, the music runs the gamut from pianist Rebillot's swing tribute to *Mr. Rushing*, featuring Newman's hard Texas tenor, through Steve Gadd's lovely lullaby *Mary Elizabeth* on which the percussionist uses the kalimba (finger piano). Some of the tunes are just brief snatches of melody like the bouncy *Turtle*, or the seemingly incomplete *Muh Hoss* with Newman and Mann dueting on flutes.

Throughout much of this album the music gets a great deal of its character from Brown's acoustic guitar work. Indeed, the sound on tunes like the guitarist's *Sunrise High* (one of the few tracks arranged for the entire group) is reminiscent of the Bud Shank-Laurindo Almeida collaborations of the 1950s.

With charts provided by Gadd, Brown, Levin, Newman, Rebillot and Mann, the album has tried for a little bit of everything—funk, pop, rock, Brazilian jazz—and has succeeded quite well in not only blending those feelings but in exhibiting the collective talent of Mann's versitile family. *—nolan*

THE JOHN BETSCH SOCIETY

EARTH BLOSSOM—Strata-East 19748: *Ode To Ethiopia; Earth Blossom; Open Pastures; Song For An Untitled Lady; Ra; Darling Doria; Get Up And Go.*

Personnel: Betsch, drums, percussion; Billy Puett, flute, alto flute, alto & tenor saxes, bass clarinet; Bob Holmes, piano, electric piano, percussion; Jim Bridges, guitar, percussion; Ed "Lump" Williams, electric & acoustic bass, percussion; Phil Royster, congas, percussion.

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

This music makes me tremendously happy; thinking about it makes me tremendously sad. Here's a *group*—empathetic, talented, unselfish, original, a group with something distinctive to say—but nobody's ever heard of them and hardly anybody ever will; they'll play as long as they can keep body and soul together, and then they'll disband (peculiarly apt etymology).

What can I tell you? The music here is fresh and contemporary; it's recognizably jazz, but the players have all heard rock and soul and reggae and know how to use the elements of these modes. The emphasis is on

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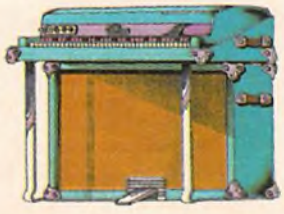

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communication among the players here. However, Puett emerges as an impressive new solo voice, which is somewhat noteworthy in that he appears by the photos on the liner to be the only white player in a band whose music gravitates unmistakably toward its African roots.

Puett plays a pretty flute line on *Ethiopia* over an insistent 6/8; his solo changes character, becoming growly and breathy, à la Steig. (It's poorly recorded, though, and some of the nuances are lost.) He does some interesting things throughout side one, especially his overdubbed flute-bass clarinet work on the title track, but his best playing is on *Ra*, a northeast Africa sound like that of Coltrane in the *Africa/Brass* period. Puett begins on tenor in a Trane-ish, droning vein, but the rhythm shifts, becomes livelier, and Puett responds with an artfully constructed but emotionally compelling solo.

To be fair, Puett's tenor work on *Get Up* is considerably less effective, and smacks uncomfortably of Trane and some of his descendants, especially Shepp but also Albert Ayler. Indeed, the tune's four-note motif, while it surely suggests the title phrase, directly echoes the *Love Supreme* motif which has become obligatory, it seems, for modern tenorists.

Puett's solo work highlights the album, but the real star is the Society as a whole, and their ensemble playing gladdens the soul. The arrangements are just what is required, neither overly elaborate nor simply excuses for blowing; Bridges' understated guitar serves as a fine contrapuntal and counter-rhythmic force; Williams, though scarcely a dominant voice, slurs and rumbles attractively behind the soloists; and Betsch is a fully competent, unselfish, propulsive percussionist.

If there were justice in the music business, the John Betsch Society would thrive and prosper. Wanna bet? *—heineman*

THE OHIO PLAYERS

FIRE—Mercury SRM-1-1013: *Fire; Together; Runnin' From the Devil; I Want to Be Free; Smoke; It's All Over, What the Hell; Together.*

Personnel: Clarence Satchell, Ralph Meadowbrook, Marvin Pierce, saxophones, flutes, trumpets, trombones, fluegelhorns; William Beck, keyboards; Leroy Bonner, guitar; Marshall Jones, bass; Jimmy Williams, drums and congas; collective vocals.

★ ★ ★

The sudden and spectacular success which the Ohio Players are currently enjoying (two gold albums and three gold singles in a row) may seem to announce a new music for the group, a departure from their past on the Westbound label where they were a somewhat obscure name with a few novelty hits to their credit. The history of soul music is filled with examples of artists who make it big after signing with another company and, most significantly, get a new producer. But the Ohio Players are, and always have been, in total control of their product. Listening to their records then and now on Mercury, one discovers that there is no radical change in the group's music. The success is a result of a general growth pattern and the three golden moments: *Jive Turkey, Skin Tight* (their best), and now *Fire*, all hits of monster proportions.

Apart from the title cut and the wailing *I Want To Be Free*, a showcase for Leroy "Sugarfoot" Bonner, whose lopsided, offbeat, stoned/pained singing is one of the group's true assets, there really isn't that much to get excited about on this album. The Players have reduced the tinny, blaring brass coloring which gave their earlier efforts a slightly corny sound. More presence is given to the bass and drums, a funkier, more modern sound. Despite impressions to the contrary that one may get from their hit singles, the Ohio Players still haven't solved their basic problem, that of finding their own identity and creating a personal, distinctive album. *—gabel*

VARIOUS ARTISTS

THE GUITAR PLAYERS—Mainstream 410: *Dueling Guitars* (David T. Walker-Arthur Wright); *Baby Please Don't Go* (Ted Nugent); *Papa Was A Rolling Stone* (Jay Berliner); *Lightning's Blues* (Lightning Hopkins); *Getting The Message* (Berliner); *Thank You* (David Spinnoza); *Minor Scene* (Jack Wilkins); *Man Ain't Nothing But A Fool* (Brownie McGhee); *Move It* (Jimmy Raney).

See below

With such an all-embracing title, small wonder this album is the confused mish-mosh it so sadly is. For in attempting to appeal to so many widely divergent listening tastes, this set winds up satisfying none. Can the Amboy Dukes fan find happiness with Jimmy Raney or, probably more to the point, vice versa?

The sports first, I guess. The Lightning Hopkins track dates from 1948 and is of slight interest, being one of his less formidable efforts vocally and instrumentally, and the Brownie McGhee selection, recorded in 1952, is actually a feature for singer and harmonica player Sonny Terry (whose name is nowhere mentioned on liner or label) for whom McGhee provides guitar accompaniment; it too is not a particularly distinguished performance.

It's quite a jump in more ways than one from these vintage blues recordings to the contemporary studio efforts by a clutch of players who, with but two or three excep-

tions, dispense superficially exciting but essentially lightweight guitaristics in variously fashionable electronic dress. Again no information is provided about the cuts beyond the song title and the featured performer's name. David Spinnoza's excursion on *Thank You*, for example, derives from the *Screaming Mothers* big band set by arranger-leader Ernie Wilkins, under whose name this cut recently was issued. In the context of the rock and soul music-oriented nature of most of this material, the execrable cut by the Amboy Dukes' Ted Nugent is as woefully out of place as it is out of tune.

There is one absolutely flawless gem here, *Move It* from the marvelous *Two Jims And A Zoot* album (Mainstream 6013), which features guitarists Raney and Jim Hall (who wrote the tune), tenor saxophonist Zoot Sims, bassist Steve Swallow and drummer Osie Johnson. While only Raney's name is listed on this album, Hall has equal playing time on the piece, taking the first guitar solo and trading lines with Raney at the end. (It's typical of the shabbiness of this presentation that an album titled *The Guitar Players* fails to mention the participation of one of the finest plectrists in the world.) For me this has always been a five-star performance, and it is so far beyond anything else in this set in terms of musicianship, craft, taste and improvisational quality that there's absolutely no contest. The only performance that begins to come close is Jack Wilkins' nicely boppish *Minor Scene*.

Forget this album. If you haven't got the aforementioned *Two Jims And A Zoot*, invest your bread in that album instead.—*welding*

NAT ADDERLEY

DOUBLE EXPOSURE—Prestige 10090: *Watermelon Man; Quit It; 59 Go and Pass; Contant 19; Traffic; In A Silent Way; Song of the Valdez Diamond.*

Personnel: Adderley, cornet, vocals; George Duke, keyboards; Billy Fender or Phil Upchurch (track 4 only), guitar; Walter Booker, bass; Roy McCurdy, drums; King Errisson, percussion; Cannonball Adderley, alto saxophone (tracks 4 and 5 only); Johnny Watson, solo guitar (track 1 and 2 only) and electric bass (track 5 only); Hal Galper, piano (track 4 only); Rudy Copeland, synthesizer (track 1 only); Don Peake, rhythm guitar (tracks 1 and 2 only). Horn Section (Allen DeRienzo, Snooky Young, Oscar Brashear, trumpets; George Bohanon, Dick Hyde, trombones; William Green, Jackie Kelso, Jay Migliori, reeds) added on track 1 only; String Section (Jack Shulman, Gareth Nuttycombe, Alexander Neiman, Henry Roth, William Hymanson, Jerome Reisler, Nathan Gershman, Walter Rower) added on tracks 2 and 6 only.

★ ½

The sad and dispirited music in this set provokes a response akin to that felt when one observes a middle-aged businessman, all decked out in his trendiest Montgomery Ward youthgear, awkwardly huffing and puffing his platform-shod way through the latest disco steps: that is, embarrassment tempered with a certain amount of admiration at the old guy's chutzpah in even attempting it.

While Nat's still trying, it's too bad that neither of the approaches followed here lends itself at all well to his abilities. The first of these—the more or less straightforward vocalizing on *Watermelon Man*, *Quit It* and *In A Silent Way*—is hamstrung simply because Nat can't sing too well. His vocals are phrased awkwardly, shot through with poor intonation, and plagued with all the other major and minor difficulties of the nonsinger —the person to whom singing is not the normal or usual mode of expression.

Similarly, the music dispensed here makes only hollow use of the devices of contempo-

rary electronic and outside musics without ever once evidencing any real understanding of what those expressions are all about. At its most effective—that is, its least offensive—the music sounds like a very pallid reduction, and poorly done at that, of what Miles was doing about five or six years ago. If that's your definition of contemporary music, then you'll probably enjoy this tedious, futile set of exercises. The rating is for the occasional flashes of musicianship from Duke, Cannonball, and Nat himself. —*welding*

CURTIS MAYFIELD

GOT TO FIND A WAY—Curtom (Warner Bros.) CRS-8604: *Love Me (Right in the Pocket); So You Don't Love Me; A Prayer; Mother's Son; Cannot Find A Way; Ain't No Love Lost.*

Personnel: Mayfield, vocals, production; Rich Tufo, arrangements; unidentified band; strings.

★ ★ ★

An advanced musician ever since his start with the Impressions, Curtis Mayfield is one of the few soul artists who have been experimenting with the album as a format. His first solo LPs established his stock rhythm patterns and arrangements. Although the music was heavily rock-influenced on those records, with long instrumental passages and Mayfield's finicky singing, one sensed that he was on to something. That something was achieved in 1972 on *Superfly*, where the compository shape of each cut was based as much on rhythmic as melodic development, yielding to the need for a break with conventional songwriting while maintaining a tight musical and vocal interplay. This nucleus, so crucial for the involvement of the singer, has been rather unstable on Mayfield's later recordings; but *Got To Find A Way* restores, in part at least, some of the balance of *Superfly*.

