

JANUARY 15, 1976

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Contents

- 12 **Lonnie Liston Smith:** "Cosmic Head On Electronic Neck," by Arnold Jay Smith. Currently one of the hottest artists in all of jazzdom, this plugged-in keyboardist looks ahead to a glorious future of electrified sound.
- 14 **Urszula Dudziak:** "Vocalese Vistas Unlimited," by Herb Nolan. She can coo like a cuckoo, buzz like a mosquito, screech like a pterodactyl. And to top it all, she makes it musical as well as innovative.
- 16 **Eddie Harris:** "Plugged-In Pioneer Turns Up His Lungs," by Steven Marks. Some 40 albums back, Eddie first started experimenting with the possibilities of electronic sound. His mania for switched-on surprises shows no sign of diminishing.
- 18 **Inside the Soundstage/down beat Awards Show:** Pictorial highlights from the session to end all sessions.
- 20 **Record Reviews:** Bill Watrous; Cannonball Adderley; Anthony Braxton; Joe Beck; Herbie Hancock; Art Lande/Jan Garbarek; Phil Woods/Michel Legrand; Michel Legrand; Keith Jarrett; Gato Barbieri; Buddy Rich; Gary Bartz; David Sanborn; Toots And The Maytals; Red Norvo; Dollar Brand; Natalie Cole; Buddy Fite.
- 31 **Blindfold Test:** Cedar Walton.
- 32 **Profile:** Frank Strazzeri, by Herb Wong.
- 34 **Caught:** Visions of Power, by Bob Henschen; Toshiko Akiyoshi/Lew Tabackin Big Band, by Gary G. Vercelli; Julius Hemphill, by Gregory J. Marshall.
- 36 **How To Select Electronic Music Studio Equipment,** by Dr. William L. Fowler and Roy Pritts.
- 37 **Workshop:** Studio Equipment Recommendations, by Roy Pritts.
- 38 **Perspective:** The Fine Art Of Recording Fine Art, by Charles Mitchell.

Departments

- 6 First Chorus
- 8 Chords & Discords
- 9 News
- 41 1976-1976: It Happened
- 45 City Scene

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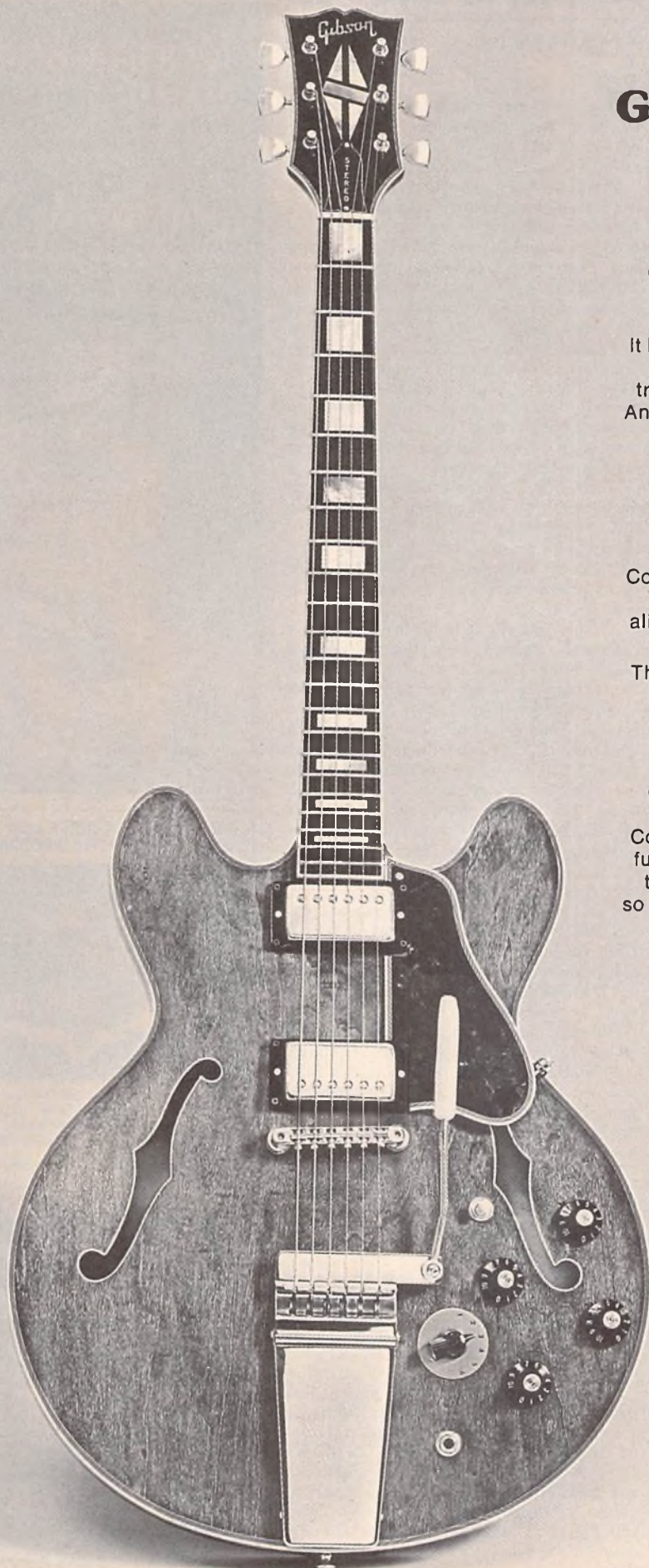
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by Quincy Jones

Looking back on it, so much of what has happened in my music is in the "how" and "why" I went to Berklee.

Early on, in Seattle, I began singing with a gospel group and started fooling around with a lot of instruments, but the



one I preferred was the trumpet. Clark Terry came to town and was a tremendous influence on me. And so was Ray Charles. He got me into arranging.

The time soon came to go academic and learn the fundamentals. I had earned two scholarships: to Seattle University and to Berklee. I went to Berklee because I wanted to be close to Bird. What I'm saying is that I needed two things: learn the fundamentals *and* keep to roots.

I took a train from Seattle to Chicago to Boston and got a little pad across the street from the Hi Hat where all the cats used to play. Stan Getz was across the street. Joe Gordon was working in town, and so was Charlie Mariano (he was going to Berklee, too) and Nat Pierce. I took ten subjects a day and gigged every night, making \$55 a week. It was beautiful! It was what I wanted to do: learning music all day, and playing all night.

So, it was in Boston, at Berklee, that I really learned the tools of my trade. It never was a mechanical, nuts and bolts thing. The atmosphere at Berklee made you apply theory to practice, and shape roots into written ideas. I learned by doing. I worked at Berklee the way I have worked since: concentrate on the music, knowing how far the players can extend your ideas, and not having to fumble for a tool in getting your idea on paper.

Some things do change: Berklee is now a full four year college with many more students and faculty; and the Hi Hat, my old pad, and the \$55 are long gone. But I know that what you get from Berklee hasn't changed. I can hear it in the music played by the best of the new studio players and jazz musicians. I recognize Berklee in the Keith Jarretts, the Gary Burtons, the Pat LaBarberas—my fellow alumni.

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the first chorus

By Charles Suber

Have you ever seen an electric sax play by itself? With that rhetorical one-liner, Eddie Harris lays out and puts down the electric vs. acoustic controversy.

The controversy—in jazz circles—began ten years ago when Harris recorded *The Tender Storm*, featuring himself on a Varitone-equipped saxophone. He thus committed two sins: a heretofore highly-regarded jazz player violated the acoustic tradition and, therefore, was no better than a degenerate rocker; *and* the album made money. The latter sin was particularly offensive to his critics but was one Harris was to happily commit again and again. The likelihood of Harris—and other electric turncoats—receiving absolution from the "jazz-is-dead" mourners depends on their discovery of a lost side of Lester Young playing a tenor theremin.

Meanwhile, Harris chortles all the way to the bank but not without some bitterness. He still resents being accused of sacrificing integrity to hit records. He wants it known that he takes his music seriously and that is for him a proper definition of a "serious" musician.

Another jazz player to hit the charts as an energized musician is keyboardist Lonnie Liston Smith. He seems to suffer no remorse by reaching "so many more people" with his Cosmic Echoes group. In fact, he delights in his new found ability to "bend notes like the horn players," "get quarter tones like the bass player," and not to be outdistanced by the guitar player and his array of little magic boxes. But like so many well-rooted jazz players, he sees no reason to abandon the acoustic instrument. He plays "both on all the records and live dates." He goes either way it takes to reach an audience.

Vocal musician Urszula Dudziak and her husband, violinist and Lyricon player Michal Urbaniak, have no qualms in using any suitable instruments to create jazz-inspired music. Dudziak uses her remarkable four-octave voice in a sometimes collaboration with a synthesizer, tape loops, and a variety of (acoustic) percussion instruments. Urbaniak uses his transducerized fiddle and that first-of-a-new-generation of musical instruments, the Lyricon. In this issue, Urbaniak discusses the reasons he has put aside his tenor for the Lyricon.

Wayne Shorter and Rahsaan Roland Kirk are also into the Lyricon but as an extra added attraction. They both used their regular horns on *down beat's* first TV Awards program (pages 18-19). This show—to be aired sometime early this year on various Public Broadcasting outlets—is a graphic illustration of how truly great musicians of varying backgrounds respect each other. Wires and such never get in the way of good music.

Next issue: dialogues with bassist Ray Brown, a shining jazz fixture; Alphonso Johnson, Weather Report's very electric bassist; frank-talking drummer Tony Williams; Dave Sanborn, an important saxophonist; and John Stubblefield, who does important things on various reeds for McCoy Tyner and others... plus several items of more than passing interest to contemporary musicians.

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discords

Cheers For Bunky

I'm writing in reference to a letter I saw in the Oct. 23 Chords & Discords. What a joy to hear a giant speak of another giant with so much beauty and modesty!

If I was asked who are my favorite alto players, I would say Charlie Parker, Cannonball Adderley, Phil Woods . . . and Bunky Green.
 Claudio Rodit Cambridge, Mass.

The Facts, Please

Regarding your review of Cesar Ascarrunz' new LP (db, 11/6): Unfortunate errors have a way of creeping into liner notes, to be perpetuated by unknowing record reviewers. In this case, the mistake is serious, because it has to do with one thing the

reviewer praised most highly—the arrangements. On this album, all arrangements were by Jules Rowell, not Teo Macero. In addition, although my name appears under personnel, I am not playing on the album.
 Mark Levine Oakland, Cal.

The Great DeMerle?

I have been most impressed by a young drummer named Les DeMerle, who plays in Harry James' big band. His limitless energy is unbelievable. If the so-called greats of today such as Cobham, Mouzon, and Lenny White would see some of the incredible solos taken by DeMerle, his speed finger control, wrist action, foot action, and overall technique, they would

throw their sticks away!
 Believe me, I have seen them all. Les DeMerle is the greatest young drummer of his generation in the world today.
 Sammy Ortiz Bronx, N.Y.

Eclipse Of The Sun

Ira Steingroot's five-star rating of Sun Ra's *Pathway To Unknown Worlds* (db, 11/6), most of which sounds like a high school band tuning up, points out a real problem for record buyers who try to use db ratings in these days when record stores refuse to let one listen before they buy. While some of this music can pass, most of it is nothing but negative tripe. Steingroot's statement that the "tones . . . are not restricted by the European concept of sequential notes" suggests that such sounds might be similar to music found in Asia or Africa. To my knowledge, such is not the case.

I am not complaining about this review just because the music is unfamiliar. I am suggesting that the sounds are negative, just as acid rock is negative . . . I wonder how many who bought *Pathways* on Mr. Steingroot's advice are happy.
 Doug Boggs Bloomington, Ind.

Mann Has No Shame

I've been a subscriber for three years, but a db collector for 15 years. I just can't understand why Herbie Mann albums are getting the shaft nowadays. (I refer to the review of *Waterbed* in the 11/20 issue.)

I feel that Mr. Mann is ever so close to being a universal musician, as is indicated by such albums as *London Underground*, *Impressions Of The Middle East*, *Mississippi Gambler*, *Live At Newport*, *In Sweden*, and *Latin Fever*.

Who is it that said "music is the healing force of the universe?" Keep on keeping on, Herbie, you have nothing to be ashamed of. Keep your head to the sky and maybe your next album will be entitled *Herbie Mann—Live At The Jupiter Bank*.
 Johnny L. Cunningham Camden, Ark.

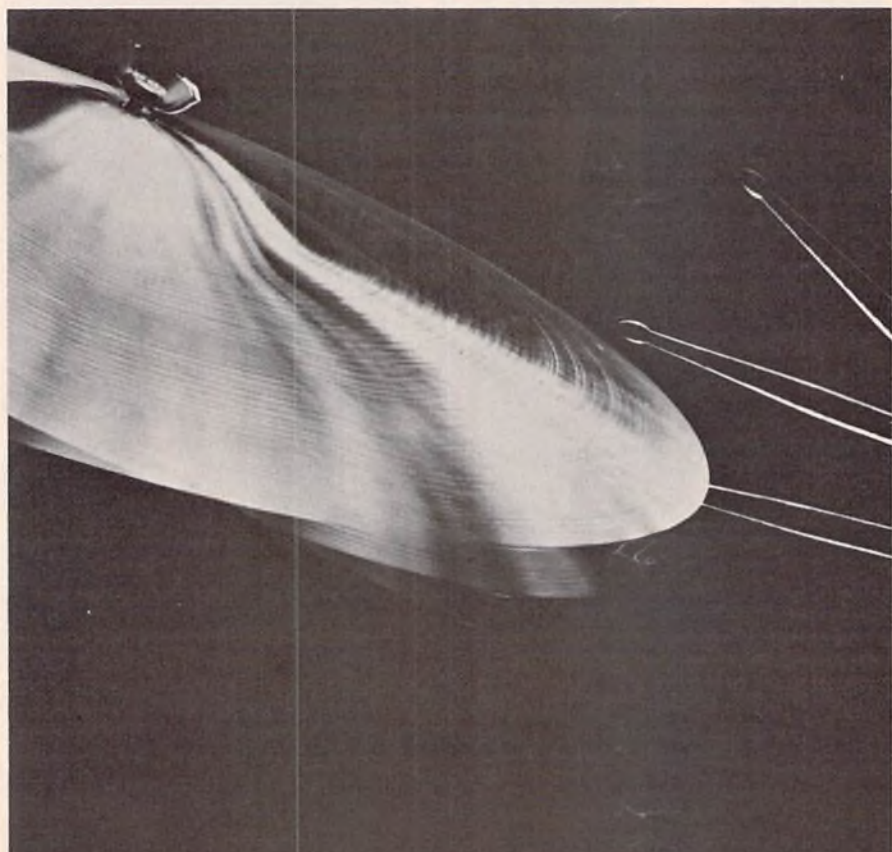
Ron's Rumpus

This letter is directed to Ron Cole (Chords, 11/6), who must think he is an authority on trumpet.

For one thing, Ronald, try digging a little deeper. I can show you trumpet solos by Maynard Ferguson back in '59 that would make you and your trumpet masters croak.
 M. F. Freak Rochester, N.Y.

Ron Cole said that he used to like Maynard Ferguson "before he grew up." He further proves his ignorance by stating that Miles Davis, Eddie Henderson, Randy Brecker, and Woody Shaw are much better and more creative.

Well, Cole must either be a patient in a padded room, or a real tin eared man. If he could hear, he would never have made such outrageous statements. I agree that high notes are not everything. But what Maynard has forgotten, not only on the trumpet, but in the whole music spectrum, the people he mentioned will never even know.
 Michael Hammond Brooklyn, N.Y.



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THE ORACLE SPEAKETH



Dr. Nostradamus honks in the New Year

CHICAGO—Feeling somewhat bypassed by all the interest in astrological and supernatural prognostication, we recently decided to consult with famed soothsayer Dr. Esautaw Nostradamus in order to prepare ourselves for events of the upcoming year.

Dr. Nostradamus, only recently returned from an around-the-world jazz cruise on the steamship Flying Deutschmann, was gracious enough to provide us with this hawk's-eye view of his predictions for '76.

Look for a famous **European-born electric keyboardist** to fly to **Copenhagen** for a super-secret medical operation, which will attempt to convert the gentleman-in-question into a human electrical outlet whereby he can plug himself in at will. The first of his *Plugged-In* albums will be released (on **Columbia**) before next fall.

A team of animal researchers from a **West Coast university** will discover that the **armadillo** is one of the most musical of animals. The hard-core symphonies will be recorded live in the New Mexico desert, the eerie music being produced by the armie's calculated rubbing of its body over various rock, cacti, and cougar droppings.

A former editor of **down beat** will be retained to head a presidential commission geared to jazzing up *The Star Spangled Banner* and will promptly be fired when he retains the services of the "red-tainted" **Intergalactic Research Arkestra**.

Vocalist **Mel Torme** will have a giant hit record which breaks big in the nation's discotheques. Mortified by his mass acceptance, Torme will enter a Tibetan monastery to search for the eternal chord.

Medical researchers will conclude that playing of the **harmonica** is responsible for many cases of cerebral hemorrhage, resulting in the world's largest harmonica manufacturer merging with a giant Western European munitions maker.

Japanese jazz artists will make a concerted assault on the American market. The "**Kamikaze**" **Sound** will become an overnight success, causing ripples of paranoia among **Blue Note** and **Fantasy** executives.

The **Buddy Rich-Stan Kenton RAIN Crusade** (Rid America of Idiomatic Nashville) will pick up unprecedented support from widespread elements of the American populace, eventually moving into the political arena. Numerous newspaper articles will appear, linking **RAIN** to such organizations as the **Ku Klux Klan**, the **CIA**, and the **Illuminati**.

A **Chicago-based jazz periodical** will be nominated for a **Pulitzer** as the result of its revealing centerfold shots of various music luminaries.

Alphonse Mouzon will be signed to play the leading role in the life of the late Haitian political chief, **Papa Doc Duvalier**. The flick will spawn a new cinematic genre, to be known as **skin/sorcery**, with drummers becoming the hottest fad in moviedom.

The aforementioned steamship, the **S.S. Flying Deutschmann**, will serve as the host for a gala one-way jazz cruise to the **Bermuda Triangle**. Our intrepid New York correspondent will cover the extravaganza for **db**, up until the briny end.

If everything happens according to the good Dr. N., we should be in for quite a year. Stay glued to these pages for all bull-etins.

Woodstock Wonderland

WOODSTOCK—The Creative Music Studio of Woodstock, New York, is offering a ten-day workshop/concert program from Dec. 27-Jan. 5 at its Mount Tremper campus. Activities will include group and orchestra workshops for all instruments, rehearsals, discussions, and live recordings by artists and students.

Participating artists will include Ingrid, Karl Berger, Dave Holland, Kalaparusha Ahrach Difda, Leroy Jenkins, Garrett List, Stu Martin, Bob Moses, Tom Schmidt, Peter Warren, Charlie Mariano, and Sara Cook.

The Creative Music Studio's regular winter session will begin January 19 and continues on for eight weeks.

Euro Fed Expands

NANCY, FRANCE—The second General Assembly of the European Jazz Federation, which took place during the Nancy Jazz Pulsations, has adopted a decision to change its name to International Jazz Federation. This step follows the recommendation by the UNESCO International Music Council in which the Federation is the sole representative of jazz. It also sanctions the real state of affairs with the membership in the countries like Australia, Japan, and the USA. The Assembly examined the question of its headquarters, at present in Vienna. In view of general lack of interest and support from Austrian authorities and jazz circles, it was resolved to consider the offers from other countries, some of which have already submitted official applications. The elected Board remains virtually unchanged, Lance Tschannen as President, Jan Byrczek, the Sec. Gen. John Carrico, the

founder/coordinator of the Reno, Nevada educational festival is the first non-European member to join the Board.

As for the Pulsations fest, it generally rose to the expectations with the usual ups and downs. The event was strongly marked by a quarrel between the organizers and Norman Granz which resulted in one and a half hour delay of a Pablo Jam Session and the cancellation of the last day's concert which was to feature Count and Ella. The organizers announced their plans to take legal action against Granz for breaking the contract. The late arrival of Archie Shepp was another disappointment for the public. Among the highlights, we should mention *Stanislas Pulsative Suite*, a work by Michel Colomier especially commissioned for the festival and performed by the artists from various countries participating in the Pulsations.

JAZZ RADIO BASH

NEW YORK—The Citizens Committee to Save Jazz Radio in New York recently held the first of a series of concerts to raise funds for the legal battle to keep the 22 hour jazz format of WRVR-FM. The bash was held at the Village Gate, in both the upstairs and cellar club. There was room enough for approximately 900 patrons in both areas combined; CCSJR packed 1200 into the seats and bar areas, while another 300 entered as some departed. There were another 1500 outside, ringing the square block that surrounds the Gate.

