

FEBRUARY 12, 1976 60c

the contemporary  
music magazine

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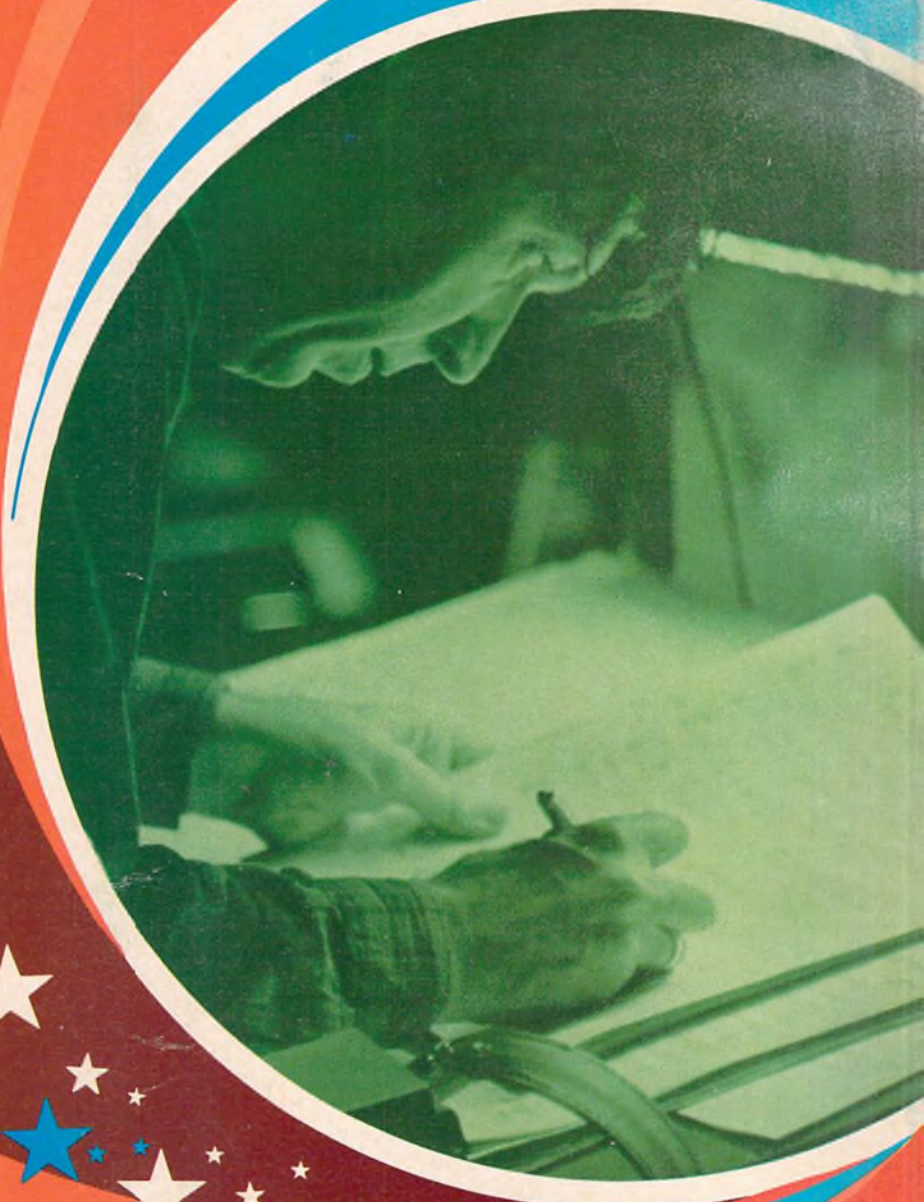
**GUNTHER  
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**SONNY  
FORTUNE**

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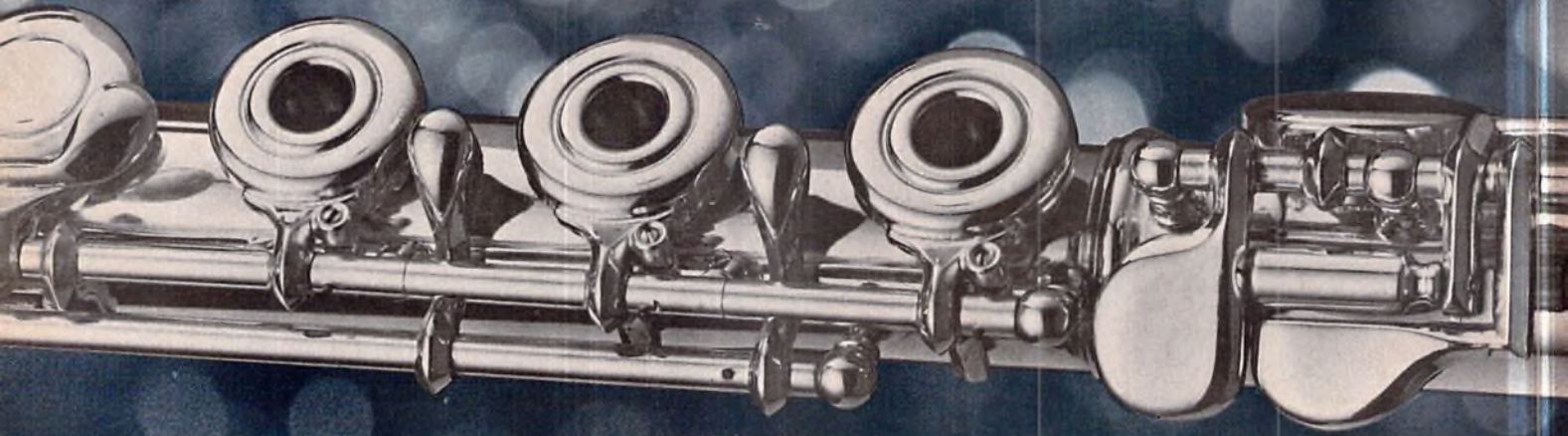
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## Contents

- 12 **Gunther Schuller:** "On The American Musical Melting Pot," by Robert Palmer. One of the foremost contemporary composers comments on the state of the harmonic union.
- 16 **Sonny Fortune:** "Windfall On The Wing," by Arnold Jay Smith. At last enjoying the spotlight with his own group, the journeyman saxophonist plots the course of his career.
- 18 **Taj Mahal:** "One Man's Gospel Gab," by Lee Underwood. One bluesman who feels he is as American as apple pie tells why, flinging timidity to the winds.
- 20 **John Handy:** "Taking The Bible Out Of The Brothels," by Bill Gallagher. Having taken an extended hiatus from the recording scene, Mr. H. is more than ready for his vinyl comeback. Watch out, fleshpots!
- 22 **Record Reviews:** Oregon; Keith Jarrett; Lonnie Liston Smith; Ronnie Laws and Pressure; The Crusaders; The New York Jazz Repertory; Norman Connors; The Art Ensemble Of Chicago; Donald Byrd; The Blackbyrds; Stanley Turrentine; Stu Martin/John Surman; Carmen McRae; Archives Of Jazz.
- 33 **Blindfold Test:** Harvey Mason.
- 34 **Profile:** Michel Legrand, by Len Lyons.
- 35 **Caught:** Billy Cobham, by Michael Point; Dave Matthews Big Band, by Arnold Jay Smith; Sonny Stitt, by Scott Albin.
- 40 **How To Make Music Real American,** by Dr. William L. Fowler.
- 40 **Workshop:** Pat Martino's *Impressions* Solo, transcribed and annotated by Vic Milukoff.

### Departments

- 6 First Chorus
- 8 Chords & Discords
- 9 News
- 10 News/Final Bar
- 42 1776-1976: It Happened
- 44 City Scene

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## education in jazz

by George Wein

I guess I've known about Berklee almost as long as I've known about jazz. It was in Boston, and I was from Boston, and although I never studied there, it seems that I kept bumping into fine musicians who did. My impression, at that time, was that Berklee was a small school specializing in jazz instruction that must have been doing a pretty good job of it if the student musicians I met were any indication.



Even after leaving Boston and getting more deeply involved in producing jazz festivals, I still found myself constantly reminded of the kind of musicians that Berklee was turning out. Among former Berklee students who have performed in festivals I have produced, these names come quickly to mind: Gabor Szabo, Gary Burton, Keith Jarrett, Bill Chase, Toshiko, Pat LaBarbera, Alan Broadbent, Sadao Watanabe, Quincy Jones, and half of various Woody Herman and Buddy Rich bands!

After too many years, I recently had occasion to spend some time at Berklee. It's still very much involved with jazz, but a great deal more has happened since my Boston days. In addition to a thorough grounding in jazz techniques, students are now trained in all phases of professional music; such as, studio work and scoring for television and films.

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*George Wein*

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## the first chorus

By Charles Suber

Jazz exists. The question isn't whether jazz is mine but what I am going to do with it." This is a French musician, Michel Legrand, on the subject of what he believes to be the "most important event in music of this century."

While Monsieur Legrand was surprised to be chosen—by a black American producer—to write as native an American score as *Lady Sings The Blues*, he doesn't feel diffident about doing jazz justice. Legrand claims universality: "Jazz doesn't belong only to black people just because it started with black people. When I write or play jazz, it's different from the way blacks or even white Americans write or play jazz—or Japanese, or anyone else."

On the other hand, Gunther Schuller, a genuine all-American musician, says: "It's categorically true that European musicians cannot really manage our American music stylistically."

Actually, Msrs. Schuller and Legrand are in agreement as to the qualifications of a musician, of any nationality or race, to properly play and interpret American music. The major qualification is education, jazz education—not just the in-school kind, but the kind of total education produced by total immersion.

Schuller gives an example: "... American musicians, even when they are totally ensconced in the classical end of music, play with a tremendous rhythmic drive and energy, and a rhythmic lightness, which we absorb through our popular music subliminally. ... I've heard ... the best German radio orchestras play perfectly accurate performances of an Ives piece ... accurate but totally devoid of musical essence. The pulse of the music, the swing, the momentum, the inflection, it's just not there. They cannot *feel* that because (their training) is not sufficient to do American music. Because American music is the sum and substance of all these influences, plus the influence of jazz and its derivatives, all melded together."

A reverse example would be the jazz and blues immersion/education of Sonny Fortune and Taj Mahal, who are also featured in this issue. Their backgrounds and talents have equipped them to perform and compose some American music with native authenticity. (No, you're not born *with* it; you're born *to* it.) It follows that Michel Legrand could not have done the score for *Sunder* as legitimately as did Taj Mahal.

Obviously, the study of American music involves more than being born to U.S. citizenship, or studying with Nadia Boulanger, or being involved in "jazz education."

Schuller, speaking as an educator, is "shocked at the inanity of the whole stage band thing." He thinks it terrible that any young stage band musicians "are being fooled into thinking that they are involved with jazz in some way." Interesting observation.

Next issue: Guitarists John Abercrombie, Larry Coryell, Django Reinhardt, and Joe Pass, saxophonist John Handy ... plus two Brubecks, Darius and Danny.

Coming Soon: *Music Handbook '76*, down beat's 21st annual reference book. This year's theme is "Getting a Job in Music!" with many "How to be ..." articles, plus the 3rd edition of "Guide to College Jazz Studies." **db**



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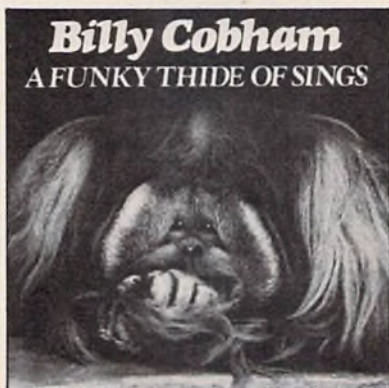
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# discords

## Ten Gallon Hat

Judging from Mr. Cobham's comments in his recent interview, he should entitle his next album *Hat Size*.  
Richard Brown Tampa, Fla.

## Exposé Furies

The interview with Alphonse Mouzon (db, 12/4) was rather interesting. But I was both amazed and appalled by the post-script. Mouzon has his own feelings about the breakup with the Eleventh House, but is that any reason to publish this slanderous piece of material?

Larry Coryell happens to be one of the greatest musical innovators of this decade. . . . In all fairness, perhaps you should

allow Coryell to respond to Mouzon and in future issues stick to the music, not gossip.  
Clifford T. Wiley Philadelphia, Pa.

In Al Mouzon's recent interview, he made a statement saying he felt the Eleventh House was poorly managed. As a promoter of jazz/rock concerts at Greenwich High School, I couldn't agree with Mr. Mouzon more. Last spring our high school class presented a concert with the Eleventh House and Return To Forever. It was interesting to see the difference between the two groups.

The Eleventh House and its management were unorganized and had no concern for the promoters of the concert. The group's equipment arrived two hours before show

time and, in doing so, disregarded the idea of a sound check. Mr. Coryell himself did not arrive until 15 minutes after the show was set to begin, thus forcing the concert to start a half hour late. The first thing his managers asked was, "Do you have the check?"

Return To Forever . . . was a model of professionalism. The group's equipment was on time and they went through a sound check. Return To Forever was received far better than the Eleventh House. It goes to show that the audiences of today recognize a professional artist from an unprofessional musician. Mr. Mouzon fortunately realized the Eleventh House was not a home for an artist.  
Alfred U. Pavlis Riverside, Conn.

## Riley Extras

Your article on Terry Riley (db, 11/20) was a long-overdue and intelligent examination of an ever-more influential figure in today's music. The discography, however, was marred by the omission of one of his all-too-rare albums, *Happy Ending* (composed for the film *Les Yeux Fermes*, WEA-Filipacchi Music, 46125U). One side's worth of piano pieces are also available on a BYG-Actuel album.  
Pierre Tourelle Washington, D.C.

## Krupa Question

I was very distressed to read Gino Vannelli's reference to Gene Krupa (db, 12/4). Vannelli said that when he saw Krupa play, he was "disappointed to see a man who had been withered away from his experience with drugs."

What actually caused Mr. Krupa's deterioration was a combination of heart disease and, just as tragic, the bad reputation he had acquired through his run-in with the law in the early 1940s.

The details are immaterial; what they boil down to is that Gene was never brought to trial on a charge of possession or use of drugs. And after a legal technicality was cleared up, he was released and legally exonerated.

It's sad that Krupa's reputation is still being hurt by rumors conceived from misinformation.  
Lorne Schoenberg Fairlawn, N.J.