Apart from *So You Don't Love Me* and *A Prayer*—which perhaps constitute an even greater example of repetitiousness by reaching back all the way to the Impressions—*Got To Find A Way* again finds Mayfield draping his loose, semi-improvised lyric lines around the rhythmic skeleton of his "tunes." While the songs function perfectly during Mayfield's delivery, they invariably peter out after it, coasting along in pointless monotony.

To be sure, most of the music here is formula, but it is a funky formula which no other artists really utilize as well as Curtis Mayfield. In this respect, he deserves to be placed with—though apart from—James Brown and Sly. The best moments on this album mark a return to *Superfly* standards, and if Mayfield will explore rather than exploit the possibilities in his music he may yet turn out another revolutionary work. —*gabel*

CATALYST

UNITY—Muse 5042: *Country Song; Little Miss Lady; Maze; Athene; Mail Order; Shorter Street.*

Personnel: Sanifu Eddie Green, electric piano, percussion; Mwalimu Odean Pope, tenor saxophone, flute; Zuri Tyrone Brown, bass; Onaje Sherman Ferguson, drums, percussion. Added on track one: Alphonso Johnson, bass. Added on tracks one, four, five: Jabali Billy Hart, drums, percussion. Additional personnel on track four: Steve Tanzer, flute, piccolo; Connie Hamilton, Shirley Byrne Brown, flutes; John Blake, Gail Murdaugh, violins.

★ ★ ★ ★

With their third album this young and intriguing band has laid out a broad and ambitious package that blends soul, funk-rock, mainstream and avant-garde. Catalyst is a tight, maturing and versatile ensemble that focuses on a collective group personality rather than any individual player.

There are moments on the album like *Country Song* that remind one of the Crusaders or Odell Brown's Organizers, but these are passing similarities in style and sound. On the whole the group has endeavored to present as many sides of their music as possible with every member of the group contributing to the writing. There are fairly straightforward charts like *Shorter Street*, balanced by bassist Brown's highly original *Athene*, a somewhat abstract and probing composition. The piece includes a fine solo passage by violinist Blake, Pope's haunting flute, and is unquestionably an ambitious piece of writing.

As individual soloists the members of Catalyst are quite good but not necessarily distinctive. However, their musical statement is a group one and in that sense they *are* distinctive and very appealing. Catalyst does things here with r&b and rock feelings with broad popular appeal as well as pieces that require some thoughtful listener involvement. It will be interesting to see where they head on their next recording. —*nolan*

SHORT SHOTS

SKY KING

SECRET SAUCE—Columbia KC 33367: *Secret Sauce; People, People, People; Looking Forward; Makes Me Feel So Good; Don't Be Afraid; Hot Mustard; Still In Love; Why Don't You Take Us; Special Place; Pedro.*

★ ★ ★ ★

From out of traditionally hard-rocking Ann Arbor, Michigan, spawning ground of Brownsville Station, Iggy and The Stooges, Commander Cody and his Lost Planet Air-

men, and the incomparable Bob Seger, comes Sky King. Most of these guys were part of a previous incarnation called New Heavenly Blue, one time Ann Arbor favorite bar band. And though they have a different name, the game remains the same—they're a dancing machine.

The obvious comparison here is to the Average White Band, another extraordinarily competent blue-eyed soul unit. But there are a number of factors which distinguish Sky King. Consider Madcat Ruth's hysterical harp playing—he's perfectly capable of blowing J. Geils' Magic Dick off the map. Chris Brubeck (Dave's son) is another singular talent. He writes good-humored, perceptive lyrics *(People, Why Don't You Take Us)* and contributes much to the advanced yet funky arrangements. Christy Coan's lead vocals are lusty and bright and all the boys sing creditably solo or in boisterous unison. Strong instrumental solo statements abound, and additional help, as from the Tower Of Power horn section, is tastefully employed.

If it weren't for the occasionally naive, cliché-ridden lyric *(Don't Be Afraid, Special Place)*, there'd be little to ask for. Mostly this *Secret Sauce* is a highly flammable mixture of up-tempo formula funk and creative Midwestern perspiration. *Makes Me Feel So Good* says it all. *—adler*

BOOKER T

EVERGREEN—Epic KE 33143: *Jamaica Song; Mama Stewart; Tennessee Voodoo; Flamingo; Song For Casey; Evergreen; Country Days; Why Me; Front Street Rag; Lie To Me.*

★

Ever since he left the MG's in 1971, severed his Memphis roots, and moved to California, Booker T. has managed to release one boring album after another. This, his first for CBS, is one more sad tombstone over his past as a member of the tight Memphis group. It is perhaps a reaction to this very background as a studio ace and real pro that has made Booker T. relinquish what musical criteria he acquired during his years on Stax, and, sitting on the porch in California under influence of bad philosophy, turn to folksy little nothing tunes, amateurish singing and defeatist lyrics in the belief, obviously, that this is *honest* music.

It is always praiseworthy when an established artist tries to expand, but there is nothing progressive or adventurous here, only retreat, and somebody ought to remind Booker T. of what a superb r&b musician he is. Considering such MG's masterpieces as *Slim Jenkins Joint, Green Onions, Over Easy* and their last album *Melting Pot*, a great new career for Booker T. should lie ahead in the area of sophisticated funk now promoted by so many soul groups, an area where Booker's distinctive organ sound coupled with his sense of linear urgent tunes would place him among the front-runners and on the disco playlists. *—gabel*

MICHAEL LONGO

900 SHARES OF THE BLUES—Groove Merchant GM 3304: *900 Shares Of The Blues; Like A Thief In The Night; Ocean Of His Might; Magic Number; Summer's Gone; El Moodo Grande.*

★ ★ ½

Pianist/composer Longo has assembled a solid, professional group for this date, including Joe Farrell, Ron Carter, Randy Brecker and Mickey Roker, and they perform his tunes with professional competence and occasional flair.

There are pretty, pleasant, unmemorable melodies in abundance here *(Ocean, Summer's Gone,* the title cut) and Longo writes fairly inventive, if not ear-shaking arrangements, of them. Most of the first side is gently funk-based—Carter is on electric bass, Longo on piano, the rhythm figures are fat and fixed—and Longo pulls a nice Hancock-like sound from his ax. *Magic Number* is the all-acoustic, straight ahead jazz vehicle which opens side two and the strongest performance here. Farrell contributes a heated, boppish tenor solo and Carter is a slippery thrill throughout.

The dilemma of *900 Shares* is that it neither inspires one to dance with joy, nor adequately repays repeated serious listening. It is superior, even uplifting, background music, but not much more. *—adler*

EARTH, WIND & FIRE

THAT'S THE WAY OF THE WORLD—Columbia PC 33280: *Shining Star; That's The Way Of The World; Happy Feelin'; All About Love; Yearnin', Learnin'; Reasons; Africano; See The Light.*

★ ★ ★ ½

I was primed to expect a lot more this time around, after loving every second of EW&F's last effort, *Open Our Eyes*. That album was persuasive evidence that these nine musicians comprised possibly the *ablest* soul aggregation on the contemporary scene. There were monster, funky AM hits, ballads of ingenuous sincerity that recalled Sam Cooke, and steamy jazz jams that featured haircurling horn solos. *Open Your Eyes* also showcased several convincing amalgams utilizing various West African rhythms and instruments (notably the watery, xylophonic, kalimba) in

a pop context.

Sadly, EW&F have apparently elected to play safe just as they're standing on the verge of acquiring giant mass acceptance and, consequently, real mind-opening power. *That's The Way Of The World* is slick. Only *Shining Star*, a companion piece, philosophically, to the great *Mighty, Mighty*, of *Open Our Eyes* manages to really goose you. Most of the other tunes are lush, tight, and undeveloped—EW&F turn on their funk motor and coast to a close. They have one lyric idea—What goes around, comes around, so you'd best respect yourself and love your neighbor. Profound enough, if simple, but how many ways can it be chopped up? *—adler*

MARK MURPHY

MARK II—Muse 5041: *Chicken Road; Too Much Love; The Unfaithful Servant; Lookin' For Another Pure Love; Triad; They; Sleeping; Lemme Blues; Truckin'.*

★

Vocalist Murphy has nothing to offer the readers of this magazine. Despite ludicrously overblown liner commentary claims to the contrary, he is little more than a "polite supper-club singer" who decided, this time, to record tunes by the likes of Joni Mitchell and Stevie Wonder instead of by Irving Berlin or Bacharach/David. His versions add nothing to the originals. *—adler*

JOHN PAYNE

JOHN PAYNE'S FIRST ALBUM—Bromfield BR-1: *Behind Her Eyes; Autumn Leaves; Killing Me Softly With His Song; Silent Jam; Blue In Green.*
Personnel: Payne, soprano & tenor sax, flute; Louis Levin, piano; David Lichman, bass (all tracks except 2); J. Gummy Guttmann, bass (track 2 only); Matthew Gordy, drums (all tracks except 2); Chuck Laire, drums, (track 2 only.)

★ ★ ★

Multi-reedman Payne has developed quite a following around Boston's rejuvenated jazz circle. No stranger to session work, Payne has appeared on Van Morrison's classic *Astral Weeks*, plus albums by Dave Bromberg, Bonnie Raitt, and bluesman Johnny Shines.

John's initial solo disc is an unruffled and mildly ambitious affair. Unfortunately, two problems mar what is an otherwise extremely listenable set: Payne is plagued by the twin bugaboos of a lackluster rhythm section and a weak choice of material. Both *Killing Me Softly* and *Autumn Leaves* have been trotted out altogether too many times to provoke anything other than a yawning response.

Payne stands out on soprano sax, as evidenced by *Behind Her Eyes*, a gentle samba that overshadows anything else on the album. The remaining two cuts span the entire second side, having been taken from a live performance from June of last year. The two-part *Silent Jam* is divided into a short interpretation of Joe Zawinul's *In A Silent Way*, ultimately expanding into an extended improvisation. Although Payne's tenor and Levin's piano keep the piece afloat, the aforementioned rigor mortis percussives almost capsize the affair. The quartet's version of Miles Davis' *Blue In Green* certainly won't make anyone forget the original, but manage to succeed despite a hovoc-wreaking bass interlude.

Payne has since added a new bassist and drummer who will hopefully offset future difficulties. Now if he can only defeat that tendency toward excessive root worship, Payne may yet mature into an authoritative young reedman. *—hohman*

Lee Ritenour

blindfold test

by leonard feather

Lee Ritenour, who surprised many listeners when he took part in the guitar round robin at last September's Monterey Jazz Festival, has more going for him at 22 than many musicians can hope to accomplish at twice his age.

Very soon his first album as a leader will be released on Capitol. Meanwhile he continues to lead the triple life that has kept him busy since his late teens: teaching, leading a combo and playing studio gigs.

"Rock and all the music of today has been with me from the start," he says. "I automatically got into it, because it was all around me. Players of my age just naturally come up with rock. Besides, especially in Los Angeles, if you're going to be getting into studio work, you're gonna need to play some rock.