Meanwhile, the star-packed club rocked with the likes of David Amram, Kenny Barron, George Benson, Randy Brecker, Ron Carter, Stanley Clarke, Billy Cobham, Larry Coryell, Roland Hanna, Bobbi Humphrey, Jimmy Owens, Lonnie Liston Smith, Warren Smith, comic David Smyrl, Billy Taylor, Michal Urbaniak, Frank Wess, Chris White, Buster Williams, Richard Wyands, and more names than

space permits. On into the night and the next morning (we split amid floods in the streets at about 4:30 a.m.) they played. Bassist Dr. Lyn Christie worked both rooms for various groups, as did percussionist Arman Habernian. Wyands, too, backed singers (Stella Marrs), as well as hornmen. Amram's cohorts (Ben Riley, Taylor, Brecker, Carter and Coryell, who, incidentally started and ended the night's noodlings,) brought the composer to tears of joy. Clasping Billy Cobham for the up-tenth time, Amram thanked Billy for allowing him to appear on the same program. "I don't remember having played this well. You had to reach way back for your best on this gig," David said.

There will be other concerts in and around New York City to aid the cause. By the time you read this, there will have been performances at Gerald's in Cambria Heights, Queens, and at a club in Newark, N.J. A Latin night has been planned for the Gate.

L.A. Jazz Week

LOS ANGELES—Los Angeles' Second Annual Jazz Week was proclaimed by civic officials Dec. 1 at dedication ceremonies of the new downtown Los Angeles Mall, bounded by Aliso, First, Los Angeles and Main Sts., where free noon concerts were presented daily.

The Red Holloway Quintet featuring Oscar Brashear kicked off the week's jazz activities opening day. The Tom Vaughn Trio, singer Ernie Andrews and his trio, the Frank Rosolino Quintet and the Gerald Wilson Big Band were heard in concert from 12-2 p.m., Dec. 2, 3, 4 and 5, respectively.

Sound systems were fed into the Mall's spectacular Triforium, a 60-ft. high structure incorporating three giant speakers and glass prisms with colored lights, which are activated by audio-electrical impulses. The Triforium was designed by noted sculptor Joseph Young, on commission by the city.

As with Los Angeles' 1974 Jazz Week, this year's observance was instigated by musician-actor-former KBCA deejay Chuck Niles, who booked the artists and co-produced the 1975 event with Eli Fish of Intercomm Public Relations Associates, Inc.

Summer Jazz Rundown

CHICAGO—The 18th annual Summer Jazz Clinics will run ten one-week sessions in 1976. Separate "Big Band" and "Combo/Improvisation" clinics are scheduled for Wichita State U., Miami U., and U. of Northern Illinois. Big band sessions will be held at Fort Qu'Appelle (Saskatchewan), Texas Lutheran College, and Mt. Hood College.

A new location for a Combo/Improvisation clinic will be State U. College at Brockport, N.Y.

As usual, the faculty for the clinics will include top flight jazz players and educators (see db, Oct. 23, 1975). Some of the big band specialists are: Rich Mat-

teson (Director), Wes Hensel, John LaPorta, Lou Marini, Roger Pemberton, Ed Soph, Dom Spera, Bill Stapleton, and Phil Wilson. The combo/improvisors include: Jamey Aebersold (Director), David Baker, Dan Haerle, Jack Peterson, Rufus Reid, and Joe Henderson (with Woody Shaw, Horacee Arnold, and Eddie Gomez). Most of the sessions will feature guest performers/clinicians, curriculum for music educators, and undergraduate college course credit. For complete information, write Ken Morris, President, SJC, P.O. Box 221, South Bend, Ind., 46624.

potpourri

Keyboardist **Cy Coleman**, remembered for his tinkly version of *The Playboy Theme*, has been converted to discoism and is rumored to be preparing a funk-based album.

Blues guitarist **Albert King** has been signed by the fledgling RCA-custom label, **Utopia**.

Record reviewer **John McDonough** makes this revised statement concerning his 11/20 *Jammin' With Lester* appraisal: "In reviewing *Jammin'* I was critical of its poor pressing work. I've now learned this was true only of the first pressing. A second pressing subsequent to my review completely corrected

the problem. I now amend my rating to *****."

Composer/educator **Billy Taylor** recently received a combined master's degree and educational doctorate from the U. of Massachusetts in Amherst. It took five years for Billy to become Dr. Taylor, a project capped by his dissertation, *The History And Development Of Jazz Piano: A New Perspective For Educators*.

Mike Vax, the current trumpet player with the **Dukes of Dixieland**, is doubling as a faculty member at New Orleans' Loyola University.

Remember that gift offer of American music to the nation's schools by **JCPenney**? Well, to date, more than 24,000 schools in 50 states and Puerto Rico have received the **Bicentennial Musical Celebration**: scores and parts to 35 selections specially arranged for orchestra, band, chorus, and jazz ensemble. In addition, several thousand Celebration sets have been presented to community music ensembles and public libraries. The United States Information Agency has shipped 85 complete sets—70 minutes of performance—to its overseas libraries. None of the music is available from commercial sources. Schools which have not yet requested the Celebration

music should contact the manager of their nearest JCPenney store.

William Russo, the composer/author and former jazz trombonist and leader, is heading back to Chicago about Feb. 15 to resume his place on the music faculty of Columbia College. Bill has been out in San Francisco since March of '75, serving in the unique capacity of Artist & Composer in Residence for the City and County of San Francisco. While all this has been happening, the U. of Chicago Press has published a paper edition of his well-known text, *Composing For The Jazz Orchestra*. db

DEBATE RAGES ON

NEW YORK—The controversy over the sale of radio station WRVR took on a dull tarnish as the waters were muddied by two separate incidents.

It was reported that the World Jazz Association has withdrawn its initial support of the Citizens Committee to Save Jazz Radio. In an interview with executive director Paul Tanner, it was learned that an early story that WJA supported the Committee was pounced upon by other radio stations across the country. The reasoning was simply that WRVR was not really *all* jazz to begin with, what with a dilution of old-time radio broadcasts and news programming.

"The other stations exclaimed that while they were struggling, WRVR was getting the treatment from us," Tanner said. "They were upset that WRVR played *The Lone Ranger* and the like, and wasn't really all jazz anyhow. So why should we opt to keep it *all* jazz."

Tanner also noted that it is not WJA's objective to force programmers into jazz, just to make it profitable so that they would want to play the music for its own sake.

"WJA got the impression that the New York people did not even want our support," he went on. "We felt that we were being asked politely to 'stay in our own backyard.' We are interested in getting more jazz on the air but not by alienating anyone."

Spokespersons for the Citizens Committee have been disturbed by the attitude of the WJA.

"The impression that CCSJR actively sought the support of WJA is false, says CCSJR president David Bailey. "It is welcome, but not solicited."

Bailey feels that WJA should not merely support any group that wants to block a sale of a station, but should support radio jazz.

"If WRVR goes under, and it surely must if the sale goes through, then how can other radio stations have confidence that it will not

happen to them?" was the question in Cobi Narita's mind. Ms. Narita is treasurer of the Committee.

Both Bailey and Narita feel that the pronouncement of WJA's withdrawal of support was unnecessary. "If the WJA is not interested in a listeners' effort, then they should have kept silent," Bailey went on. "We are interested in the preservation and propagation of America's classical music. That should be their goal, too. If the WJA were more concerned about the well-being of the artists and the listeners, rather than with the commercial entities, then the WRVR sale would have been of paramount importance. The diminution of *any* amount of jazz programming on *any* radio station should require WJA's unsolicited and unbridled support."

In another development, a pair of letters has crossed this reporter's desk, both over the signature of Roy Innis, national director of the Congress Of Racial Equality.

The first letter is in praise of WRVR and details why it should remain a separate entity and not fall under the aegis of Sonderling Broadcasting. The letter ran to a page-and-a-half and closed with the following paragraph:

"On the eve of the American Bicentennial, we would hope that the FCC would refuse to approve the transfer of WRVR-FM to the Sonderling Corp. and thereby uphold its pledge to serve the interests of the people . . ."

In a mysterious about-face, Innis' next letter to the FCC refuted all of that by stating, "My experience with Sonderling . . . its President, its staff and Radio Station WWRL (Sonderling's AM outlet in New York) has been a most rewarding and pleasant one . . ."

"I fully endorse the proposed transfer of license . . . because . . . I feel confident that Sonderling will operate another Radio Station in NYC in the public interest."

All of this was in the course of one month and not even CORE has heretofore been able to boast of such rapid turnabouts.

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Lonnie Liston Smith

COSMIC HEAD ON ELECTRONIC NECK

by arnold jay smith

Until April of 1975, he was Lonnie Liston Smith, jazz artist. He had played with Miles Davis and Pharoah Sanders, and was part of a house rhythm section for Bob Thiele's Flying Dutchman label. He didn't have a hit record or a manager. He was well-recorded and well-respected among his peers. *Expansions* changed much of that. That album caught fire. *Billboard* had the LP on every list—pop, r&b, jazz—a most unusual occurrence.

"I'm finding more out about this industry because of all that," Lonnie says. "I thought all you had to do was just play."

Wherever his band is playing—and he has some good venues—there are RCA's publicity staffs ready to welcome him into that city. "They'll get me on radio shows, have press down to the club, or whatever. It's a warm feeling when you get into a strange town."

Here, then is a conversation from Hitsville.

Ajay: Were you always a keyboard player?

Lonnie: My father was a singer; he's still active, by the way. We all gravitated toward that. I sing some backgrounds, but it's my brother Donald who has that beautiful tenor that I've always admired. I would be embarrassed to call myself a singer. I played some tuba in the marching band in high school.

Ajay: What was your first experience with other keyboards than acoustic piano?

Lonnie: I was doing a date with Pharoah Sanders in L.A. and I noticed a Rhodes sitting in the corner. While the other guys were setting up I started to finger and noodle on the keyboard. I liked the touch. I had played other electronic instruments but the action was nothing like the piano. This was as close as any I'd played. I liked all those knobs and the different effects I could get with them.

Ajay: Do you approach the instrument differently?

Lonnie: Of course. The acoustic piano can take a lot of energy, the electronic instruments can be very delicate. You can get very

12 □ down beat



VERYL C. OAKLAND

percussive on acoustic—melodic, sensitive—but electronic can't take much pounding.

Ajay: Do you find that the electric's ability to sustain notes without pedaling enhances what you want to do with the music?

Lonnie: I like to deal with space. Time is "busy, busy"—running out of it, filling it in. But with electronics you can deal with spacial aspects. I can color it like I want, because it's just hanging out there waiting. I use some of the stops like I would the middle pedal on a grand, to hold certain notes while I add to them, even thinking about new things I am going to add. I always admired horn players' ability to bend notes. Bass players can get quarter-tones. The piano is just what it is.

Pharoah was trying to develop new techniques with his horn and we would work at trying to get some coordination with the piano. He just had to or he would be off by himself. He felt he had to get the piano to at least imply that same sound. With electronics, you really bend notes, and sustain exactly what notes you want, even a series of notes or chords. This, at last, was my answer to what hornmen were doing. Guitarists could not now do any more than I could do with the keyboard.

Ajay: I caught you gesticulating with your elbows and wrists. Did you pick that up from anyone in particular? It's not new; Thelonious Monk has been doing it for years.

Lonnie: No, not any one. I just can get more out of a chord when I spread my hand over the wrist or the elbow. I don't hit random notes; but additional ones that fit the framework of the piece.

Ajay: Do you ever feel that you want to go back to acoustic piano?

Lonnie: I play both on all the records and my live dates. I go either way. With acoustic piano, I can be percussive, melodic. I can even go inside the strings. I look upon it as an

orchestra. I can do so much with it.

(There are no personnel listings on Miles Davis' *On The Corner*, but there were three electric keyboards on the date. Herbie Hancock, Harold J. Williams, and Lonnie Liston Smith. That was also the first time Lonnie heard organ in Miles' electronic context.)

Lonnie: The Yamaha was in the studio complete with a wahwah pedal. I had never used any of that before. I was waiting for the Rhodes, but Miles said, "Here, this is yours." So I played it and enjoyed the whole set. There were no tunes, nothing written. Everything was spontaneous. I never heard anybody play it (the Yamaha) before. All those knobs and everything. This was the first time I'd ever laid eyes on one, let alone played it. Miles had only just started playing it himself. Before I came with Miles, Herbie was using electric piano, but I never paid much attention to it.

Ajay: With the three of you on the same date, was it competitive?

Lonnie: That was a whole trip. That would be your natural first instinct. But anybody can do that. If you are a sensitive artist and musician you can be creative and get some importance out of that, both for the music and for yourself. It was one hell of a challenge. I was used to one keyboard, doing the whole thing. Now I had to stop and listen and lay back while the other guy gets his. As far as having the other guy comp for me, it did hamper my improvising somewhat. I mean, Herbie might be playing chords and I would have to listen and then only lay a fabric on top of it.

You had to be careful not to play what already was played. You really had to listen and invent as you were listening, otherwise you would copy what you heard. You often do that unconsciously, anyhow. You might play a lick only to hear it on playback and realize you didn't invent that at all. You

heard someone else do it somewhere. When you're playing, you can't always remember that. Especially when the sessions are free, like Miles' were.

Ajay: When you were with Miles, was the flow of ideas from him to you as a sideman, or did he accept what you did and incorporate that into what he eventually sent back to the group?

Lonnie: Working with Miles was like putting icing on the cake. He's so loose, and with all that knowledge, it's hard to say if there was an interchange. It would be presumptuous of me to suggest that he used some of my ideas. But when you're in that loose a situation I guess the concepts have to be free-flowing ideas and interchangeable. He could sense something and go into a new direction. He was using two guitars, the organ, a sitar, a tabla player, drums, bass and congas. Dave Liebman was playing soprano, too. Each night was spontaneous; we had a general outline, but that was it. He'd lay out a melodic line and you were on your own to create.

Ajay: The dates with Leon Thomas and Pharoah Sanders were very tight. Everybody seemed to sense what the others were into. How did that work with a vocalist? Where did it take you?

Lonnie: Leon was another instrument. Besides playing percussion, and that yodel of his, we just came together naturally. Pharoah would be trying new things with the tenor and I was trying to get into his head and chops. I would hear him do things that I can do today.

Of course, I use other electronic items. There's the string ensemble, the Clavinet and the synthesizer. You can get flute and oboe sounds. It's up to your imagination. The Clavinet has a very funky, raw sound. You can only use it as an adjunct to other instruments. You can't play it alone. There's not enough room either on the keyboard or in the mechanism to get full-toned chords out of it. So it's basically a melodic-lined instrument. I'm thinking of putting some hookups to it to get some more colors. You know how the rhythm guitar players get some oboe-funky sounds. You can do it with the clavinet.

Ajay: Some of the newer electronic inventions, like the Arp String Ensemble, have been accused of being too slow by some who play it. Are they inexperienced, or is it a problem?

Lonnie: Both. It's slow to the inexperienced. It takes a second or so for the sound to reach the intensity you desire. What you have to do is think ahead. Where do you want to use it? How many bars does it take to build to the sound you want? Do a little arithmetic and you'll come up with the right time to press the keys. As I said before, when you approach electronic instruments, you've got to get a new set of rules. Your whole perspective has to change. It's putting your head on a hinge. Turn this way and you get one idea; turn that way and it's another.

Ajay: You're telling me that it's a controlled energy that you unleash at your discretion.

Lonnie: That's good, man. Yeah.

Ajay: Is there a "proper" way to record a multitude of electronic instruments such as what Les McCann did on *Layers*?

Lonnie: I like it in Quad. You can hear the entire "orchestra," an electronic orchestra. But other times you can get a better effect with plain stereo, just two channels. Why is it necessary to split up a clavinet four ways? It

can't handle more than one, maybe two. If you divide a synthesizer up, you had better have more than just a few different instrumental sounds. A synthesizer has been an orchestra on some recordings; the more channels you have in an orchestra, the more enjoyment you get out of hearing *all* of it. What the artist has to do is realize what he is and how far the development of his instrument has come. He has to be aware of what it is he is doing and how it fits the sound systems that he's going to be heard on. If you can't hear it, it's self-defeating. Take *Expansions*. All we did was slow it down some. Program it a little bit more.

Ajay: Sounds like you're toying with the space thing again.

Lonnie: I never "toy" with that. It's very important to my music. Up to now everybody's been dealing with time. Man has to use time instead of the other way 'round. That's the course (not *cause*) of heart attacks, ulcers—time eating on man. When you're dealing with space, you have much more to deal with, much more warmth. Time is cold.

SELECTED SMITH DISCOGRAPHY

Featured

VISIONS OF A NEW WORLD—Flying Dutchman BDL11196
EXPANSIONS—Flying Dutchman BDL10934
COSMIC FUNK—Flying Dutchman BDL10591
ASTRAL TRAVELING—Flying Dutchman FD10163 with Miles Davis
ON THE CORNER—Columbia KC31906
BIG FUN—Columbia PG32866 with Gato Barbieri
BOLIVIA—Flying Dutchman 10158
UNDER FIRE—Flying Dutchman 10156
EL PAMPERO—Flying Dutchman 10151
FENIX—Flying Dutchman 10144
THE THIRD WORLD—Flying Dutchman 10117 with Pharoah Sanders
SUMMUM BUKMUN UMYUN—Impulse S9199
THEMBI—Impulse S9206
JEWELS OF THOUGHT—Impulse S9190
KARMA—Impulse S9181 with Rahsaan Roland Kirk
HERE COMES THE WHISTLEMAN—Atlantic S3007 (out of print)
PLEASE DON'T CRY BEAUTIFUL EDITH—Atlantic (no number available; out of print)

Space gives people a chance to think, relax, get their thoughts and ideas together. Time keeps you on edge.

Ajay: Is human energy going to take a back seat to electric energy, and are you antagonized by that idea?

Lonnie: There are all kinds of energy. Even paintings convey energy. I see peacefulness but with all that other energy to deal with also. You can get that from acoustic too. I was listening to Oscar Peterson and a trio. He was dealin' and that was energy. I'd like to do that one time. Sometimes I play just one note on acoustic piano. I'd get "time" responses like, "You didn't listen." "What are you going to do with it now that it's there?" "He's not saying anything." But it's what you put on that one note, color it, build around it. Lots of composers and musicians play few notes. Stravinsky built movements around one note. Ahmad Jamal was one of the most sparing pianists when he had Vernel Fournier and Israel Crosby with him. Ahmad put more of something into his playing. The more he left

out, the more he left a feeling of, "You know what I mean."

Ajay: Can that interplay between musicians happen again? Or is the subtlety of acoustic texture lost in electronics?

Lonnie: I definitely believe it can. I'm going to get to the point where I'll be so subtle and at the same time have so much high intensity on another level that it will be phenomenal. I want to use strings, big orchestrations with people like Bob James, people who know how to use the soloists while not losing their individuality.

Ajay: What about the way percussionists take over?

Lonnie: I don't like no beaters, man! Drummers, too, have to learn all the roots. Brushes are so subtle. They should learn all the techniques. Else how would they use what they don't even know exists? Mallet work is beautiful.

Ajay: During what period were you with Rahsaan Roland Kirk?

Lonnie: 1965-66. That was a challenge, too. He really dealt with the roots. He'd come on a gig with a clarinet and you said, "Here we go; back to Dixieland." The idea was to play the music and see what came out. No attitude. Just play. I even played stride piano. If you play one way, you stay one way. That's not my way. You can't limit yourself. An "electric" piano player cannot grow if he's going to limit himself to that one keyboard. Think of all the facility he's missing out on by not hitting the different actions of a soundbox. Even different acoustics have different feelings to them. Steinway differs from Yamaha, which differs from Baldwin, which differs from Wurlitzer.

Ajay: I know Yamaha makes acoustic boxes, but Wurlitzer?

Lonnie: Well, not really an acoustic. But the electric piano that Wurlitzer makes (do they still make them?) has actual action and pressure on the fingers. The process is that the hammers hit a tuning fork that, in turn, turns the vibrations into electrical impulses that produce the sound you hear.

Ajay: How did the current group come about?

Lonnie: The original Cosmic Echoes included Stanley Clarke, Mtume, Norman Connors, George Bryan and Charles Sullivan. We did a TV show called *Jazz Set* and someone noticed. The new group features Donald on flute and vocals with a lot of electronic colors behind. *Expansions* just took off as if it's what we were doing all the time. It was that natural to happen.

Which brings me to another point. My whole thing right now is that there is a oneness running through life. I want to bridge all the gaps through music. The idea that people will say, "I don't want to go hear this, or that," is not what I'm into. The idea that *Expansions* hit all those charts excites me, makes me feel that I've reached so many more people than if I stayed in one category. The artist has a responsibility to the people. I want to cover the whole field without losing the artistic part of it. I need some good "roadies," more electronic instruments, and I have to play more concerts that are conducive to my music—acoustic, too. Later, I may branch out to movie scores or whatever. But right now the music is what's important. Too much all at once brings ego into it. Ego will trip you right up; keep your head on your neck at all times. db

Urszula Dudziak:

Vocales Vistas

Unlimited

by Herb Nolan



HERB NOLAN

The morning-after daily press made it clear that Urszula Dudziak, the girl from Poland with a name frequently misspelled and fumbled by the tongue, had bounced her concert audience on its cerebral tail. It was like she had opened a tiny cosmic window revealing the remarkable, sometimes bizarre, wonders of her voice and the folks floated in and over Urszula's four octave vocal soundscape with its lyricless myriad of scats, squawks, groans, screeches, mellow harmonies, subtle counterpoint and wild improvisations, finally tumbling back to their padded theater seats before leaping up with a standing ovation.

"Imagine Yma Sumac on an acid trip," one writer had written after a show featuring Weather Report and Michal Urbaniak's Fusion. (He also said that she resembled English actress Maggie Smith.) "It's something you have to see and hear to believe . . . a vocal performance unlike anything ever experienced."