## Correction Time

In the article on Billy Cobham (db, 12/4), it was stated that I teach at the Juilliard School of Music. I teach at Yale University instead.  
Fred D. Hinger Leonia, N.J.

## Atlantic Crossings

Congratulations to db for an insight into the genius of Manfred Eicher, whose contribution to the contemporary music scene surely qualifies him as a true artist/master of the craft.

I would like to see more coverage given to the European ECM musicians such as Eberhard Weber, Jan Garbarek, Terje Rypdal, Arild Anderson. . . .

I believe contemporary music has evolved to the point where it transcends social background, classification, etc., and has become truly universal.  
Bill Fitzgerald Chicago, Ill.

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## JOPLIN ON BROADWAY



MICHAEL ALPERT

### The Treemonisha Gang In Action

NEW YORK—The favorite expression around Broadway these days is, "At last it made it here." The talk is about Scott Joplin's opera *Treemonisha*, which had a six week run at two theatres. It opened at the Uris for only three, due to a musicians' strike, then moved to the Palace for three more. The expression should be, "At least it made it here." It had a peck full of shortcomings while only a bushful of happy moments.

It appears that Joplin tried to copy the European operatic formula of the era when he wrote this one. It's a shame that in order to look bright one sometimes has to step outside his metier. When Scott gets down to it, the show perks up. He did his rag-best in the first act *We're Goin' Around*. *Around* is a dance/singing production number that comes on the heels of some staid Nelson Eddy/Jeanette MacDonald - in - blackface items with the storyline unfolding cumbersomely. It is colorful and lively, totally in keeping with what we have come to expect from Joplin.

The first act closes with a rousing *Aunt Dinah Has Blowed De Horn*, a company tune sung by liberated slaves in the cotton fields. The dance that follows stops the show cold. It is also used as a reprise at the end of the show after a lengthy *A Real Slow Drag*. *Treemonisha* is a period piece and when it is done faithfully, as it is here, it appears somewhat demeaning, since the southern-speaking blacks are riddled with superstition. Space does not allow for the full libretto here, but suffice it to say *Treemonisha*, an 18-year-old educated woman, runs afoul of the local conjurers and is kidnapped, eventually rescued, finally going on to become the first woman leader of that particular plantation. (Women's Libbers please take note, this was 1866!) The rescue scene, because of the grammar employed, comes off like Mighty Mouse singing, "Here I come to save the day."

The production is mercifully short, but for history's sake, it *did* make it to Broadway after the Houston Opera company's production. Carmen Ballthrop is a bouyant *Treemonisha* and brightens up every scene she is in. Gunther Schuller's supervision was much in evidence throughout. And therein may lie the trouble. Perhaps operatic training is not what the show needed; drop it into the gutter a bit and let's see who picks it up.

## Montreal Freezeout

MONTREAL—This city's only real jazz club, In Concert, closed its door on December 28. The club had run six nights a week for 18 months, and in this time had imported a wealth of jazz and blues talent including Luther Allison, Dizzy Gillespie, Carmen McRae, Charles Mingus, Sonny Rollins, Archie Shepp and McCoy Tyner. Failure of the club is variously attributed to lack of

publicity, some unfortunate bookings, the Canadian postal strike, the club's location in the Old City, and a lack of visitors to Montreal this summer. The club existed long enough to prove that an audience exists in Montreal for the best in blues and jazz, and it is hoped that other entrepreneurs will follow the spark shown by In Concert during its time on the scene.

## Hibbler In Shangri La

CHICAGO—Al Hibbler, vocalist of the deep growl and wide vibrato, opened just after Christmas at a small neighborhood Chicago bar currently trying to break into the nightclub scene with name entertainment.

The booking may have seemed a bit different to the ex-Ellingtonian than his last Chicago stand, when he wowed dinner crowds at Rush St.'s Mister Kelly's. But that longtime showplace has closed down.

"It's alright," mumbled Hibbler, who sat at the bar of the Shangri La Club Lounge, holding a Kent that was burning down to the filter. "I can always find someplace to play."

"Someplace" this time was at 7404 S. Cottage Grove Avenue, a street lined with stores in a residential neighborhood that likes its music straight ahead (saxophonist Von Freeman holds court just around the corner every Monday night at the Enterprise Lounge, and the regulars treat him like visiting royalty). The narrow room was softly lit and crowded with fans of the singer, including one redhaired woman whose I.D. tag named her "Red Top." Next door to the club is a barbecue house, and a window in the wall between the two establishments enables Shangri La customers to satisfy their appetites without walking outside.

Sharing the bill with Hibbler, who didn't sing a note at his

press reception, was big-toned tenor saxman Cozy Eggleston and a trio of accompanying South Siders on organ, drums, and second tenor sax. Though the bandstand was cramped, the group played strong, bluesy numbers: *Summertime*, a chase chorus tune, and the much requested *Red Top*. Eggleston, who has been leading musicians at the lounge since November, has an LP entitled *Wham* on his own Grand Slam label.

Hibbler was involved with greeting friends and wellwishers, nodding in recognition at praise for his long recording career. He appeared troubled when one handshaker expressed admiration for *A Meeting Of The Times*, the Atlantic session which teamed the blind singer with Rahsaan Roland Kirk.

"Yeah, you know, Roland had a stroke recently." Then Hibbler visibly brightened. "But I talked to him last time I was home. And he says he's doing fine, getting better. I sure hope so."

Moving past a fountain spurt-ing champagne and a table of cream cheese hors d'oeuvres, around several pretty hostesses towards the club's front door and a breath of fresh air, Hibbler turned. Without raising his unique voice over the din of the tenor-organ band he could still be heard: "Come back after Christmas; I'll sing some then."

## GOTHAM SPECIAL

NEW YORK—If you've got the means and the desire you can do what W. Robert Widener did. He got together New York's finest (studio musicians, that is), rented the sub-sub-basement of the McGraw Hill Building (an area set aside for an attraction called "Little Old New York"), gave away all the hot dogs you can eat (dispensed from a sidewalk vendor) and called it simply, *New York, New York, The City So Important They Named It Twice!*

It was billed as a grand bash for those who still love New York and it starred Dr. Lyn

Christie, Eddie Daniels, Kenny Davern, Pee Wee Erwin, Dick Hyman, Bucky Pizzarelli, Bobby Rosengarden and Bill Watrous. Widener also presented the debut of singer Linda Clifford, whom he discovered in Chicago on a recent business trip. She has pipes to match her looks.

The music was easy and unrehearsed as most of the cats have played with each other before, probably at some "Highlights In Jazz" concerts, since producer Jack Kleinsinger likes to put some of these guys together to see what happens.

## New Releases

Atlantic has issued *Confessin' The Blues*, Esther Phillips; a debut disc by French superstar Michael Polnareff; *Lovelock*, Gene Page; *Fish Out Of Water*, Chris Squire; *Jealousy*, Major Harris; and a live Black Oak Arkansas effort.

New on United Artists are *Beast From The East*, Mandrill; *There Comes A Time*, Gil Evans; *Station To Station*, David Bowie; *The Complete Glenn Miller-Vol. 1*; *Master Musician*, Sidney Bechet; *The Complete Artie Shaw-Vol. 1*; *Coney Island Baby*, Lou Reed; *The Party's On Me*, Cy Coleman; *Sandman*, Harry Nilsson; *Born On A Friday*, Cleo Laine; *The Complete Benny Goodman-Vol. III*; and *Twentieth Anniversary Of Rock n Roll*, Bo Diddley.

## At The Top Climbs On

ROCHESTER, N.Y.—The Public Broadcasting Center of radio and television station WXXI have announced that last year's series of *At The Top* tapings has been expanded for '76.

The following artists have all been recorded for the upcoming *At The Top* series: Joe Williams, Stanley Turrentine, Freddie Hubbard, Taj Mahal, Gil Scott-

Heron, the New York Jazz Quartet, Keith Jarrett, Bill Watrous and the Manhattan Wildlife Refuge, Two Generations Of Brubeck, Count Basie, and Woody Herman.

Plans are being negotiated to have the one hour radio series distributed by the National Public Radio Network to some 180 noncommercial stations.

## potpourri

**Blood Sweat & Tears** fronts some new personnel in the form of bassist **Jaco Pastorious**, percussionist **Don Alias**, and guitarist **Mike Stein**.

The reclusive singer/songwriter **Fred Nell** has made plans to record a new album, his first in seven years. The disc is slated for Columbia.

Avant garde country performer **Willie Nelson** (take note, Stan and Buddy!) has made plans to move into the jazz field, via a record label called Lone Star and an album by pianist/guitarist **Bucky Meadows**. Three cheers for the red-headed stranger.

The **Thad Jones/Mel Lewis** tour of Japan was so successful that by the time you read this they will have already returned for an encore.

Drummer **Kenny Clarke** is recuperating from a heart attack he recently suffered. Clarke has lived in Paris since 1956.

Composer/pianist **Jack Reilly** has been appointed to the regular faculty of the Mannes College of Music in New York City. Reilly will teach the Jazz Improvisation Ensemble at the school and will continue directing the four-year jazz piano curriculum in the Extension Division, a program he specially designed.

**McCoy Tyner** was recently named Musician Of The Year For The World by **Jazz Forum**, the magazine published by the European Jazz Federation.

Organist **Jimmy Smith** recently opened his new night club, **Jimmy's Supper Club**, in Los Angeles. The Smith Trio will regularly appear at the club. The menu features steak and soul food, with a special discount being offered to musicians dining at the club.

**Artie Shaw** has sued **Time Inc.** for two million big ones, as a result of Time-Life Records selling a "Swing Era" series of record-

ings employing some 25 Shaw arrangements. Shaw states that the Time-Life discs, for which he receives no royalty, are competing unfairly with a four-record set being sold by the Reader's Digest Album Service.

Phoenix saxophonist **John Hardy** is missing his favorite horn, a curved Conn soprano with gold body and silver keys. The rare axe was heisted from Hardy's unlocked, vintage model Cadillac, a 20-year-old relic that obviously invited attention from a thieving onlooker. John asks that jazz fans keep their eyes peeled.

**Biograph Records** has announced that it has purchased rights to the catalog of the Center Record Company. The Center catalog includes 16 albums of traditional New Orleans jazz featuring artists such as **George Lewis**, **Billie and DeDe Pierce**, **Kid Thomas**, **Captain John Handy**, and **Jim Robinson**. A series to be called *The New Orleans Dance Hall Series* will be released in upcoming months.

In a recent profile on **Bernie Senensky** (db, 12/18), Mr. S. mentioned plans to release an LP. **Gene Perla** has picked up rights to the disc for his **PM Records** and it should be available shortly.

**Dizzy Gillespie** recently conducted ten workshops in the city schools of San Francisco. The idea behind the workshops was to have Diz and his quintet "serve as the prime motivators in a project designed to develop reading and math curricula through jazz."

**Don Schlitten's Xanadu Records** has signed guitarist **Jimmy Raney**. Raney's first album for the label was recorded in September and is titled *The Influence*. To be released come spring, Raney is joined on it by bassist **Sam Jones** and drummer **Billy Higgins**.

An upcoming **Sam Rivers** album for **Impulse** will feature percussionist **Warren Smith** and guitarist **Roland Prince**. db

## JOHNSON MAKES SWITCH

NEW YORK—At press time, Johnson's departure comes on the eve of his first solo album re-Alphaons Johnson (see db, lease. The current composition 1/29) has vacated his position of the Cobham unit is Cobham, with Weather Report in order to George Duke, John Scofield, join Billy Cobham's Spectrum. and Johnson.

## FINAL BAR



OTTO F. HESS

### Sissle In Prime

**Noble Sissle**, orchestra leader, songwriter and purveyor of talent, passed away at his Tampa, Fla. home recently. He was 86.

Sissle was most noted for his collaboration with Eubie Blake, specifically on a show called "Shuffle Along," from which came *I'm Just Wild About Harry*. The pair also penned *Chocolate Dandies*, a Broadway review. Other popular Sissle tunes were *Love Will Find A Way* and *You Were Meant For Me*.

Sissle's band was not a swing type, but actually served as successor to Jim Europe's Society Orchestra, which skyrocketed to fame as the touring backup for the dancing Castles. After Europe's death, Noble took over. The unusual aspect of the orchestra was that it was an all black society organization that played the best palaces of terpsichore in the world, only to have to sleep on buses or in shabby hotels.

"According to the rich, white parties we played, we were a swing band," Lena Horne stated in her biography, *Lena*. Ms. Horne was one of those talents that Sissle garnered for his band. Others were Sidney Bechet, Tony Ladnier and Buster Bailey. Lena laments that "once swing became popular and the great Negro bands like Duke Ellington's received the acceptance they deserved, we would probably have wound up as the Lester Lanin of the Negro world." They never made it; the band broke up in the '30s.

Sissle was one of 30 outstanding black instrumentalists and singers to receive the Ellington Medal from Kingman Brewster, Jr., president of Yale, in 1972. The occasion was a weekend long convocation called "The Conservatory Without Walls," in honor of the Afro-American musical legacy.

Noble played before British royalty, most notably the then Prince of Wales (later Edward VIII), the Rothschilds and Elsa Lancaster.

In his spare time, Sissle aided homeless boys released from the state school at Warwick, N.Y., who he felt "need a springboard into normal law-abiding life."

It was inevitable that they should have been billed as "the first Negro band to . . ." Yet "we always entered through the kitchen," as Lena remembers. Sissle has been accused of projecting an image that would later be known as Uncle Tomism. But he didn't know any better. "Noble, and the people like him, did the best they could," Ms. Horne concluded. —arnold jay smith

**Theodore "Hound Dog" Taylor**, blues guitarist, died on December 17 in Chicago as a result of lung cancer. He was 59.

Taylor began his professional career in 1935, performing around his Greenville, Miss. birthplace. He moved to Chicago in 1940, becoming widely-known in the city's blues clubs. His first recordings were belatedly made in 1957, with his more recent discs being issued on Alligator Records.

Hound Dog and his band, The House Rockers, specialized in a hard-driving, stomping style of blues. He would often lace his performances with pithy comments to the audience and was incessantly adding new verses to his regular material. His unique blending of bottleneck guitar and northern boogie endeared him to blues fans throughout the world.

Taylor is survived by his wife and four sons.