"But I loved jazz from a very early age too, and that meant studying with people like Joe Pass, the president of bebop out here, and Howard Roberts.

"At USC I studied with Chris Parkening; then a year after I left there I was called back and they hired me as a teacher. The first year of my class, some of the students I used to go to school with were addressing me as professor!"

This was Ritenour's first Blindfold Test.

1. HOWARD ROBERTS. *Canteloupe Island* (from *Spinning Wheel*, Capitol). Herbie Hancock, composer; Roberts, guitar; Tom Scott, saxophone; Dave Grusin, keyboards; Chuck Domanico, bass; John Guerin, drums.

That was very close to home for me. That was Howard Roberts. I got that record as soon as it came out because it was so different for Howard. That came out about four years ago, and all the records prior to that were kind of tame. Some of them were excellent, but this was the group he was working with at Donte's: I think Tom Scott, Chuck Domanico, Dave Grusin, John Guerin . . . I remember Howard telling me that he just went in (to the studio) and didn't use any baffles to separate the musicians—they just sat around in a circle and recorded this album in a few days, and just had a ball doing it.

When I first listened to it today, it seemed dated because Howard has changed even so much more. I think he likes to play even farther out than this record; and this was pretty far out for Howard. But it's really an excellent record. It's hard for me to rate these records in the normal sense, because I think of them in different terms. First of all I think of it for my own personal satisfaction—which is the main thing. But also there's some records you may play which may be worth five stars—let's say a bebop record of Dizzy that has classic solos in it—but which I don't enjoy as much any more, so for me it wouldn't be a five star.

Anyway, the arrangement and the song—I think it's a Tom Scott composition—are very good, and Howard is very melodic on it. I'd rate five stars for Howard and maybe three stars for the record.

2. CHARLIE CHRISTIAN. *Benny's Bugle* (from *Solo Flight*, Columbia). Benny Goodman, clarinet; Charlie Christian, guitar; Georgie Auld, tenor; Cootie Williams, trumpet; Count Basie, piano. Recorded 1940.

That was sort of the other end of the scale compared to the last record. That one I think was definitely before my time. Just the same, especially in its context, it was a very good record, really swinging. I'm probably not familiar with all the players.

I noticed in the guitar solo that he did have some very modern lines. I don't think it was Charlie Christian, but somebody in that context: Eddie Lang, or maybe even somebody like John Collins. There was a lot of blues in him. It's interesting that that style is even current today. I know a lot of rock players have told me they're listening to people like Charlie Christian. In other words, that's why Charlie was such a genius, because people are still stealing from him.

As far as this record, I like the arrangement. I imagine when it came out—it sounds to me like it was recorded in the early '40s—it was very fresh and very popular. As I said, I'm not familiar with any of the players. The piano sounds like it may be Teddy Wilson. The saxophonist has me baffled; it could be so many different people. I would rate that three stars.

3. GEORGE BENSON. *Summer Wishes, Winter Dreams* (from *Bad Benson*, CTI). Johnny Mandel, composer; Don Sebesky, arranger.

Before commenting on George's record, we've heard three records, all completely different . . . maybe I'm partial, but I don't think there's too many instruments that can have that total variety. Guitars can go from one spectrum to the other; that's what makes it great for me, because I love most of those styles.

This record you just played is the new George Benson album. When I first listened to the whole thing at home—there used to be comparisons of George Benson and Wes Montgomery all the time. I never really did feel that. I thought George had his own thing. But on this record, Don Sebesky did all the arranging and it really put him . . . it was an orchestral album, with George featured . . . and it was really structured just like some of the Wes Montgomery albums. I think because of Don's writing I recognize a similarity.

Personally, I enjoy the album . . . it's not one of George's better albums. He's a marvelous player, one of my greatest influences. But I found the comparison between him and Wes so strong here, that I couldn't really get into George this time.

I think George was trapped somewhat by the arrangement. There was a cello section, and a harp kept going in and out of his playing. It was a nice attempt, a different attempt than has been made on recent George Benson albums. George hasn't really gone right up to the top in terms of popularity, I think mainly because of the way he records. He's an incredible guitarist. . . .

4. CHICK COREA. *Hymn of the Seventh Galaxy* (from *Return to Forever*, Polydor). Corea, piano, composer; Bill Connors, guitar; Lenny White, drums; Stan Clarke, electric bass.

The thing I noticed about that record different from all the others . . . well, for one thing, that's a very current style—Chick Corea's group, Return To Forever. It's not his most recent album, but the one before it, with Bill Connors on guitar. The whole album is really excellent. The thing that struck me most about it is that the arrangement of the song is very orchestrated. Chick laid it out very well; he left room for the soloists—which was Bill Connors, mostly, and himself.

It's an excellent tune and the whole album is very well structured and orchestrated. This is the only five star record I've heard today. This record's been criticized by people as having a lot of Mahavishnu in it. In fact, the new album is even more like it—but I think Chick has his own direction, and with the guitar style being played on this album, it could easily fall into the Mahavishnu category.

I love Chick and his group. Somebody once referred to Chick's band as playing "flamenco rock 'n roll" because he has so much Spanish in him.

5. HERB ELLIS-JOE PASS. *Seven Come Eleven* (from *Seven Come Eleven*, Concord Jazz). Ellis, Pass, guitars; Ray Brown, bass; Jake Hanna, drums.

That was another five star record in a totally different context. Just virtuoso guitar playing with Herb Ellis and Joe Pass. When I see Herb and Joe performing at a club, it's totally different than hearing them on record. They've played together for quite a while and Herb began to sound a little more like Joe, and Joe began to loosen up and sound more like Herb, in that Texas-blues kind of thing. On record it's very hard to differentiate between the two players.

That was Ray Brown and Jake Hanna. And that's a guitar style that's really only played by great people like Herb Ellis and Joe Pass. Was the tune *Seven Come Eleven*?

Hearing this after Chick's record makes me realize there's a place for both styles. I used to want to play this kind of style all the time—like Joe, Herb, Barney, Tal Farlow—finally I woke up one day and realized I love that style but Joe is the president of that kind of thing. It's been done, and is being done by him every day; so it was time for me to move on, and I don't play that way any more. But I still enjoy and love it. I think you have to keep moving on just as people like Herbie Hancock and Chick Corea are. They don't play like they did three or four years ago—even since last year they've changed. It's important to change—whether they're selling more records or less records, it's not as important as it is to keep moving. That's what I want to keep doing. db

Profile

VICTOR ALEMAN

LUIS GASCA

by Ien Iyons

Luis Gasca is an itinerant musician. He has traveled a variety of roads—and in good company. On the rock scene for several years, he gigged and recorded with Janis Joplin, Santana, and Van Morrison. "I got tired of the rock 'n roll trip very fast," he recalled. "You wait three hours to play 30 minutes." Gasca also played trumpet for Perez Prado, traveling with him through Japan while *Cherry Pink And Apple Blossom White* was on top of the pop charts. Later, he played with many better, less commercial, Latin bands like Mongo Santamaria, Willie Bobo, and Eddie Palmieri.

Gasca, a Mexican raised in Houston, Texas, resists being characterized as a fundamentally Latin player. "I've enjoyed playing Latin, and I'm glad to see now that the conga is in demand. All of a sudden, everyone's using congas and timbales, so I'm glad to see that voice in the orchestra, like another color coming through. It helped in the recognition of Latin rhythms which have always been there. It's funny, though: back in high school, when everyone was into Elvis and football games, I was listening to Miles, Dizzy, and Cannonball. I'm not a Latin player. I play jazz. I listen to John Coltrane. That's my music."

In addition to his rock, pop, and Latin credits, Gasca's trumpet and fluegelhorn have served in the big bands of Basie, Ferguson, Woody Herman, and Stan Kenton. Finally, the three albums released under his own name have included a list of the most celebrated ensemble players in jazz.

Certainly, this is the brief biography of a journeyman musician and a restless one, as well. One senses that after all those years on the road, the record labels, the variety of bands, and temporary residences, Gasca is looking for a place he can call *home*, musically and personally. It seems he may have found it in San Francisco.

At least part of Gasca's disillusionment has grown out of his experience with the record companies. "My first album was on Atlantic with Herbie Hancock, Mickey Roker, Hubert Laws, Joe Henderson, and Mongo. It's still played on the air, but I haven't made anything on it. They called it *Little Giant*, which wasn't my idea at all. They also put four pineapples on the cover, and I'm not even Hawaiian. I wrote most of the tunes and, with the help of Mark Levine (a San Francisco pianist), arranged them. But they dropped me right after that.

"After Atlantic, I recorded *For Those Who Chant* on Blue Thumb, which was an even more terrible experience. They just didn't take care of business. Until recently, I think the jazz musician has always been stifled. He makes records, and 'Okay, send 'em out. No advertisement for this, no ads for that, no packaging.' Well, at least as an artist, I feel a lot more comfortable where I am now than I have anywhere else.

"I made enough noise in San Francisco for Fantasy Records to think I'd be an investment for them. I arranged Joe Henderson's *Canyon Lady* album, selecting the personnel and material with the help of Joe and Orrin Keepnews. I was excited about that because it was a Latin album, and I wanted to make sure the music was the color it was supposed to be. Joe's *latino*, anyway—he plays so beautifully."

Soon after that date, Gasca recorded *Born To Love You*, an album which accurately represents the same musical conception he conveys from the bandstand. His trumpet playing is characterized by a sharp attack and bright tone. His format is controlled, and each tune (Coltrane's *A Love Supreme* is a particularly good example) is invested with an orderly, singable quality. "I've always dug (chord) changes," Gasca explained, adding, "although they were on the way out when I finally learned to play them. But they'll always be there. I don't think I've ever been in a setting for free-playing, though *For Those Who Chant* uses more of a free conception. I'm basically a time-player. I like to take it out once in a while, but I can't stay out there all the time, because I like to be 'in' too. There's validity in both. I like the concept of a collage in which everything is part of the music. (Collage *is the projected title for Gasca's second Fantasy album.*) My next album will use this conception. I'm going to use Joe Sample, Harvey Mason, and a San Francisco singer, Gay Brewer. I really like the color of her voice."

Recounting his well-traveled career, Gasca seems to remember Los Angeles least fondly of all. He insists upon calling it *Hollyweird* and characterizes its attitude as one preoccupied with image, *Who's Who*, and stardom. "Jazz artists do live in L.A., but the feeling and communications are lost. It's not a *city*, at least that's the way it seemed to me. I wanted more communication between musicians. I wanted to hear the music, and I couldn't unless it came from somewhere else. San Francisco is a jazz city. It has that crispness, the energy, and it's intimate."

In San Francisco, Gasca has found only occasional opportunities to play with a band of his own. He has tried, however, to improve the environment for jazz by playing and booking for a struggling—though beautiful—young jazz room, called Gold Street. "I'm careful about my playing. I've played all my life, at least 15 years on the road, so unless it's right, it's too disappointing. I'm not in that much demand that I can go anywhere and play where I want to. When you're a jazz musician, you know it's going to take some time. Herbie Hancock is on top now, but he's been doing this all his life.