Later Urszula would study that review intently, with little comment but certainly pleased. "Who's Maggie Smith?" she'd say fi-

nally, looking perplexed.

In the two years since Ms. Dudziak arrived in the United States with her husband Urbaniak's band, she has established herself as a vocal musician whose style is fresh, free, and different—very different. A quote in her record company biography says "mind blowing," a reflection of the problem that people have in trying to describe what she does. It's no wonder, for Urszula finds it difficult to explain herself. "People ask me what I'm trying to say with this kind of vocal music. I can't explain it; it's like asking a painter why he paints a certain way. You can't say why, you just feel it—it's built into my intuition."

What Urszula Dudziak does know, as do her audiences, is that she *communicates*. "The audience feels everything," she said the day after the Weather Report-Fusion concert, before she'd discovered she resembled Maggie Smith. "If you really play music with conviction and your emotions, it doesn't matter whether it's difficult music or not, there are always vibrations going on between you and the audience."

A year earlier, she had put it another way: "Reaching people without words is my passion, I'm completely involved with it."

Violinist Urbaniak sat across from Urszula at a coffee shop table: "They might not know what's happening," he said, "but they can feel it and we can feel it too—that's enough."

Writing about Urszula Dudziak also means writing about Michal Urbaniak, for he was always keeper of the dream. In the beginning, he laid out the plans, founded on fantasy, that would bring these Polish musicians to New

York City in the fall of 1973; he provided the encouragement and creative environment for Urszula Dudziak. And as she went through changes so did Michal, because her evolution as a singer was, and still is, closely bound to Urbaniak and his music. "He was the only person who continued to believe in me," Urszula often says.

When they met about ten years ago, Michal was primarily a jazz saxophone player who had been trained as a classical violinist. But he bolted from that music after hearing jazz for the first time on the radio. "People thought I was insane, but when I started trying to play jazz—there wasn't much in Poland—I wanted to be the best; I wanted to come to New York and play with the best musicians—nothing else. It was like a dream, a fantasy, and it got harder and harder but I worked at it. When we met, I told Urszula we're going to New York and we're going to make it there—America was a big thing for me."

Urszula Dudziak, like Michal, studied classical music. However, in the midst of her music education as a teenager, she heard Ella Fitzgerald on Willis Conover's Voice of America Jazz Hour. "I fell in love with her and listened to her singing for hours. I remember she did *Stomping At The Savoy* at the Berlin Opera and sang 20 improvised choruses. I used to listen to that over and over, singing along with her. It was a great experience and a great foundation." Later, Miles Davis would be a big influence.

She was a natural soprano who always wanted to sing in lower registers. But ultimately, says Urszula, she found her "real" voice, a voice with which she could effectively express herself. "I had a great teacher for two years who taught me how to completely control my voice. I had a certain amount of natural control, but I still couldn't do it well. Now I don't have any problems with my voice, it doesn't get tired. If I have a week off, I do some breathing exercises but only that—I have perfect control."

Her style, at first, was imitative of singers like Ella, Carmen McRae, and Dinah Washington, and what really bothered her was she had no musical identity of her own.

"I was singing lyrics and getting very tired of it—tired of imitating somebody else. I felt that I had something to say, that there was music in me, but I couldn't find the right way to express it. . . . The voice has tremendous possibilities; but it was always triggered one way, you sing lyrics and it's the lyrics you use to say something. Also I didn't see why you should have to sing shoobedoobaa, or simply imitate other instruments. I was unhappy just singing that way, you know, singing the melody while everyone is waiting for a turn to improvise, then coming back and doing the melody again. It was a drag.

"One day I told Michal no, I can't go on singing this way." Although frustrated by her music, Urszula didn't have the foggiest idea what the alternative was going to be. So she quit completely and went to the university to ponder other things. In the mean time, Michal, who was equally hung up with his music, had formed a new band and urged Urszula to come back and try some "new things."

"For the first time I really felt that something was growing and that I was onto something original." Picking up a phrase from '60s Americanese, she added. "I saw the light at

SELECTED DUDZIAK DISCOGRAPHY

featured

URSZULA—Arista 4065

NEWBORN LIGHT—Columbia KC 32902

with Michal Urbaniak

FUSION III—Columbia PC 33542

ATMA—Columbia KC 33184

FUSION—Columbia KC 32852

FUNK FACTORY—Atco 36-116

the end of the tunnel. I knew that this was just the beginning and from then on I had the conviction of what I was trying; it was just a matter of time and playing."

Michal, Urszula, and the band settled into a Polish night club. For nine months, they played, rehearsed, and were paid solely with what was taken in at the door. "We were concerned with music only and that was it," recalls Urbaniak.

Urszula Dudziak is a shy woman with long auburn hair who gives you the impression of being direct, honest, filled with vitality and humor. She remembers the Polish club and the two years working in Europe that followed it with enthusiastic wonder.

"It was a great time for me, because every day I was doing something new. Each night I'd come home and say that's all I can do, I can't do anything more, but the next day I found I *could* do something new, and it went on and on. It was a fantastic experience, really fantastic, and it was all because of hard work, conviction, and a happiness within."

Each night the band would record what it was doing. After they'd finished playing she'd mull over those tapes, selecting and rejecting from what she had performed that night; those tapes were the only vocal music she heard for a long time.

While Urszula was working on creating a singing style unlike any other—building it by bit and pieces in the context of Urbaniak's band—the people who had liked her the way she was were wondering what the hell was happening.

"The public didn't accept it for a long time. People used to say, 'What are you doing? You were singing lyrics so beautifully; you sounded just like Anita O'Day or somebody. What are you trying to do? It's leading nowhere.'"

Michal laughed through his long, black wispy beard: "People used to come to me and say that she was finished, that she didn't know what she was doing anymore; every-

stage—just keyboards and voice—to improvise freely, letting the music roam the limit of their imaginations.

The results of those improvised duets was a unique recording called *Newborn Light*, originally a German import and later released by Columbia. It was cut in about three hours, and, with the exception of two short tracks, was totally improvised.

In Europe, Michal, Urszula, and the band had become a big name attraction. But despite that success, their desire to come to the United States remained constant.

"People thought I was crazy," recalled Michal. "Whenever I met American jazz musicians, I'd hang out and ask how it was over there. They'd say 'Hey, man, it's crazy, business is lousy, everything is bad.' That doomsday report didn't faze Michal and Urszula a bit. "Even more so, we had to try it," said Michal. "We'd been traveling and saving money for years to have the chance to come to New York and see what we could do—it was the only thing I wanted."

Before they set foot in New York City, however, record company executives, music moguls, and a few magazine editors who read their mail knew Urbaniak and company were coming. Michal, who reasoned the only person who was going to help him was himself, sent what might be called "Urbaniak is coming" post cards to anyone he felt could help get their music heard. Since no one in Poland could do anything for him, he launched his own promotional campaign: it was simple and untainted by any prior knowledge of the unsettling world known as the Great American Music business.

"I laugh now at what we did," said Michal, "I didn't know a thing about how the U.S. record business worked. I still don't, but now when I see its complexities I get scared," he said candidly.

"You know those handwritten post cards we sent to record companies? I'm sure some people never read them, but it was the only way—coming from Poland—to talk about what we wanted to do. It was instinct.

Wider Recognition violin category in *down beat's* Critics Poll, and Urszula closely trailed Dee Dee Bridgewater in the TDWR category for best female vocalist.

Were they surprised by their success? "No, we deserved it," Urszula commented.

"We wouldn't have come to the United States without being completely ready," Urbaniak said, picking up the line that Urszula had left dangling. "We'd planned this for ten years, we worked hard, we had proven ourselves in Europe, and after what we had achieved there, we felt the time was right to make the move to the United States. We knew how hard it would be with our strange ideas and foreign names."

Urszula continued: "We felt that there was nothing unreachable, you can obtain anything if you have conviction and a really good plan."

When Clive Davis saw Urszula Dudziak with Fusion at the Village Gate, he immediately signed her; suddenly she was no longer simply a musician in a band who was dragging the singing voice from its tradition into lands where people still thought the world flat; she was something of a musical celebrity in her own right.

According to Urbaniak, Clive Davis suggested it might be a good thing if on Urszula's first album, she would do short songs that could be played on the air, so more people would be aware of her. But don't sacrifice anything, he urged. Michal respected that approach immensely; "I think if we were told to be commercial we couldn't do it, but this was a nice way to put it. They were very concerned about doing the best for her and not compromising her talent."

Papaya was the short song, the opening cut on *Urszula*, that recently-released first album. It immediately began to get airplay. For the first time, Urszula found herself in the midst of the pop music market, and so she made the rounds of AM stations to plug the new disc.

The new album, which bears little resemblance to *Newborn Light*, was arranged and produced by Michal. Urszula wrote seven of the ten tunes on the record, revealing herself to be a gifted creator of catchy melodies.

The record itself employs a full band, composed of musicians from Fusion (not the present edition) and augmented by people like guitarist Reggie Lucas. It's filled with rhythmic funkiness light years away from her experiments with Makowicz. As arranger for her first album in the United States, Urbaniak says he wanted to allow her as much freedom as possible; he wanted to bring out her best qualities and reinforce them with solid continuity and impressive contrasts. The album marked Urszula's first attempt at writing. "Some of the tunes have a very original harmonic approach," said Urbaniak, "and they're very 'cute' I would say—I don't know if that's a good word—it's nice." He added that he felt the album had to be rhythmic and energetic because Urszula has changed since *Newborn Light*. Her musical ideas have gotten stronger.

The talk turned from the obligatory discussion of the new album to Urszula Dudziak's voice, and specifically her use of electronics. In addition to a table filled with percussion instruments, Urszula uses an English-made EMS synthesizer, hooked up to a touch keyboard for electronic percussion, a ring modulator, and an echoplex.

According to Urbaniak, "I think her voice

"I felt that I had something to say, that there was music in me, but I couldn't find the right way to express it. . . . I didn't see why you should have to sing shoobedoobaa, or simply imitate other instruments. I was unhappy just singing that way, you know, singing the melody while everyone is waiting for a turn to improvise, then coming back and doing the melody again. It was a drag."

body thought Urszula was cuckoo. . . ."

As far as Urszula was concerned, she was getting it together. After almost a year at one club, they began playing throughout Europe, sometimes doing a seemingly endless succession of one-nighters. At that time the band's keyboard player was a musician named Adam Makowicz. "His approach to music was similar to mine," said Urszula, "and he too wanted to do something new. I was always sure that he was inspired by my voice and in turn I was inspired by his playing; we became very close musically."

Their own music experiments began to take the form of unusual duets. During a concert, Adam and Urszula would be left alone on the

We knew that once we had a chance to be heard and be around what was happening, we could make it.

"When we actually got to America there were a lot of things against us. Like the record companies would say there's a vinyl shortage and nobody's signing new artists, or the economy's bad. But we believed we were ready and could do it regardless."

Apparently they were—the plan was working. Michal Urbaniak, Urszula Dudziak and Fusion were signed by Columbia. Their music, well known in Europe, found immediate critical and popular success—their blend of rock and lyrical jazz was refreshing. In 1975, Michal topped the Talent Deserving

EDDIE HARRIS

Plugged-In Pioneer Turns Up His Lungs

by Steven Marks

Adaptation and change has been the lifeblood of jazz. New ideas in orchestration, instrumentation and composition have kept the art form creatively stimulating. Great innovators like Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, and Miles Davis have not been content to simply echo the overworked structures and hackneyed phrases of their contemporaries. Their aim has been to expand the jazz man's musical vision, to revitalize those rhythmic and harmonic forms which have become stale and stereotyped. If that entails looking to other forms of music for new sounds and techniques, they do so. As these artists have so astutely realized, the separation and isolation of one musical dialect from another is unnecessary and counter-creative, a purely arbitrary distinction which stifles the creation of a new musical dialectic.

In its relatively short lifetime, though, jazz has also been marked by periods of turbulence and resistance to change. Members of the jazz establishment, safely ensconced in the womb of popular acceptance and relative luxury, have branded as heresy the forays of these musical explorers.

The fusion musicians have been the most recent iconoclasts to feel the wrath of the jazz traditionalists. Not only have they been castigated for using some of the equipment and flair of the high-income rock stars, but their desire to reap the sweetest financial fruits of their labor has been labeled a cheap, commercial sellout.

Eddie Harris has borne the brunt of this attack far longer than anyone else. In 1960, he violated one of the unwritten rules of jazz: he cut a hit, commercial single. The record, *Exodus*, sold a million copies, a rare achievement for a jazz artist. Harris, who had previously played with Stan Getz, Gene Ammons, Wardell Gray and Sonny Stitt, was pigeonholed a melody player, a musician without heavy improvisational chops. "*Exodus* actually cost me a lot of jobs," the 47-year-old saxophonist remarked between sets at a recent concert. "Club owners would think about John Coltrane or Cannonball, but when my name came up, they'd say, 'Who, that commercial cat?' And many musicians felt the same way."

The rejection of *Exodus* as commercial



ALAIN BETTEX

trash was only the calm before the storm, however. In 1966, two years before the watershed *Bitches Brew* album, Harris introduced the jazz world to the Varitone electric sax via an LP called *The Tender Storm*. Though Sonny Stitt initially recorded with the Varitone, Harris was the first to make the instrument and all of its electrical accoutrements a focal part of his music. The traditionalists dismissed the amplification as gimmickry, an introduction of rock 'n roll decay into the pristine world of jazz. Though Miles, Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock and others have made fusion music critically acceptable, in many quarters the contempt of the purists remains. Eddie Harris, one of the vanguards, has been paying for his early experiments ever since.

"It doesn't bother me that people put down my work and don't give me the recognition that I deserve," Harris said with a shrug of his shoulders. "I don't listen to these critics anyway. I play what I want and what my audiences want to hear and I enjoy my work. People who say that you lose your integrity if you cut a hit single have no integrity of their own. They claim to be 'serious musicians.' Well, what is a serious musician? I guess the proper definition is one who takes his music serious-

ly. Look at Howlin' Wolf. Maybe he doesn't read music, but that's academic. He plays, he creates music. A guy who plays in a symphony orchestra says, 'I'm a serious musician.' What makes him any better than I am? I've played in five symphony orchestras and I've found that guys can travel all over the world and play second chair, but if they were put on first, they would get fired because they couldn't adapt themselves to the new music. They're just not versatile. As a 'serious musician,' he learns one piece of music, rehearses it for ten years and then goes out to make a performance on it. People come to see if he's interpreted Prokofiev correctly. Well, what's that? To me, if he's been practicing for ten years and can't play it, then he'll never be able to cut it.

"To be a serious musician means to play what you're playing seriously and to be flexible, to be able to move out in different directions. Musicians try to play different things to make themselves come across, and one form is no more serious than the next. People might want to reach into Tibet or into Indian ragas for the appropriate sound. You can't fault a guy for that. Each guy is trying to get into something which will get him on the map. The name of the game is popularity. Let's face it. Were Wagner, Beethoven and Brahms the only cats in their day? They were the popular ones, so they made the history books.

"Look at jazz. When Bird was playing *Ko-Ko*, he wasn't popular; no one knew who he was. But when he started playing *Autumn In New York* or *Bird With Strings*, he became really popular and people started to say, 'He's a heavy cat.' As if he wasn't before.

"What is Trane known for? *My Favorite Things*. So you've got to figure, that in large part, his reputation is due to popularity. If the fans dig you, if they buy your records and see your concerts, you'll go down in history whether you're good or bad. The fans don't read the criticism. They listen to their ears and that's what I worry about.

"Music tradition is a hang-up because once a style becomes popular, then everyone has got to play in that style, whether he digs it or not. Tradition just holds the people back

SELECTED HARRIS DISCOGRAPHY

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 THE ELECTRIFYING EDDIE HARRIS—Atlantic 1495
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 PLUG ME IN—Atlantic 1506
 LIVE AT NEWPORT—Atlantic 1595
 SILVER CYCLES—Atlantic 1517
 COME ON DOWN—Atlantic 1554
 HIGH VOLTAGE—Atlantic 1529
 SINGS THE BLUES—Atlantic 1625
 MEAN GREENS—Atlantic 1453
 E. H. IN THE U. K.—Atlantic 1647
 I NEED SOME MONEY—Atlantic 1669
 IT IS IN—Atlantic 1659

"I'm an experimentalist. . . . I like to get into new things, to break new ground. My mind is always probing for different things, different sounds. I've never been one to let my mind stagnate. You've got to keep growing. . . . If I didn't experiment with music, it would mean nothing to me."

from expressing what they really want to express."

In addition to his pioneering work with the Varitone, Harris has also designed a reed trumpet. He is presently working on what he calls the Eddie Harris Attachment for Saxophone, the details of which are still secret. All of these instruments are fed through an army of amplifiers, modulators, and echoplex units. The resulting sound delves deeply into Latin rhythms, back-street funk and inter-valistic modernism: yet because of the electronics, it all adds up to something else entirely.

Many critics say that Harris' music is all style, a fad, the product of machines rather than men. Harris, however, vehemently rejects the charge that he has hopped on the electric bandwagon solely to create a particular effect.

"People tend to reject things they know nothing about," he argued, "because if they are the so-called leaders, then they have to go back and relearn everything that they had thought was hip. They won't accept anything different from that which they had originally learned.

"Amplification of music is not necessarily gimmickry. Acoustic playing, if used out of context, is gimmickry, no matter what is being played. A gimmick is essentially in the listener's mind. It could be a guy playing acoustic piano with his elbows or a guy trilling the same lick on the sax for 15 minutes. These are all acoustic gimmicks. Electric playing is not gimmickry, because by pressing an oboe stop or a clarinet stop, the music sounds different, even though you're playing the same run. Some guys are gonna play distastefully no matter what they have at their command. The important point is to use electronics in the proper context and do it tastefully.

"Those people who say the instruments play me are just ridiculous. If they did, I would ask the machines to push a button and then I would function. Those people who don't think any talent is involved are really out of line. Have you ever seen an electric sax play by itself?"

Harris admitted that the growth of electronics has opened a Pandora's box. As more and more artists begin to experiment with amplification and use the vast array of equipment, other musicians, hoping to keep pace, are forced to integrate electronics into their own work. The problem, Harris said, is that many musicians do not take the time to learn how to use the devices properly: they are, as Harris remarked, "Just jumping in because it's fashionable."

"There are many guys I know in music who will employ special technicians in the studio to work the synthesizer," he stated. "Without these guys who specialize in programming and mixing, they can't come up with a decent sound. Everyone is becoming electronically-minded—overnight it seems—and they want to use all of the equipment at once. It's like the guy who suddenly gets hip to cars after riding bicycles all his life. He'll go out and

buy a Ferrari, a Sting Ray, and a Porsche 'cause he digs them, but he can only learn to drive one of them at a time. He can only appreciate each one after he knows what it's about. In my music, I only use one kind of sound and then out. I keep graduating to new things and moving on to new ideas only after I've mastered the old ones.

"Some guys get 15 different synthesizers and 1000 sound men, but they bypass the learning experience. They never figure out how these things are supposed to work musically. They're really bypassing music. I don't think of it like that. When I make a step to the next plateau, I know where I am.

"The making of a record, and most musicians have got to figure this out, does not just involve the collection of all these devices. These machines are not here for effect, you know. Some cats can make a great record, but when they go onstage without their technicians, they die. They can't play their own instruments. Everything I do in the studio I can do in person, and that's rare."

If an artist learns how to use amplification properly, he can control the sound levels of the different instruments and delicately mix the music, Harris said. "Most importantly, electricity saves bodily wear and tear and prevents physical damage to the musician," he added. "When you play electrically, you play as though you are in the studio at all times. Some sax players, for instance, play in a movement form. While they play, they bob and weave and go up and down. Since there is only one mike, their music tends to disappear as they move. You miss a lot of runs. With amplification, you can walk about, you can bob and weave, and the listener can still hear everything you play.

"It's very difficult for acoustic instruments to compete with electric instruments when you're playing live. Now, with everything amplified, you can hear each instrument as you do on the record. We have better mixing as a result of the amplification.

"Take John Coltrane's group. When you went to see them, you could never hear Jimmy (Garrison) on bass or McCoy (Tyner) on piano. You knew they were up there because you saw them, but their playing was inaudible. You imagined you heard them 'cause you knew the record. But all you could hear was Elvin (Jones) and Trane.

"The most important thing, though, is when you're blowing electrically you don't have to blow as hard as you do acoustically. When you play a wind instrument in this modern day and age, you're playing on top of electric guitars, pianos, and basses. You get larger lungs from using them excessively. Moreover, it's not just playing loudly, but playing at an extremely intense, constant peak as a result of competing with the amplified instruments. Instead of turning up a knob, what you're doing, in effect, is turning up your lungs. Many sax and trumpet players develop spots on their lungs from overextending themselves. This generally leads to tuberculosis.

"Let's look at the intensity peak a bit dif-

ferently. When a guy plays in an electric band and he's playing acoustically, he may be playing loudly enough. However, the intensity of the electronics changes the signal of the amplified sound. It makes the music sound louder than it really is. So the acoustic player tends to overblow, because he can't hear himself. You're loud enough to be heard by the crowd, but the intensity of the electronics really gets to you psychologically. It sounds like you're not keeping up with the guitar.