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# Gunther Schuller

## On The American Musical Melting Pot

by Robert Palmer

**G**unther Schuller is: President of the New England Conservatory; Artistic Co-Director (with conductor Seiji Ozawa) of the Berkshire Music Center's Tanglewood Festival; and a composer well known and well respected for his *Seven Studies On Themes Of Paul Klee*, *Symphony For Brass And Percussion*, and his opera, *The Visitation*. He is also the author of *Early Jazz: Its Roots and Musical Development* (Oxford), the definitive musicological treatment of jazz history and the first volume of a projected series. And, as director of the New England Conservatory Ragtime Ensemble and conductor for the Broadway production of Scott Joplin's *Treemonisha*, he's perhaps the most outstanding active exponent of the ragtime revival. He also happens to be a formidable French horn soloist who was featured with the Cincinnati Symphony at the age of 17, and later performed on numerous jazz sessions while he was solo horn with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. He cheerfully admits that he was a high school drop-out.

As I read through a biography of Schuller provided by the Conservatory, I felt that there were almost too many accomplishments and honors listed. Commissions for compositions alone took up several densely packed pages, and the list of conducting honors was lengthy enough to satisfy most men devoted solely to that art. Schuller's recordings of ragtime orchestrations and other American music, on three major labels, continue to be successful. Yet he is also President of the Conservatory and a musicologist/historian, and he actively pursues all of his interests. I noticed, in the Boston *Globe's* tribute to Schuller's recently celebrated 50th birthday, that veteran conductor Erich Leinsdorf had written, "I would feel more cheerful about his being only 50 if he didn't have so much to do. My birthday wish is that he can divest himself of some of the things that distract him from composing. The world is full of people who can conduct *Treemonisha*, but there are very



few who can write an opera that has the significance of *The Visitation*." Others wish Schuller would favor one or another of his other interests. As an administrator, he seems to be a tireless campaigner for contemporary music in a world where 19th century sacred cows are still standards of excellence. Certainly jazz studies would benefit from the appearance of the second volume of his *Early Jazz*. But the man seems determined to continue wearing all his hats. The key to his many involvements has been suggested by columnist Joseph McLellan: "Schuller has devoted a large part of his energy to reducing or eliminating the arbitrary and mutually impoverishing division between classical and popular music."

The holistic nature of Schuller's participation in American music seemed to make him an ideal subject for a *db* interview having to do with the sources of our musical heritage and its uniqueness in the world today. I met him at the Conservatory on a nippy, autumnal Boston afternoon. To tell the truth, the hallowed halls seemed slightly seedy. The old cliché about impoverished students shivering in ill-heated conservatories was further suggested by the many posters heralding the institution's "Give A Little Do Re Me" campaign. Clearly, while musicians of Schuller's stature live very comfortably—as do successful jazz and pop musicians—the lot of the average student of classical music is no better than that of the aspiring jazzman.

Schuller was still rehearsing an ensemble when I arrived in the small, overcrowded anteroom to his office, and he was planning to leave in two hours for the airport in order to get a shuttle to New York, where he was conducting *Treemonisha* that night. I passed the time reading the rest of his bio. He was born into classical music, his father having served as a violinist in the New York Philharmonic from 1923 until 1965. He left high school to pursue his career as a French horn

player, and he also began composing early. When he was 24, in 1949, he wrote the *Symphony For Brass And Percussion*, later recorded for Columbia by the New York Philharmonic under Dimitri Mitropoulos. In 1959, he resigned his position as horn soloist with the Met in order to devote himself to composing, conducting and writing. During this period, he championed and substantially boosted the careers of two gifted but incredibly dissimilar jazz musicians, John Lewis and Ornette Coleman. He orchestrated several of Lewis' compositions and participated with him, and with the MJQ, in several orchestral recordings, including *Third Stream Music*. Coleman and Eric Dolphy appeared as soloists in Schuller Third Stream compositions. In fact, Schuller was an important catalyst for the entire Third Stream movement. Its fruits included a number of pretentious or otherwise unsuccessful works. But it now appears that the most interesting and original Third Stream compositions, and the ones which were authentic 20th century pieces (rather than jazz/baroque or jazz/romantic hybrids) were Schuller's.

He returned from the rehearsal, long hair bristling in disarray, dressed in a rumpled, dark blue sweatshirt, a round but not really plump man with slightly crossed but very intense and penetrating eyes. After he ushered me into his office, which included an antique piano and several desks and tables which were piled high with scores and manuscripts and recordings, he talked briskly about the weather and other matters while changing into a white shirt, jacket, and tie, and munching from a plate of cheese, fruit, and crackers. I had quite a few questions, but he caught me off guard by telling me he had just finished four record dates recreating the Paul Whiteman orchestra of the 1920s.

**Palmer:** Whiteman?

**Schuller:** The entire down beat crowd is going to say I've gone mad. "What's he doing

with Whiteman of all people, that disgusting man who made Bix Beiderbecke suffer so much?" All of that is nonsense. . . .

**Palmer:** Well, who's playing Bix?

**Schuller:** A student named Bo Winiker, who already has quite a reputation around here. The whole orchestra is composed of students here. It's an educational thing. You know, in that band there were not only Bix and Frankie Trumbauer—who had a great influence on Pres,—but there were Jack Teagarden, Charlie Teagarden, and on some recordings Joe Venuti, Eddie Lang, all of whom were just fabulous. But beyond that, I want these kids to know how great those Bill Challis and Ferde Grofé arrangements are. I can assure you—I'll stand behind this—they're greater than any of this stage band stuff that's going on now. They're very difficult, very demanding arrangements.

**Palmer:** Haven't you done Ellington recreations here as well?

**Schuller:** Yes, we did it before Duke died. I just couldn't live with the thought that here were these countless masterpieces of Duke and his orchestra which even Duke wasn't playing. I had a lot of talented kids here three years ago who were into Coltrane and Freddie Hubbard or whoever. They seemed to be able to make a translation from their own lives, to go back a generation or two almost in the way of classical repertory. Some of them could really deliver the goods; they'd play, and you'd hear Lawrence Brown, Johnny Hodges. Anyway, I went to Duke's publishing company and asked for three or four pieces that I wanted to do. I thought they would have the music, parts, scores, whatever. Nothing. They looked for a day and a half for pieces like *Daybreak Express*, going through big barrels of music where they had it all stashed away. Half the music was waterlogged, dirty, illegible, rotten. I would have even been happy with waterlogged parts. Nothing. So I had to take the pieces—15 pieces eventually—off the records, note by note. I did that, we performed them at the Smithsonian as a tribute to Duke on his 75th birthday, and those kids sounded exactly like Duke. The record is on Golden Crest.

**Palmer:** So you really like recreating music from the past.

**Schuller:** We even have a country fiddle band here at the school that does mountain music, square dance music, jigs, all the old music from the 19th and present centuries that they still play in Kentucky or Vermont. It's not solo virtuoso country fiddle, but fiddle bands—nine violins playing a tune together, say, with flutes, guitars, accordion, piano, bass, drums, spoons, washboard. You hear bands like that in the summer in New England, the fiddlers will all play in unison, and of course they'll all be amateur players—wrong fingering, wrong bow, but the music has this marvelous kind of raggedness. Ives would have loved it, because he loved that kind of raggedy out-of-tuneness of country music, or of amateur music-making. But it's the totality of that sound which is so exciting. So we made up a band here and got it recorded by Columbia.

But to answer your question, I love to try to reconstruct or recreate musics of an earlier era in as authentic a way as I can imagine. And evidently I have some ability in this direction. I can think my way back 50 or 60 years and then teach people how to play the music so that it really sounds like that era,

without updating it. That's the thing. A lot of people wanted me to update Joplin's *Tree-monisha*. "We gotta jazz it up for Broadway," they said, "make it more sophisticated and re-orchestrate and add some numbers." No, you'll kill it. The whole trick is to try to reach into the essence and soul of that music and to let it be what it was, and not to change it. I love that, I almost love it as much as composing.

**Palmer:** Can European conductors and players realize this music accurately in terms of rhythmic values? I remember the summer before last, I heard Pierre Boulez, whom I greatly admire, absolutely slaughter an Ives symphony with the New York Philharmonic, and then I heard Michael Tilson Thomas and Leonard Bernstein conducting Ives pieces with fewer rehearsals and with an inferior orchestra, and bringing it off beautifully. Boulez just didn't seem to be able to handle the rhythms.

**Schuller:** You're absolutely right. It's categorically true that European musicians cannot really manage our American music stylistically. If you ask me why, it would be a very complicated answer; but you could summarize it by saying that here there's a confluence of so many styles and nationalities and concepts of life expressed in music. In Europe, where you have very strongly demarcated national boundaries and national traits, people are often impressed with a single view of how to do things. We can talk, rightly and intelligently, about a German way of playing—very solid and straight and often unimaginative—or an Italian way—with a kind of freedom—even an English way, surely a Russian way, and so on. These sort of single views are never enough for American music. People are now making fun of the melting pot theory of American social development, and maybe it's been overstated. But to the extent that it's true socially and politically, it is also true musically.

For example, I practically grew up in the New York Philharmonic, and I learned very early that for Mengelberg and Toscanini and all those great conductors of the '30s, one of their main jobs was taking all these national traits, say within the string section, and trying to bring them all into one common denominator. It was a heck of a job. Violinists from the French and Belgian school would play rhythms a certain way, Germans another way.

But now, American musicians, even when they're solidly ensconced in the classical end of music, play with a tremendous rhythmic drive and energy, and a rhythmic lightness, which we absorb subliminally through our popular music. So that when a German or French trained conductor tries to play our music with a European orchestra, he can get very accurate performances, but . . . I've heard the best German radio orchestras, for example, play perfectly accurate performances of an Ives piece or something by another American composer—Elliott Carter, whoever—accurate but devoid of musical essence. The pulse of the music, the swing, the momentum, the inflection, it's just not there. They cannot feel that, because they've been trained in a certain rhythmic sense, rhythmic style, rhythmic momentum, which is not sufficient to do American music. Because American music is the sum and substance of all these influences, plus the influence of jazz and its derivatives, all melded together.

**Palmer:** Michael Tilson Thomas told me he

attributes the way he plays Bach to the fact that he grew up listening to Chuck Berry.

**Schuller:** Yes, well Bach lends itself very well to a kind of swinging treatment. If you hear European orchestras play Gershwin or lighter, more popular American music, then you really notice a difference. But the point is that the difference is there even if the music is Elliott Carter or other complex modern music. Elliott is not overtly, consciously involved with jazz, but I don't care. If you're born here, this whole kind of loose feel of the music is going to be there. It's going to creep in. That's why Europeans can't perform it, Boulez included, and there's a man with a very keen rhythmic sense. But it doesn't apply to our music.

**Palmer:** Well then, was *Early Jazz* in some sense an attempt to make that part of the musical heritage available to people like Carter—people with, say, conservatory backgrounds?

**Schuller:** Right, precisely. I've lived through 20 or 30 years of involvement with jazz, seeing around me lots of very fine composers and performers to whom jazz is so remote that they can't make any connection to it at all, mentally or musically. I thought about why that is, and I don't know all the answers, but I know that one answer is that so much of the writing on jazz had been for so many years impressionistic writing. It was writing by musical amateurs, people who loved the music and sometimes did marvelous services for the music. But rarely did you have someone who could say to an Elliott Carter, "Hey, let's listen to this Bessie Smith record and then let's look at it in musical, analytical terms and see what this kind of view of it will yield." One cannot ignore the social context out of which jazz music came; obviously one always has to have that in the background. But one can also analyze the music in virtually the same way that you would analyze a Beethoven symphony. You can say, look, these people are using F sharps, dotted eighth notes, harmony, phrasing. What's different is, say, the inflection, the swing, the rhythmic feeling, how you get into and out of notes. But the similarities I think are almost greater than the differences. So the book was directed precisely at those kind of people to whom this music had somehow not been a part of their lives. I wanted to put it on their terms—somewhat, not altogether—so that they could look at it, with my help so to speak, as they look at other music which they do know. It had been done before. André Hodeir did it in his first book, *Jazz: Its Evolution and Essence*. He did exactly that.

**Palmer:** But he took a more fragmented, more personal approach.

**Schuller:** Right, it wasn't meant to be as sort of comprehensive and historically chronological as mine is, partly because André didn't have access to the recordings that we have here. He lived in France, and in those days you were more or less limited to whatever the French issued. If you read his book, you find that sometimes he's reviewing records which we don't have in the U.S., because the French sometimes issued second takes rather than the first or third takes we had. So it was spotty in that way. Still, I think, a very brilliant book.

**Palmer:** I wonder if you've had any reconsiderations about the African music part of your book. I thought it was . . . less satisfying than the rest of the book.

**Schuller:** What did you find dissatisfying?

**Palmer:** Well, first of all, I don't disagree with your conclusions. [Note: Schuller stressed African roots, in contrast to earlier writers, most of whom viewed jazz as an Afro-European amalgam. He wrote that "every musical element—rhythm, melody, harmony, melody, timbre, and the basic forms of jazz—is essentially African in background and derivation." (*Early Jazz*, page 62)] But the writing doesn't have the specificity of the rest of the book. You treated African music as a more or less homogenous whole, and the sample of recorded music you had wasn't as broad as it could have been.

**Schuller:** This is what I've heard before, and this always intrigues me. If, on a minimum of evidence, I arrive at conclusions with which a lot of people agree, people who might've gone the same route on a maximum of evidence, I don't really know how much difference it makes. I was flying a little bit by the seat of my pants, and I would have to admit that a lot of that was based on some combination of instincts and—again, this kind of reaching back that I like to do—instincts and just sort of putting two and two together without having all the evidence. I am not a trained musicologist, so the kind of absolutely finicky musicological approach that many people wanted me to adopt, I couldn't have. I don't have the time and I don't have the training. But I can live with that chapter. I didn't look for a particular kind of evidence to make a certain point. I went through what material was available to me and from that deduced and extrapolated. Mind you, I quite understand that now or ten years from now somebody is really going to do that job. There's a chance they may come up with different conclusions. I doubt it, though.

My point was, it had to be done. I got sick and tired of reading books, even Marshall Stearns, who devoted one page to West African. . .

**Palmer:** ". . . its predominant components are European harmony, Euro-African melody, and African rhythm." [Marshall W. Stearns, *The Story of Jazz*, page 282] I use that book as a textbook in a course I teach in Afro-American folk music.