"I have faith. Faith is everything, man. Without that, I'd still be back in Texas or, even worse, Los Angeles." db

EDDIE HENDERSON

by Ien Iyons

When the public eye was last focused on Eddie Henderson, he was seen as a sideman in Herbie Hancock's sextet ('70-'73), supplying the rich fluegelhorn and mellow trumpet parts. Suddenly, it's more accurate to look at him as an emerging leader with uncommon potential. Musically, if not mythically, he could be next in line for the mantle Miles tends to wear, playing the sparse, understated lines, the nuances, and the accents. His tone is sure and controlled, never jagged or strident; and he communicates a rational self-consciousness about his playing and its place in the history of the music.

Henderson's first efforts as a leader were recorded on Capricorn (*Realization* and *Inside Out*). He himself prefers the first album, cut while the Hancock band was still intact, for the greater rapport among the players, who were working together regularly at the time. Neither album, however, boosted his career notably or left him in particularly great demand as a performer. "The year I was with Capricorn," he explained, "they were a rock label, and I was their only jazz artist. I don't think they knew how to promote jazz product. It's not that they didn't want to—they just didn't know what to do."

Since the break-up of Hancock's band, Eddie has spent six months traveling with Art Blakey and an irregular year with Azteca, a big San Francisco band that plays a Latin/jazz/rock hybrid. "It was a good experience for me," he recalled, "just to round out my musical scope by playing Latin music. That's a strong type of music, and I certainly benefited from it." He has played only infrequently on the stand as a leader; yet even these few performances have revealed a distinct direction in his music.

At the Keystone Korner in San Francisco, he worked with pianist Mike Nock, co-leader with Michael White of the now-defunct Fourth Way, and with two "free" players who frequently work together, Pat O'Hearn (acoustic bass) and Terry Bozzio (drums). They were hired as a warm-up band but, by general consensus, upstaged the headliner. Henderson's conception left wide spaces between melodic statements and maintained a strong sense of balance along with the open structure. The music suggested the clear, geometric qualities of the surrealist painter, de Chirico.

At this writing, Henderson is preparing to tape the first of two albums for Blue Note. By his own estimation, it's going to take a "hit" record to make traveling with his own band, or other professional goals, a realistic endeavor, and this leaves him in a painful dilemma.

"On my first albums, I felt no pressure at all. But this time, I'm feeling pressure from Skip (*Drinkwater, Henderson's producer for both Capricorn and Blue Note*) and from what the record company is saying, which is 'we want you to sell so many albums.' In other words 'we want you to make a commercially appealing album,' and that means they want a rock-oriented sound. The guidelines were set down by Hancock's *Headhunters* and Donald Byrd's *Black Byrd* album. They sold a million or something, so now the industry's saying, 'Wow! That's jazz!' It's turned into a purely economic venture for the record company people. The producers are in the middle. They feel the squeeze. And I feel the pressure to do a commercial album.

"I'm in a bind because music is very important to me. There are so many people who have sold out and fallen short of their potential. I'm weighing the pros and cons. Should I try to make something that sells a million records and be a commercial success? . . . But then I think, Is that what I'm playing music for? If I wanted to make a lot of money, I might as well practice medicine. (*Henderson, an M.D., is one year short of completing a psychiatric residency.*) The reason I play music is for the creative outlet it gives me. But I can't tell the record company off or I'd be cutting off my nose to spite my face. It's a real dilemma that the music business puts the artists in, and in the end the artist suffers."

The way out of this trap, however, may turn out to be Henderson's own musical conception, which has already been introduced to rock audiences via *Bitches Brew* and other albums of its genre. A comparison to Miles is, in fact, unavoidable, though the similarities are less apparent in his playing on the stand than in his recorded efforts, especially *Realization*. Yet Henderson appears to feel that Miles' influence on his own playing has not been singular.

"I'm obviously influenced by him, but I love Clifford Brown and Lee Morgan, too. All through, say, '60 to '70, when I was trying to learn how to play, I learned how to play on changes. Maybe people who hear my records now say, 'Oh, well, he just plays *that* way,' but I spent years learning how to play changes. I probably seem closer to Miles because of the musical conception, the type of music I play now. Like Clifford usually played bebop-oriented tunes or standards, though the music now has evolved into a more open, tonality-based think, rather than chord-change based. That's why I sound more akin to Miles. It's the kind of thing he delved into." **db**

VERYL OAKLAND

VON FREEMAN

Enterprise Lounge, Chicago

Personnel: Freeman, tenor saxophone; John Young, piano; David Shipp, bass; Charles Walton, drums; Gerri Mitchum, vocals.

"Excuse me," said Von to his group, after a long sax cadenza, "I was just trying to find the magic note." He needn't worry—Von has found it many times, including the night I heard that aside.

Mondays at the Enterprise are a wonder. Chicago is a miserable environment for a serious artist, and Von has generally worked fronting house bands, with oddly-assorted "all-stars," and as a sideman (beginning with Horace Henderson in 1939, including such disparates as Sun Ra and, heaven help us, Milt Trenier). These relaxed nights with his own expert group, and sitters-in of every imaginable ability, find him exploring a huge repertoire, stretching out to his heart's content, and generally setting a musically heavy pace. The rhythm section keeps up, too: Young is perhaps Chicago's most flexible pianist, with an excitement ranging from surface to (often at fast tempos) the genuinely melodic; Shipp is a perfect bassist, one of the few with the lyricism to invent beautiful ballad solos; Walton is simply the best of a recent series of sympathetic Freeman drummers.

For example: Gerri Mitchum's nice *Solitude* vocal is broken by Von's melodic chorus, as perfect as Lester with Lady. *It Was A Very Good Year* is transferred to long meter and swings like an authentic piece of music. Back and forth multiplication and reduction of time enlightens *The Touch Of Your Lips* and *I Remember You*. Often themes are chosen for their rhythmically contrasting potential—the walking whole notes of *Love Walked In*, the simplicity of *When You're Smiling* (very fast tempo, here), the relatively quaint *Honeysuckle Rose*—raw meat for such a fluent imagination. Rhythm is at the heart of Von's near-rococo conception, the primary element in his remarkably varied and *alive* solo tension.

Yet Von's structures are in no way self-contained. His theme statements may invariably be improvements on the originals, but what follows is quite different, and frequently only distantly related to the changes. His modernism permits entire choruses on substitute changes, but more often he invents long passages with a remarkably free relation to the initiating chordal patterns. If each chorus is a complete statement, there is neither ordering around a central idea, internal disorder justified by passion, nor the bop-typical burst and contrast of ideas. Von possesses the detachment to *evolve* one idea from another so that a chorus may conclude an emotional world away from its opening statement.

A typical solo, then, perhaps on *Remember* or a standard as provocative, may open with Von playing the theme out of tempo, then in a medium-up four, the staccato on-the-beat notes breaking for what appears as coloring, only to be extended into a melody substitute. A cascade of notes may lead into choruses that combine in their ingenuity the methods of Dexter Gordon and classic-period Rollins: the line is doubled, quadrupled, returned to the original tempo, all at the most unusual—but personally necessary—places within the 32-bar outline. A section of exposition may demand anticipating a chord change and even extending it as the force of the line demands. Along the way, Young abandons his soft chording as the powerful thrust of the tenor absorbs all.

RON HOWARD

With only the precise bass and Walton (less booming than Blakey, but often as pertinent), Von may then abandon changes for plain key signatures. These adventures may include several wholly double-timed choruses, with utter involvement and flow. However detailed his playing appears in outline, his intent is seldom decorative: the linear directness and sense of direction are imperative. If the challenge of modes has destroyed other men, it's become merely one more tool for Von—useful when his sense of line demands, to be abandoned when changes may yield better music. As with Benny Carter or McCoy Tyner, even strongly melodic qualities are subordinate to the more immediate needs of expression. A drawn-out note or a rhythmically conclusive phrase signals Young's return, then Von's remaining chorus uses a bit of theme restatement to provoke further forays.

Solos by the others follow, and Von's several return choruses may incorporate all the techniques of his opening solo, often to even superior effect. Phrases as bold as Hawkins may happen, or ascending lines may gather in unusually controlled split-tone or overtone instants. A long cadenza follows the theme restatement, rarely evolving into a completely free statement. His creative fertility, his big "Chicago" sound, his skill with blues have won him a "blowing tenor man" reputation that's accurate enough in all it's implications.

This is only a typical description, not a rule, for Von's emotional and stylistic emphasis may change from one performance to another. The perfection of the style remains the same, however. Lately his work on records has been more rewarding than, say, Rollins' or Shorter's or Gordon's, but it's by no means an adequate measure of his art. An evening of Von Freeman improvising freely is one of the most thoroughly satisfying experiences in contemporary music, with the immediacy and *total* musicality that only jazzmen with a hint of greatness in them can provide.

—john b. litweiler

TRIBE

Jazz West, Detroit, Michigan

Personnel: Wendell Harrison, tenor saxophone and flute; Phil Renelin, trombone; Marcus Belgrave, fluegelhorn and trumpet; Hal McKinney, piano; Bud Spangler, drums; Billy Turner, drums; Herman Curry, bass.

In Detroit, where the crippling impact of unemployment, inflation, and recession run neck and neck with increasing repression, you would think it fairly miraculous to find workers and non-workers with both the means and guts to venture out in search of live music. But one look at the "strip" (Fenkell Avenue roughly from Livernois to Schaffer) on the weekends would support neither the notion of depression or that black-on-black crime had chased all but the foolhardy to fortified pads.

In the midst of this so-called strip, with its now-and-then neon, looms the Jazz West, an after-hours club that partially thrives off the overlow and/or the after-math of activities at Watts' Mozambique. With its 2-6 a.m. motif you might expect the club to have an atmosphere reeking of the blues, jam sessions and fried chicken—and you wouldn't be disappointed. And the recent appearance of Tribe, a local group of rare quality and musicanship, was enough to complete the image and ensure an evening (morning?) of nuance and entertainment for a bunch of melancholy old-timers.

Although Tribe has undergone some changes in its rhythm section, the nucleus of the band (Harrison, McKinney, Belgrave and Renelin) remains, as does the overall musical direction which must be seen on a somewhat steadier course in many ways.

With their opening tune, Ranelin's *Of Times Gone By* (a melodic instrumental in search of lyrics), you are made aware of the group's rich ensemble experience and the virtuosity of the individual soloists. Ranelin's horn has a throaty, unruffled quality: like his own resonant voice, there is the strong masculine effect at the base of his performance that persuades without pushing. His soloing is well-manicured and economical and the no nonsense demeanor characterizes his every move. (This particular tune, by the way, is the mainstay of his own Tribe Records album, which has received quite a bit of air time on Detroit's only daily jazz radio station.)

The group moves almost imperceptibly into *Black Destiny*, another Ranelin composition, with Spangler and Curry carefully administering a slightly altered meter and texture. Here the melody is not as engaging or distinctive but the form is much freer. Belgrave's solo is at first hesitant but the old consistency soon swells to the top and you are reminded that this is the trumpet player that Mingus feels to be one of the very best in the land. Marcus struggles with a rapid succession of notes that would have been no problem at all on his former horns that were recently stolen. There is a quick exchange between Ranelin and Harrison—they in a small way derive the essence of brass-reed antiphony—while the veteran pianist signals yet another voyage, *Out Of The Blue*.