"As far as the piano is concerned, at many places, the piano is out of tune and the ivory is off the keys. Everyone plays piano, you know, and the instrument tends to be abused. Most are in horrible condition. And if you study jazz history, you find that many pianists turned to the organ because the pianos weren't working. You could bring your own instrument with you. The same thing is true for the electric piano."

Harris began exploring the contours of electricity in part, as he said, "to make a name for myself, to do something unique," but also to discover the untapped aural potential of his instruments.

"I'm an experimentalist," Eddie said. "I like to get into new things, to break new ground. My mind is always probing for different things, different sounds. I've never been one to let my mind stagnate. You've got to keep growing. Complacency is such a drag. If I didn't experiment with music, it would mean nothing to me. I would go into another field, because experimenting is what it's all about. I think that anyone can go up on stage and copy another cat. It's a challenge for me to try to sing the blues in the vernacular of the blues artist, the way people are accustomed to hearing it. It's a challenge for me to play Beethoven as well as Trane. I accept challenge, I always will.

"One guy I really admire in this business is Miles. His music spans many eras, yet even now, he's in tune with the new music. That's to be commended. I mean, I know that he really couldn't like it, because he's from another era, but he's broad enough to open his mind to accept change."

Harris' innovations are sometimes cut from a bizarre mold. On one of his albums, *Eddie Harris Sings The Blues*, the jazz giant sings through a trumpet, duplicating the sound of a blues vocalist. At various times in his career, he has used a trombone mouthpiece on a saxophone, played the sax without a neck and placed spoons inside his tenor. These instrumental alterations, he said, make him "a professional improviser rather than a soloist. A soloist is just a cat who plays alone and hits all the notes," Harris explained. "An improviser comes up with new things, different ways of playing those notes. People stop and say, 'Hey, let's listen to that cat, he's different.' In actuality, all improvisation is simply the process of stretching out your mind.

"It's also a hell of a lot easier to be creative and experiment if you avoid the popular conception of what a musician's proper image

INSIDE THE SOUNDSTAGE /down beat AWARDS SHOW

It wasn't your typical TV awards show, since it lacked podiums, envelopes, and bosomy starlets. But those who were there couldn't believe their eyes. Late in October, the highly-acclaimed PBS music show, *Soundstage*, gathered together an all-star cast of winners and runners-up in the 1975 *down beat* Readers Poll, and taped the first televised *down beat* Awards. Nationwide air dates were not yet determined at press time, but the show will be seen on most Public Broadcasting Stations sometime in January or February.

Assembled at the studios of WTTW-TV in Chicago, where Ken Ehrlich and Eliot Wald produce *Soundstage* for the PBS network, was an agree-

gate of some of the heaviest names in American contemporary music: Jazzman Of The Year McCoy Tyner, Jazz Group Of The Year Weather Report, Sonny Rollins, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Bill Watrous, Stanley Clarke, Freddie Hubbard, Hubert Laws, Airto, George Benson, and Lenny White. And the show was co-hosted by two more giants, Quincy Jones and Chick Corea.

All hands appeared together on stage for an opening tribute to Hall Of Famer Cannonball Adderley and a rousing closing jam on Ellington's *Take The A-Train*, the latter featuring an especially memorable tenor duel between Rollins and Kirk. Other highlights included a rare duet performance

between Sonny and McCoy Tyner; a galvanic Rahsaan *Pedal Up* with Tyner, Clarke, and White; a pre-taped segment by Weather Report; and a mellow rendition of Chick Corea's *Spain* by the composer, Hubert Laws, Bill Watrous, George Benson, and rhythm section mainstays Clarke and White. Freddie Hubbard and Airto teamed up to blow the crowd away on *Straight Life*.

But it was a show of highlights, for which *down beat* would like to thank producers Ehrlich and Wald and, of course, the great musicians who so honored us by their presence and tremendous music. Watch your local listings for *Soundstage: The down beat Awards*.



A front line of Laws, Watrous, Hubbard, Benson, partially obscured Clarke, Rollins, and Kirk opens the show with a trio of tunes dedicated to Hall of Famer Cannonball Adderley.



Rahsaan pedals up.



JON RANDOLPH



JON RANDOLPH



JON RANDOLPH

Stringmaster Benson treads lightly and politely.

In rehearsal, Jazzman of the Year McCoy Tyner and Sonny Rollins discuss their duet performance of Ellington's *Sentimental Mood* with Quincy Jones.

Stanley Clarke takes a breather in rehearsal.



JON RANDOLPH

Just prior to taping, co-hosts Chick Corea and Quincy Jones get some words of advice from Executive Producer Ken Ehrlich.



JON RANDOLPH

Laws (top) and Watrous (bottom) help create a sweet *Spain*.



HERB NOLAN

Airtio and Freddie Hubbard discuss their rendition of the latter's *Straight Life* just before a rehearsal run-through.



JON RANDOLPH

McCoy performs a *Celestial Chant* in trio spotlite.



HERB NOLAN

Lenny White provided the pulse.



JON RANDOLPH

The whole ensemble, led by Quincy Jones, gets a standing ovation for its closing performance.

RECORD REVIEWS

Ratings are:

***** excellent, **** very good,
*** good, ** fair, * poor

BILL WATROUS

THE TIGER OF SAN PEDRO—Columbia PC 33701; *Dirty Dun*; *Quiet Lady*; *The Tiger Of San Pedro*; *Somewhere Along The Way*; *T.S.*; *T.S.: Passion At Three O'Clock*; *Sweet Georgia Upside Down*.

Personnel: Danny Stiles, John Gatchell, Dean Pratt, George Triffon, Bob Millikan, trumpets, flugelhorn; Watrous, Sam Burtis, Charlie Small, Bob Hankle, Joe Randazzo, trombones; Paul Eisler, Ed Xiques, Frank Perowsky, Charlie Lagond, Juroslav Jakubovic, reeds; Tom Garvin or Derek Smith, keyboards; Darryl (Babe) Thompson, guitar; Mike Richmond, bass; Ron Davis, drums; Frank Malabe, congas.

***** 1/2

Second albums, like second novels, are harder to bring off than firsts, but the Manhattan Wildlife Refuge has managed to improve on its excellent debut LP with this superior effort.

The music here is more varied, the ensemble playing more secure and relaxed, and the soloists in as good or better form. There have been a few changes in personnel, but the only really significant ones are in the rhythm section, which is now the band's regular team rather than a star-studded studio lineup.

What stands out about this band is its mellow ensemble quality. Even when it shouts—and it can shout plenty—it doesn't become strident. The music is contemporary in flavor and rhythm, but does not commit the cardinal contemporary sin of loudness. It's a pleasure to hear a band that understands the importance of dynamics and shading.

The outstanding score on the album is Mike Gibson's *Passion*, a piece of real music. It has reed voicings worthy of Strayhorn, superb work by the leader, who is one of the most brilliant instrumentalists of this era (he's so good you don't even mind when he shows off), and first-rate solo and ensemble soprano sax playing by Xiques. But everyone in the band deserves credit for bringing Gibson's work to life so well.

There are many other fine moments. Phil Kelly's reworking of *Sweet Georgia Brown* is one of the most swinging things in this or any band's book—an exuberant piece of big band jazz. *Dirty* is the blues and gives the remarkable Danny Stiles a chance to really shine—on his own and in tandem with Watrous. This version captures the excitement and fun of the prior one by these two heavies, via Danny's quintet album for Famous Door. Stiles also gets his innings on the title track, a well-crafted rouser by the gifted John LaBarbera. And then there's his flawless lead work.

LaBarbera also scored *Way*, a pretty ballad not often done instrumentally. Watrous demonstrates his melodic skills, and there's a tasty tenor bit by Lagond, who solos on *Dirty* as well. Also in a tender mood is *Lady*, by pian-

ist Garvin. It has some pretty voicings; nice, soft brass to complement Watrous' silken soloing.

Garvin's *T.S.* has a soul/rock flavor, but it isn't overdone; the 7/8ish patterns are made to swing rather than pound. Drummer Davis does well here and throughout, ably abetted by his section mates.

Why not five stars, you may ask. Well, this band's potential is such they can do even better. Let's hope they'll get the work and exposure a big band needs to survive.

—morgenstern

CANNONBALL ADDERLEY

PHENIX—Fantasy F-79004; *High Fly*; *Work Song*; *Sack O' Woe*; *Jive Samba*; *This Here*; *The Sidewalks Of New York*; *Hamba Nami*; *Domination*; *74 Miles Away*; *Country Preacher*; *Stars Fell On Alabama*; *Walk Tall/Mercy, Mercy, Mercy*.

Personnel: Adderley, soprano and alto saxes; Nat Adderley, cornet; George Duke, keyboards (tracks 1-6), synthesizers (tracks 1-6, 8, 10, 12); Mike Wolff, keyboards (tracks 7-12); Sam Jones, acoustic bass (tracks 1-6); Walter Booker, acoustic and electric bass (tracks 7-12); Louis Hayes, drums (tracks 1-6); Roy McCurdy, drums (tracks 7-12); Airtio Moreira, percussion and conga drums.

BIG MAN—Fantasy F-79006; *Overture*; *Anybody Need A Big Man?*; *Who Bend The Rainbow*; *Forty More Miles To Go/Rouster's Chant*; *Ten Mile Of Mountain/Who Up In Heaven*; *Gonna Give Lovin' A Try*; *The Broomstick Song*; *Next Year In Jerusalem*; *Stayin' Place*; *A New Star Risin'*; *The Steamdrill Race*; *Anybody Need A Big Man?*; *Grind Your Own Coffee*; *Hundred An' One Year/M'ria*; *River*; *New Star Risin'*; *Born Black*; *Poundin'*; *Steamdrill Race*; *Jesus, Where You Now?*; *If I Was Jehovah*; *On His Bones*.

Personnel: Adderley, alto sax; Allan de Rienzo, Oliver Mitchell, Oscar Brashear, trumpets; Dick Hyde, George Bohannon, trombones; William Green, Jackie Kelso, Donald Menza, Jay Migliori, reeds; Jimmy Jones, piano; Dawalli Gongg, keyboards; Billy Fender, Don Peake, guitars; Carol Kaye, Walter Booker, bass; Roy McCurdy, drums; Airtio Moreira, King Errisson, percussion. Vocalists: Joe Williams as John Henry; Randy Crawford as Carolina; Robert Guillaume as Jassawa; Judy Thames as The Whore; Lane Smith as The Sheriff and Bull Maree. Music by Julian and Nat Adderley; lyrics by Diane Lampert and Peter Farrow.

Cannonball Adderley could not have prepared better, more reflective testaments to his musical stature than *Phenix* and *Big Man*, even had he been equipped with the precognition of his own imminent mortality. What could be more fulfilling than to look at one's past and destiny in the same passage, to recreate a people's history and music in the same measure? Like John Henry, Cannonball went out with both fists pounding and a big heart swelling with love.

Phenix provides a setting, a late night walk-in club, rife with the warm smell of smoke and liquor, where Cannonball and his perdurable quintet share in the intense joy of each other's expressions. Actually, it is a studio regeneration of his popular, relaxed club format of the mid and late '60s, complete with that period's standards, such as *74 Miles Away*, *Country Preacher*, *Mercy, Mercy, Mercy* and *Work Song*. For the enterprise, Cannonball assembled two distinct quintet/sextets, one containing George Duke, Sam Jones, and Louis Hayes, the other harboring Mike Wolff, Walter Booker, and Roy McCurdy, and both featuring Cannon, brother Nat, and Airtio. The resulting difference in the material's treatment is slight; perhaps the second ensemble creates a more exotic, pushier rhythm. In any case, Adderley kept the percussive role in undertow, preferring, instead, to emphasize textures and solos. His own best moments promote an urgent and

mellifluous alto style, most hauntingly captured during *Stars Fell On Alabama*, his poignant duet with Wolff. Overall, *Phenix* is a pastiche of Cannonball's music and passion; cool, but not cold; blue, but not mournful; funky, but not oversteated.

From the first assaulting moments of the *Overture to Big Man*, it is apparent that the composers Adderley and the lyricists Lampert and Farrow are delving into an ambitious, vital and monstrous task. *Big Man* is a reworking of the John Henry legend, an attempt to draw parallels between the plight of the post-Civil War black and the covert conditions of today, while making a commentary, at large, on the undaunted dignity of the human spirit. If *Big Man* is not as accessible or listenable as *Phenix* (and it's not), that is due essentially to its "stage work adapted to record before presented on stage" format. Following key transitions and characterizations can be a cloudy process, and dialogue often fluctuates between melodramatic and vapid extremes. Despite such scriptural flaws, *Big Man* hangs together by the fabric weaved in the score, a potent fusion of gospel, blues, and jazz themes. Among the numerous highlights are Joe Williams' emotional portrayal of John Henry and Randy Crawford as Carolina. Randy, in fact, makes her debut on *Big Man*, and, hopefully, we will soon hear more of her sassy, brassy style.

Ultimately, the test for *Big Man*, as for any musical, is its effectiveness on stage. The rating above refers to the score, not the dramatic content (which can't be gauged on record). At one point in the story, John Henry is described as a man "so big, he got two first names." The irresistible analogy, of course, is to Cannonball, a man whose shadow will linger forever.

—gilmore

ANTHONY BRAXTON

FIVE PIECES 1975—Arista AL 4064; *You Stepped Out Of A Dream*; G-647 BNK; 373—4038—6—NBS; 489M 70-2—(TH-B M); BOR N-K 64 (60)—M-H-S.

Personnel: Braxton, alto sax, soprano, flute, alto flute, clarinet, contrabass clarinet; Kenny Wheeler, trumpet, flugelhorn; Dave Holland, bass; Barry Altschul, drums.

The mathematical titles only amplify the rigid structurization of Braxton's work. The creator of a hybrid, compositional improvisation, his cast and concepts have never been better.

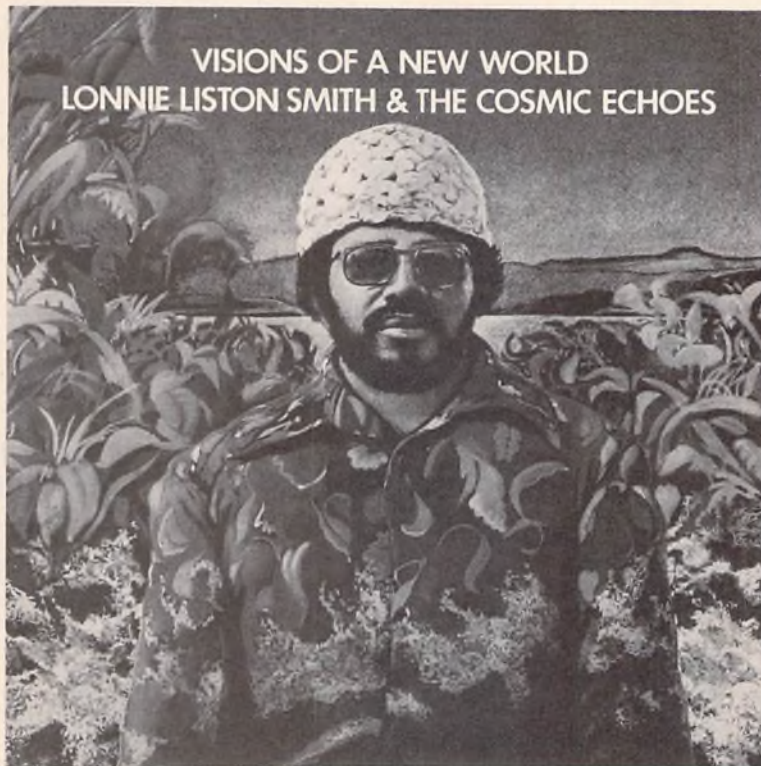
Polyphonous Varese-like clashes predominate, especially on the diagrammed cuts. Kenny Wheeler's echo-bound trumpet and Braxton's flute caper through several joining and decoupling processes on G-647. Yet despite the random appearance, the piece is deliberately planned. Reprise codas do not fall out of the sky.

The discourse between sax and trumpet takes several unique and more accelerated turns on 373. Altschul's marching cadence, albeit muted, provides a backdrop for countless duels between bugle soprano sax and clarinet, both contrabass and Bb. Holland's inaugural bass ostinato, reminiscent of the prevailing mood on *Concert Of The Birds*, provides an eerie background. Colors shine: the contrabass roars like a muted thunderstorm, the soprano like a duck trying to reach the high notes of *La Traviata*.

Anthony Braxton, indeed, is an employer of the extremes of tonality. 489 B takes us

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ATLANTIC-LITTLE, BROWN



from a growling contrabass to a tiny sax, with notes sputtering like signals from a super-sonic telegraph wire. And as before, there's Altschul, never pushy, lighting his quiet flame. Even the drum rolls are taken almost ashamedly. Relying on coloration rather than force, he fits in perfectly.

Yet if there's one thing which proves Braxton's virtuosity, it's the opening cut, *You Stepped Out Of A Dream*. An alto-bass duet, the delivery on the first pass is almost rote. The inevitable departures are there, but are delivered from a traditionally "melodic" perspective. If anyone seriously doubts Braxton's lyrical sense, this cut should be required listening. But then so should the entire album.

—shaw

JOE BECK

BECK—Kudu KU-21 S1: *Star Fire; Cactus; Texas Ann; Red Eye; Cafe Black Rose; Brothers And Others.*

Personnel: Beck, Steve Khan, guitar; Don Grolnick, keyboards; Will Lee, bass; Chris Parker, drums; Ray Mantilla, percussion; David Sanborn, alto sax; Frederick Buldrini, Harry Cykman, Peter Dimitriadis, Max Ellen, Harold Kohon, Charles Libove, Harry Lookofsky, Joe Malin, David Nadien, violin; Jesse Levy, Charles McCracken, George Ricci, cello.

★ ★

This album can lay claim to one distinction: no matter where you drop the needle, on side one or side two, it sounds exactly the same.

Joe Beck is a talented guitarist, but this record does him a disservice. First, the lion's share of attention is drawn by alto saxophonist Dave Sanborn, whose wailing lines dominate virtually every cut. Beck plays behind him, often in unison.

While Beck is credited as composer on four of the six tracks, the sameness of these compositions is staggering—not to mention the endless repetition *within* each performance, stating and restating the theme, and embellishing with the same soul-blues licks and background vamps (complete with strings).

The best melodic line on the date is Gene Dinwiddie's *Cafe Black Rose*, but even this uptempo jazz-rock theme is driven into the ground by incessant repetition.

As background sound for a noisy room this album may serve a purpose, but as music it's pretty tiresome.

—maltin

HERBIE HANCOCK

MAN CHILD—Columbia PC33812; *Hang Up Your Hang Ups; Sun Touch; The Traitor; Bubbles; Steppin' In It; Heartbeat.*

Personnel: Hancock, acoustic and electric piano, synthesizer, Clavinet; Wayne Shorter, soprano sax; Bennie Maupin, soprano and tenor sax, saxello, bass clarinet, bass and alto flute; Blackbird McKnight, David T. Walker, guitar; Bud Brisbois, Jay DeVersa, trumpet; Ernie Watts, Jim Horn, saxes, flutes; Garnett Brown, trombone; Dick Hyde, tuba, bass trombone; Stevie Wonder, harmonica; Paul Jackson, Louis Johnson, Henry Davis, bass; Mike Clark, Harvey Mason, James Gadson, drums; Bill Summers, percussion.

★ ★ ★

It's tempting to dismiss this as a predictable exercise drawn from a hackneyed frame of reference. After all, that catchy little bass figure on *Steppin' In It* is a direct descendant of *Chameleon*. And bearing in mind David T. Walker's potential for solo excitement, a tepid guitar solo, far beneath his Blue Note best, is further emasculated and drowned in a sea of syrupy strings on *Bubbles*. Yet this cut too has its redeeming virtues with Arp-created echoes of dripping faucets harkening back to the *Crossings* days.

By no means is this a return to a synthesizer fantasyland, however. For some mysterious reason, the African percussion is downplayed, yet the basic structures are still here. Bennie Maupin's tenor solo over a repeated Henry Davis bass line on *Hang Up Your Hang Ups* is *deja vu*. Maupin's playing has never been better: often given to flirtations with atonality on bass clarinet, his excursion on *Sun Touch* is his most melodic effort to date on the huge reed. Appropriate cymbal riding by Mason provides the cushion.

Despite a foundation of solid rhythmic bedrock, the disappointments here are obvious. One would expect more than sporadic fills and marching band toots from a horn section boasting such guest luminaries as Garnett Brown and Wayne Shorter. A potential Brown-Maupin duet tickles the speculative fancy, but never occurs. Wonder's three minute harp solo on *Steppin'* is rather sterile, when compared to the animative propulsion of *Boogie On, Reggae Woman*, for example.

So what we have here is a crazy quilt mixture of Herbie Hancock's several musical lifetimes, assembled in a nonintentional anthology. Even the old acoustic ivory is pulled out of the attic for a few stolen bars. Never mind, though, that *Man Child* falls short of expectations. Stripped to the core, the release is full of the familiar and vibrant energy that has characterized all Hancock's post-Headhunters work.