**Schuller:** But he doesn't give any substantiation at all—just assumptions. At least I went through some kinds of materials to make some points on specifics, on rhythm, timbre, all that stuff. If I had said to myself, "Gee, I'm not really trained to do this well enough," God, we'd be waiting forever. And I couldn't live with the idea that I was going to write a history about jazz and just have that same old thing.

**Palmer:** Right, it's amazing that you were writing only ten years after Stearns and that thinking on this whole area of African roots could have changed so radically so fast. It's a subject I'm very interested in myself; it figures in a book I've been writing. What I'm questioning is, for example, the fact that the only sort of African harmony you dealt with was diody, when there are a lot of other kinds of harmonic organization, or the fact that you can go to African aerophone playing and find techniques and styles that carried over. You can take hoquet style melodic organization in African horn ensembles and relate that to polyphony in early jazz.

**Schuller:** Sure, I know about that. I transcribed some West African ivory horn music, the kind where each player plays one or two

notes, the hoquet style. In fact, I once got a bunch of French horn players together to perform this stuff. Yeah, you're right. . .

**Palmer:** I was hoping there'd be something more specific like that, rather than the sort of monolithic treatment of African music as a whole. But I don't want to question your conclusions. They're conclusions that, really, if you've heard enough American music and then gone back and heard some African music, and gone past the point where they sound so much alike in so many ways, to where you're hearing differences again, then you still almost *have* to come to those conclusions.

**Schuller:** I think the main point of my chapter was the explanation of what we call syncopation, which, I am convinced, comes out of the polyrhythmic structuring of African ensemble music. They do it differently in different sections of Africa, but essentially it's the same thing. There was a process of kind of squeezing that into 4/4 meter, and the result was that you couldn't suppress it. I mean, the blacks would not let it be suppressed. Like in social terms, you could squeeze them and push them but you could not take away the essence of their culture—to this day—and a parallel exists in music. That's what intrigued me.

Look, if I face students who are classically trained and I want to get them to play a swinging syncopation, what do I do? I write it down. Of course I can't write it down exactly.

**“ . . . Music educators have become a big business in this country; there's security in it, and a lot of people are going right into it with very little concern about what's happening to the music, and to the students . . . I find the whole idea of stamping out these thousands of little Coltranes and McCoy Tyners and thises and thats just frightening. . . It's a danger we've never had before, not to this extent.”**

If I write it the way jazz musicians write it, they'll play it like this. (Schuller sings a choppy, stiff version of a swing riff.) If I try to write it more or less exactly, it will be terribly complex, sextuplets over quintuplets, all that sort of thing—irrational rhythms—and they still won't be able to play it. The obvious answer is that all they have to do is hear it. But, and this is the fantastic thing, *they often cannot hear it!* My father, who is a German trained musician, cannot play jazz rhythms.

So I asked myself, "Where did that particular type of syncopation, which you do not find in Brahms, in Wagner, where did it come from?" If you go back to the structuring of African music, you find these things, and you begin to have an explanation of how the Africans can feel—and we almost don't have the language to say this correctly—how they can *feel* the rhythmic time points as syncopations which are displaced downbeats in their measures. Of course, they don't have downbeats because they don't have bar lines, but you know what I mean. And *that* you can't get a European-trained musician to do automatically, because he has no reference points. So that's the answer, and just opening up a European-trained musician's mind to the concept of additive rhythms, as opposed to divisive rhythms—which is what we do—can be a mind-blowing thing. I'm sure there's much more that needs to be done in this whole area, not only historically but for our

own present usage, as a reference point.

You're right, if I had time, if I didn't have all these other things to do, I would write another exhaustive book, perhaps, on that subject alone. Because I can't live with the notion of hearing something and not trying to figure out why it's that way.

**Palmer:** What about the second volume of *Early Jazz*? Have you been working on it?

**Schuller:** I have been working on it. But with this position here as President of the Conservatory and the fund-raising problems we have, plus my two still ongoing careers of composer and conductor, it has been increasingly difficult to find any consecutive hours (much less days) to work on the book. I have something like four chapters finished, but there have been four or five month periods when I wasn't able to write a single word. It's really beginning to bug the hell out of me, particularly since I keep getting this question. I'm going to make some even more strenuous efforts to finish it within a year or two. I'd love to make the book as thorough and comprehensive as I could, as I tried to do in the first volume. There's no problem writing a chapter about Duke Ellington of the 1930s—or Benny Goodman—but it's filling in all those gaps, trying to get all those other people who are not visible, not so well publicized.

**Palmer:** Like what you did with Jabbo Smith in the first volume.

**Schuller:** Yes, exactly.

**Palmer:** I had never heard of Jabbo Smith until I read your book. I went out and bought the reissues of his work on Melodeon (*Jabbo Smith: The Trumpet Ace Of The '20s*, Melodeon MLP 7326 and 7237) and was just blown away. He was playing like Dizzy in the '20s!

**Schuller:** Fortunately, there's more reissuing going on now than when I wrote the first volume. I used to have to scrounge around with these collectors and pay \$10 for a 10" disc that I might not even want to keep, but that I had to hear in order to be able to say, "Yes, I've listened to all these records." Now, there's so much reissued that it makes it a little easier, but still there are so many. Do you know for example, those fantastic sides that Django Reinhardt and Rex Stewart and Barney Bigard did in Paris? They're not reissued!

**Palmer:** I have them on EMI Odeon (*Django And His American Friends, Volume II*, E.M.I. Odeon CLP 1907). They're, too, among the two or three finest small band sessions of the '30s, absolutely the greatest.

**Schuller:** Aren't they? But they haven't been reissued here, and hardly anybody knows them. There are these kind of gaps. So I have to do that, and it takes time.

**Palmer:** Moving on, what about the backgrounds of the students who come into your programs here at the Conservatory? Have they heard this music? How many of them

can improvise?

**Schuller:** Well, in that respect they're very typical of the average American student who moves toward classical music as a basic career. They all have heard some, as we were saying before, because you can't escape it in our culture. Of course, sometimes they think they've heard jazz when they may have heard . . . much less than that. But anyhow, they all have a basic connection with the kind of rhythmic feel of that music. There's a small percentage that's actually played in some kind of what you might call a jazz group or orchestra; then there's a smaller minority that actually has improvised jazz. And then there's a whole lot of people, unfortunately, who have done neither of those things. And even with the presence of a very healthy, very active jazz department here—plus all the stuff I've done with Ellington and ragtime and so on—there are still a lot of kids, and a lot of faculty, going around this school who are absolutely unaware of it. This is one of the most open, wide-spectrum music schools in the world. And still there are a lot of thick hides I can't get to, or get through.

On the other hand, with some it goes very deep. The kids that are in the ragtime group are going to have it with them the rest of their lives. Wherever they go, they're going to continue with something like that, or be open to that. Many of them have now gone beyond ragtime and are actually involved with jazz. So the injections work a good part of the time, but one always wishes that there would never be this silly barrier between classical music—the sacred cows of the 19th century—and the rest of this whole, what many people call the Third World of music. It's getting better, those barriers are breaking down, but it takes time. You can't undo 200 years of wrongs in ten years and make it all right.

**Palmer:** I was interested to hear you say, in reference to the students, that some have played in jazz groups while far fewer have actually improvised jazz. It seems the two should be more or less synonymous. What are your comments on institutional jazz education, particularly the stage band movement? It seems to me that it's turning out an awful lot of ersatz Coltranes and so on, schooled but not very original players.

**Schuller:** Yeah, it's terrible. The worst foibles and sins of classical music education that many of us try very hard to avoid are now showing up increasingly in jazz education. I'm not really expert on it. I haven't taken a hard look around or conducted a poll of who's doing what; but I do lecture around at colleges and universities and travel enough that sometimes I'm shocked by the inanity of the whole stage band thing. Even my good friend Stan Kenton, with his whole thing of smothering the country with these bands and these arrangements that all sound alike. . . . It's a terrible, pernicious, insidious thing, because all these kids are being fooled into thinking that they are involved with jazz in some way. That's terrible, and where in our culture are they going to find out differently?

**Palmer:** Where are they going to find jobs?

**Schuller:** Well, that too. Of course, there are many good places too. Still, I think that the danger people have been speaking about for decades, the danger of jazz becoming an endangered species once you try to codify it and put it in a curriculum, *it has come true*. There's no question but that that danger is real, it's ever present, and it takes a very

imaginative and open-minded director or faculty of such a program—or people sensitive to the very special qualities and special needs of jazz—to avoid that. But by now, music educators have become a big business in this country; there's security in it, and a lot of people are going right into it with very little concern about what's happening to the music, and to the students.

I'm very worried about it. I find the whole idea of stamping out these thousands of little Coltranes and McCoy Tyners and thises and thats just frightening. And I must say, it's a danger we never had before, not to this extent. Yes, you always had people who were influenced by Pres or by Charlie Parker, and who tried to emulate those players, but there wasn't this musical establishment saying *en masse*, "That's the thing to do." The danger is all the money and the institutionalization behind this. If Sonny Stitt imitated Charlie Parker, well, that was *him* doing that. There was no other kind of force making it happen. Just himself, he loved Parker and he did it, and he did it well. But now we have a lot of people with more or less mediocre talents being told you must sound like Coltrane, or you must sound like the Kenton trombone section. It's horrible. I would rather die than have anything like that in this school.

If students could play these Paul Whiteman and Duke Ellington arrangements authentically *and* play in their own styles, that would be something, that would be a real challenge. But this sort of pap that's being turned out now by publishers and various organizations takes very little involvement. You run these charts down; they're sort of dry, half-dead, same riffs, same climaxes, same forms, and here somebody takes 32 bars. I won't have it. I'd rather deal with authentic material from the past as an educational instrument. If you can play Duke's *Cottontail*, that's like playing the *Eroica* of Beethoven—it's a real experience. You can learn by playing it because it's great music. But to play some third hand, mediocre derivative of what *Cottontail* was supposed to be—that's worthless.

**Palmer:** I know you were an early supporter of Ornette Coleman. What do you think of the way the music has gone now, the fact that so many people are doing music like Miles is doing, electric music influenced by crossover from people like Stevie Wonder? There are so many players involved in rock rhythms and electronics, and so very few who can play in an idiom like Ornette's.

**Schuller:** I think it's a cop-out overall. I can find a lot of reasons why it's happening, both good and bad, but the sum total of it is that it is always much easier to play on an ostinato on one chord. It's much *harder*, by the way, to do it well and imaginatively and excitingly.

**Palmer:** Playing changes can be a cop-out too.

**Schuller:** Right, the changes help you sometimes. But in the end it *is* less demanding to do it in a kind of average way, and it's also a cop-out because it places no demands on the audience. It becomes like wallpaper music: it just goes on and on and you gimmick it up with electronic sounds and synthesizers, which are like a novelty sound to most people. In that context you are less obliged to create something really original, and also it's very difficult to create something original.

Now I must say that I don't want to include Miles in this sort of criticism, because I've

heard him quite a few times and, depending on his mood, he sometimes is absolutely, fantastically beautiful with his groups. I've heard them at times when I've been thoroughly overwhelmed by the beauty of the music. And then at other times it just gets bogged down in so many irrelevant complexities of texture, of rhythm, that it can't carry the whole load. I remember when Mingus first started years ago with the idea of playing on two chords only for extended periods, what he called extended forms—he was taking a part of the chord structure and extending it, it was as simple as that. He did it so magnificently that he and Dannie Richmond could go on for hours and I would sit there with my mouth open. Now people think they're doing the same thing, but I don't hear it as the same thing. I hear it as a kind of endless duplication of itself, like Xerox copies. But again, one mustn't generalize too much, because there are people who rise above that, using the same techniques.

I think at times even Coltrane was guilty of it, because he did a lot of practicing in public. This whole idea of having 40-minute solos comes from that, and I think that he should have done much of that practicing in private, and come out with the results in public. But that's beside the point now. I just think back to the great jazz musicians of the '20s and '30s. Most jazz soloists had eight bars or 16 bars and they had to say it all in those 16 bars. There was a kind of discipline there, which had its good and bad points, and I think the good points were important. That kind of playing gives you a sense of the need for form, for structure. If you leave it open-ended and know that you can keep on playing until you find that ineluctable great moment—well, that's a kind of musical freedom which you can't argue against. It's like arguing against motherhood or democracy. It's a wonderful *ideal*, but it has the disadvantage of taking away self-imposed discipline. When you leave it that open-ended, where you can just keep on playing the same chord and trying and trying, I call it practicing in public.

**Palmer:** Ornette's so-called freedom has a lot more rules.

**Schuller:** Oh yeah. In a way, it is the most daring still, the most complex form of music making that I have heard in jazz. Because while it seems terribly free, it has an inner discipline. It's not based on the disciplines of the past, the 32-bar structures or 12-bar blues changes. It has its own inner, sometimes very rigid internal disciplines, hard to master.

**Palmer:** I've been on gigs with Ornette's band and after a set he'd say to Charlie Haden, "Hey, remember when you hit that E flat in such and such a tune? I thought you were modulating to a C7 so I played. . . ." They go into incredible detail about what modulation one thought the other was making at a certain point, and how one responded to the other.

**Schuller:** Yes, his music is very strongly harmonic. They know where they are all the time, which is what people refuse to believe. You mentioned Miles Davis as belonging now to the avant garde, but you know, Miles Davis for five years put down Ornette Coleman as a faker. An interesting lesson.

**Palmer:** Perhaps you could wind this up by addressing yourself again to the Americanness of our music, as a whole.

**Schuller:** It's difficult. I really don't think in terms of American music, except when we

# SONNY FORTUNE

## Windfall on the Wing

by  
arnold jay  
smith

**S**onny Fortune changes musical moods as some of us change records. He has done his stints with bebop oriented groups, moved on to Latin music, had his stay with Miles Davis, and is currently doing what he wants to do, writing and being a saxophonist who expresses himself.

His musical forebears were his fellow Philadelphians. Check Leonard Feather for the complete scroll of *Brotherly Lovers*.

**Fortune:** Between the fact that so many of us have come out of Philly and Granoff's School of Music and studying with Roland Wiggins, music director at Amherst, I became exposed to a lot of music, all kinds. Graduates of Granoff include John Coltrane and Lee Morgan. It was just a music school that many of us passed through. It had both private courses and regular formal classes, so you had both ends of it. I attended for the basics, to learn the instrument and theory.