Within this tune there's an echo of Moody's *Last Train To Overbrook* (or was I hearing things?). Was this the concession made for a gathering clientele who might have had the MFSB or the Stylistics on their

minds? Nonetheless, it was done without sacrificing a note of the jazz-oriented integrity that is part of the band's collective breath. The rhythm section was flowing much better now and Spangler, who can be seen as the bellwether in several respects, was managing the tempo in his indubitable way. The old battered cymbal (garbage can top?) is still part of Bud's arsenal that is capable of soloing delicately behind a Ursula Walker or pushing the Austin-Moro big band. Toward the young Curry there is a glance to instill further confidence as he tags gleefully behind a spirited McKinney.

By the time *Space Odyssey* was launched, Billy Turner had assembled his drums and joined Harrison, who was putting his tenor through the rickets. Harrison takes care of business both literally and figuratively—his repertoire has grown deep like the rivers. You hear a little Trane and maybe a little Bird, but always a lot of Harrison. As his tenor rips off large portions of jazz history, you know he will never be content with this level of brilliance—he is the seeker.

Perhaps the basic difference with Tribe at this date is the addition of Spangler and Curry. Unlike so many talented bass players who are quick to solo and less involved with keeping time, Curry brings a strong and disciplined regard for his responsibility. It may have something to do with his comparative lack of experience, but in any case it is refreshing to hear that time-keeping concern pursued with so much relish and competence. Maybe that long tradition of important bass players out of Detroit will continue for at least another generation, due to the arrival of Ralph Armstrong, Michael Henderson, and now, Herman Curry. If Curry can stick in this environment for a few more months, especially within rimshot of Mr. Spangler, he is sure to improve his already expanding capability.

After three hours on the set you pull yourself together and prepare to hit the "strip" again. Fenkell is quiet now and only a distant siren shakes you back from the fun and nostalgia as it vainly struggles to eliminate the passionate and forceful sound that was Tribe.

—herb boyd

POTPOURRI

continued from page 10

and *Holly Dancers Of Alexander*. Featured artist **Mohammed El Bakkar** refutes all tongue-in-cheek allegations.

●

You Can't Keep A Good Man Down: One-time household word **Tiny Tim** was recently injured in an automobile crash outside of Mechanicsburg, Pa. Tiny, who is said to be in the process of making a comeback, suffered chest injuries. Plagued by bad breaks during the past few years, the mild-mannered Tiny plans to continue touring as soon as possible. Meanwhile, his former sweetheart, **Miss Vicki** (who he married on the Johnny Carson show at the peak of his popularity), tiptoes on her own way, making plans to grace the environs of one of the more noted girlie magazines.

●

Erroll Garner, look out: Ray Stevens, perpetrator of such Top 40 diseases as *Ahab The Ahab, Gitarzan,* and *The Streak,* has turned his ulterior attentions to the all-time classic *Misty*. The perverse burlesque has broken into the charts as this goes to press, and will probably be driving all Garnerites to tears for the next couple of months. db

BENNIE MAUPIN continued from page 18

ready to try a different environment, I wanted to do something different. And Herbie's music was nice."

People still discuss the plight of Herbie's sextet with strong emotion. Why did it fail? Why couldn't the jazz community support such an exceptional venture? "First of all, I think the record company Herbie was involved with at that point—Warner Brothers—didn't really help by doing the kind of big spread they'll do when they feel really good about an artist. They didn't really try to sell the music. I mean they put it out there, but they remained critical about it so that nothing ever got done. We made two albums for them and for a moment it looked like they were going to do something, but nothing really happened.

"We worked really hard and played a lot of gigs and there wasn't much money involved. With the number of people involved, if you don't sell records you can't demand enough money to support something like this. Herbie had to constantly take money out of his source, his royalties from his tunes, to sustain it. (**Ed. Note:** *As David Rubinson, Herbie's producer, put it:* 'every single sweat-dollar from Pillsbury cake mix commercials and European sales of *Watermelon Man.*') After a point there was just no way to continue."

However economically unfeasible, the audience response to the music of the sextet was generally enthusiastic "A lot of times people were very confused as to whether we were actually playing that way or not. I mean it was different. It was unique. I've never experienced it within any group of musicians before and I think most of the time the response was fantastic. All we played were the clubs and we got to a lot of people that a lot of other groups didn't get to. The music was so broad, there were so many things there, really beautiful things, some really freer things, that it served to bridge a certain gap that existed in the music around that time."

Of the new Headhunters group, which includes Bill Summers on percussion, Paul Jackson on bass guitar, Blackbird on guitar, and Mike Clark on drums, as well as Maupin, only Bennie is a hold over from the sextet. "It was Herbie's decision. When he told me the band was breaking up, I told him I could understand. He wanted to do something different, plus he was way into debt as a result of trying to sustain it. After a certain point, either you change directions, try to do something else, or you go further into the hole. He said he wanted to try me in his new band after the sextet played its last concert. I said okay, because I didn't have anything else to do. Then I moved out to the West Coast and we started to rehearse the new band.

"The music in the sextet was much more spontaneous in a certain way. When we first started working together . . . like the first gig we ever had with that particular band, we never rehearsed. I rehearsed with Julian Priester and Eddie Henderson alone, just the three of us. We played the horn parts, then we went to the gig and we played with the rhythm section. And out of all the time we were together, about three years, we rehearsed a total of, if I say two dozen times, that's probably an overstatement, because something just happened when we got together that was unique.

"With Headhunters it's different because the rhythmic structure is a bit different and the music is more basic. I think it's a little easier for people to get into because you don't really have to think about it that much. You can really *feel* it. The other music we played with the sextet was a definite challenge. Like I saw people get up and run out of places. Not walk, run! Holding their ears because they just didn't dig it. They said it was boring, they said it was freaky. But with this band, the music is more into the stream of what people hear. And I think that's the reason for it's acceptance, even though a lot of times it gets pretty crazy, too."

It is suggested that perhaps the sextet played music that could be construed as "intangible" and Headhunters music that is very "tangible." The difference between air and earth. "I think we were dealing with another realm at that time. The emphasis in the other band a lot of times would be on space, silence, and other things like that. What we're doing now doesn't deal necessarily with that so much as with solid rhythms, real melodic things. The things we did with the other band are melodic to me, even though to the average person they might not sound melodic. I'll tell you, to this day, it was the most amazing musical experience I ever had."

Today, Bennie Maupin finds himself the only horn player in a group that used to have three. His role in the ensemble, and as a soloist, has changed radically. "Herbie and I developed a different way of playing together. Like Julian Priester, Eddie Henderson and I, we developed a way of playing together so that we sounded like one. It was just that close so many times. You could not tell if I was playing, or if the trombone was playing, or if the trumpet was playing. I mean we would stand there with our horns in our mouths but you really couldn't tell the difference in the *sound*. Then, after being exposed to that sound for three years, you're suddenly out there alone.

"One reason I wanted to attempt it when Herbie first asked me is that I could see that it would really stretch me out as a soloist. As a result of the change, playing with him is a completely different experience. Now I have to listen more to the sound of the piano and the other keyboard instruments he's playing in order to get a timbre that goes with that kind of sound. Something that will make us sound really close.

"I also find myself playing more notes as opposed to more sounds. What we were really doing with the other band a lot of times was sound. Almost complete absence of notes. Like we were just trying to deal with different timbres, textures, and a completely different approach. We did, in many instances, eliminate the idea of notes. A lot of things that we did might imply chords, but in a lot of instances it wasn't. It was just that we discovered so many different areas of sound that we could use to create certain illusions."

Finally, no discussion with Bennie Maupin would be complete without his reaction to criticisms that the Headhunters band is overly commercial. "While a lot of criticisms may appear negative, it's positive, actually. It doesn't bother me. Whenever you do something, if it's public, if it's out there, you automatically are going to be criticized. People are going to say it's some kind of a compromise when you go from one area to another. But the proof is in the people who listen to the records. When we play sellout concerts and when we make gold albums, it shows that we must be communicating." **db**

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HOW TO host a friendly festival

by Dr. William L. Fowler

School jazz-fests, like flowers, bloom in the springtime, when throughout our land hundreds of adjudicators exalt thousands of winners into nebulous glory. At the same time, tens of thousands of losers are plunged into gnawing gloom, hardly the festive circumstances our stage band contests purport to induce.

To a high-schooler, losing can really hurt —ego, school spirit, peer recognition, things like that. In the sensitivity-prone adolescent years, losers have a more difficult time laughing off defeat than, say, Basie would had he just been rated—through some involved point system based on intonation, section precision, programming and the like—not as keen as Kenton, not as eloquent as Ellington, not as winning as Woody. No, teenagers are more likely to think unhappy thoughts than to laugh at losing. "If those judges had really listened to my solo. . . If they knew how hard we worked on those three charts. . . If they weren't so set in what styles they like. . ."

This negative aspect of high school festivals has been prevalent since the first such contest nearly thirty years ago. And once again this spring, a multitude of well-meaning directors will be designing their festivals around that fleeting moment of climactic excitement when an M. C. announces, "And the winner is . . ." And then those same directors will once again see unconcealed disappointment in losing faces.

But not down Mobile way! Not at the upcoming American High School Jazz Festival, from which J. C. McAleer and his smooth-functioning staff have abolished any notion of slavery to the Great American Competitive Syndrome. This year, instead of naming champs, they'll improve chops; instead of handing out trophies, they'll supply training; instead of fomenting jealousy, they'll promote amity. Mobilians like to begin their hospitality immediately upon a visitor's arrival. If past performance is an indication, VIP's will likely usher each group arriving by air directly from their plane to an airport reception room replete with snacks, soft drinks, photographers, and his Honor, young jazz-loving Mayor Greenough. And the same kind of welcome will await groups arriving by surface transportation at Festival Headquarters, the downtown Admiral Semmes Hotel.

And while the newly-arrived bands, combos, and singers are surveying the Mobile scene, getting acquainted with one another, or just plain relaxing, super-cats like Clark Terry, Lou Marini, Johnny Smith, Urbie Green, his super-kitten singing wife, Kathy Preston, and the Airmen of Note will be checking in, ready for three days and nights of mingling, mentoring, and music-making.

The members of that super service band, the Airmen, are aiming higher than any regular duty call. They plan, in their clinics, to apply band-aids to every ragged edge they can find. They expect to coach every section of every band in the principles of attack, phrase ending, dynamic balance, expression, and style. They'll offer both classes and private lessons in the techniques of every instrument. They'll lead improvisation clinics and teach theory and arranging. They'll sit in at student jam sessions, split up for combo programs, and concertize both alone and behind Clark, Johnny, Lou, Urbie, and Kathy. Between these services, they'll be around to discuss individual student problems and to suggest individual solutions. The special artists, too, plan intensive care for the musical and social needs of their young future friends. In addition to general hobnobbing, jamming, and both informal and formal concertizing, Lou intends to acquaint every reedman there with the secrets of woodwind doubling, Johnny looks to making a performance ensemble out of the assembled guitarists, Kathy expects to extend the projection of the singers, Urbie anticipates fronting a thirty-piece-plus, all-bone band on stage, and Clark vows that no wind instrument blower will get away without having learned to circular-breathe. Maybe nap-times will be scarce, but learning-times promise to be abundant in Mobile the days of June 5th, 6th, and 7th!

For the nightly concerts, though, that concentrated pace will slacken: jazz performance comes out best in a relaxed atmosphere. No crowding of a dozen or so groups into a single concert; no stop-watch timing of fifteen minutes, including set-up, per band; no auto-

matic curtain closing if a tempo gets counted off too slowly by a pressured leader. Instead, the Mobile schedule of three full concerts to accommodate a total of not more than eight or so high school units will provide time aplenty for unfrantic set-ups, stretched-out solos, and depth of exposure for each group. There will still be ample time left for the Airmen and for Clark, Johnny, Lou, Urbie, and Kathy to add their particular musical magic.