—shaw

ART LANDE/ JAN GARBAREK

RED LANTA—ECM 1038 ST: *Quintessence; Velvet; Waltz For A; Awakening-Midweek; Verdulac; Miss Fortune; Medley: Open Return-Cuncion Del Momento, Meanwhile, Cherifen Dream Of Renate.*

Personnel: Lande, piano; Jan Garbarek, flutes, soprano and bass saxes.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Lande and Garbarek have fashioned an extremely sophisticated record here which explores form and structure, while managing to attain a full measure of melodic grace.

Lande, composer of the album's ten tunes, is a facile and flexible writer with a compelling sense of melody and harmony. His compositions depict a variety of emotive colors, from the peaceful and euphoric to the dark and mysterious. The 28-year-old Berkeley pianist achieves this textural diversity through strategic modulations and subtle shifts in accent and time. By manipulating the formal qualities of the note, the phrase and the line, Lande communicates an expansive depth and breadth of meaning without resorting to needless gimmickry.

It is the interplay of the two artists, however, that elicits the full richness of the music. Lande and Garbarek, one of the leaders of the European "free" scene, have intelligently channelled their virtuosity, forging a uniquely inspired vision. The result is enthralling, a testimony of the beauty that ensues from the empathetic interaction of two highly sensitive musicians.

This sensitive interplay is perhaps clearest on *Cherifen Dream Of Renate*. The piece begins in haunting despair, with a sharp cry of anguish echoing from Garbarek's flute. The melody line is elegiac and his inflection deliberately uncertain. Lande then forcefully counterpoints the melody, adding strength and support to Garbarek's plaintive entreaty. However, the two musicians successfully un-

deplay the drama, preventing the music from becoming maudlin. In fact, their control over effect is so complete that a single note, wistful and eloquent, vibrating in graphic silence, is sufficient to produce the finale's staggering impact. The same astute musical consciousness also characterizes *Velvet*, *Verdulac*, and *Awakening*, marking *Red Lanta* one of the finest albums ECM has yet released.—marks

PHIL WOODS/ MICHEL LEGRAND

IMAGES—RCA Gryphon BGL 1-1027: *The Windmills Of Your Mind; A Song For You; Nicole; The Summer Knows; We've Only Just Begun; I Was Born In Love With You; Clair De Lune; Images.*

Personnel: Woods, alto sax; Legrand, arranger, conductor, piano; Jack Rothstein, concert master; Derek Watkins, lead trumpet; Don Lusher, lead trombone; Roy Willox, woodwinds; Ron Matthewson, bass; Kenny Clare, drums; Jud Proctor, lead guitar; Armand Migiani, bass sax; other instrumentalists and vocalists not identified.

MICHEL LEGRAND

THE CONCERT LEGRAND—RCA Gryphon BGL 1-1028, *Once Upon A Summertime; The Saddest Thing Of All; You Must Believe In Spring; Wonder Where I'll Be Tomorrow; Christine; Sweet Gingerbread Man; Happy; Snowbird Serenade; Fickle Fingers; Petite Musique D'Amour (Do You Hear Music In Your Sleep?); Pieces Of Dreams.*

Personnel: same as above except that Woods is heard only on *Fickle Fingers*.

** 1/2

Phil Woods and Michel Legrand are two talents I have great respect for. Woods has been and continues to be one of the masters of the alto saxophone, while Legrand's film

scores have firmly established his reputation as an outstanding melodist and arranger.

But there is a basic problem with these two sessions which stems, I suspect, from Legrand's work as a movie composer. The arrangements, with few exceptions, just don't stand on their own. They need to be accompanied by something else—filmed or televised images, dancers, pantomimists, even a circus act. It's the opposite side of the problem faced by film exhibitors during the silent era when the mute, flickering images of Chaplin, Pickford and Fairbanks needed the accompanying support of live music to make the film-going experience fully complete and satisfactory.

Of the two albums, *Images* is the more interesting because of the presence of Woods. A neo-bop, hard hitter out of the Parker tradition, Woods confines himself for the most part to pastel sketches of the melodies' basic contours. This would be fine except that Legrand's overblown, overelaborate arrangements detract. Instead of helping to reveal the special charms of the tunes and Woods' interpretive powers, the charts have a forced and synthetic quality that reminds me of the gaudy, oversaturated colors of Technicolor films made during the late '30s and '40s. With Legrand's own *The Windmills Of Your Mind*, for example, Woods' alto is accompanied by pipe organ and a brassy, percussive big band. While I am generally in favor of eclectic and unusual combinations, this particular match-up is just too contrived and incongruous.

The most provocative cut in the Woods/Legrand collaboration is the extended title track, *Images*. After the heavy orchestral

backdrop recedes, Woods and Legrand establish a brilliant dialogue that features antiphonal two-bar trade-offs and dazzling unison and contrapuntal lines at a breakneck tempo. Phil Woods, the master improviser, at last emerges.

With *The Concert Legrand*, Legrand's talents as a mood-maker come to the fore. With *Wonder Where I'll Be Tomorrow* (From *Sheila Levine*) and *Sweet Gingerbread Man* (from *The Magic Garden Of Stanley Sweetheart*), Legrand captures the upbeat excitement of young people discovering themselves and life in New York City. And with *Petite Musique D'Amour*, Legrand nicely establishes a readily identifiable Gallic atmosphere.

But again the arrangements just don't stand on their own as music. Legrand's talent is as a composer and arranger of incidental music for films—a craft and an art which must be judged according to other criteria relating to how images and tones interact. —berg

KEITH JARRETT

EL JUICIO (THE JUDGEMENT)—Atlantic SD 1673: *Gypsy Moth; Toll Road; Pardon My Rags; Pre-Judgement Atmosphere; El Juicio; Piece For Ornette (Long Version); Piece For Ornette (Short Version).*

Personnel: Jarrett, piano, soprano sax, recorder; Dewey Redman, tenor sax; Charlie Haden, bass; Paul Motian, drums.

****/

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
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excellent on its own merits, one of its functions at this late date is comparison. And, compared to Jarrett's recent releases, this LP provides a tone and group interplay more rawly bristling and less texturally rich. The compositions themselves reflect this: they're even more angular than the sharply bent pieces Jarrett is now writing, and a solid reminder of the comparisons to Ornette Coleman's music that often popped up at this stage in the pianist's career.

Jarrett proves aware of that fact in the *Piece For Ornette*. As on the rollicking *Toll Road*—which instantly hits you as one of the classic Jarrett pieces—the instrumentation out front is Jarrett's soprano and Redman's tenor, and the similarity to the Coleman-Redman sound in Ornette's own group is unmistakable. Redman's straight-ahead solo leads to a two-part invention section, with Keith's soprano spouting theme reminders in a wholly pianistic manner: it's a highlight of the disc.

Jarrett's tunes, then as now, are a paradox: complexly introverted, yet as earthy as anything else around. *Gypsy Morph* is a typically wide-flung melody, nearly *klangfarben* in its mammoth leaps around octaves, with the piano solo focusing on a riffy phrase and building to an exceptional developmental climax. Motian, who plays with discreet invention and free abandon throughout, sets up a beat that is at first simplistic, then insistent, and finally hypnotic. And as always, Haden's bass defines the "strong and supple" playing that nearly every bassist you read about is allegedly capable of.

A delightful surprise is the piano solo *Pardon My Rags*, a sort of gospel-player piano variant on the ragtime style. It starts at a furious tempo and never lets up, with Jarrett playing traditional two-fisted ivories—there are even a few bars of *stride*—in a complete departure from his other solo work. A few complaints on the title piece, with a long free section that wanders a bit too long. The piano break, too, makes one wonder if half the fun is getting there: it's nervous yet lacks that quality of constructive tension that issues forth from the very *best* art. And a percussion section, decorated with unearthly chant-singing, is esoterically atmospheric if you're so inclined, and slightly ridiculous if you're not.

When *El Juicio* came out, Jarrett commented on the pretentiousness of the arty cover. But the real pretense is on the back. These are the same musicians Jarrett now employs, and by not including a recording date—1971, according to Jarrett—Atlantic has sought to peddle this as a "new" album. And I call that "poor"—hence the second, one-star rating. —*lesser*

GATO BARBIERI

CHAPTER FOUR: ALIVE IN NEW YORK—ABC/Impulse ASD-9303: *Milonga Triste; La China Leoncia; Bahia; Lluvia Azul.*

Personnel: Gato Barbieri, tenor sax, guiro; Howard Johnson, flugelhorn, tuba, bass clarinet, tambourine; Eddie Martinez, Rhodes electric piano; Paul Metzke, guitar; Ron Carter, bass; Portinho, drums; Ray Armando, congas, percussion.

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

This recording of Gato's group live at the Bottom Line in February of this year is more than a phonograph record. It is the fourth chapter of his continuing album cum movie serial. Each of the four records lists not only the producer, but Michelle Barbieri as director. The storyline is Gato's search for his musical roots (*Latin America*), his departure

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(*Hasta Siempre*), as a bandit (*Viva Emiliano Zapata*), and his arrival in the U.S. with the fruits of his thievery: great Latin music.

Gato is the most important non-U.S. performer of jazz since Django Reinhardt. The comparison is apt, since both players have roots in oral culture as well as tango music. Reinhardt played in tango orchestras before joining Grappelli in the quintet of the Hot Club. Now Gato is finding parallels between his own Argentinian tango and what he has learned of jazz.

The *milonga* is the parent form of the tango, low class, wild and erotic. But this sad *milonga* is mostly slow, even solemn. The saxophone is Gato's voice and the horn responds instantly to his conception. He articulates nuances of feeling with precision through subtle and free changes in timbre. As the rhythm moves along, the tempo increases and Gato turns up the temperature.

My only quibble with *China* is that the previous version on *Chapter One* feels like it's part of an event, festivities. This new version feels more like jazz played in a club. It is difficult to keep the power in the music when once removed from the celebratory atmosphere. Howard Johnson's tuba in the ensemble goes a long way towards creating a feeling of wild abandon. His bass clarinet is put to good use with and against what Gato plays on other numbers.

Gato never takes a solo in the normal bop sense here. Instead he returns to the traditional jazz method of constant variation in stating the melody; great textural latitude, from a pure, smooth tone to the most kinetic and dirty use of screaming and harmonics; and subtle shifts and crossovers of rhythm. While not unlike the methods of any Latin band, it is also the basis of the music of Monk, Rollins and Ayler.

Bahia (misspelled on the liner) again demonstrates the beauty with which Gato uses the freak register. It opens in a ballad style reminiscent of Coltrane on *Nature Boy* or the final *Naima*. This acts as a verse to a delightfully bouncy medium tempo refrain which progresses to some fast licks before coming back to the ballad feeling.

Luvia is a blue rain or a rainy blues. This number was done on *Chapter Three*. These alternate performances, which occur on all four records, enhance and elaborate the motifs of the series. Here the band flows through many changes of rhythm, mood and tempo. Gato opens with an orthodox jazz tone, then roughens it up until he reaches the beginning of the melody. The sax then floats over the rhythm, the band moving through the changes till they reach a burning ending.

If you've heard Gato, you don't need to be told what a lush melodist he is. Both as performer and composer, he displays excellent structural sense. My one criticism is that the music is less professional, more exciting, with the Argentinian sideplayers. —steingroot

BUDDY RICH

BIG BAND MACHINE—Groove Merchant GM 3307: *Three Day Sucker*; *Tommy Medley (Eyesight To The Blind, Champagne, See Me, Feel Me, Miracle Cure, Listening To You)*; *On Broadway*; *Pieces Of Dreams*; *Ease On Down The Road*; *West Side Story '75*.

Personnel: Rich, drums; Lloyd Michaels, Richard Hurwitz, Ross Konikoff, Danny Hayes, Charles Camilleri, trumpets; Barry Maur, Gerald Chamberlain, Anthony Salvatori, trombones; Peter Yellin, Bill Blaut, Steve Marcus, Bob Mintzer, Roger Rosenberg, saxes; Wayne Wright, Cornell Dupree, Cliff

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Buddy Rich's new album has plenty of energy; when this combines with good material and shaded performances, the results can be excellent.

The band's power, drive, and tremendous rhythm come to the fore in the opening cut, *Three Day Sucker*, an infectious melodic line stretched to its outermost limits with a long solo by Steve Marcus on an incredible-sounding electric soprano sax. With a rock beat underneath, and the trumpet section handling a unison statement of the theme, this gets the album off to a fine start.

A medley from *Tommy* is not so inspiring. Despite the statement and ultimate return to Barry Maur's mellow trombone reading of

See Me, Feel Me, the 11-minute medley keeps its pitch so high and colorless that it's difficult to get involved.

On Broadway is a syncopated variation of the familiar theme, with breathing room for three good, short solos atop the walking-bass line. *Pieces Of Dreams* is the major ballad feature of the album, and one of the best cuts of all. Richard Lieb's arrangement concentrates on ensemble performance of Michel Legrand's pretty theme, enhancing the piece with fascinating harmonic ideas and strong, fat chords.

Ease On Down The Road sets the band back into a rock mode, with invigorating results; it moves from start to finish, and Danny Hayes gets a good solo feature with the band providing a strong vamp behind him.

West Side Story '75 isn't all that different from the earlier version of this medley, which remains one of Rich's most-requested numbers. As before, there are some good uptempo renderings of Leonard Bernstein's melodies, and a climactic solo from Buddy. It's never been my favorite piece in the band book, but who am I to argue?

All in all, *Big Band Machine* lives up to its title. This is a very well-oiled machine, and with the proper components it can create superb, up-to-date big band jazz. The trick is to feed the machine proper fuel. —maltin

GARY BARTZ

THE SHADOW DO—Prestige P-10092: *Winding Roads; Mother Nature; Love Tones; Gentle Smiles (Saxy); Make Me Feel Better; Sea Gypsy; For My Baby; Incident*.

Personnel: Bartz, alto and soprano saxes, synthesizer, lead and background vocals; Hubert Eaves, piano, clavinet, synthesizer; Larry Mizell, synthesizer, background vocals (track 5); Reggie Lucas, guitar; Michael Henderson, bass, background vocals (track 5); Howard King, drums, synthesizer; Mtume, congas and percussion; Fonce Mizell, background vocals (track 5); James Carter, whistling (track 6).

Bartz has an attractive tone, facility and style. But after working with some of the finest leaders in straight-ahead jazz, he's now coming on with all the commitment of a bingo caller at a carnival. A chorus of "ahs" and the basic chuka-chuka rhythms, adequate guitar breaks, synthesizers pretending to be several strains of strings, Bartz blowing dully off the vamp—that's the formula that gets irksome after two or three cuts. Additionally, the saxophonist sings like Herb Alpert with a cold, and his lyrics are so banal John Denver would blush.

The most distinguished track on the album is Michael Henderson's *Make Me*, which manages to stay within the leader's vocal range and comes off funky rather than mushy. The altoist is able to dig into this one, relieved not to have to feign lyricism or significance. *Incident* is also successful, relative to the aim of this band to sound like War; the narrative of a Baltimore racial disturbance is succinctly told, its energy as contained as in a good rock song.

Those merits hardly balance *Mother*, which features Sanders-type bass pattern souped up with Zappa electronics. Its hokey lyrics are printed on the album jacket for the merriment of all who look. A deathless couplet from *Saxy* ("Love makes me feel so good I can feel it in my bones/Sometimes it feels so good I play my saxophone") is not printed on the jacket, but is included here to save you from buying the record.

Without regard for his material or sidemen, Bartz effects long lines on every arrangement, as though his presence could salvage the mediocrity. It doesn't. —mandel

DAVID SANBORN

TAKING OFF—Warner Brothers BS 2873: *Butterfat; 'Way 'Cross Georgia; Duck Ankles; Funky Banana; The Whisperer; It Took A Long Time; The Suite (Black Light; Blue Night; Flight)*.

Personnel: Sanborn, alto sax; Mike Brecker, tenor sax; Randy Brecker, trumpet; Howard Johnson, baritone sax and tuba; Tom Malone, trombone; Steve Khan, Buzzy Feiten, Joe Beck, guitars; Don Grolnick, keyboards; Will Lee, bass; Chris Parker and Rick Marotta, drums; Ralph McDonald, percussion; Peter Gordon and John Clark, french horn. Musicians on *The Suite*: Emile Charlap, David Nadien, Paul Gershman, Gene Orloff, Harold Kohon, Charles Libove, Guy Lumia, Lou Eley, Matthew Raimondi, Max Pollikoff, Leo Kahn and Harry Glickman, violin; Harold Coletta, Manny Vardi and

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Al Brown, viola; George Ricci, Charles McCracken and Lucien Schmit, cello; John Beal and Bob Daugherty, bass; Jose Madera and Warren Smith, percussion; Steve Gadd, drums; Ralph McDonald, congas.

Altoist David Sanborn's debut album for Warner is a polished, toe-tappin', finger-poppin', jazz-flavored rhythm and blues outing, infectious in nature. Working out of the tradition of such r&b saxophonists as Jr. Walker and King Curtis, Sanborn convincingly engages the tight, funky charts of David Matthews, Howard Johnson, Don Grolnick and Randy Brecker.

But while succeeding as solid functional dance music, the album is far from being on the cutting edge of anything particularly new or astounding. Part of the problem is that Sanborn seems content with playing it safe. He needs to take a few more chances. As Whitney Balliett has said, the sound of jazz is the sound of surprise. This is what Sanborn needs to investigate. (On the basis of his recent work with Gil Evans, I think Sanborn has a much broader potential than that demonstrated in *Taking Off*.)

Somewhat of a deviation from the blues-rock cum jazz of *Butterfat*, et al, is David Matthews' *Suite*. There are some nice moments, but in the end it comes off as a poor relative of *Focus*, the extraordinary collaboration of Eddie Sauter and Stan Getz (1961). The weight of the strings seems too heavy and Sanborn's alto never achieves the level of integration that Getz's tenor does in *Focus*. Also, Matthews' ideas become repetitive and do not quite offer the same firm, supple launching pad as that provided for Getz by Sauter.

Hopefully, Sanborn's next session will feature him within the context of a small group so that he'll have a greater opportunity to stretch out and explore materials more challenging than the blues-oriented and over-arranged compositions captured here.—*berg*

TOOTS AND THE MAYTALS

FUNKY KINGSTON—Dragon PRLS 5002: *Sit Right Down; Pomp And Pride; Louie, Louie; I Can't Believe; Redemption Song; Daddy; Funky Kingston; It Was Written Down.*

Personnel: "Toots" Hibbert, lead vocals; Raleigh Gordon and Jerry Mathias, background vocals. Instrumentalists not listed.

IN THE DARK—Dragon DRLS 5004: *Got To Be There; In The Dark; Having A Party; Time Tough; I See You; Take A Look In The Mirror; Country Road; Fever; Love Gonna Walk Out On Me; Revolution; 54-36; Sail On.*

Personnel: same as above.

FUNKY KINGSTON—Island ILPS 9330: *Time Tough; In The Dark; Funky Kingston; Love Is Gonna Let Me Down; Louie, Louie; Pomp And Pride; Got To Be There; Country Road; Pressure Drop; Sail On.*

Personnel: Same as above.

Reggae music has taken a long time to capture the imagination of American record buyers, but now that it finally has been deemed marketable, we can look forward to the ready availability of the real stuff. The phenomenon hails from Jamaica and is often identified with that country's Rastafarian cult, a political-religious movement which embraces the deification of Haile Selassie. (Rastafarian vocabulary test: What is the difference between ganja, spliff, and natty-dreadlock?) In truth, the music does derive its tough, crude,



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hopeful street spirit from Rasta consciousness, but its musicological basis accrues from an intriguing mixture of African, Caribbean, and American popular idioms. Jamaican music of recent years has been highly susceptible to the American mainstream of rock, soul, blues, rhythm and blues, gospel, jazz—even a fondness for country and western melodic flavorings. All of these elements are traceable in the Jamaican ska and rock steady localisms of the '60s, eventually giving way to the synthesis known today as reggae. Seemingly incompatible but inexplicably infectious layers of polyrhythms, dominant bass lines, casual differentiation between semi and quarter tones, stacy chord progressions, and entrancing broken English vocals characterize reggae. Although blacks perform and support the music in Jamaica, whites, nearly exclusively, comprise the American audience.

Toots and the Maytals' prominence in Jamaica is roughly comparable to that of the Stones or Elton John in the States. In fact, "Toots" Hibbert, the lead singer and songwriter, coined the term "reggae" to describe the trend when it was new. The remaining Maytals are Jerry Mathias and Raleigh Gordon, and their association with Toots extends back over a decade. Toots' lyrics, like those of fellow Jamaican Bob Marley, subscribe to the Rastafarian fondness for Biblical themes, chiefly love and an eventual day of judgement, although Hibbert's are not so sharply apocalyptic as Marley's. Toots' startling proficiency as a songwriter owes largely to his unabashed, truly endearing ability to borrow other's tunes or phrases and reshape them, via the magical reggae beat, into something totally new.

To clarify any confusion, the albums outlined at the beginning on the Dragon label are English imports; the Island release is an American sampling of the two, and comprises Toots and the Maytals' official album debut in this country. Of the imports, *Funky Kingston* has the edge. The production is sharp and clear, bass and drums are prominent, and vocals are resoundingly present. Toots is foremost a soul singer, casting himself in the mold of Sam Cooke, Percy Faith, and, most noticeably, Otis Redding. The band (not credited, but excellent) stretches its performances, immersing the incantatory material with a relentless dynamism. *In The Dark* suffers in comparison to a tendency to samey abbreviation and redundant, gospel backup vocals. Nonetheless, the album yields enough substance to merit repeated delvings. The American *Funky Kingston* purports to gather the best from both in a cautious debut effort, and includes the previously unavailable *Pressure Drop*. The results are mixed, blending a gem like *Pomp And Pride* with a turkey like *Country Road*, but where the imports are unavailable, this Island release is invaluable.