**Smith:** From the way you talk I take it you were a reedman from the start.

**Fortune:** Yeah. I didn't get into it until I was 18 when a schoolmate trumpet player caught my ear. I was just hanging on the corner, nothing much happening, when I heard names like Miles Davis and Charlie Parker. Mind you, this was 1957, two years after Bird had died. I was just waking up. I asked who he was, and I decided to play the horn. I really don't know why. Nobody in my family played an instrument, but I felt a drive to do it. You see I had this idea that in about three months I was going to terrorize the world. I found that after three months I was still hav-

16 □ down beat

ing trouble with a C scale. So I put it in the closet for awhile. It wasn't until a year later that I again tried to do something with the instrument. I remember just listening to records over and over and was completely dumbfounded as to what those cats were doing.

My first set of chords were *Night In Tunisia* and I played the hell out of those chords. Then I listened to the recording and found that those cats were playing everything except what I was studying. Now the chronology escapes me, but those are some of the horrible things I remember. I say "horrible" because of the frustration. It seems all I can remember was forlorn hopes, dreams I thought I could never attain.

**Smith:** When did you seriously begin to "hear" Bird? I pick him because at 17, in 1957, and in Philadelphia, you obviously weren't catching up on your Johnny Hodges. Nor is your style reminiscent of Benny Carter.

**Fortune:** Right on all counts. Somewhere around eight to ten months after I bought an alto I bought *Bird And Strings*. I could take that; everything else was kind of hard on me.

One of the things that fascinates me with this music called jazz, whatever that is, is that it's another kind of music. I listened when I was a teenager, and I listen to it now and I ask myself, "Wow, you mean to tell me I was into that?" I listened to *Bird And Strings* then and I will listen to it now, and I'll hear something that I didn't hear a year ago. As you grow and develop in the music, you come to hear more than you did at such-and-such age.

So exactly when I seriously studied Bird is not easy to answer. In fact, I doubt if I can do it. When I really heard Bird, when he really knocked me out, was only a year or two ago. Since I had never seen him live I had to go by what was on the record market. I found out via a marathon on WKCR-FM. (Ed. Note: KCR is a non-profit station of Columbia University that airs a good deal of jazz daily, sometimes getting the green light to carry on exhaustive recorded studies of a particular artist.) That wiped me out. Not only did I learn about WKCR, but I heard more Bird than I ever dreamed existed. I went to school on that program. That was the beginning of my aural experiences with Charlie Parker. Staggering. I had never been so paralyzed by a musician.

**Smith:** By what he was saying, or by what he was laying down for others to follow?

**Fortune:** What he was involved in; what was around him as a person, his music. He had some equipment that was unbelievable, harmonically, melodically, rhythmically, control of the instrument, just a certainty about what he was doing. I concluded after that show that Bird was prophet-like. I had heard cats say that before, but I never felt that until then.

**Smith:** Were there others along the way other than Parker?

**Fortune:** Trane knew what was happening, musically and otherwise. Both Sonnies—Stitt and Rollins—Cannon. Stitt was my first feeling in terms of really relating to someone. I heard Sonny before I heard any of them.

**Smith:** You recently shared a bill at the Village Gate with Stitt. I wandered in after your last set and immediately before Stitt's. You were both on the stand together and you did one long blues. After that, you wandered past my table; you looked like you were under a hypnotic whammy placed by one of the tarot card readers in the neighborhood.

**Fortune:** It's a thrill to play with someone you revere. It's strange that he sounded so much like Bird in my mind. Maybe that was because I could see Stitt in Philly and I could never see Bird. Rollins was next. I never could get into Trane until around 1960, when he turned me around on soprano with *My Favorite Things*. I dug Cannon for smoothness, Rollins because I took something from him. In fact, I took something from all of them.

**Smith:** You heard Rollins first with Miles, probably Cannon and Trane also. Did that have a bearing on why you stayed with Miles for so long? I don't think you fit in with his group.

**Fortune:** I started in August '74 and concluded in May '75. It was never considered to be a temporary gig. It wasn't always rewarding. It was a change from what I had been doing before. I had been with Mongo Santamaria and loving every minute of it. People have asked me how I could change my style so drastically. Didn't it take some changes in my head to play with Miles? I tell them that it took more changes to play with Mongo. He's very heavily into his Latin thing and you've really got to be on top of your chops to do it. He gave me insight into rhythms from Africa and Cuba.

**S**onny came to New York in 1967 and worked with Elvin Jones for about three months. It was about the time that John Col-



*"Electronics is bringing in more possibilities, so it is interesting to listen to what's happening. But I'm not overwhelmed because I haven't heard anything that wipes me out. Some of it is so loud that not only can't I hear it, but I fear for my most precious possessions, my ears. I cannot afford to have them damaged, and some of the music is a bit too strong for me."*

trane passed away. Sonny had played with Trane in Philly and Trane was so impressed that he asked Sonny to play with him when next he came north. While working with Elvin, Sonny thought to call Trane and inform him of his whereabouts. He called on a Saturday and was informed by Alice that John was asleep. Trane died that Sunday night. The incident so unnerved Fortune that he was forced to return to his hometown, "for about a minute." His next appearance in The Apple was late in '67 with Santamaria, a gig that lasted until mid-1970. A sojourn to California proved fruitless. He went out there to live, "but me and Los Angeles were not quite ready for each other."

A stint with Leon Thomas was next, followed quickly by McCoy Tyner's group. Then, into 1973 and a Sonny Fortune Quartet that tried and failed. Buddy Rich was forming a small group for his east side club and Sonny was tapped as one of two front horns. (The other was Sal Nestico.) Coincidental to the septet's going on the road was the Miles Davis gig.

**Fortune:** Working with Miles is something you don't really believe is going to happen. When you're growing up musically there's always Miles Davis lurking somewhere. When I was playing I was totally involved in what was going on. It's just that there wasn't very much of me needed. I was confined to very little participation in the music. But he meant so much to me in that I didn't know what he was going to do, so I had to stay ready. I practiced.

**Smith:** What kind of instrument do you use and how do you warm up on a regular basis?

**Fortune:** I use stock Selmers, the Mark VI alto and one of the new sopranos. I own a balance action tenor, a rare horn, but I don't play it much. I had a Selmer baritone when I was working with Mongo. I recorded with David Young on baritone and flute.

My practice habits vary. I practice like a fighter who trains and never meets his opponent. He does all that he needs to do to prepare to meet that opponent. I practice to prepare myself for when I have to play. I play scales, chords, tunes, but not all of them all the time. When it comes time for me to hit, I'm trying to get everything I can get my hands on. I sometimes use lead sheets, music scores, exercise books, but only sometimes. Sometimes it's chords; sometimes it's melody; sometimes it's finger-exercises, but basically it's all in preparation.

**Smith:** Do you experiment with reeds and mouthpieces or are you locked into one kind?

**Fortune:** Boy, do I experiment! At the moment it's a Berg-Larson. I don't know what it will be tomorrow, or next week. It's a hard rubber mouthpiece with a comparatively small opening. I can't play with a large, open mouthpiece. Although for a long time I thought that's what it was about for me. The reeds are soft, a 2½. I can't get with the metal mouthpieces; the vibration chills my blood. It's a matter of what's comfortable; some musicians are at ease with metal in their mouths. I'm not.

I experiment with all the parts of the horn—necks, bodies and even whole horns. I had a moment of panic right before a trip to the coast. One day my mouthpiece felt great and the next day it was out. I went to one mechanic who recommended me to another. We switched around the setup between necks and mouthpieces, and wham, one combo worked. Since then I changed it around three or four times. And all this was in the span of a month, maybe six weeks.

The difference I find in the necks has to do with the metal, and not necessarily with the makeup of the metal, either. From what my repairman was telling me, it has to do with the heating of the metal and at what temperature the instrument is formed.

**Smith:** Tempering of the metal may have the same effect, i.e., the cooling process. Maybe that's what made Sidney Bechet's sound so unique.

**Fortune:** At that point he (the repairman) started talking about molecules, and that's where you're coming from. I didn't want to deal with what caused it; it's the end result that was limiting, so I dealt with that.

The fact that Bechet, or Hawkins, or any of the "old-timers" got different sounds out of their respective horns may or may not be due to the metal that was around at the time, or the process of heating and/or cooling of it. Somewhere floating around there is a "cigar cutter" which has been traced back to Hawk's time. It was a model that Selmer made. Some cats swear by them; I've played a couple of

cigar cutters and they haven't gassed me. Then Selmer came out with the Marks which followed the balanced series. John (Coltrane) swore by the balanced he owned. When the Mark VI hit, everyone swore by the earlier ones.

My point is that there are all types, from cigar cutters through the latest Marks but it takes more than the instrument to make a unique sound. The mouthpiece and how it is handled through facial makeup and control is so important. Embouchure, you know.

**Smith:** Ornette Coleman tried a plastic sax, as did Charlie Parker. What are the pros and cons of that?

**Fortune:** I've never tried one, so I have no idea what would happen if I blew into one. I kind of question the viability of it, though. I'll say this, they are making plastic as hard as metal these days. They have the fibrecane, and plastic reeds, but they'll have to go some to touch the old bamboo cane. They are putting less brass into newer instruments due to the shortage of the metal. I don't know what they are filling the rest with, but I hear complaints. I guess we have to consider price. If saxophones were individually produced instead of mass produced, the cost would be prohibitive. That may be why the instruments are so out of it.

**Smith:** Let's talk about electronic music in general and perhaps electrified mouthpieces in particular.

**Fortune:** My dealings with both were with Miles. I was with Mongo when the Varitone came out. The cat in charge of that with Selmer came to see us in Chicago. He asked me if I would care to advertise the hookup. At the time I didn't feel ready for that kind of responsibility. He gave me the equipment anyhow. That was the first and last time until Miles.

Harris has explored that more than anyone. He was so far ahead with various attachments. With Miles, I got the opportunity to explore all the different knobs and switches and it was an education. But at this time I'm more interested in something else that electronics would interfere with. In fact, it might even take away from it. I see something there that is interesting and challenging, but from the acoustic instrument's point of view, the sound that I have put so many years into would seem wasted if I put a button on it. It would give me a lot of comfort with a knob to enhance the sound, but for some strange reason I just like to beat myself. It's too easy the other way.

Once you get to pushing or turning, you're not relating to the sound of the instrument. You are relating to sound, but not necessarily to your own or the instrument's, because a knob or a button takes away from the instrument being personal. You can take ten cats and put them on electric piano and you can't tell them apart. If you take those same ten on acoustic you can tell each one of them to some extent. All these years I have been trying to get to my personal self, my personality and how I project it through my horn.

**Smith:** How do you feel about having the

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with George Benson

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Flying Dutchman FDS 130

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HE'S COMING—Polydor TD 5022

# TAJ MAHAL

## One Man's Gospel Gab

by Lee Underwood

If you are a fan of Frederick Henery's, better known as Taj Mahal after he plucked the tomb's name from one of his nightmares, you are: authentic, perceptive, honest, real, basic, true, funky, down-home, vital, intelligent, and sensitive.

If, however, you think his music is lyrically simplistic, harmonically repetitious, melodically puerile, historically irrelevant, or fundamentally dull, you are: superficial, out of touch, insensitive, unaware, commercially oriented, spiritually blind, and aesthetically numb.

At least that is the impression you come away with if you sit down and talk directly with Mahal, whose music launches many people into quasi-religious rapture while boring others into states of terminal stupefaction.

To put it mildly, Taj Mahal is a man of contradictory images. His loud, aggressive, petulant, sometimes pretentious, and always pompous tone during interview situations (we had two) flagrantly belies the oftentimes lilting frolic and cheerful thumpings of his popular stage act.

At the Roxy Theater in Hollywood, he strode on stage alone wearing an outrageously large Caribbean straw hat and carrying a funky old guitar. His personal charisma immediately brought the screaming full house to its feet. The people loved him wildly as he strutted into *I'm In Love Wit Chew!* and *Goin' Fishin'*, two folksy ditties that did not strain either his 6'4" frame or his four-to-five-note arsenal of vocal licks.

After introducing his six-piece band, he pranced through a series of 12-bar blues, West Indies reggae stompers (*Way Back Home*, *Black Jack Davy*), and the folksy *Slave Driver*. A quantitatively versatile instrumentalist, he shifted easily from guitar to harmonica, to cowbells, to piano, to banjo, to mandolin.

He lulled the crowd. He titillated them. He stroked them with one song, whipped them with another. Seduction was his forte. Some people laughed and cheered. Others cried poignant tears. All rose ecstatically to their feet and clamored for more. To suggest that Taj's devoted, diehard fans were less than enthralled would be a journalistically irresponsible understatement.

Some listeners, however, are considerably less than enthralled with Frederick Henery's musical substance. Of Taj's recent *Mo' Roots* album, *db's* Alan Heineman said, "Taj Mahal has always more or less bored me, but this re-



lease is much more bore than less. . . . The lyrics are forgettable at best, pretentious at worst. . . . To me, it sounds on most cuts as if arrogance were the keynote, as if Mahal's attitude were, 'I'm so good that whatever I do will be outtasite.'"

Richard Cromelin of the *L.A. Times* wrote of a Taj Troubadour performance in more merciful terms: "Taj Mahal, fortunately, has something in him—some rare combination of integrity and talent—that can unfailingly make enjoyable what is, by the standards he's set in the past, a disappointing performance."

Of Taj's abovementioned Roxy performance, this writer wrote in part, "Like the stock market, Taj opens high and closes low. . . . After ten tunes, his loyal fans rudely awakened me by hysterically demanding two encores."

Born in Harlem and raised in Springfield, Massachusetts, the 33-year-old singer moved to California in 1965, at first playing in a band called the Rising Sons (featuring guitarist Ry Cooder).

When the sun failed to rise, Taj went solo and has obviously endured. Since 1967, he has recorded no fewer than ten albums for Columbia: *Taj Mahal*, *The Natch'l Blues*, *Giant Step/De Ole Folks At Home*, *The Real Thing* (the last two are double LPs), *Happy Just To Be Like I Am*, *Recycling The Blues And Other Related Stuff*, *Sounder* (the soundtrack for the movie, in which he also acted), *Oooh So Good 'N Blues*, *Mo' Roots*, and his latest, *Music Keeps Me Together*.