Ideal conditions for national festivals are rare. Mobile, while enjoying a fine auditorium and walking distances to all events, is still off the major national transportation routes. The big, centrally-located cities, while easy of initial access, usually present local transportation difficulties and high production costs. Yes, any festival might have its individual problems. But the Mobilians see no musical advantage whatsoever, only considerable emotional disadvangage, in burdening their festival with the tensions of competition. They are heeding Kenton's 1967 humanistic words of consolation to the nonwinners at the first national Intercollegiate Jazz Festival, "If my band had a play-off with Woody's and Count's and Duke's, three of us would come out losers."

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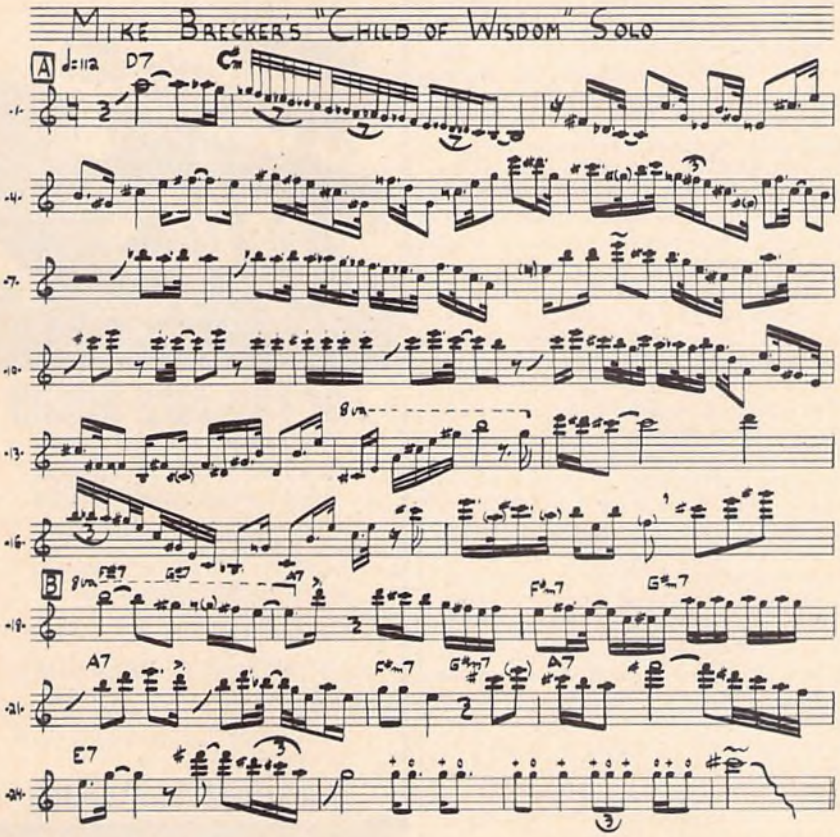
db music workshop

MIKE BRECKER'S "CHILD OF WISDOM" SOLO

This solo is transcribed from *Imagine My Surprise*, the second LP by Dreams, a short-lived but excellent jazz/rock band that featured Brecker, his trumpeter-brother Randy, guitarist John Abercrombie, and drummer Billy Cobham. Faced with relatively short solo space, Brecker gives his solo direction and builds tension by dividing it into two parts, using contrasting materials for each part. Part [A] (1-17) is built up of complex polytonal ideas, with an occasional blues-derived phrase used to briefly touch on the dominant B minor tonality. The considerable tension that results is released at [B], where Brecker switches to strong, simple, blues-based ideas (foreshadowed at bars 4 and 5). Other points of interest include Brecker's remarkably wide range, over three octaves from low B flat to an altissimo B natural, and his use of alternate fingerings and "note bending" in measures 25-26.

Brecker can be heard with Billy Cobham (*Crosswinds*), Horace Silver (*In Pursuit of the 27th Man*), Hal Galper (*Wild Bird, The Guerrilla Band*), Mike Mainieri (*White Elephant*), and James Taylor (*One Man Dog*).

The solo is transposed to the tenor saxophone's key; actual pitch is a ninth lower than written.



know, it's just a record." He didn't know what to do with it, how to market it, and I never did know what to tell him, all he got out of me is that it's whatever it is. By that time, I didn't give a damn whether they released it or not, I'd got my nut off just to record it. I think that's why it took them so long to release it. But somebody I guess at Billboard or Cashbox or somewhere called it hoodoo rock, so that's what it wound up as. Me, I get bitter over labeling anything except just plain music, even though I catch myself calling something jazz or this or that. Like you call a guy up for a date, and he asks, "What kind of date is it?" I say, "Man, it's a date." And he says, "I don't play just any kind of date." That irritates me, 'cause as musicians we're supposed to be united, anything that is put in front of us to play, we're supposed to do that and treat it with the same respect as anything else. No matter if I play on a hillbilly record or a reggae song—there have even been some psychedelic records I've been on that I felt good about.

Hohman: I take it you're not overly fond of hard rock.

Dr. John: Well, that was the first music I ever developed a prejudice against. For one, it was the *lack* of music that these cats showed, jackin' them amps up to ten and turnin' around to face the amp so it'd hum for ten minutes. That to me is not music. Not only did *I* feel that way, I saw audiences throw bands off the stage and punch 'em out, they got so irritated with all that shuckin' and jivin' with wahwahs and fuzz tones and shit.

Hohman: Did your *Babylon* album express some of the hostility you felt to hard rock?

Dr. John: To tell you the truth, that was a bitter album. I made that album in the hopes that it would kill that garbage music that was coming out of Frisco at the time. I'm sure nobody got the impression I felt when I made it, because in between the time we were playing that stuff live on gigs and the time we got in the studio to cut it, the original anger and bitterness that was in that record had mellowed down too much.

I was trying to paint a picture of the whole L. A. music scene on it. At that time, everybody knew the name of the Velvet Underground and bands like Blue Cheer, representatives of that loud music. Like Johnny Winter, he used to sit in with us in New Orleans when we was playing across the street from Al Hirt's club, and him and Edgar would just come along and jam with us at Papa Joe's and different joints. He was just a mellow blues guitar player. Then the next time I saw the cat, he had 40 amplifiers across the stage that almost blew my eardrums out. I couldn't believe it was the same dude, man. The guy that used to sit in with us had a little bitty amp and he was almost like jazz influenced, playing them 1920 blues and stuff and people was just eating it up. Oh man, I was so turned around by that, I didn't know what to think. But so much stuff has happened through the years. Edgar never sat in with us much at the time, but both of them were in New Orleans working with another band. Me and James Booker were strawbossin' the bands at that time, like four organ clubs where I had to play organ and was working about 12 hours a night at it. My chops was really up and I

thought I was gonna be a jazz organist. We would work one gig of strip shows, another that was like a jazz gig, and then another blues gig. All of them were great music gigs and after they was up, we'd hit a late jam session where there was free-for-all jamming with 25 saxophones waiting to see who could play the most like John Coltrane.

Hohman: Was Coltrane's influence very great in New Orleans?

Dr. John: When he played at Vernon's in New Orleans with Eric Dolphy, even before he started recording by himself, he really turned the people around. Like James Black was no longer a funk drummer, from then on he wanted to be like Elvin Jones-James Black. This happened in just the opposite respect from when Cannonball and them came to New Orleans and were influenced by our music, then came out with records like *Jive Samba*. Ramsey Lewis came down and cut Alvin Robinson's *Something You Got*. When all those cats were coming in to learn some funk and add it to their music, Coltrane came down and changed the whole scene. That was it, man, shit on Charlie Parker. There was a cat named Jimmy Wilson who had spent all his life mastering Bird and when he heard a John Coltrane record, he went and committed suicide, they found him floating in a swimming pool with his saxophone. All kinds of shit like that was going down after Coltrane.

Hohman: Have you got any plans for ever taking all the different elements of music you've played and incorporating them into one gigantic piece?

Dr. John: Well, around the time I recorded *The Sun, Moon And Herbs* album, I had plans of making that into a three-record set. The sun part was to be played in the morning when you get up, the herbs in the day while you're sitting around smokin' or whatever you're doing, and the moon was to be played late at night. That idea was blowed out the window when they told me nobody could afford to buy a three-record set. But that was what my heart was into cause I wanted to do something where you not only put charts down but could have cats really jam and do extended things. I had some of the tunes written in almost classical movements. Like one song was two sides of an album. The whole thing went from a Latin thing to a church thing like a wedding, then into *When The Battle Is Over Who Will Wear The Crown* and then back into the gospel thing and then into a real funk thing and then into a 7/4 stretched-out jazz thing. But it was modulated, so that every so often, it would change keys and would vamp on this key change and the next one. On each third key change, a whole new set of rhythm patterns would emerge and you could go on to infinity in one long piece. But in cutting it off and performing it, there was some kind of brain salad surgery on the tape and the whole issue went out the window.

Another thing I'd like to try is recording some of the hoodoo music that thrives in the 9th Ward of New Orleans. Even though it might not have anything to do with being commercial, that whole district and its sound is still untapped. The creole music of New Orleans has been established by Toussaint and those fellas, the cajun music has been exposed by Clifton Chenier, but the hoodoo music, man, that's one area that's been ignored all too long. **db**

GARNETT BROWN continued from page 20

give it much thought when it's not around. I think the instrumentation, what I can do with each section separately and against each other.

Smith: You mentioned Billy Taylor and *Black Journal* to me. What have you done for him? (*Black Journal* is broadcast weekly over the Public Broadcasting Service (WNET) in New York.)

Brown: Yeah. Billy asked me if I would like to write something for his band that appears on the show every now and then. I had written for Billy when he was with David Frost and the album that came out of it, *OK Billy*. There was *Dust Bowl*, *Breakaway* and *Splice Time*. *Breakaway* was the piece I selected for *Black Journal;* I expanded it slightly. I also dipped into arranging someone else's tunes at about the same time. *After Love, Emptiness*, a beautiful piece of Bobby Thomas', Billy's drummer, was the vehicle.

Smith: Which brings us close to where we are now, *Pieces Of Miles*.

Brown: That was an unusual time. I would be getting up at 3 AM to avoid the kids and trying to get it all done before they would get up. But I got so involved in the transcribing of thematic material that I would have them in-between my legs, grabbing at the headphones.

Smith: What themes did you pick and how did you choose them?

Brown: The main theme was *Walkin'*, not the original, but the Blackhawk, in-person gig. That was taken at about twice the tempo as the original, and it suited my purposes. The final third of *Pieces* is based on *Walkin'*. I even used the section after the statement of the theme as a launch point for an orchestral development. I would interject elements of *Porgy* and things like *The Theme*, as a breakdown for the closing statement. But *Walkin'* was the main developmental area.

I didn't just want to transcribe something for the NYJRC when Jimmy Owens asked me to do it. He told me I could use the big band, or any size ensemble I wished. I left that to Sy Johnson and Jimmy Heath and those that are really into that. I wanted something more original. I really bit off a big chunk.

Smith: Who do you favor in writing talents?