One word of caution for the reggae novice: Toots and the Maytals represent the pure, non-bastardized side of reggae, and, as such, may appear uncommonly coarse. That strangely gripping monotony is the unadulterated charm of reggae. Where it goes from here should concern us all. —gilmore

RED NORVO

VIBES A LA RED—Famous Door HL 105: *The One I Love*; *Tea For Two*; *I'll Be Around*; *Short One For Santa Monica*; *Blues For WRVR*; *Green Dolphin Street*; *Don't Blame Me*; *Runnin' Wild*.

Personnel: Side 1—Norvo, vibes; Hank Jones, piano; Milt Hinton, bass; Jo Jones, drums. Side 2—

Norvo, vibes; Jimmy Rowles, piano; Lloyd Ellis, guitar; Gene Chericco, bass; Donald Bailey, drums.

***** / **

Harry Lim, whose Keynote label caught some of the most profound jazz statements of the '40s, has conveniently segregated the profound from the pedestrian on this LP.

The quartet session occupies all of side one and has almost everything imaginable going for it. Norvo's lightly pulsing lines are alive with clever gems of variation played with a sense of nuance and subtlety seductive to the ears. But more important is the wonderful ensemble sound that frames it all. It's a neat, lean, crisply invigorating atmosphere, due in large measure to Jo Jones' bracing drum work. He is the most musically sensitive jazz drummer playing today. Hinton's playing has a steady snap and avoids the hokum that sometimes creeps into his work. Hank Jones, always an engaging player, has rarely been heard in a more congenial environment. The collective interplay, particularly *One I Love*, is fascinating; his solos are nimble and wryly inventive.

The quintet set on side two sounds cluttered by comparison. Bailey's drumming swings more broadly but without the foxy precision Jones brings to side one. Ellis plays well, although with a trifle too much twang. However, the fatal error was the use of the electric bass in a session that would better be served by subtlety. Chericco's lines are fine, but the instrument is horribly obtrusive. It throws the whole group out of balance. Norvo's delightfully lighthanded touches are trampled under this club-footed rhythm section. —mcdonough

DOLLAR BRAND

SANGOMA—Sackville 3006: *The Aloe And The Wild Rose*; *Fats*, *Duke And The Monk*; *Ancient Africa*.

Here Brand knits African, Christian and jazz themes into a cloak of identity that the pianist/composer hasn't before worn on album. (He's appeared as a sensitive and challenging collaborator on the recent duct album with Gato Barbieri, and as an adventurous arranger of rowdy jubilation on *African Space Program*.) Dramatic, somber rubato movements contrast with folkish tunes and stylized single note and stride bass lines. The result is a weave detailing the past times and places of this far-traveled musician.

In the classic manner of the keyboard muses he calls on, quotes and composes from, Brand has as much technique as he needs to accommodate the breadth of his imagination. Occasional rough touches add a primitive strength to the spiny portrait of the jungle lily and rose, and add percussive significance to the patchwork he makes from *Single Petal Of A Rose*, *Honeysuckle Rose*, *Think Of One*, and his own *Ode To Duke*, *Monk From Harlem*, and *Mumsey Weh*.

As he chants along with the three part *Africa* suite, Brand seems to impose the natural rhythms of tribal work and celebratory songs on the strains of missionary hymns. He's depicting the multi-leveled society of the present as well as the ancient dark continent of myth, in the process improvising a fascinating aural self-portrait. —mandel

NATALIE COLE

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Short of actually playing with jazz musicians, studying and playing their accurately transcribed solos are invaluable learning experiences. The goal is not to imitate but to gain a sense of what we at the professional level continuously strive for.
 —Cannonball Adderley

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Be You; Something For Nothing; I Love Him So Much; How Come You Won't Stay Here; Your Face Stays In My Mind; You.
 Personnel: Cole, vocals.

Ms. Cole's debut album leaves me with a melancholy sadness. Again, it seems, a young promising talent has been exploited by crass commercial producers. Perhaps I should say "creative" producers since Messrs. Chuck Jackson and Marvin Yancy have also "contributed" the tunes and arrangements. The problem is that Jackson and Yancy have mixed the sticky strings of Lawrence Welk with the rhythmic shafts of Isaac Hayes and hyped them up with horn licks from Chicago. The obvious intent was to manufacture a product both funky, sensuous and *au courant*.

If this had been a product to be physically ingested into the body, it would have undoubtedly been recalled by one of the Federal regulatory agencies. Fortunately, there are no governmental gatekeepers attached to the recording industry. Unfortunately, there are cynical gatekeepers in the record business itself whose schemes are calculated solely on the basis of economics. Let the buyer beware.

The album's single socially redeeming value is that it brings to light the voice of Ms. Cole. (By the way, she *is*, indeed, the daughter of the late Nat.) While a competent technician with good intonation, a fair range and a pleasant, breathy tone quality, Ms. Cole does not yet have style and direction of her own. But this may again be due to the handicap of having to work with tunes and arrangements that are devastatingly limited. Clearly, Natalie deserves another opportunity to display her wares.
 —berg

BUDDY FITE

PLAYS FOR SATIN DOLLS—Different Drummer 1001: *Here's That Rainy Day; I Can't Get Started; Moonlight In Vermont; Willow Weep For Me; A Day In The Life Of A Fool; Summer Of '42; Angel Eyes; Sunny; Michelle; Girl Talk.*

Personnel: Fite, guitar; others unidentified.

Fite's a self-taught player whose handling of the instrument bears a superficial resemblance to the polyphonic approach of Lenny Breau. Some of the effects he brings off are admirable from a technical point. But Fite's spotty, incomplete knowledge of harmony gives his music something of an unfinished, patchwork quality—an unsettling tug-of-war between sophistication and naivete—that prevents its coalescing properly or his improvisations taking wing as they should. As a result of his not knowing how to join the disparate elements his intuition has drawn to his music, it's much too disjointed in character, pulled in too many directions at once.

Then, too, his excessive note-bending, use of tremolo bar, or both, is utterly inappropriate—as well as irritating—to the effective performance of the romantic ballads that make up this set. Fite seems to be bending every third or fourth note and that's much too much, turning the effect into a parody of feeling, destroying whatever mood had been set up in the pieces, and turning the program into an exercise in sheer, tasteless absurdity.

You wind up laughing at these performances, and I am sure that's not what Fite intended the listener should do. Producer Robert Mersey should have taken greater pains with this project, which suffers from an acute case of the bends.
 —welding

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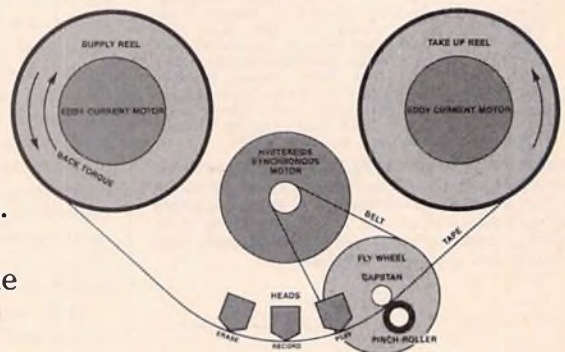
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Cedar Walton



VERYL OAKLAND

by leonard feather

Cedar Anthony Walton, Jr. made his first substantial dent in the New York scene when he joined J.J. Johnson's combo in 1958. Dallas-born, he had studied with his mother, a piano teacher. He first came to the Apple in '55 but was sidetracked by the Army from '56-8.

Walton's trenchant post-bop lines came to international attention through his stints with the Jazztet, and most conspicuously with Art Blakey's Messengers (alongside Hubbard, Shorter, et. al.) from 1961-64.

Recently he has been branching out in two directions. On his latest album he heads an electronically oriented 9-man group, in which he plays electric keyboards and synthesizers. In person, however, at the Light-house in Hermosa Beach, he showed up with a tightly-knit quartet, playing only acoustic piano; his sidemen were George Coleman, Sam Jones and Billy Higgins.

"We've managed to come up with a formula that enables us to promote our new recordings with the quartet," said Walton. "In fact, some of the tunes, like *Soul Trane*, sound even more exciting this way."

Walton's survey of fellow keyboarders was his first blindfold test. He was given no information about the records played.

1. MCCOY TYNER. *Desert Cry* (from *Sama Layuca*, Milestone). Tyner, composer, piano; John Stubblefield, oboe.

That's concert music of the highest order. My first impression is due mainly to the mix. It sounds like the piano is mixed up-front, as compared to what normally would be the solo instrument—the soprano saxophone.

It had an extremely pastoral quality while also retaining an eastern flavor, which has got to be McCoy Tyner. I thought it was McCoy because of the universality approach . . . he reaches so far. I get the feeling of his appeal to mankind, a quest for eternal peace for his fellow man. I enjoyed it extremely well.

I envy him, because with this kind of music I would be personally a little hesitant at doing it in a club; it sounds like it belongs in a very serious listening situation, where you don't have to compete with drinks, admissions, cover charges and minimums. I'd like to hear it in a concert hall or on a record, or in my own home enjoying a night of pleasure.

I'd give it 5 stars; I enjoyed it totally.

Feather: I think the lead instrument was an oboe.

Walton: Yeah, I was wondering about that.

2. BOBBY HUTCHERSON. *Yuyo* (from *Man-tara*, Blue Note). Hutcherson, composer and marimba; Dave Troncoso, bass; Larry Nash, Rhodes piano; Ernie Watts, flute.

First of all, I'm in love with the marimba. I know Bobby Hutcherson, so an educated guess would be that it is Bobby, because I know he just recently had a release on Blue Note where he played exclusively marimba.

I was impressed with the performance of the tune, even though it was a typical jazz musician's

rendition of a Latin-flavored piece. I couldn't resist the bass player; occasionally he'd get bored with his chores of repeating that line over, so he'd put some of his own things in, which were quite exciting to me. But it took away from the authenticity of the Latin style, which is their prerogative. I would do the same thing, after about the 90th repeat on one of those figures I'd have to do something.

The keyboard player laid back. I had the feeling that he was purposely trying to stay in the Latin groove when he played, but I have no idea who it was.

It was an interesting piece in form, too, sort of an A. B. with a lower case C (an 8-bar interlude). They only improvised on the AB part. They left out the 8-bar interlude with the chromatic-rooted ascending tonalities and harmonies.

It was a nice piece. I enjoyed it. It was pleasantly constructed and hung together very well; there was some authenticity in the rhythm section. I'd give it 3 stars.

3. LES McCANN. *Us* (from *Hustle To Survive*, Atlantic). Miroslaw Kudykowski, Harold Davis, James E. Rowser & Les McCann, composers; McCann, electric keyboard.

That was the world's heavyweight funk champion, Les McCann. The thing about Les is that he's had so much experience recording. About 15 years ago he was about to embark on a keyboard career and he sounded like he could play only the blues, or sing a few simple tunes, but he always had such a powerful thing. Now he has refined his talent . . . his singing, his timing. He's got a lot to offer, he's a great artist.

The overdubbing on this track, the way it was all coordinated musically, rhythmically, is typical of Les' most recent work, which I am very im-

pressed with, because of the excitement and seemingly uncluttered, unpretentious approach to music that he has.

I'd give it 4 stars.

4. THE JAZZ PIANO QUARTET. *Watch It!* (from *Let It Happen*, RCA). Dick Hyman, piano, composer; Roland Hanna, piano; Marian McPartland, piano; Hank Jones, piano.

The first name that comes to mind is Dollar Brand, but it's a little too clean for Dollar. Then I decided it was a female. Mary Lou Williams' name flashed through my mind. In the middle it sounded like Aretha Franklin, but I dismissed it as being too weak for Aretha . . . not as strong as her attack I should say. Her roots are in the gospel style.

You've got me. I give up. I enjoyed the performance. It sounded gospelized but I didn't recognize the tune and I assume it was an original tune by the performer. I'd give it three stars.

Feather: Actually there were four pianists on this album.

Walton: Really? Well, it must have been very meticulously arranged. Not necessarily all written, but those people certainly knew where to come in.

5. DAVE BRUBECK. *Call Of The Wild* (from *Two Generations Of Brubeck*, Atlantic). Perry Robinson, clarinet, composer; Dave Brubeck, acoustic piano; Darius Brubeck, electric piano; Jerry Bergonzi, tenor sax.

With this type of performance I always find myself on the outside looking in. Very appreciatively, though; I'm satisfied by the excitement. There are some tonalities which leave something to be desired in terms of logical conclusions.

The saxophone solo was very impressive. Could be somebody like Albert Ayler, or possibly Dewey Redman. Reminds me of an album Charlie Haden put out a few years ago. This was freedom in a positive sense; they sounded like they were having fun. I enjoyed it very much; for what it was, I'd give it three

6. LARRY RIDLEY. *Chamga Chikuyo* (from *Sum Of The Parts*, Strata-East). Onaje Allan Gumbs, composer, keyboard; Ridley, acoustic bass; Sonny Fortune, flute; Grady Tate, drums; Earl Bennett, percussion.

There again we have an unrecognizable personnel. It was a pleasant enough melody, nice harmony. But the rhythm—the percussion in particular—never settled. Especially when they were on their own. The bass tended to be a settling factor when he came back in.

The flute player was—ah—competent. I got the impression they should have played this a little longer before they recorded it. They didn't rehearse it quite enough to get it clean. I sense a little tension.

Overall, I would rate it about two stars.

7. AHMAD JAMAL. *Woody'n You* (from *But Not For Me*, Cadet). Jamal, piano; Dizzy Gillespie, composer; Israel Crosby, bass; Vernel Fournier, drums. Recorded 1958.

That was of course the historic recording of the famous Ahmad Jamal Trio, with Israel Crosby and Vernel Fournier, recorded at the Pershing Room if I'm not mistaken, probably in the late '50s. Ahmad had the big hit record at that time on *But Not For Me*. This is Dizzy Gillespie's *Woody'n You*.

This kind of performance should go in a time capsule, because for me, as a young pianist trying to soak up as much experience as I could, I can remember very vividly how much I was impressed by his approach. The critics at the same were calling that sound "cocktail jazz," sort of a distilled, watered-down form. I think Ahmad may have been secretly trying to live that down. But he certainly didn't have to, for me. He's one of my all time favorite artists. So, five stars for Jamal.

db

Profile

FRANK STRAZZERI

by herb wong

For the past fifteen years, the versatile and impressive work of pianist-composer Frank Strazzeri has been heard mainly as a member of a variety of jazz groups, and he has surfaced on his own records in a low-keyed, sporadic pattern. Frank's pianistic pathways can be heard on albums recorded by Carmell Jones, Terry Gibbs, Harold Land, Herb Ellis, Gerald Wilson, Oliver Nelson and Cal Tjader—a recent association.

By no means is Frank a sophomore in the jazz world, but as in the case of a sizable cadre of tenaciously dedicated jazz musicians, he has surely paid his dues and needs to be considered with thoughtful awareness. In a recent issue of *down beat* (10/9/75), trumpeter Bobby Shew waxed enthusiastically about Strazzeri: "a giant, a master, an incredibly underrated player, a complete genius." In person, Bobby remarked to me, "I meant every word . . . 'Strazz' is fantastic!"

Frank studied classical piano at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, the city of his birth. He reminisced, "I grew up listening to my Uncle Joe playing swing piano à la Teddy Wilson and Mel Powell. I also dug the boogie woogie of Albert Ammons, Pete Johnson, Meade Lux Lewis, and Ken Kersey. Likewise my ears were tuned into Diz, Stitt, Clifford Brown, Bird, and Bud Powell. This period of interest paralleled my playing piano during the Korean War; I was playing on military bases and had time to devote to listening to the giants.

"I came out of the service and landed a job in Rochester with a local trio. The club owner brought in many jazz greats from New York—Benney Green, Roy Eldridge, J.J., Joe Carroll, Billie Holiday, Tony Scott, Teddy Charles and Teddy Kotick. I was 20 years old and gained much experience playing behind them. I also listened a lot to the local cats.

"You must listen a lot to be in jazz, and preferably should be living in an area where you can hear a good deal of it in person. You just can't be listening to records exclusively. I do recognize that many musicians' early experiences were via records; but for me, I could just go to town to catch Miles, Getz, Silver, etc. in person . . . maybe I was born at the right place at the right time."

It is clear that Frank is keenly aware of the heritage of jazz on a number of levels. Without any blandishment, Frank cites incidents, trends and modes with ease and some degree of refreshing unpredictability. "I like what I think is good, of course. As for jazz composing/arranging, the guy that sticks with me is Gigi Gryce—what he did with five or six guys was like a little big band, one of the first really organized types of playing. Not a "normal" little band jamming, but one definitely reflecting an arranger's mind, utilizing everyone. Gigi said something I had never heard. Bear in mind, the voicings weren't intricate in today's context or standards, but they were fresh to me when I heard them. As for today's material, I prefer the work of Gil Evans, Bob James, Don Sebesky, and Mike Barone among others.

Today, the forms of jazz have changed dramatically. Arrangers write no key signatures and they set no rules for bars. I play things on piano and then when I put them on paper, they are a virtual mix—even when they sound "normal"; 8 bars are really 9 bars or 11 bars, for instance. Things start in one key and end in another."

Since Frank exhibits acute sensitivity in his voicings, his overall impressions are of interest. "Present pianists voice beautifully—Chick, McCoy, and Bill Evans, for instance, warrant consideration. Art Tatum used some voicings that are the greatest; we'll never approach them har-

monically. He went thru them so fast it's difficult to realize what he was doing. Today's pianists continue to accelerate changes of forms and voicing. Keith Jarrett and Herbie Hancock, along with the others, have changed the 'feeling' in that they are really arrangers . . . this comes thru in the way they play and the way they write their music down, searching out and carrying out their ideas to enhance the music they project. On the West Coast, I've also enjoyed Hampton Hawes, Mike Wolff, Jimmy Rowles.

"If I have an all-time favorite, a pianist who fits into every bag and every role, it's Hank Jones. If I owe anyone anything, it would be learning how to try to play tastefully, and I learned that from Hank. This man always plays with taste, grace, and finesse . . . and he always swings. It's not easy to

Menza and Cherico were also on the session that produced *View from Within*, Strazzeri's earlier record on Creative World.

Another sharp focus of Frank's perception is the continuity and interrelationships of jazz's past, present and future. "Some say, 'Forget the past, today's the thing.' Well, I don't ever want to forget the yesterdays. It's just life, after all, relative and not a matter of isolated comparison. What Joe Henderson plays today and what Charlie Parker played yesterday can't be forgotten today and tomorrow.

"I find that when I sit down and play something, I'll use it for something. In the past I just played the piano, period. I never went anywhere; however, today I play and write it down to use in some eventual context. The circle is rounder and larger



play with grace and class. It's not just slam bang and just puttin' your soul across!"

Up until this past spring, Frank had been playing in Cal Tjader's group for the last year and more. "I had never worked a Latin-type job in my 27 years of playing. When the call from Tjader came, I suddenly launched into one of the richest experiences of my life. I feel Cal showed much confidence in me when he was planning his ballad album and offered me the chance to arrange the material. I have always viewed myself (and so have most others) as a jazz pianist and not a serious writer, although I have been writing for years. I believe that a good arranger needs lots of knowledge, imagination and genuine confidence from someone else; I am indebted to Cal for this supportive attitude."

Speaking of a Latin jazz orientation, Frank's new Lp, *Frames* (Glendale) is generally of Latin concept. Frank wrote all of the tunes and used musicians with whom he has strong familiarity or ties through experience: Frank Rosolino, Gary Barone, Don Menza and Gene Cherico. Rosolino,

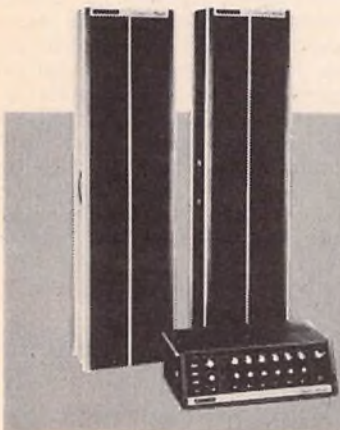
than it was years ago. For years, certain musicians just didn't fit; but they fit perfectly today—you can be a good arranger/composer and use jazz musicians in the frame to put the ideas across."

It is very apparent that Frank has not been playing jazz piano for the sake of achieving economic success. His long range goal is artistic self-sufficiency to some degree. "I am a firm believer in being yourself. I don't really care about playing in the total scope of others. I have to be myself, as well as enjoy others. I don't favor either side of the 'time coin.' There are heartaches and warm fulfillments from the past and from the present."