Because *Music Keeps Me Together* is so similar in tone and content to *Mo' Roots* and all previous recordings, I asked Taj the following in the middle of our spirited second interview: "Do you stay where you are because you're comfortable with it? Perhaps because you are not really enough of a musician, singer or songwriter to progress further? Have you hit a place where you've found your niche, where you kind of lay back and protect yourself from any sort of musical or psychological growth that may help you perceive what is going on now, today?"

Hurling his words with a volume designed

to annihilate, Taj bellowed, "That's only because you have the records to listen to! I live on the other side of the records, see?"

"That's what we're here to talk about, Taj: the man behind the records."

Taj lunged into the issue, characteristically avoiding the question's essence by shifting the focus to what he regards as the perceptual limitations of others. "Hey!" he boomed. "I enjoy the hell out of the song, *Further On Down The Road*. This is maybe the third time I've recorded it. If it means somethin' different to somebody else, good. I'm sure it does.

"But only those special people, people who really can see, are going to like it, and they can see it right away. All the rest of the guys got blinds down their eyes this far, like this—they got tunnel vision, man! Unless somebody says (*whistles*), 'It's over here!' they can't do anything," he bawled. "NOTH-ING! *Nothing!* Not a thing at all! They have no space for themselves."

Taj all but shouted, "The only thing they'd have to do is stop trying to figure out you gotta be such a big intellectual to deal with Taj's music—or be so simple, or be this, or be that—and just let the music come right through, because all the people who let it come right through get it, and know exactly where I'm comin' from. They write me about it daily.

"It isn't even that I'm safe doin' what I'm doin'. It's obvious that it's just ahead of where everybody's comin' from. I did blues in the '60s, for instance, and everybody said, 'Naw, naw, naw, not commercial enough.'

"Now, let me tell you something: Smokestack Lightnin's version of Howlin' Wolf's *Meetcha At The Bottom* made a lot of money for Howlin' Wolf. Now, why in hell can these cats go out there and play it, but I can't? It needs to be explained.

"It's explained really easy. American people in the past have not been able to deal with the black people that they actually brought to this country. And they still have not dealt with them as intelligent people. Until they do, they always gonna take something that's second best. These cats say, 'Okay, here's the music, here you are, this is what I know how

to play, I'll play it for you.' But it ain't got nothin' to do with *communicatin'*! Black music is not their language!!"

The major themes that run throughout many of Taj's diatribes are all present: those who like his music constitute a perspicacious elite inner circle, while those who don't like it are blind. In order to appreciate his musical "earthiness" and "integrity," one must suspend intelligent critical judgements. Taj is ahead of his time, rather than behind. Taj is intelligent and nobly uncompromising. Whites are predominately rip-off artists who ruthlessly exploit black resources.

Far from regarding himself as a musical Wrong Way Corrigan, Taj sees himself as a champion of Third World cultures, a rugged individualist unbroken by recording industry demands, a promulgator of the True Spirit, the antithesis of more commercially successful artists who "only steal without puttin' nothin' back cultural."

His background is one of the reasons many writers describe Taj and his multifaceted music as "authentic," "a man of integrity," "pure," "real," etc. He is the elder of nine children. His mother was a gospel singer who today teaches elementary school. His West Indian father spoke seven languages, played the piano, and exposed him to jazz at an early age.

According to Taj, Springfield, Massachusetts was an international mecca. Cubans,

agriculture. Different people in our neighborhood grew gardens, see, so agriculture came first to me—boom! I went for it. I got my B.A. in Animal Husbandry from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. While goin' to school, and after, I worked on the farms and was also a veterinarian.

"Our neighborhood was basically black, but also there was Italians, Jews, Egyptians, Panamanians, Black Indians, Caucasian Indians, all kinds of people. People lived in wooden frame tenements, six or eight families in a house, and everybody knew everybody. The level of communications was really heavy. There's so-and-so's grandmother, or great-grandmother, or great-great-grandmother!"

"I mean, the kind of people I come from have the working impetus, and ability to get out and work—WORK!—and get ahead and understand and comprehend, because there are so many people who have traveled the world over, whereas many people born in this country are not given that point of view. They don't hear no drums of their own, you know. When the drum beats, they go with the drum."

Taj began singing at six, playing the guitar at 15. He attended the Episcopal Church, "where the West Indians were," and the gospel and holy-roller churches, "where the music was dynamite."

"There was a *looooot* of people, man, and Mississippi music, Alabama music, Georgia music, Carolina music, Louisiana music,

continued, "... who collects folk idioms, folk songs, folk presentations, folk styles, and presents them because they come from musical and cultural sources that you respect and like, but which musically perhaps have no direct relevance to what's happening today and tomorrow?"

"Bullshit," he snapped. "That's where it's bullshit, right there! That can only be assumed by somebody from the outside who really doesn't know what's goin' on!"

"It's obvious to me that—you see, I've also dealt with this—that perhaps my assignment on the planet Earth by my ancestors is a commitment given to me to deal with a long time ago that has nothin' to do with what's currently goin' on, and I don't even worry about that!"

"Does a Jamaican or an African regard you as being authentic? Or does he perhaps regard you as being a kind of well-meaning thief?"

"No!"

"In an interview with Harold Bronson of the *L.A. Free Press*, you said, 'First I'm an African, second I'm a Jamaican, third a black American. The rest of it is somebody else's mischief.' In fact, however, you were born in New York City, raised in Springfield, and have been in, around, and of America all of your life."

"But that's to you! You must understand that that is to you!"

"Just posing the question."

"No-no-no-no-no! You're still, you're still,

---

***"All I'm tryin' to say to the consumer is go for the real stuff, like Bob Marley, or Bob Dylan, or purveyors of the music, like Richie Havens or Gil Scott-Heron, or even Ry Cooder, a person who really has basic principles and really takes time to make the music sound good."***

---

Puerto Ricans, Tahitians, Hungarians, Poles, French Canadians, Trinidadians, South Americans, blacks and whites came "from all over the world" to work in the factories and on the farms, and to attend the American International College and Springfield College.

"My stepfather was Jamaican," Taj asserted, "and I was raised in a household eating Jamaican food. Like, I'm assimilating to me another part of two different cultures."

"People from around the world, of all faiths, nationalities and colors came over to the house, because we came off with a different type of vibe, of being aware, of being intelligent to deal with people."

"I mean, when you go down to the Caribbean Islands, the Dutch have been there, the East Indians, the Syrians; there's this one, there's that one, from all over the world they've been there."

"There was piracy, man! Open, outright piracy! Would you like to live in a port with pirates bein' outside there? My grandmother told me about gun battles would go on out in front in the harbor, and whichever flag would go up was the language you was gonna speak that night!"

"All kinds of people don't understand that. You can be anything you want in this world if you use the basic intellect and energy that's created and given to you to use. If you don't, you fall into the trap of rippin' people off."

"When I was about six or seven years old, I decided there was two things I wanted to do: be involved with music, and be involved with

sometimes people from both ends of the state! Like Mississippi people from down towards the Gulf, real Creole looking. Others came North for a job ad they saw in the papers.

"Many was the day I'd stand out on the street and see Mississippi and North Carolina people come up in some big Buick with stuff just fallin' out the car, kids just pilin' out the car, big baskets of chicken in the front seat—cats just gettin' into town!"

"We lived in an international house. We had friends from everywhere. Relating to America in a day-to-day sense was not in terms of the music. I didn't really hear rhythm and blues till I was 14, 15 years old, and I didn't like most of what I heard, 'cause I liked jazz. I heard that you was supposed to *sing* a note."

Because of his "Jamaican food" background, Taj feels supremely qualified to represent musics of other historical eras and cultures. "Yeah! That's because it interests me! I've had America up to *here*, man! I mean, I'm an intelligent man. I been to college, been through all of the trips, and basically, I don't think it's shit!" Taj resents any suggestion that he might not be qualified because of his American roots, just as he resents any suggestion that his music perhaps has little to do with contemporary consciousness.

"Are you a kind of historian?" I queried. "A kind of black Allen Lomax, who . . ." Taj trampled on the question: "Black Allen Lomax!?" he snorted contemptuously. I con-

tinued, "... However people pick up on that and read that, it has nothin' to do with what I'm sayin', because the words that I'm tryin' to communicate to you—you *hear* me when I'm playin' music, and you understand what I mean. So, I mean, I don't have the same value for words."

"As a matter of fact, that's what really gets me in trouble with most people in my life, 'cause I don't have the same value for words, because they function differently. I dealt with that word-space really hard and very intelligently for a long time when I was totally ignored for my intelligence, which was the very important thing that everybody said was necessary for people to have."

"As far as the question goes, Taj, your natural roots are here, and all of your American followers say, 'Taj Mahal is authentic. He goes back to the roots. He is the real thing. He has integrity.' These are key words we see every time we read an article about you. But might an African, Jamaican or Indian American look at you as a rip-off of his culture the same way you look at the rock and roll artist as a rip-off of the black culture?"

"I don't know." Taj explained in detail about how land becomes depleted in seven year cycles unless periodically replenished, and then said, again avoiding a direct discussion of himself, "That is the basis of what is ruling the whole trip. The same thing, like the land, is when you go over to somebody's raw music and rip it off, rip it off, rip it off—pretty soon, there's nothin' left, nothin' left

# JOHN HANDY

## Taking The Bible Out Of The Brothels

by Bill Gallagher

It should come as no surprise to those who knew John Handy in his early days as an alto player in New York, or during his progressive years in San Francisco, that he still feels angry about the indignities imposed on jazz. Handy predicts that in 15 years there won't be any young blacks playing jazz and that the acceptance of the music in the white world will save it from the night clubs it is now forced into.

And now, people take notes when Professor Handy talks.

Speaking slowly, arranging thoughts the way he constructs his haunting alto solos, the performer-turned-professor charts a survey of American jazz that grows out of his own fitful career as composer and performer. And the students take down every one of Handy's words, mystified enough by his cool, but deceptive, detachment to believe that they may be asked to hand those beliefs back to him on the next test.

John Handy follows a pretty hectic schedule for a man who is supposedly semi-retired. During the school year, he teaches around the San Francisco Bay Area. Then he devotes his summer months to festivals and the "adjudication duties" at various secondary school jazz gatherings. He spends what other time he can find performing in concert settings around San Francisco as the better half of the only successful fusion of jazz and Indian music. Thus it can hardly be said that Handy, one of the unique altoists in jazz, is retired. It

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20 □ down beat



LARRY JOHNSON

**"In 15 years, it will be rare to see young black jazz musicians. Unless some effort is made to educate young blacks that jazz isn't just older people's music, they'll turn off to it. . . . Unless blacks discover the value of the music, they'll see exactly what happened to the blues when young whites took that music to their audience and found a pot of gold."**

would be more precise to say he takes things on his own terms.

He first came into his own in 1961, when, with two albums already released, he signed on with Charles Mingus. Under the tutelage of the bass master, Handy shook the inevitable influences of Charlie Parker and developed the "flawless control" that Whitney Balliett of the New Yorker saw fit to praise.

Following a desertion of New York, Handy staged a West Coast comeback in 1965 at the head of an adventuresome group best-remembered for its Monterey Jazz Festival performance (recorded on Columbia) of Handy's *Spanish Lady*, which he wrote based on the Gregorian chants he sang as a youth and performed as an extended set of variations on a single minor chord.

From a later Handy quintet, featuring violinist Mike White, bassist Ron McClure, and pianist Mike Nock, a group called The Fourth Way emerged. But by that time, Handy had stopped recording and trimmed his performance schedule back to a leisurely pace. He took the opportunity to follow up on a long-held ambition of his to teach jazz at the college level for musicians and those interested students, who up until that time had been taught by "well-meaning white intellectuals."

Of his entry to the field of education he says, "I simply thought it should be done. So I did it for the public and the musicians and the state of the art. The public doesn't understand us. A musician shouldn't be out there alone, people should know what he's doing." Handy wanted to do his part to tear

down the seedy image he feels jazz has developed because it hasn't been treated as seriously as "classical" music. The negative image of jazz is one he knows intimately, since it lies at the root of his turn from the role of performer to that of educator.

Speaking recently of that switch, the 42-year-old Handy said, "I first started teaching about the same time I recorded my last album. Then for the next two years, I did no professional playing, and devoted almost 80% of my musical energy to teaching. The reason was primarily the hardness and callousness of the people with whom I've played. It was emotionally impossible to continue. I was just 100% turned off with the rest of the business of getting gigs and dealing with agents and . . . well, just with the whole business."

Handy wasn't really "blacklisted" after that. "Unlisted" would be a better way to describe his relationship with the business side of jazz after he swore it off. But in San Francisco, he found a sustaining interest from his days as the city's premier jazz musician to lead him into a partnership with sarod player Ali Akbar Khan in 1971. That musical coalition is still growing in popularity, even as memories of the short-lived synthesis of rock, jazz, and Indian music fades into nirvana. Handy has recently signed with Impulse, ending his hiatus from the recording studio with an album featuring his work with Khan. It marks their first record, despite the local acclaim the two have received in the last four

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# RECORD REVIEWS

Ratings are:

★★★★ excellent, ★★★ very good,

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## OREGON

IN CONCERT—Vanguard VSD 79358: *Become, Seem, Appear; Summer Solstice; Undertow; The Silence Of A Candle; Tryon's Horn; Yet To Be.*

Personnel: Paul McCandless, oboe, English horn, bass clarinet, and wooden flute; Glen Moore, bass, flute, violin, and piano; Ralph Towner, 12 string and classical guitars, mellophone, french horn, trumpet and piano; Collin Walcott, sitar, tabla, clarinet, percussion, and congas.

★★★★★

During the same month Oregon recorded this live album in New York. I had the pleasure of witnessing them in concert in the state whose name they have adopted. Just as it is indeed a long way from New York to Oregon, the two concerts in question differ significantly but without sacrificing an iota of quality. The Oregon I saw performed with recondite intensity, at times bordering on detachment, meaning the kind of contemplated involvement with one's instrument that eliminates the emotional "cloud of unknowing" act which so many confuse for improvisatory prowess. But, I hasten to add, they were by no means cold; they projected, consciously or not, warmth, well-being, and humor. (At the end of one free-form excursion, everybody, at the prompting of Glen Moore, fell into a hilarious dissonant vamp of *Pretty Baby*.)