Brown: I have an unusual answer there. I can't say enough about some of the Hollywood cats like Dave Grusin. I don't get excited by all that he plays, but his movie things really say something. And Benny Golson, Oliver Nelson, Quincy Jones, of course, as far as jazz-oriented writers are concerned. But there are three guys that don't ordinarily write for jazz scoring. What they say is extremely valid. They are Billy Goldenberg, Jerry Goldsmith and Earl Hagen.

Smith: What's ahead?

Brown: A lot of people are really knocked out about doing records as a leader. I view myself as a middle-of-the-road trombone player who likes his family. I don't view myself as any kind of star, I'M NOT THAT. I don't delude myself, and others don't delude themselves, about the polls. All of a sudden, a middle-of-the-road trombone player who likes his family, won. It's great to win. Now I can go out and get all kinds of things, or try to, anyhow. I don't want to do anything unless I feel that I'm really ready. When I do a leader date, it will be because I feel like it. I'm not going to do a record just for its own sake. **db**

CITY SCENE

New York

The New York Jazz Repertory Company will present another concert May 9 at Carnegie Hall . . . **Dave Mathews Big Band** is at the Five Spot Mondays . . . Mikell's features **Joe Beck** with **Dave Sanborn** May 10-12 . . . Check out the likes of **Grady Tate** (singing) and **Arthur Prysock** at the Seafood Playhouse. They have also reinstituted Friday Luncheon jazz . . . St. James Infirmary is hot with **David Amram** Monday nights. Other nights feature **Hod O'Brien** . . . **Sam Rivers** is at his Studio Rivbea with guests like **Warren Smith** . . . Town Hall's Interludes (5:45 PM) Wednesdays has **Dorothy Donegan** May 14 and **Anais Nin** May 21 . . . New arrival Eddie Condon's has **(Red) Balaban and Cats** with **Vic Dickenson, Ed Polcer, Herb Hall, Jim Andrews, Cliff Leeman,** with sitters-in Tuesday nights. (Invitees only.) . . . The Bottom Line has been mixing their neat rock and pop bags with fine jazz regularly. Check the dailies for details . . . British-influenced Angry Squire has had **Cedar Walton** for a while . . . Boomer's has **Junior Mance** May 7-10 and again starting the 21st. **Sonny Fortune** helps fill the gap May 14-17 . . . **Count Basie** does a matinee at Fisher Hall May 11 at 3 PM . . . **Dick Wellstood** at the Cookery . . . The Village Vanguard will have **Elvin Jones** May 13 . . . **Bette Midler** still at the Minskoff thru May 10 with **Lionel Hampton** on the bill . . . Jazz Interactions' Lectures features **Archie Shepp** on **John Coltrane** May 9 at Hunter College. Call them at 212-866-6316 . . . **The Blackbyrds** are at Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y., May 10.

CHICAGO

The 40th Anniversary Season of Chicago's prestigious Ravinia Festival has announced just about all of its schedule for late June, July, August, and early September. A spectacular summer of music, theatre, and dance is on tap. The Chicago Symphony Orchestra will be the mainstay attraction, of course, under the baton of Musical Director **James Levine** and a host of guests. The **Joffrey Ballet** performs from August 19-24, and the following jazz-pop-folk acts have been signed: **Benny Goodman,** July 22; **Judy Collins,** July 25; **Linda Ronstadt,** July 29; **Barry Manilow,** July 31; **Ramsey Lewis,** August 1; **Tom Paxton** and **Bonnie Koloc,** August 5; **Kris Kristofferson and Rita Coolidge,** August 6; **America,** August 8; the **Carpenters,** August 12. August 13 will also feature a jazz, pop, or folk act, soon to be announced. In addition, **William Bolcom,** the noted pianist-composer, and **Joan Morris,** soprano, will present *A Survey Of Ragtime And The American Popular Song* on July 21. Music of Joplin, Gershwin, Porter, Kern, and diverse others will be performed. Sounds like a unique and interesting show. For complete details, call or write the Ravinia Festival in Chicago. Ravinia Park is located in Highland Park, about 30 miles north of the city, on Lake Michigan, and very accessible by all forms of transportation . . . The Jazz Medium at Rush and Delaware has a few special events lined up for the month: **Eddie Harris** comes in at mid-week May 6-10; **May-**

nard Ferguson and the band do two shows at 9 and 11 on May 11 only; **Hugh Masakela** and his Revue headline the room May 14-18; a series of Monday night concerts at the club winds up this month with **Eddie de Haas Quintet** featuring **Sonny Seals** and **Bobby Lewis** May 13; **Willie Pickens Trio** May 20; and a Gospel Night May 27 featuring **Louise Weaver** . . . **The Purple Circle Quartet** holds down the fort at Roy's Show Lounge on 95th Street every Tuesday night. The group features the vibes of **Paris Smith; Ken Hill** on tenor; **Donnell Lambert,** bass; and **Ben Montgomery,** drums.

San Francisco

An unprecendented, 36-program film series entitled *Music and the Movies* that includes many rare and previously unshown feature films, documentaries, newsreels and cartoons of blues, traditional jazz and folk, rock, big band, bebop, avant-garde, and classical musicians has been put together by Berkeley's Pacific Film Archive and the University Art Museum in association with radio station KSAN and *CITY* magazine. The series runs April 14-June 8 and films will be shown at various Bay Area locations. Net proceeds go to the Pacific Film Archive, which has consistently shown many rare and obscure films of every description that otherwise might not get shown in the Bay Area. For further information on individual programs, location, time, etc. contact The Pacific Film Archive (415)-642-1124 or *CITY* magazine (415)-362-3210 . . . The Institute of High Fidelity, representative organization of the hi-fi industry, hosted the 1975 High Fidelity Music Festival held April 2-5 in the Civic Center. In addition to exhibits, demonstrations, and seminars by over 40 hi-fi component manufacturers, **Dizzy Gillespie, Taj Mahal, the Alex Harvey Band, Styx** and **Kingfish** performed in concert. The highlight of the live performances was a surprise appearance by **Carmen MacRae,** who presented Dizzy with the Institute's Artist of The Year Award and sang two numbers with Dizzy and his group. Both Dizzy and Carmen were relaxed, inspired and in fine form. They received sensitive backing from **Earl May,** bass, **Mickey Roker,** drums, and **Al Gaffe,** guitar. **Aretha Franklin, Earl Scruggs** and **Elton John** were the other recipients of the Artist of the Year Awards . . . The University of California at Berkeley hosted the two-day Pacific Coast Collegiate Jazz Festival April 4-5, which included over 84 instrumental and vocal groups from colleges and universities in California and Oregon . . . A special appearance was made April 4 by the Southern California School Honor Jazz Ensemble, who represented the best of the high school jazz players. **Hubert Laws, Ed Shaughnessy, Freddie Hubbard, Sonny Rollins, Jamey Aebersold** and **Tom Hart** conducted afternoon clinics/seminars. Laws and Shaughnessy performed April 4 during the playoffs of top combos while Hubbard and Rollins performed April 5 during the big band playoffs . . . Trombonist **Julian Priester** and pianist **Mike Nock** were among the local recipients of grants from the National Endowment For The Arts and Humanities. Each received $3,000 . . . Among others, Bill Graham presented **Santana** and **Journey;** the **Average White Band** with **Etta James;** and the **Chambers Brothers** and **Chick Corea and Return to Forever,** with **Larry Coryell and the Eleventh House** all in concert during April.

Scheduled for May are **John Prine,** May 2 at the Berkeley Community Theatre (BCT); **Joe Walsh, Brian Auger,** and the **Strawbs,** May 2-3 at Winterland; **Jackson Browne** and **Phoebe Snow;** May 3 at BCT, **Weather Report** and **Billy Cobham,** May 4 at BCT; **John Denver,** May 7 at the Cow Palace; **The Hoodoo Rhythm Devils, Heartsfield, The Headhunters** and **Terry Garthwaite,** May 9 at Winterland; **Kraftwerk,** May 11 at BCT; and the **Jefferson Starship** and **Kingfish,** May 16-17 at Winterland . . . **Eddie Harris, Jimmy Witherspoon** (featuring the tasteful guitar of **Hollywood Fats**), **Betty Carter,** and the **Patrice Rushen Quartet** and **Grover Washington, Jr.** all checked into Keystone Korner during April. Scheduled May 1-11 is **McCoy Tyner.** KK will be closed for renovations May 12-26 which will enlarge the capacity of the club by 80 seats. On May 27-June 8, bright moments will be proliferated by **Rahsaan Roland Kirk and the Vibration Society** . . . Keystone Berkeley continues to present a diversity of local and national acts. Coming up in May are **Muddy Waters,** May 9-10; **New Riders of the Purple Sage,** May 16-17; **Sons of Champlin** and **Alice Stuart,** May 23-24; and **Clifton Chenier,** May 29-30 . . . The New Orleans House, the comfortable and once-thriving Berkeley night club that has presented some of the best blues and rock acts ever to evolve out of or pass through Berkeley will close at the end of June. Owner Kitty Griffin and the N.O.H. will be sorely missed.

KANSAS CITY

D(for"Dixie")lighted patrons continue to pack Pat O'Brien's in the Quay where drummer **Jim Buckley's Five on Fourth** offers an excellent era repertoire via players like **Gene Davis** (bass), **Ken Frederickson** (piano), **Bob Clark** (clarinet, tenor) and **Norm Davidson** (trumpet, trombone). Trumpeter **Don Carlton** and **Tommy Williams** (reeds) fill in twice weekly. Shows start at 9, Monday - Saturday . . . Speaking of riverfront revelry, the local mod squad seems summer set at Dirty McNasty's Boiler Room on Delaware. Futuristic **Jeff Gholson, Gary Helm,** and **David Joos** guarantee an evening of plugged-in ideation, skill, and finesse Wednesday - Saturday, 9 to 1 . . . **Greg Meise** gets down with his B-3, synthesizer, and funky blues vocals nightly at the Plaza Inn International out around K.C.I. Joining him weekends, guitar man **Danny Embry** and **Lynn Allred,** drums . . . On the intimate side, catch the Christy-Connor school stylings of pianist-vocalist **Sylvia Bell** at the Buttonwood Tree Inn on the Plaza . . . **The Dean Stringer Jazz Music Company** launched its spring-summer concert series at Unity Village Auditorium in Lees Summit April 24th. The unique septet (which includes composer-arranger Stringer on flute, soprano, and tenor; and legit-oriented spouse **Darlene** scatting rangy flute figures) can be enjoyed at U.V. every three weeks beginning May 15. If free-form celebrations and/or intricate structured expertise are your persuasion, they're tailor-made . . . K.C.'s own **Pat Metheny,** 20-year-old genius guitarist with **Gary Burton,** is recording his first album at ECM in New York the latter part of May. Pat's multitudinous following should flip at the fact that all cuts will be Metheny originals . . . Kudos to KMBC-TV's *Etc.* for continuing to showcase jazz.

on the road

GOLDEN EARRING
May 7, Palace Theatre, Dayton, Ohio
10, Folsom Field, Boulder, Colo.
11, McFarlin Auditorium, Dallas, Tex.

EDDIE HENDERSON
May 19, End of Beginn, Cotati, Ca.
31, Pasadena City College, Pasadena, Ca.

BOBBY HUTCHERSON
May 15, UCLA, Los Angeles, Ca

TRACY NELSON/MOTHER EARTH
June 15-16, Arizona '75 Music Festival, Chandler, Ariz.