Frank Strazzeri's recent work can be heard at its best on Cal Tjader's *Last Night When We Were Young* (Fantasy), and his own LPs: 1973's *View From Within* (Creative World) and Strazz' latest, *Frames*, on the Glendale label. The last of these has already drawn critical praise for Frank's ever-expanding capabilities as an impeccable pianist and writer-arranger of wide-ranging imagination. db

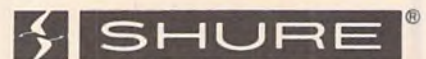


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VISIONS OF POWER

Mandeville Auditorium,
University of California, San Diego

Personnel: Burgess Meredith, selected readings from Carlos Castaneda; Charles Lloyd, flute, Chinese oboe, Lyricon woodwind synthesizer.

With actor Burgess Meredith reading from Carlos Castaneda, and transcendental jazzman Charles Lloyd backing him on flute, *Visions Of Power* promised to be anything from a mind-blowing foray into psychotropic imagery to a multi-media extravaganza. But ironically, the show waxed surprisingly mellow, not sensationalistic and not jazz. It played to a disappointingly small audience.

The curtain rose on a simple, candle-lit stage. Lloyd and Meredith sat cross-legged on Indian rugs and pillows, sticks of incense burning at their sides. Meredith immediately announced that the evening would involve

text. In fact, there were several times when Meredith reached a good stopping point and demonstrably looked to Lloyd for a flute solo. Eyes closed in meditational ambience, Charles sometimes missed his cue.

There were better moments. Lloyd opened the evening with an acoustic flute solo, holding his fingerings near the mike for a clever clicking effect. Three improvisations on Chinese oboe proved captivating, particularly his post-concert exhibition with its Eastern motif and blowing jazz section. The synthesizer was used generally as a quiet mood-setter as Burgess read from the finale to Castaneda's Don Juan series, but the Lyricon's mouthpiece attachment was occasionally used to good effect. Played much like a clarinet, this bell-less gizmo creates sympathetic harmonic variations with or without Lloyd's blowing, and he sometimes played the keys without using the mouthpiece. It's an inconsistently played instrument at this point, but its possi-



DAN ROSEN

readings not only from Castaneda, but from other "psychonauts" as well, and the low-key, conversational atmosphere took on the feel of a mid-Sixties sensitivity session. As Meredith prefaced Castaneda with meditational passages from Merrell-Wolfe and John Lilly, Lloyd noodled weirdly with the first of many knobs on his new synthesizer.

Charles Lloyd, an impressive tenor saxophonist and flutist, has been critically castigated for his apparently trendy experimentations with Oriental philosophies, rock 'n roll (the last touring quartet), and other dubious musical directions (like the *Moonman* album). But "*Visions Of Power*" found him in his true light—an honest, gentle, articulate man in pursuit of the mystic. His peaceful demeanor on stage was absorbing, and his wrinkle-free visage radiated an appropriate nascence.

Lloyd's experimentations with the Lyricon panelboard, however, were less than cosmic. Most of the concert was spent in twisting dials and changing pitch, tone, or volume. At first interesting, Lloyd's tamperings eventually became tiresome and diversionary, random experimentations with few connections to the

bilities are substantial.

The program was successful more as an augmented lecture, really, than a concert. Much of the audience left too quickly, for Lloyd and Meredith soon reappeared for a question-and-answer rap with the students. The twosome, who became close friends while neighbors in Malibu, talked about consciousness raising, modern gurus, and personal experiences. Lloyd performed his stunning solo on Chinese oboe, then frankly discussed his turn away from drugs and toward transcendental meditation. In this light, the infamous Charles Lloyd changes, and the unusual *Visions Of Power* presentation, became more understandable. —bob henschen

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Tom Petterson, Gary Foster, Dick Spencer, Bill Perkins, reeds and flutes; Garnett Brown, Charlie Loper, Britt Woodman, Phil Teel, trombones; Gene Cherico, bass; Peter Donald, drums.

If the era of big band jazz is indeed dead, a swinging funeral was held at Howard Rumsey's intimate establishment, which comfortably seats 200. A full house was on hand for the band's rare, one-night-only engagement, following their well-received appearances at the Kool and Monterey Festivals. All present were no doubt wondering if exposure in such an amicable setting would be conducive to a loosening of Toshiko's programming, allowing featured musicians more solo time, something that's not possible within the stifling confines of time restrictions placed on a festival date. As it turned out, the band was able to exhibit 12 lengthy compositions during three sets.

Upon entering the club, I immediately wondered whether a band that numbered 16 strong could be restrained from blowing the audience away in a club of this size. To my pleasant surprise, due in part to the use of completely acoustic instrumentation, a high decibel noise factor never materialized.

Following Toshiko's eloquent introduction, the band swung into a traditional 4/4 blues opener. Aptly titled *Tuning Up* (bassist Cherico was still doing just that), this number elicited a positive response from the cosmopolitan crowd, composed of diverse age groups. Everyone immediately realized this was a tight, well-rehearsed band. Particularly notable was the gutsy, vocal quality of Tabackin's tenor voice and the unison of the trumpet section, of which this and other arrangements were quite demanding.

Then it was Toshiko's turn, as she began *Elegy* with a brief, inventive interlude, over the plush background of five muted trumpets. Cherico, now in tune, took a soulful stroll on bass, as Peter Donald lightly rode the high hat. An arresting effect.

The next four selections made it quite evident that, for the most part, the band is firmly rooted in a traditional, hard-driving, mainstream approach. Yet Toshiko is also wise enough to provide contrast by implementing many mellow elements in her arrangements. For example, *The First Night* began with orchestration requiring the entire reed section to double on flutes (3 C's and 2 altos in G), in a flowing cerebral arrangement; while *Sumie* ultimately concluded with the trumpet section bending quarter-tone slides in unison, thus resolving tension built up throughout the composition.

On *Quadrille Anyone?*, an updated adaptation of traditional 19th century European dance music, Gary Foster's virtuosity on soprano sax was particularly noteworthy. His fluent and full sound was to be matched only by Bobby Shew, who spent some bright moments in the upper register, while playing fluegelhorn on a pretty ballad called *Memory*. Few players—Freddie Hubbard is one—can affect such an impeccable, clear, yet emotional sound on this instrument.

Kogan was a piece on which Toshiko combined abstract dissonant elements from the Noh Theatre (a traditional Japanese artform) with the changing tempi of the band's mainstream sound. It was the evening's high point. The composition began and ended with Tabackin soaring on flute over an Oriental chant and the dissonant rhythm of a Tsuzumi (a two-headed drum which varies in pitch). These last two elements were introduced by way of a prerecorded tape. Toshiko

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HOW TO select electronic music studio equipment

by Dr. William L. Fowler and Roy Pritts

In the January 30, 1975 *How To* column, Bob Burnham and Tom Likes delineated the techniques and equipment necessary for home recording success. But those interested in sophisticated signal processing and sound synthesis, as well as quality recording and reproduction, must equip their studios with much more than just mikes, tape decks, and speakers. To aid in the purchase of the right equipment at the right price for such studios, here is up-to-date information from Roy Pritts, just back from the Audio Engineers Society demonstrations of the latest in studio electronics:

"There are four system-divisions in an electronic music studio—synthesis, signal processing, recording, and playback.

...

Synthesis:

Because the market is flooded with all types of synthesizers, each with its own particular sound, its own specific applications, and its own inherent limitations, careful selection is necessary. For live performance, the non-modular synthesizer has the advantages of switches, pre-set choice of voices, and speed in handling. And it costs the least. Moog, Arp, Roland, Steiner-Parker, and other makers offer a variety of live performance units. For studio use, the modular synthesizer has the advantage of patching capabilities: it is a collection of sound-generating, sound-modifying modules. Increased flexibility is to be found in the larger units from such manufacturers as Moog, Arp, Aries, Synthi, Buchla, E Mu, Steiner-Parker, and others. An added advantage of the modular system is the ability to expand the unit as dollars become available and needs become identified. In general, what is gained in operational speed with non-modular synthesizers limits their studio use. Conversely, high quality, high versatility modular systems can prove unwieldy in live performance.

...

Signal processing:

Aside from the features for modifying sound that a synthesizer might contain, there are several valuable items to be considered for outboard equipment. Equalization, for instance, will prove a valuable tool. One can get suitable results from two-octave band program equalizers made by BSR or Radio Shack, to one-octave band units by Advent, and ultimately to one third-octave units by Urci. Special effects devices (such as phase shifters, tape echoes, ring modulators, and multi-dividers) can enhance the processing package. But they must be properly interfaced to the system because many such units are designed for use with guitar amplifiers and therefore may not match the input impedance of studio equipment. Choice of a mixer or mixing console is of great importance; individual channel equalization, echo send, limiters or compressors, and output panning and assignment are highly desirable features. But professional recording mixing consoles with these features can cost many thousand dollars. Studio mixers from Quantum, Stevenson, Gately, or Tascam begin to look logical at about \$5000. But mixers built for public address systems have brought many recording features into the market at reasonable cost. One can find some reasonable choices among the P. A. boards from Peavey, Yamaha, Shure, Altec, and others. Compact mixers begin to give up individual features as their price goes down, but Sony and Yamaha attempt to meet feature needs at prices under a thousand dollars. The best thing to look for is maximum number of input and output lines. Then selected processing features can be added as one can afford them.

...

Recording:

Since the tape recorder also functions as a system to store sound and as a tool in composing and manipulating sound, studios never seem to have too many available recording channels. The minimum requirement is two machines, a multi-track recorder and a mixdown recorder. But additional transports for tape looping, echoing, etc. will expand studio resources greatly. Since the most expensive tape recorder is the multi-track machine, its features should be carefully examined. Separate record and playback heads are desirable, and a sel-sync feature is a must. Easy editing requires easy access to the head group and a playback-edit feature. The recorder should also be set up to use high-output, low-noise tape. Tape speeds of 7½ and 15 IPS are suitable for moderate studio use, but 15 and 30 IPS are standard for professional mastering. Among the choices of moderately-priced two and four-track, quarter-inch tape recorders are units from Crown, Sony, Teac, Otari, and Akai. Teac (Tascam) is now showing an eight-track recorder for half-inch tape.

The next step up is a big one in both price and quality. Professional multi-track recorders use wider tape tracks, thus requiring wider tape formats. Cost in these recorders is about one thousand dollars per channel, compared to about \$400 per channel in the suitable quarter inch machines. Some names to shop for are Ampex, MCI, Studer, Scully, and 3M. Selection should be on the basis of desirable features, serviceability, and cost.

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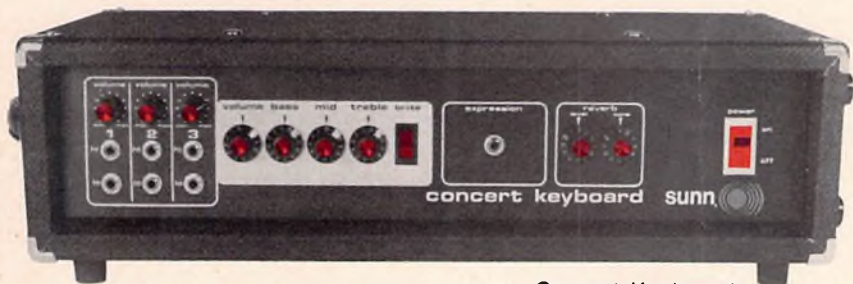
Playback:

For the electronic music studio, four channel "quad" is ideal, because electronic music finds a natural vehicle in the quad sound environment. The size of the studio is the guide for power requirements. About \$400 per channel must be allowed for something on the order of 75 watts driving a 50 liter loudspeaker system.

And finally, all the studio equipment—synthesis, signal processing, recording, and playback—must be hooked up by a qualified technician."

Table A: Synthesizers <i>Moderate Studio Use</i> (under \$2K) Non-modular design Fixed voice selection One or two oscillators with limited waves.	<i>Good Studio Use</i> (\$2K to \$5K) Some patching ability Outboard expandable Two or more oscillators with all basic waves Modest sequencer Two voice polyphonic	<i>Best Studio Use</i> (\$5K and up) Full modular design Totally expandable Four or more oscillators with all basic waves Programmable sequencer Full polyphonic
Table B: Mixers <i>Moderate Studio Use</i> (under \$1K) 6-in, 2-out no EQ Has output switching Output VU meters only No echo send Non-modular	<i>Good Studio Use</i> (\$1K to \$5K) 8-in, 4-out some EQ Some output panning Input-Output VU Echo send and return Modular design	<i>Best Studio Use</i> (\$5K and up) 10-in, 8-out or more, full EQ Quad output panning Input-output dB meters Panning echo send/return Modular design with patchbay
Table C: Recorders <i>Moderate Studio Use</i> (@\$200 per channel) 2-track stereo ¼ track headwidth Fair editing Tape speeds 1½, 3¾, 7½ IPS	<i>Good Studio Use</i> (@\$300 to \$500 per channel) 2 to 4-track sel-sync ¼ track headwidth Good editing Tape speeds 3¾, 7½, 15 IPS	<i>Best Studio Use</i> (@\$1K per channel) 2 to (40) track sel-sync ¼ and ½ track headwidth Excellent editing Tape speeds 7½, 15, 30 IPS
Table D: Some Possible Combinations (but the list goes on, and on, and on!)		
<i>Moderate Studio</i> Live performance synthesizer \$1400. Assorted Mikes 200. 6-in, 2-out mixer 500. 2 octave band EQ 80. Stereo playback 200. 2-track recorder 300. 2-track recorder 300.	<i>Good Studio</i> Patchable synthesizer \$2000. Assorted Mikes 400. 8-in, 4-out mixer 2000. 1 octave band EQ (2) 600. Quad playback 400. 4-track recorder 1500. 2-track recorder 500.	<i>Best Studio</i> Modular synthesizer (plus other instruments) \$5000. Assorted mikes 1000. 10-in, 8-out mixer 10000. ½ octave band EQ(2) 2000. Quad playback 2500. 8-track recorder 9000. 4-track recorder 5000. 2-track recorder 3000.

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Perspective THE FINE ART OF RECORDING FINE ART

by charles mitchell

When it rains, it pours. Serious listeners of jazz and contemporary music have had so few recordings to be pleased with in the past several years that 1975 must have seemed like Utopia: the Fantasy/Prestige/Milestone, Blue Note, and RCA sets of reissues; Arista's Freedom catalog and Braxton recordings; Norman Granz' by-and-large exceptional Pablos. It may seem that the market is clogged with saccharine soul sounds and forgettable funk fusions, but look around . . .

Of all the new mass-distributed labels currently involved with the intelligent presentation of intelligent music, it strikes me that Manfred Eicher's Munich-based, American Polydor-distributed ECM Records may have the farthest-reaching musical and technical influence. Artistically, ECM's roster speaks for itself: Keith Jarrett, Gary Burton, Ralph Towner, Jan Garbarek, and others involved with the legitimate development of new forms in a broadened area of instrumental, compositional, and improvisational possibility. In the technical area of musical sound as

and I prefer a very transparent, clear sound. We've experimented a lot with the engineers trying to find out how to get it. Though I think every producer should take some time in finding out how to place a microphone properly, there are really no big secrets technically. I think it's much more a difference in personal styles and ears.

"I like an airy musical sound. It should be as transparent as being able to look through all the trees in a forest. You should be able to see everything clearly—all the elements . . . the sun above, the grass—not just the trees. I want to get full instrumental tones, all the overtones, a clear, transparent sound."

To achieve this sound, Manfred usually goes to one of three locations: Studio Bauer in Stuttgart, the Arne Bendriksen Studio in Oslo, or, occasionally, Generation Sound in New York. "These days," he asserts, "all of the studios are very well equipped. It doesn't really matter where I record, but it is necessary to have a definite idea of what the project should sound like. I use the Bendriksen Studio because we record a lot of Oslo musicians; it's good and convenient. In Stuttgart, I've been working with the engineers for ten



SERINE HASTINGS

documented on vinyl. Eicher's meticulous attention to detail and quality is setting new standards that, sooner or later, the cost-cut-crazy American recording industry will have to deal with.

ECM's musicians are so loyal and enthusiastic about what Eicher is doing that this in itself sets the company apart from other labels, where legendary battles often rage between artists and the middlemen who seek to turn creative endeavor into "product." So, on a recent trip to Europe, I made it my business to visit Munich, meet Eicher and his associates, Thomas Stöwsand and Dieter Bonhorst, and try to glean the secret of ECM's success, in studio and out.

Eicher formed ECM (Editions of Contemporary Music) in 1970 after studying contra-bass and composition, playing with the Berlin Philharmonic and as a freelance jazzman, and working as an independent producer for Deutsche Grammophon, Electrola, and other companies involved with classical music. He insists there are no big secrets to the technique he has evolved to produce such flawless recordings. "Each producer has his own style, 38 □ down beat

years. They know what I want, and we can do records very fast." ECM projects are generally recorded in about two days, with a third reserved for mixing.

Eicher likes to go outside of Munich to record: getting away from the extra-musical aspects of his business enables him to establish the proper mind-set for the upcoming recording project. "I think you should have your mind together when you go in the studio. Maybe the music isn't completely finished, but you should know exactly what you want to do. However, you must be flexible enough to leave space for change if it comes up. Our short recording time keeps everything very concentrated, but I don't want the musicians to feel pushed or pressured in any direction. The structure of the record must thus be determined and agreed upon before we go into the studio."

The nature of the project will determine just how Eicher will set up his session and how many tracks he'll use on the recording. He doesn't necessarily put each musician on a separate track, and has strong views on what can and can't be done at a mixing board.

"We have made some two-track recordings where a rehearsal was done in the studio and the recording mixed as we were doing the take. Keith's *In The Light* was recorded this way, on just two tracks. It's not simply a matter of putting each musician on a separate track—it's the presentation on the tape, the dimension you get, no matter how many tracks. I've heard many multi-track productions where everyone sounds right up front and there's no depth at all.

"There's a certain philosophy that says let's leave all the refinements to the mixing. Most projects turn out to be complete bombs if they're done that way. You have to get as much as you can in the studio. In a 16-track recording, particularly, you have to be very meticulous with the mike placement, because it's impossible to get overtones afterwards—you can brighten things up a bit, that's all. Mixing is good for balancing, and making some equalizations, but you can't get a dull-sounding piano to sing in the mix."

The producer can choose to take a variety of roles in the studio, some active, some passive. Again, it's a matter of personal style. Since most of the ECM music is quiet, intimate, almost fragile, it's not unusual that Eicher's disposition in the studio is frequently inclined in the same direction. "A recording session is not a showcase for anyone," he says. "It's a very intimate atmosphere; you see things and hear things people never hear. These may be very, very private and personal things. I think the producer's function is primarily psychological. You have to know a lot about music and a lot about recording technique, but you don't necessarily have to show off everything you know. A musician should never feel that you're preaching to him or, worst of all, intimidating him. You can get almost anything you want, but there are ways to get it. Each person is different, and needs to be approached differently."

The ECM vinyl bill is also apt to be higher than that of most companies, because Eicher refuses to allow studio clarity to be marred by inferior pressings and the snap-crackle-pop they create. Actually, ECM had been having severe problems with its Polydor-pressed American editions, which began to be released in 1973. To put it bluntly, they were awful until mid-1975, when Eicher hired Robert Hurwitz as his domestic label coordinator. Vinyl quality has since improved considerably, as have sales. Eicher terms the vinyl shortage that had the industry running scared last year, "an excuse that the manufacturers in the States invented so they could release inferior product. If you pay the right price, you get the quality vinyl. We pay much more than we have to pay, but this is necessary if we're to properly represent this subtle, quiet music that we're recording."

That music's quality speaks for itself, and surely no one listener is guaranteed of enjoying everything that appears on the ECM label. But there can be no denying Eicher's honest approach, devoted to representing the artist and his creations in the best possible format. Manfred feels it isn't necessary to dilute a musician's creative resources in order to achieve that "wider audience" that so many chart-oriented companies and musicians keep prattling about. If the musician is sincere, his time will come, Eicher feels.

"I'm very happy that artists like Keith Jarrett and Gary Burton never had to change



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their styles; they're still playing what they've always played as far as style is concerned. Now Keith is perhaps one of the most successful piano artists in the States and Gary is doing better than ever after all these years. I think that more people are hearing Ralph Towner now, also."

Most of the ECM label's music represents a turn away from specific single forms (words) such as "jazz," "rock," or "classical," moving more into a generally contemporary format, employing all forms to create new styles based on a musician's personal approach towards the materials he combines to fashion his art. "Most of our musicians really aren't thinking in terms of 'jazz' at all," notes Eicher. "They're informed about everything, and they have a wide perspective in all the

arts. Music doesn't just come from *playing* music, if you know what I mean; and because these people are widely educated and aware, they will not be limited to any categories you can name. The main thing is the music, not the category."

Thus it appears that, for the first time in the recording of contemporary improvised music at any rate, we can speak of a recording process that is more fully integrated with the music—an art to match the art being documented. "It's a different atmosphere and presentation," Manfred sums up. "I want to have a situation where the musicians really feel they can make the complete statement they want to make everytime they record for us. If you listen to all but four or five of the 70 records in our catalog, you'll find that

there is the same aesthetic feeling to them, though each one is musically completely different. It's like in the early days of the French cinema's *nouvelle vague*. Godard, Resnais, Truffaut, and Chabrol each had a completely different statement to make; but they all had a similar general aesthetic desire. And those films go very well together, even though each is very different from the next. It is the same with our recordings, a matter of attitude and shared ideals."

CAUGHT

continued from page 35

then came forth with another all-too-brief solo, combining the mellow melodic inventiveness of early Hancock with the soulful enthusiasm of contemporary Tyner. Although her greatest strength lies in her arranging abilities, she's also a hell of a player.