The Oregon of *In Concert*, their fourth album for Vanguard, is more reserved, perhaps more aloof, but also more inexplicably magnetic. Surprisingly, their awesome degree of interchangeability with an arsenal of instruments, mind-boggling in the visual realm alone, comes gliding through this entire performance with an impact unparalleled in previous studio recordings. I can actually see Ralph Towner, guitar perched on his knee like a pet flamingo, gesturing towards Moore with his eyebrows, indicating to the latter with that simple glance that this would be the right moment for a strange, beautiful bowed bass solo. That happens in the middle of Towner's brightly infectious *Summer Solstice*; and if they had miked his eyebrows, you could hear them. Really! Nevertheless, you can hear every stop on Paul McCandless' bass clarinet on *Undertow*, a duet with bassist Moore, recalling the original blueprint of architects Eric Dolphy and Ron Carter.

The one selection here in some slight danger of overexposure, Towner's *The Silence Of A Candle*, emerges as the most stirring performance, an alluring residue that won't quit the mind. Collin Walcott, on sitar, casts a floating, somnolent veil over the piece as Towner's light finger-picking patterns swell underneath, float to the crest, and rest alongside the drone. Moore underpins the movement in warm, wide sweeps as the ensemble multiplies tone layers that dramatically sub-  
22 □ down beat

side while Walcott states that graceful theme on his sitar. That one moment, so brief and so spellbinding, would be enough to recommend this album. But take away even that instant, and *In Concert* would still stand on its own five stars.

—gilmore

## KEITH JARRETT

THE KOLN CONCERT—ECM 1064-65: *Part I; Part II.*

Personnel: Jarrett, piano.

★★★★★

A little more than a year ago, Keith Jarrett returned from Europe and announced that, for a variety of reasons, he was halting his immensely popular series of piano solo-concerts. Like the man and his music, that statement was rather puzzling in its dualism, couched in blunt simplicity with the unmistakable suggestion of deeper implications.

Only weeks before, he had recorded this concert in Koln, West Germany, which emerges as the pinnacle of his solo art. Jarrett had not only distilled and refined the broad concept and specialized technique of his earlier *Solo-Concerts*; he had also broken through the potential limitations of the solo idiom—and of his own choices in length and form—to erect magnifying mirrors of his clear vision. The fingers are often startling, the melodies infectious, the piano arranging richly diverse, the self-propulsive rhythmic stomp sections glorious in their vibrancy; and still, the most enduring quality of these performances is their breathtaking intimacy.

In *Part II*, Jarrett seems to be shouting his most private exultations to the world, and the quiet fragility of his language is the most effective amplification. Using broad strokes and voicings of the Russian Romantics—Rimsky-Korsakov leaps to mind—Jarrett's structure moves firmly, inexorably to its pianissimo conclusion. As fully impressive as the actual notes and phrases is the pianist's ability to improvise and balance the vast forms he works in.

Jarrett has stated, verbally as well as musically, his affinity for folk music, and that is the guiding light of *Part I*, the most unusual—and for me, the most enjoyable—solo-concert on record. The piece abounds in English- and Scottish-sounding folk melodies, bagpipe drone voicings in the left hand, ringing church-chimes and organ-pipes in the right. Its strength is in its deceptive simplicity and translucence, and in the insistent correctness of its realization.

Jarrett is an out-of-the-closet romantic, but moments of sentimentality are rare: his transportive beauty glides on starkly touching incisions to the psyche's emotional lifeline. His solo art remains a unique entity in music, and *The Koln Concert* is its most moving, most telling exposition.

—tesser

## LONNIE LISTON SMITH

VISIONS OF A NEW WORLD—Flying Dutchman BDL 1-1196: *A Chance For Peace; Love Beams; Colors Of The Rainbow; Devika (Goddess); Sunset; Visions Of A New World (Phase I); Visions Of A New World (Phase II); Summer Nights.*

Personnel: Smith, keyboards, Donald Smith, flute, vocals; Dave Hubbard, reeds; Cecil Bridgewater, trumpet; Clifford Adams, trombone; Reggie Lucas, guitar; Greg Maker, electric bass; Art Gore, Wilby Fletcher, drums; Ray Armando, Michael Carvin, Angel Allende, Lawrence Killian, percussion.

★ 1/2

The title of Lonnie Smith's new album must be a joke. *Visions Of A New World* should be retitled *Visions Of The Status Quo*.

There is *nothing* new here. Instead we get warmed marshmallow froth that belongs on one of those treacly "easy listening" FM stations that pipe music to dentists' offices.

The Smith "sound" consists of a medium tempo funka-chunk beat, the constant drone of a string synthesizer, cute little keyboard arabesques, the reverberated voice of Donald Smith, and horn lines that would cause a beginning student arranger to blush. This whole conglomeration is then echoed to round out the rough spots (it's amazing what a ton of echo can do for intonation problems) and to impart, no doubt, a cosmic dimension or two.

The overall effect is boredom beyond belief. With six percussionists on practically every track, one would expect some interesting rhythmic colorations. Unfortunately, Smith's *New World* must be 1984 because all percussionists are marching to a pale, conformist ghost of a pulse; in fact those mechanical "sidemen" used by cocktail pianists provide just about as much interest as Smith's "rhythm" section. And then there are the bells. I kept expecting a hearty "ho, ho, ho, and a Merry Christmas to you."

Other forgettable moments include the title cut. *Phase I* includes some pianistic rumblings and arpeggios (some of you who remember the silent film era will recognize this as the musical cue that announced the entrance of the villain). *Phase II* catapults us into a dialogue with Smith's string synthesizer and the percussionists' nifty xerox of Isaac Hayes' rhythmic shafts. Alas, Smith provides about as clear a vision of a new world as the Flat Earth Society.

A note on Smith's charming modesty. After thanking the musicians, producer and engineer, Smith, in reference to the album's cover, thanks "Jack Martin for capturing my *mystery* and *mystic* on canvas" [italics mine].

—berg

## RONNIE LAWS AND PRESSURE

PRESSURE SENSITIVE—Blue Note BNLA 452: *Always There; Momma; Never Be The Same; Tell Me Something Good; Nothing To Lose; Tidal Wave; Why Do You Laugh At Me; Mis' Mary's Place.*

Personnel: Laws, tenor and soprano saxes, flute; John W. Rowin, Jr., guitar; Roland Bautista, guitar; Clint Mosley, bass; Wilton Felder, bass; Steve Gutierrez, drums; Michael Willars, drums; Mike Cavanaugh, Clavinet and electric piano; Joe Sample, Clavinet and electric piano; Jerry Peters, electric piano, Arp synthesizer, string ensemble; Joe Clayton, Flexitone, congas, tambourine.

★★★

## THE CRUSADERS

CHAIN REACTION—Blue Thumb BTSO 6022: *Creole; Chain Reaction; I Felt The Love; Mellow Out; Rainbow Visions; Hallucinate; Give It Up; Hot's It; Sugar Cane; Soul Caravan.*

Personnel: Wayne Henderson, trombone and brass; Wilton Felder, saxes and bass; Joe Sample, Rhodes piano, Clavinet and synthesizer; Larry Carlton, guitars; Stix Hooper, drums and percussion.

★★

Ronnie Laws is a new face in the sea of soul-jazz saxophonists, brought to shore under the tutelage and navigation of the Crusaders. Although both Laws' and the Crusaders' new albums share a common interest (the recyclable soul hook) and some common musicians (Wilton Felder, Joe Sample and Wayne Henderson), they differ dramatically in spirit. On Laws' *Pressure Sensitive*, he steps clearly and commandingly to the foreground, casting his shadow across the music. The

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Crusaders' *Chain Reaction* is anonymity incarnate, a blending of personality into texture until only texture exists, with little substance or spirit. One album demands to be remembered; the other begs to be casually assimilated.

In his record debut, Laws declares himself as a facile, well-versed tenor and soprano sax man, possessing an acute sense of the instrument's tone and dynamics. His best moments are on the virile throatgrabbers, like the bright opener *Always There*, which features an ingenious mating of a choppy rhythm guitar with a funky Clavinet riff. Laws and producer Henderson's recording philosophy seems to be doubling the instruments in order to achieve greater rhythmic variation and a stormier dynamic range, an idea put to best use on Stevie Wonder's *Tell Me Something Good*, a truc tour de force.

The album is weakened in places by Laws' skeletal compositions. He relies heavily on a chord change outline, building his solos on overstated hooks and tending to wander around his theme without focus. At other times, Henderson's over-exacting sense of arrangement creates a bland vacuum, pushing Ronnie into the back seat.

Apparently, the Crusaders prefer the low profile the back seat affords. Their music is constructed in smooth layers of plush texture, from warm, unobtrusive funk moods. If this makes for affable, cleanly recorded sounds, it also makes for redundant and predictable music. And, at this point, their compositions derive solely from a tireless and shameless re-vamping of well-worn hooks. The arrangements are too stately and familiar to catch one by surprise. Even the bouncy *Mellow Out*, highlighting Larry Carlton's inimitable guitar voicing, remains a remake of their popular *Put It Where You Want It*.

The entire second side of *Chain Reaction* is a string of soul-funk-disco-jazz items, replete with cliched two-chord backdrop and the obligatory sophisticated turnaround. If the Crusaders really feel compelled to provide this sort of thing, why don't they at least attempt other people's material, where they might not appear so rigid? The talents this band bears are formidable, enough to make an earth-shattering, uncontrived recording worthy to even the most discriminating listener. Perhaps the Crusaders' quandary is symptomatic of the current jazz scene. For jazz to be easily digestible, thus commercial, must it sprawl out in the back seat and hum like some transient hitchhiker so the driver can keep time with his foot? —gilmore

## THE NEW YORK JAZZ REPERTORY COMPANY

**SATCHMO REMEMBERED: THE MUSIC OF LOUIS ARMSTRONG AT CARNegie HALL:** *Sr. Louis Tickle; Creole Belles; Flee As A Bird/Oh, Didn't He Ramble; Chimes Blues; Cake Walking Babies From Home; Potato Head Blues; Weather Bird Rag; Willie The Weeper; Big Butter And Egg Man; Someday; Rosetta; Saint Louis Blues; You've Been A Good Old Wagon; S.O.L. Blues.*

Personnel: Dick Hyman, piano; Mel Davis, Pee Wee Erwin, Joe Newman, trumpets; Ruby Braff, Ray Nance, cornets; Eph Resnick, Vic Dickenson, trombones; Kenny Davern, clarinet, soprano sax; Milt Hinton, bass; Bobby Rosengarden, drums; Carmen Mastren, guitar, banjo; Carrie Smith, vocals; William Russell, violin.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Here is the first recording to emerge from two years of consistently rewarding and exciting concerts presented by the New York

Jazz Repertory Company. Atlantic has chosen to release one of the Company's most successful concerts, a tribute to Louis Armstrong, in this judiciously edited version. It's a winner from start to finish.

Purists may argue the value of imitating great performances. But the NYJRC is not attempting to "imitate," but rather, to recreate performances that exist only on records which are inaccessible, or at best, a dim echo of what the music must have sounded like when it was first played.

New embellishments and ideas broaden the scope of the music, as well, with hand-picked all-star groups bringing these numbers back to life.

Arranger/conductor/pianist Dick Hyman transcribed early Louis records for this concert, adding the bright touch of arranging Satchmo's parts and solos for three trumpets, prompting one wag to dub the evening "Supersatch."

Starting with faithful versions of such early New Orleans tunes as *St. Louis Tickle* and *Creole Belles* (with recorded comments from Armstrong himself) the concert moves on to the King Oliver and Hot Five periods, building to greater and greater excitement along the way with highly-spirited renditions of *Cake Walking Babies From Home*, *Potato Head Blues*, and other Armstrong classics.

Mel Davis, PeeWee Erwin, and Joe Newman work beautifully together, and are given a particularly fine showcase playing just with Hyman on piano in a recalling of the Armstrong-Ear Hines recording, *Weather Bird Rag*. Carrie Smith provides some fine vocals, and Louis' role is passed on to Ruby Braff and then Ray Nance before a rousing ensemble finale.

Using the classic Armstrong recordings as derivatives, the New York Jazz Repertory Company makes them *live* in 1975, not as antiques or historical pieces but as full, vibrant jazz works. For this we say bravo and wish the NYJRC a long and healthy life. Now how about recordings of their wonderful concerts on Bix, Ellington, Basie, the Savoy Ballroom, etc? —multin

## NORMAN CONNORS

**SATURDAY NIGHT SPECIAL—Buddah BDS 5643:** *Saturday Night Special; Dindi; Maiden Voyage; Valentine Love; Akia; Skin Diver; Kwasi.*

Personnel: Connors, drums; Jean Carn and Michael Henderson, vocals; Herbie Hancock, acoustic piano (track 1); Gary Bartz, alto and soprano saxes; Eddie Henderson, trumpet and flugelhorn; Carlos Garnett, tenor sax; Onaje Allan Gumbs, acoustic and electric piano, organ, synthesizer; Hubert Eaves, acoustic and electric piano, Clavinet, organ; Reggie Lucas, electric guitar; Henderson, electric bass; Buster Williams, acoustic bass; Ken Nash, percussion; Bill Summers, percussion; Robert King, acoustic guitar; David Subke and William O. Murphy, Jr., flutes; Nathan Rubin and Myra Bucky, violins; Terry Adams, cello; Nancy Ellis, viola; Bernie Krause, Moog synthesizer programming.

★ ★ 1/2

Term it Chic Afrique. Sumptuous Nubian temptresses chanting, scating and breathing through latent Barry White exercises. Seas of seductive strings and tepid electric piano rolls programmed to bounce from one speaker to the next, just like the give and take of an orgasm. Tripe poetry, ostensibly soulful, but in reality black McKueneque, accentuating the setting.

A most guilty track is *Skin Diver*, with its commands to seek the "pleasures of the harbor." Not that Jean Carn doesn't have the voice to pull it off, but when I look at an al-



bum jacket and see names like Gary Bartz, Eddie Henderson, and Carlos Garnett, I'm expecting more than ping-pong Rhodes, gimmicky echoplex and marching band toots. Connors himself has never been more disappointing.

The inaugural cut, *Saturday Night Special* (and what's so special about it?) bears no distinguishing characteristics that would give clue as to performers. Full of Michael Henderson's hackneyed, popping bass lines and an irritating chorus that chants "Saturday night, sounds of love" until the ears cry for mercy, this could just as well have been recorded by the Ritchie Family. Even Connors, who by his track record must be considered a potential catalyst, disappoints, his metronomic accompaniment a shell of his ability.