RETURN TO FOREVER
May 9, Symphony Hall, Atlanta, Ga.
10, University of Florida, Gainesville, Fla.
11, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Fla.
12, Gussman Auditorium, Miami, Fla.
13, May Front Center, St. Petersburg, Fla.
16, New Canaan High School, New Canaan, Conn.
17, Constitution Hall, Washington, D.C.
24, Union College, Schenectedy, N.Y.
31, Carnegie Hall, New York, N.Y.

DEMIS ROUSSOS
May 6-11, Troubadour, Los Angeles, Ca.
14, Carnegie Hall, New York, N.Y.
15, Constitution Hall, Washington, D.C.
18, Auditorium Theater, Chicago, Ill.
19, Academy of Music, Philadelphia, Pa.
21, Harvard Square Theater, Cambridge, Mass.

MICHAEL WHITE
May 17, Claremont College, Claremont, Ca.

BOSTON

Coast-to-coast clubhopping has afforded **Sandy Berman** new perspectives on America's music that are reflected in the policy of his refurbished Beverly club. Says Sandy, "It looks like young America is ready to listen to all forms of jazz. I'll be trying to bridge the generation gap." Renamed Sandy's Jazz Revival and done up in Tenderloin Modern, the North Shore nightspot opened in mid-April with some startling combinations of young and old: venerable vocalist **Helen Humes** and smooth accompanist **Ellis Larkins** opposite swing-era youngbloods **Roomful of Blues. Roy Eldridge** teamed with another young R.I. band, **Hamilton Bates** and the **Blue Flames.** The antebellum, but hardly antiquated, **Legends of Jazz** did one night, ex-Rich trumpeter **Wayne Maus'** big-band did another. Matched pairs **Al Cohn/Zoot Sims** (thru May 5) and **Buddy Guy/Jr. Wells** (May 12-17) further indicate that Sandy's booking of veterans intends 100% excitement, zero nostalgia . . . A narrow bar with peeling 20-foot ceilings, ice-blue stage lights, no stage, well-graffitied john and reputation for late-night jamming: that's Michael's, an anomaly among clubs. Conservatory and Berklee students (and teachers) drop by after gigs and practice rooms fold and get all sorts of music moving. Among others, hear **Small Potatoes** (international sextet), **Robert Athas** (guitar plus three), **Band X** (sci-fi futurist jazz), **Charlie Beuchler** (Hammond organ plus three). 50¢ cover nightly til two (at least). Bring your ax . . . **Marian McPartland** holds sway at Copley Plaza's Merry-Go-Round, May 5-17. **Gary Burton's** intriguing group will be right at home at the Jazz Workshop, May 12-18 . . . **Roomful of Blues** meets the **Count Basie Orchestra** on May 9 at Windham College in Putney, Vt.

SOUTHWEST

PHOENIX: The **Joe Borland Trio** is at the Boojum Tree thru May, spelled on Sundays by the likes of *Latin Jazz Night* with the **Lou Garno Quintet** (May 4) and the **Bob Ravenscroft Trio** (May 11) . . . The Celebrity Theater brings in **Jackson Browne** on May 7 with **Phoebe Snow.** Two days later, on May 9, the Celebrity will host a fantastic twin bill with **Weather Report** and **Billy Cobham**. Will Cobham's drumatrics "eclipse" last months double-header of Al Mouzon and Lenny White? . . . Uncle Albert's Sunday night jazz program has the geometric sounds of **Angles** . . . May 8 will reportedly bring a repeat of last year's mini-festival at A.S.U. Arizona State and Mesa Community College jazz ensembles, both award winning big bands, will play . . . By the way, the '75 Summer Jazz Workshop at M.C.C. will be another great one. From June 8-12, 99 high school, college, and professional musicians can learn from the tutorings of **Grant Wolf's** faculty: **Supersax, Joe Pass, Don Rader, Bruce Fowler, Ladd McIntosh, Lanny Morgan, Pete Magadini, Don Bothwell, Bob Graham, Bob Ravenscroft.** The cost is $60 .

SAN DIEGO: The Back Door has had a good season with **Eddie Harris, Bobby Blue Bland, Hugh Masakela,** and **Grover Washington.** But, located on Cal State San Diego's premises, The Back Door will be closing while school is out, and there is a good chance that May's final concert will be **McCoy Tyner.** Call 286-6562 for details.

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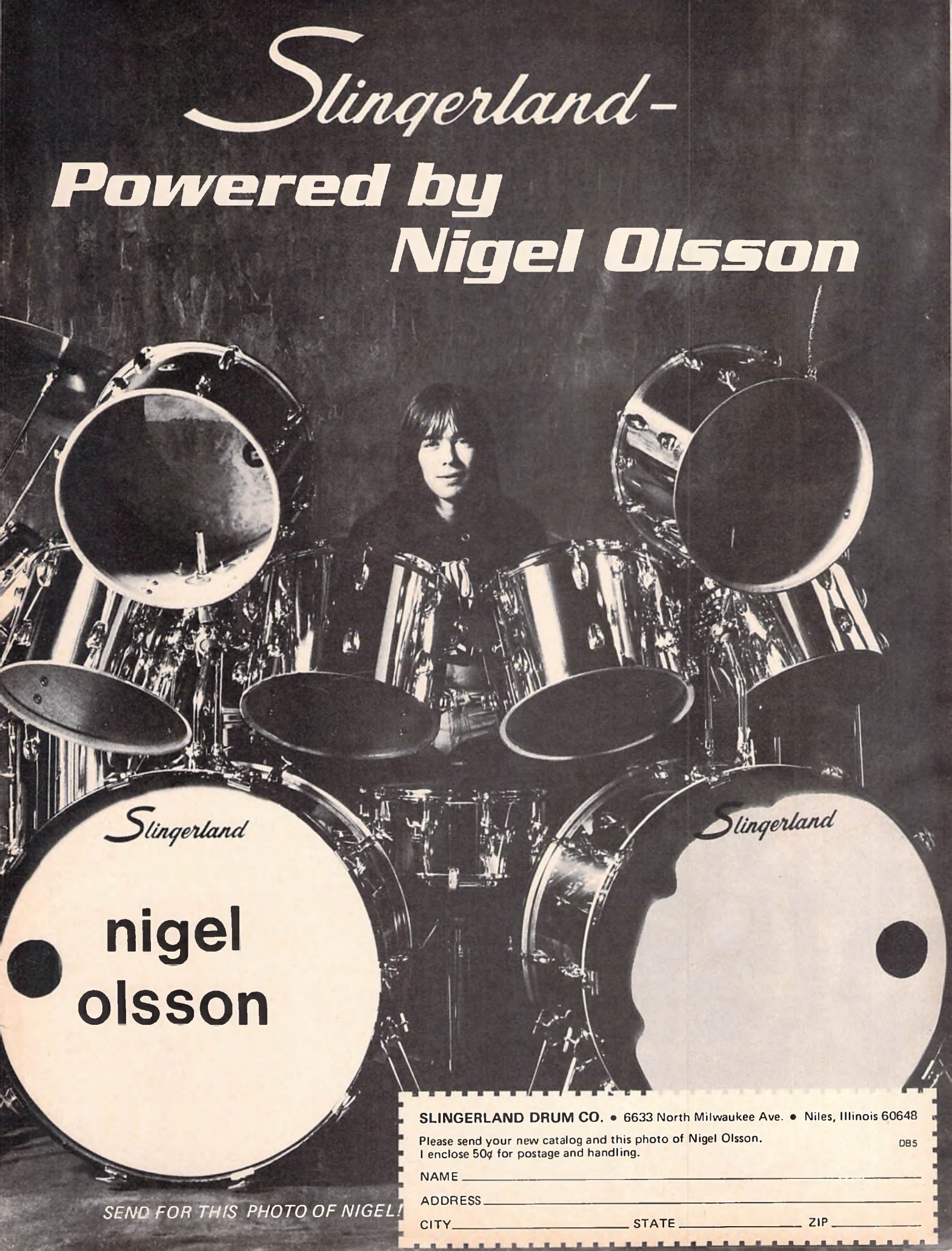

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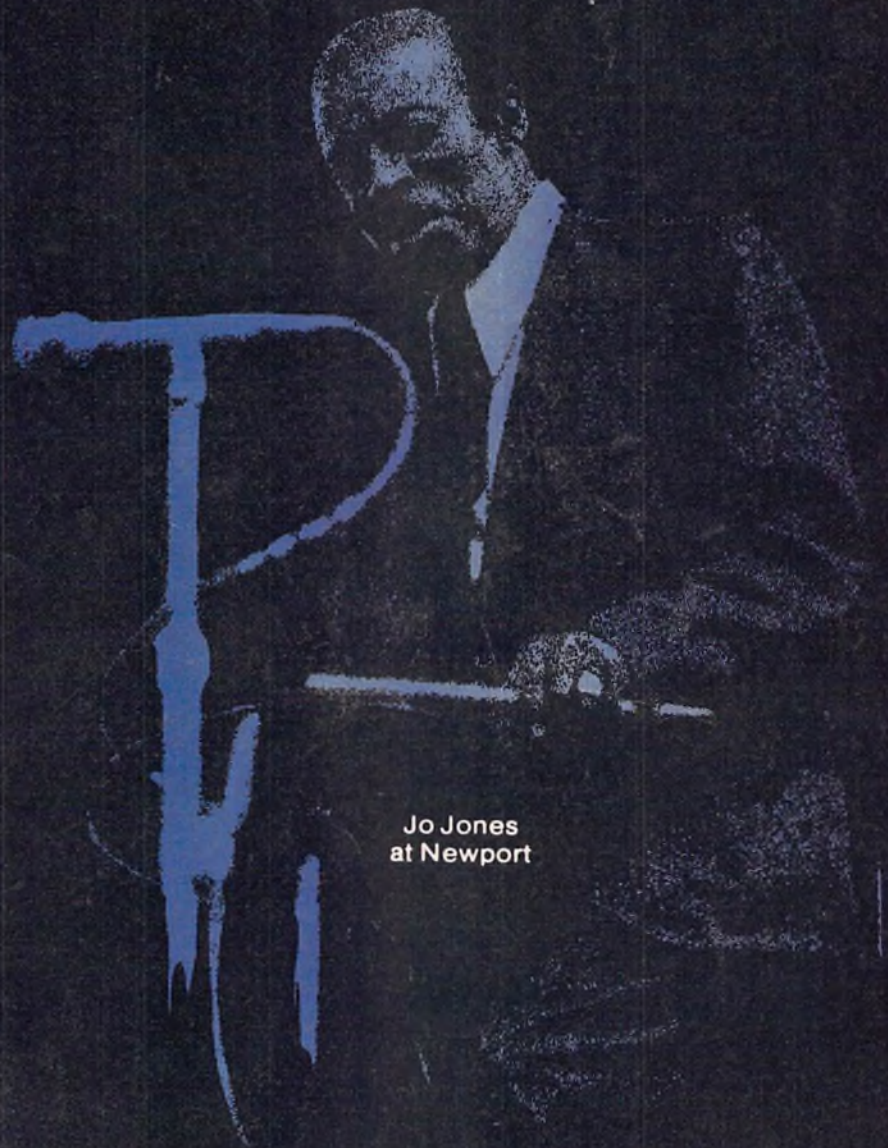

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