Anything put forth after this point had to be anticlimactic, and the band returned to playing tunes a bit more limited in scope than *Kogan*. Not much new territory was to be covered compositionally throughout the remainder of the third set, although the band remained as technically tight as ever.

The myriad of possibilities that could be explored by Toshiko, if she continues to infuse eastern elements of her rich cultural background with the western tradition of the band, truly staggers the imagination.

—gary g. vercelli

JULIUS HEMPHILL ENSEMBLE

The Loretto Hilton, St. Louis

Personnel: Julius Hemphill, alto and soprano saxophones; J. D. Parran, tenor saxophone, alto clarinet, piccolo, percussion, small instruments; Baikida E. J. Carroll, trumpet, flugelhorn, percussion, small instruments; Eric Foreman, electric bass; Arzina Richardson, acoustic bass; Ray Eldridge, acoustic bass; Papa Glenn Wright, drums.

Julius Hemphill's lengthy and much-appreciated visit to St. Louis resulted in several concerts of varying personnel and size, as well as some recording activity and sitting-in stints with a local BAG offshoot known as Third Circuit in Spirit. This highly-productive return to his one-time home culminated with an ambitious performance at what is perhaps the closest thing St. Louis has to offer in terms of an acoustically-perfect auditorium—The Loretto Hilton.

Hemphill's continually evolving style and changing directions were reflected in both his choice of musicians and set of compositions. For this performance, he purposely did not use selections from any of his albums (including his first recording for the Arista/Freedom label) nor did he use material from that multi-media extravaganza, *The Coon Town Bicentennial Memorial Service*, which he co-composed along with Baikida E. J. Carroll and Fontella Bass. The seven lengthy tunes performed at the Loretto were comparatively new pieces; for Hemphill, they represented what he was into at the time. They may never be heard again.

Hemphill did not play flute on this occasion, and his alto sax was heard only a few times. For the most part, he indulged the soprano sax—an instrument he's been playing extensively the past few months. Carroll,

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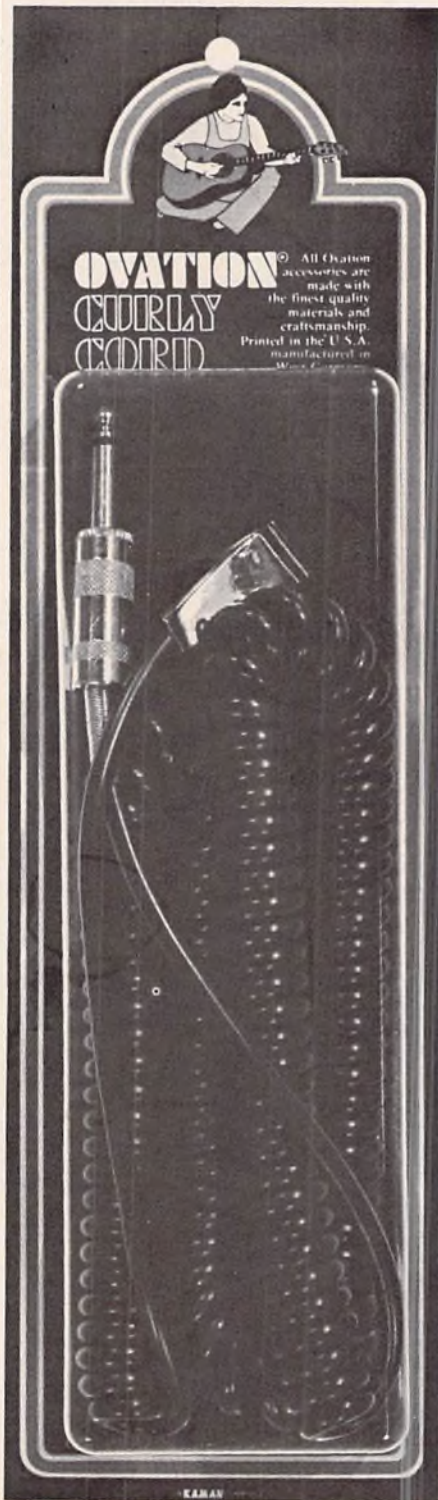
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has gotten so that whatever she does people think it's electronic. Actually nobody but us know what is electronics and what isn't. Her voice is very unusual," continued Michal. "Electronics is not as big a part of what she does as everybody thinks. . . ."

"It's like the raisins in the cake—a cake consisting of pure voice," added Urszula.

Urbaniak went on: "When I was getting into synthesizer years ago and we were thinking of using Urszula's voice in conjunction with it, she said, 'Look, I can do the same sounds *without* the synthesizer.' If she were to record just an acoustic voice track, you would be amazed to hear what she really does with voice acoustically. Mostly all she does is delay her voice with tape, actually all she uses for her voice is a kind of echoplex and ring modulator. . . . But in a way electronics are important. When she does her unaccompanied solos she uses tape in a way that is very crucial, and I think it's the best use of the echoplex anybody has ever done. It's part of her voice as an instrument. The way she switches heads for varying delay effects is a science in itself." Urbaniak noted that many of the things Urszula is doing acoustically with her voice probably wouldn't have happened if there hadn't been electronics around.

"Well, not entirely," Urszula disagreed, suggesting that some of her sounds were developed prior to hearing from electronic or other sources. Urbaniak still thought he was right, however, and decided she'd heard the sounds at some point; they had lodged at the edge of her subconscious, waiting for a hearing.

Besides voice and electronics, Urszula revels in miscellaneous percussion; her brother played drums, and since sibling rivalry is a fundamental force in the universe, she too became a percussionist.

"I have this whole table of percussion and it's part of me, but how I use it depends on how I feel," she explained. "Many times in Europe when I felt like singing, I'd forget about the table of percussion instruments and just sing, sing, sing. Then the next day, I might get completely into percussion and not sing so much. But you see, I wanted to be surrounded by as many things as I could, so I could pick up this or that depending on how I feel."

"There are beautiful things she is doing now," said Michal, "blending playing and singing—counterpointing—it's great for the band. I'm talking about things she does within the band, not just soloing—counterpointing rhythmically, vocal effects with percussion, sounds, colors."

Urszula went on: ". . . and my approach to this is joyous; I don't want to do predetermined things, I want to be as free as possible to try many things spontaneously."

"Within the band," continued Michal, "we try to divide our brains and ears so we can hear everything that's happening—every instrument, every sound. It's great when everybody gets into the same groove and it's *happening*, it's like . . ." Michal searches for a description, and he and Urszula converse briefly in Polish. "It's a mutual trip," she says with enthusiasm, "you don't think about it, it just comes out of you."

"The ultimate goal of this band," said Michal Urbaniak, "is to be able to create pieces

on the spot that will sound like compositions. When we play now, I never say beforehand what we will play, it just carries itself. When things happen musically, what comes next is obvious. I think there's a lot of different music to be made, but what ultimately counts with us is emotion. Then you forget about electronics—about everything—nothing matters."

Urbaniak, who no longer performs with the tenor saxophone, now plays a Lyricon in addition to the violin. As far as the saxophone is concerned, he said he reached a dead end. "The instrument has been so over-exposed there's not much new you can do with it, unless your name is Wayne Shorter (he also likes Andrew White and Joe Henderson). The way Wayne is heading, I think he'll open new doors for saxophone players. The Lyricon is very electronic, but, on the other hand, it's very acoustic—the logic behind it is acoustic—and you can control it well."

Urbaniak sees a future in what he calls humanized electronics. "Look how much electronics there are in Weather Report. It's much more than you think, yet it sounds so natural. When they started it was so far out, however. They had perhaps one-tenth the electronics they have now—it was acoustic bass, soprano sax, percussion and Rhodes—nothing else—and they sounded out in space. Now they have ten times the electronics, but it sounds natural—Wayne Shorter would say lyrical. People claim that electronic instruments destroy the personality—it's not true. For example, Wayne Shorter had his Lyricon for just a few weeks, but when he played just a few notes on it you knew it was Wayne Shorter—Wayne Shorter playing a strange instrument—but you could hear *him*."

As far as electronics are concerned, Urszula Dudziak says she wants to learn as much about her synthesizer as possible. "There are a thousand possibilities, so many combinations, I want to get into it very deeply." Her synthesizer, incidentally, is an experimental model which takes time to program.

"In the future," said Michal, "Urszula will be fooling around with a lot of different approaches, both electronic and acoustic; there will be Latin things and she will be doing some semi-classical music. . . ."

Urszula looked skeptical: "We'll see," she said, "we have this interview tape, we'll play it back in two years. . . ." She smiled and then said, "Write that Michal is my inspiration, he helps me so much, I couldn't imagine being without him." She looked across the table at Michal and her eyes went soft. "There would be no music without you," she said quietly.

"The attention Urszula is getting now is deserved," Urbaniak said after a moment. "There are many violin players and there's just so much I can do that is different, but I think what she is doing is far beyond what anybody else is doing with the voice. People sometimes ask me if I'm jealous. Are you kidding, I say, she is an integral part of the band's sound: if you were to take her away, you would notice instantly that something had changed. There is so much of her music in the band. Even now when she has her own records and probably won't do as much soloing on my records, she will be needed badly for the sound of my band. There is no band I can imagine without her being there." **db**

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should be. Musicians try to assume certain attitudes: 'I'm a heavy person, I'm into this vernacular, so I should play this way and not play that music. And most of all, I've got to suffer!' Now how is a guy supposed to live like that?

"It's silly when you get right down to it, because the object is to go up there and have a ball. If you want to play any kind of way, do it. No one feels the same way each day. I might want to play *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star* or run a repeat sequence of two or three notes. But you don't have that freedom anymore. That's what I'm trying to tell my fellow musicians. Loosen up, be free and you can play anything. You're not hampered by style,

your contemporaries, or the history books. You avoid living a lie.

"That's the way music was many years ago, before it became popular and people started writing about it and musicians started to read their own press clippings. In other words, before artists started trying to act like people said they should.

"Well, I do just the opposite. I'd rather come out looking like the Temptations and play avant-garde: to give a different image of what people expect. And it messes their minds. It shows them that these are just material things, that you don't have to get caught up in images. Images just limit the degree to which a person can go outside, step out beyond the norm. If you keep your self-image free, you can get into anything you want to.

"The music business does not know quite what to do with me. They accept me because I'm supposed to be a jazz musician. I'm a 'musician's musician.' Consequently, I'm not supposed to be doing the things I'm doing. I can't play funky, I'm not supposed to be talking, singing, and smiling up on the bandstand. I'm supposed to look serious and up-tight with the world. Well, I play music for enjoyment. I'm up there to have a good time."

At his latest Chicago area concert, Harris and his band did just that. The club, *Amazing Grace*, is a small homey spot which caters to the college crowd at Evanston's Northwestern University. There are very few seats; most of the patrons sit on the floor. At the three sessions I attended, the club was packed. Surprisingly, most of the crowd was white, given the saxophonist's reputation for funky jive and street *savoir faire*.

Harris' good-time approach was readily evident during each set. He kidded the collegians and lectured on such wide-ranging subjects as music theory, oral sex, and the quest for knowledge. The music, too, was a pastiche of such diverse entities as a 30-minute blues tune, several feet-tapping, finger-snapping dance numbers, and a lingering piano solo that most of the audience talked through.

The piano solo seemed to put a damper on the festivities, though: at the request of the crowd, Harris followed it up with one of his disco tunes. After the set, Harris explained, "As far as young kids are concerned, the long, virtuoso solo may be dead. Kids just don't want to hear your chops for that long a time. They say, 'Yeah, he can play,' but they get bored. I wouldn't dare add a really outside solo in most of my concerts. These audiences would be content to hear my Top 40 singles all night.

"That's why I lean more heavily on one thing or another with certain audiences. Tonight, the kids wanted to dance. If, on the other hand, I feel the vibration that a particular audience is in tune with the practices and studies that I've done in my 20 years of performing, well, I'll play more outside that evening.

"My whole thing about music is versatility. I think if a person can do exciting things, innovative things which are a little bit different, then he should do them. My last album, *Bad Luck Is All I've Got*, contains some blues, some soul and several experimental numbers.

"For this reason, I don't even think about the future direction of my music. I just play from day to day and try to experiment. That's why I choose musicians based upon their attitudes. If they are open to a lot of ideas and can play a lot of different things, then I'd like them in my band because my music won't stagnate. We play according to our surroundings, according to our personal feel, and you've got to be flexible to do that.

"In this way, we can keep the music from falling into a groove like other cats. When some people say that my music is all rhythm, they miss the point. My music is not rhythmic, it has a feel. A rhythm is a programmed sound. It's something anybody can do. Today, all these record executives think that all you gotta do to make a hit record is to tack on this funky rhythm track to anything. That's ridiculous. You've gotta have a special feeling and a special way of interpreting the music which will make you stand out from other cats."

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Anchorage-Hawaii: Don Phillips Quartet (until Jan.).

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El Bandito (formerly Wing's): *Pete Magadini* (Tue. thru Sat.).

Cork Tree Lounge (Scottsdale): *Hamlet.*
Hangar (Scottsdale): *Charles Lewis Quintet* (Sun. and Mon.); *Lou Garno/Keith Greko/Bob Lashier.*

CHICAGO

Ratso's: Gerry Mulligan (CTI live recording date, 12/17-21); *Martin Mull* (12/22-23); *Donny Hathaway* (Warner Bros. live recording date, 1/1-4); *Stanley Turrentine* (1/13-18).

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As you've already noticed, *City Scene* has changed its format to what we feel is a handier, easier reference guide to what's happening locally in metro areas around the country. As always, we'd like your opinions on the change, so let us know what you think.

CAUGHT

continued from page 40

cultivating the other extreme, played trumpet and fluegelhorn with an almost Milesian sense of economy. He shaped and formed his notes as carefully as a sculptor, utilizing the spaces between for an effect that might have aroused John Cage.

This contrasting horn work was further underscored by the gruff (but beautifully flowing) tenor solos of J. D. Parran. His alto clarinet, piccolo, and a series of nondescripts (an astonishing collection of whistles, shakers, fog horns, and whatever) were used primarily for color, shading, and conversation with the other instruments. One highlight occurred during the end of one of Hemphill's rare alto solos, when J. D. joined in on piccolo, dueting with the alto's high upper register.

It was nearly impossible to distinguish one bass player's contributions from another's, unless you watched continuously for a long period of time—which was rarely possible due to the stage positioning of the musicians. Occasionally, you might catch Arzina Richardson echoing one of Hemphill's clipped phrases with a rapid flurry of high notes, or hear Foreman integrate a powerful electric bass chord into the rhythmic onslaught.

Hemphill, who was well aware of the muddled bass sound, would often walk back to the basses and listen, or stroll out into the audience to glean a proper perspective. He also directed the Ensemble with hand motions and occasionally initiated a drastic change of volume; but most of the volume alterations happened organically, adding a naturally subtle quality to the music.

If any negative criticism at all can be accurately leveled at the concert, it would fall not on the quality of the playing itself, but rather on the similarity of the compositions. One piece was reminiscent of a ballad, the first and last were slightly funky, and the second featured a haunting, folkish, bass-played melody; but the bulk of the music flew with non-stop, up-tempo rhythms—extremely powerful music that could have been more effective when contrasted with softer passages.

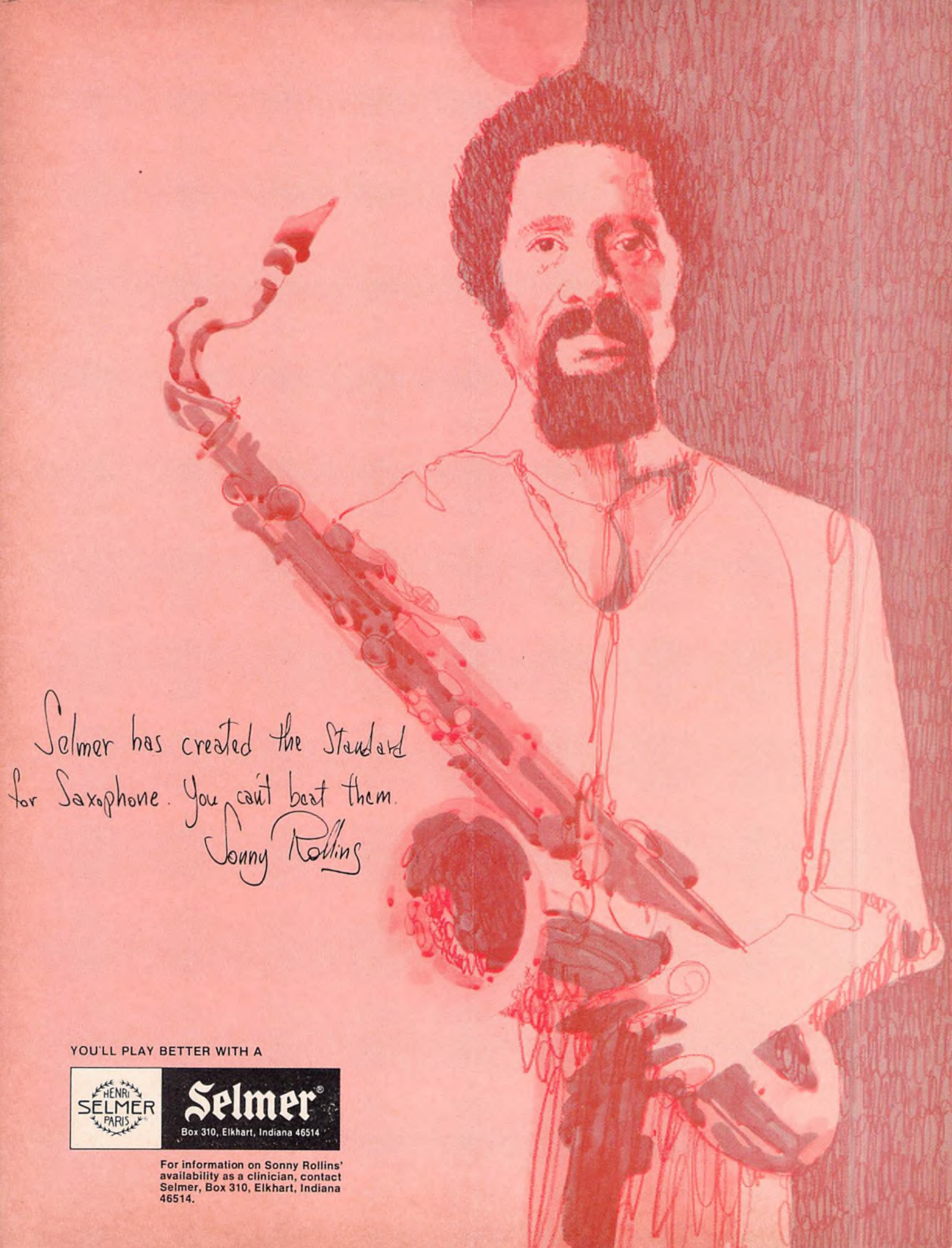
Despite its lack of dynamic range, the program was nonetheless exciting. Now that Julius Hemphill is beginning to receive the attention his music deserves, it will be a moving experience to watch him develop further.

—gregory j. marshall

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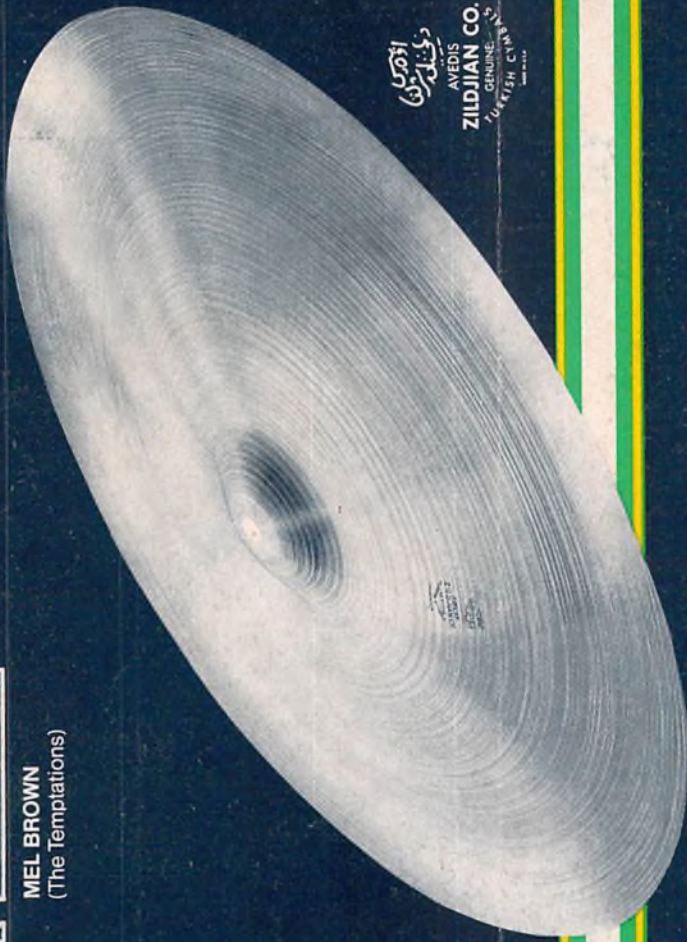


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