It's a mystery why Connors is so shy here. Only on *Kwasi* are we relieved of Carn's silky tease, Henderson's glossy Al Greenisms (the silly *Valentine Love*) and the half-hearted solos of a slew of illustrious but seemingly bored sessionmen. This marks Connors' only solo, but disillusionment prevails: it's a hyperactive bashing section with no rhyme and little reason.

And that's the basic fault of this whole smorgasbord. From disco to on-the-make Muzak to a dose of discursive percussive, the bases are touched. Yet it is product: pretty, yes, but void of originality, and filled with boring, programmed efficiency. —shaw

## ART ENSEMBLE OF CHICAGO

THE PARIS SESSION—Arista-Freedom 1903: *Tutankhamun; The Ninth Room; That The Evening The Sky Fell Through The Glass Wall And We Stood Alone Somewhere?; Toro; Lori Song; Thinitthedalen Part One; Thinitthedalen Part Two; The Spiritual.*

Personnel: Lester Bowie, trumpet, flugelhorn, horns, bass, drum, percussion; Roscoe Mitchell, soprano, alto and bass saxes, clarinet, flute, whistles, siren, bells, percussion; Joseph Jarman, soprano, alto and tenor saxes, clarinet, oboe, flute, piano, harpsichord, guitar, percussion; Malachi Favors, bass, electric bass, banjo, zither.

\*\*\* 1/2

Musical interplay and unfolding improvisation have always been the Art Ensemble's long suits: cooperatively, Mssrs. Bowie, Favors, Mitchell and Jarman compose virtuoso instrumental music so rich in relationship and full of the process of *becoming* that the oddest climaxes as well as the simplest themes seem foreshadowed and predestined.

Specific as the aural landscape may be in an Ensemble creation, so are the activities of the musicians in live performances. Pantomime and slapstick are not unknown to the group—in fact, no other jazz unit uses theatricality to the extent of the Chicagoans. Some of their satire comes right out of the grooves and through the speakers; other bits you have to be there to dig.

So when Jarman opens the album with some word play reminiscent of Lord Buckley, his colleagues chanting behind him, listen further. What comes next is an expedition into multivoiced melody; then timeless sawing on the bass and the deeper saxes holding long tones under Bowie's trumpet explorations. A wispy flute and insinuating clarinet draw one into the musty corridors of King Tut's tomb. Nearly braying brass sheds modern light on the ancient Egyptian's crypt, sending insects, rodents, and lizards scurrying, brushing cobwebs aside. Bowie's bursts of delighted song are turned to sputtering when the inscrutable

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clarinet (Mitchell's) and the odd effects of Jarman and Favors envelop him like a curse.

Malachi is credited with *Tur's* composition; he is the constant underpinning of *Room*, an always throbbing reference for Mitchell's inspired alto solo. Bowie, too, rides the edge of the unflinching bass cliff-walk, and Jarman slides around his horn range, piercing the high bounds of his alto and shaking loose low notes. Tiny cymbals, drums, chimes and a gong crescendo supply a track suggesting a free drummer's accentuation; in *Spiritual* the Ensemble again plays a rhythm passage as though the four were one ferocious drummer.

*Toro* is almost programmatic, a deadly sly ritual play with Favors acting out the nervous pace of the bull, taunted by percussive tics, encircled by the saxes, standing ground before a confident, flourishing trumpet. The shorter Art Ensemble pieces are often gems; *Lori* is one such, reflecting within itself natural sounds—wood and metal warmed by breath, strings plucked, a single finger describing a simple scale on the piano. The *Tithinis* are largely duets for Favors and Mitchell. The saxist minimizes his horn on *Part One* by equating it with the single-toned capabilities of bicycle horns, then in *Part Two* blows—or lets slip, passively—parallel lines on two saxes at once, a la Kirk.

I doubt I'll listen to side four, the 20 minute *Spiritual*, after reviewing it. The scenario for this extended piece is fulfilled in sound, but the screaming and cartoonish script irritates, marring the pleasures of another supple bass solo and the powerful lines Bowie works out over random piano notes and harpsichord clusters. The riverboat passage is evocative, the banjo sequence hilarious, but the rage evidenced in the slave auction segment is little short of a broad plantation caricature.

—mandel

## DONALD BYRD

PLACES AND SPACES—Blue Note BN-LA549-G: *Change (Makes You Want To Hustle)*; *Wind Parade*; *Dominoes*; *Places And Spaces*; *You And Music*; *Night Whistler*; *Just My Imagination*.

Personnel: Byrd, trumpet, fluegelhorn, solo vocals; Larry Mizell, piano; Craig McCullen, John Rowin, guitars; Fonze Mizell, clarinet, trumpet; James Carter, whistler; George Bohannon, trombone; Tyree Glenn, Jr., tenor sax; Raymond Brown, trumpet; Skip Scarborough, Rhodes piano; Chuck Rainey, electric bass; Harvey Mason, drums; Fonze Mizell, Larry Mizell, Kay Haith, vocals.

\*\*\*

## THE BLACKBYRDS

CITY LIFE—Fantasy F 9490: *Rock Creek Park*; *Thankful 'Bout Yourself*; *City Life*; *All I Ask*; *Happy Music*; *Love So Fine*; *Flying High*; *Hash And Eggs*.

Personnel: Kevin Toney, keyboards; Stephen Johnson, sax, flute; Orville Saunders, guitar; Joe Hall, bass; Keith Killgo, drums. With Merry Clayton, George Bohannon, Ernie Watts, Patrice Rushen, Gary Bartz, Larry Mizell, Fonze Mizell, Tommy Morgan.

\*\*\*

Donald Byrd is to muzak what Herbie Hancock is to funk. And just as his former pianist continues to develop his new style, so does Donald Byrd perfect his, considerably narrower, base. While there are some mediocre moments on *Places And Spaces*—*Just My Imagination* is especially insipid with Byrd and his fellow vocalists manhandling the song's originally wistful lyrics, the monotonous rhythm and sound getting to you after a while—there are nice moments. The buoyant *Change* and the subtly arranged

*Places And Spaces* both succeed, but the real delight is the track called *Night Whistler*, as evocative as its title suggests. Written by Larry Mizell and James Carter, the number opens with Byrd on muted and echo-reinforced trumpet oscillating with Carter's hoarse whistling over a widely-spaced rhythm pattern in midtempo and a poignant guitar figure. There are traces of Ennio Morricone here in the use of Carter's whistling, but the intricate mixing is Byrd's and Mizell's own. The *Night Whistler* is also the only cut on the album which is not too long.

While the Blackbyrds can be considered one of Byrd's contributions to music, the unit's influential, breezy vocal style has crept into their mentor's music ever steadily. One is currently hard-pressed to tell the difference between a Byrd and a Blackbyrds date. (Check out *Just My Imagination* from *Places And Spaces* and *Happy Music* (written by Byrd), which opens side two of the Blackbyrds' *City Life*).

The presence of *Places And Spaces* sidemen and arrangers like the two Mizell brothers and Wade Marcus on *City Life* further obscures the borderlines between the trumpeter and his proteges. But where a Donald Byrd album is filled up with fluegelhorn bubbles floating on top of the rhythm mix, the Blackbyrds substitute vocals comprised of vapid lyrics, delivered in uninspired chant.

Like its predecessors, *City Life* is so consistent that it is difficult to distinguish the tracks from one another. A brief saving moment occurs on Kevin Toney's lovely well-balanced ballad *All I Ask*, which is played straight on harmonica (unidentified). It alone offers a welcome relief from the album's overexuberant tedium. —gabel

## STANLEY TURRENTINE

HAVE YOU EVER SEEN THE RAIN—Fantasy F-9493: *Reasons*; *Touching You*; *T's Dream*; *That's The Way Of The World*; *You*; *Tommy's Tune*; *Have You Ever Seen The Rain*.

Personnel: Turrentine, tenor sax; Freddie Hubbard, trumpet, fluegelhorn; Patrice Rushen, keyboards; David T. Walker, Jay Graydon, guitars; Clark Spangler, synthesizer; Ron Carter, Scott Edwards (track 7), bass; Eddie "Bongo" Brown, congas; Jack DeJohnette, Harvey Mason (track 4), drums; Jim Gilstrap, John Lehman, Marti McCall, Jackie Ward, Carolyn Willis, vocals; Harry Bluestone, concertmaster; Vince DeRosa, french horn; Gene Page, conductor; unidentified string section.

★ ★

Stanley Turrentine has always been one of my favorite tenorists. A big, full-bodied tone and a penchant for blues-inflected lines give him a strong, rich, individual voice that marks him as a unique and readily identifiable stylist. Hearing this album therefore disappoints and saddens.

With a series of generally benign tunes and innocuous string arrangements, *Have You Ever Seen The Rain* is viable only as pretty background music. *Touching You*, for example, includes both backup strings and vocals which give the chart a slick, lush, Hollywood show-biz sort of feeling. As such, it is perfect for calming nerves in the cabin of a 747 before take-off. Unfortunately, as music it's eminently forgettable.

Tommy Turrentine's *Tommy's Tune* is the only chart that gets off the ground, due in part to the absence of the strings and voices. At last the considerable talents of T, Hubbard, Carter and DeJohnette begin to emerge. But even here there is a huge problem caused by terrible engineering. Hubbard's solo is lost

in the background of the mix, while the re-statement of the head is never completed because of a totally incomprehensible fade.

The album is perhaps musically summed up by Turrentine himself in *That's The Way Of The World*. T projects a feeling of resignation and weariness that has a bittersweet melancholy, as if he were trying to say "Sorry folks, I really had no control over this one." In an apparent effort to soften his dejection, his tenor is mixed so as to be subordinate to the strings and horns.

It's time for T to forget this bland, homogenized, pre-digested, pseudo-hip muzak and get back to the real music of such previous efforts as *Sugar* and *Dearly Beloved*.

—berg

## STU MARTIN & JOHN SURMAN

LIVE AT WOODSTOCK TOWN HALL—Pye 12114: *Harry Lovett, Man Without A Country*; *Are You Positive You're Negative*; *Wrested In Mustard*; *Professor Goodly's Implosion Machine*; *Master Of Disaster*; *Don't Leave Me Like This*.

Personnel: Martin, drums, synthesizers; Surman, reeds.

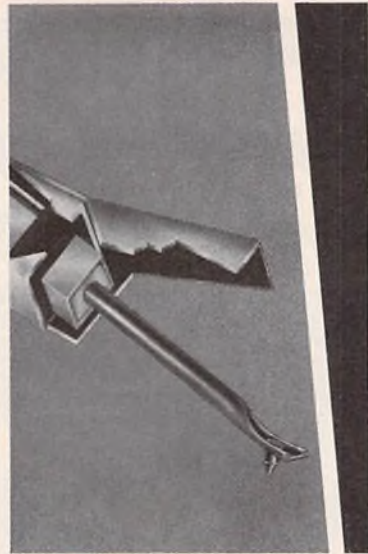
★ ★ ★ ★

Stu Martin and John Surman are both lesser known, but important and distinct, voices in the sometimes bewildering clatter of free music. This album presents them to better advantage than their recently-released 1969 session on Pye (featuring John McLaughlin), and the duet format proves liberating: the two delineate their music with such clarity, depth and multiformity that other instrumentation is only occasionally missed.

*Woodstock's* six pieces are programmatic, the titles taken from various bizarre incidents in part by Martin. The hero, clumsy Harry Lovett, is transformed by the Masters of the Universe into "Mr. Everything, a superhero who bumbles around doing good in order to prepare the earth for its inter-galactic awakening." Harry, who reputedly dematerializes for his next assignment 20 seconds before every time he makes love, deals with an Rh-conscious vampire (*Positive*) and is changed into an assassin's bullet during the course of the story. So much for science and art.

Martin is a sort of "old-line" synthesist. No souped-up electric mini-keyboards here, but rather a pair of solid EMS Synthi, which Martin programs to repeat simple rhythmic patterns, freeing him from timekeeping and giving both musicians a concrete foundation for their fanciful flights. The first notes on the album, in fact, are the synthesizer's metronomic foghorn blasts, which give way to a seductive drum melody—in this kind of format, a melodic drummer is a *must*—and Surman's tortuous soprano sax.

Surman was first known for his baritone work, which flows with the same fluid warmth as his soprano, and is heard in a stunning pirouette above a major-minor chord motif in *Positive*. Less recognized is his bass clarinet playing, heard on *Wrested*; here, he plays against a soft synthesizer drone, using it as a stationary plane on which to build unisons, harmonies and effective dissonances. Both he and Martin use time elastically, stretching the rhythm according to the expressive needs of each piece. There is little surface interaction, but they nonetheless read each other effortlessly, playing against each other as often as not to create a finely-honed, rewarding tension.



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*Woodstock* ends with a whimper on a tune stated by tiny synthesized bell-blasts; similarities to those hearing tests using high-pitched tones are not to be overlooked. It is a suitable respite from the frantic intensity of *Master*, with its Frankenstein bass figure and Surman's madman flights. In an album that suggests as many possibilities as it realizes, *Master* is profoundly disturbing, a reminder of the thin line between insanity and brilliance. —tesser

### CARMEN McRAE

I AM MUSIC—Blue Note BN-LA462-G: *A Letter For Anna-Lee; Trouble With Hello Is Goodbye; Faraway Forever; I Ain't Here; You Know Who You Are; I Have The Feeling I've Been Here Before; Who Gave You Permission; Like A Lover; I Never Lied To You; I Am Music.*

Credited personnel: McRae, vocals; Roger Kellaway, piano; Dave Grusin, electric piano and synthesizer; Frank Collett, keyboards; John Gianelli, bass; Spider Webb, John Guerin, drums; Dennis Budimir, guitar; Erno Neufeld, Gerri Vinci, violin; Alan Harshman, viola; Ed Lustgarten, cello; Emil Richards, percussion; The Morgan Ames Singers.

★ ★

This is a "mood" album, full of tone poem-type songs. Vocally, Carmen McRae can do no wrong, but this material has its definite ups and downs.

*I Have The Feeling I've Been Here Before*, written especially for Carmen, is a lovely ballad, but in the same vein, *The Trouble With Hello* cloy the listener with lines like "we summered in each other's arms," to the accompaniment of a lush chorus. *Who Gave You Permission* eschews music altogether and has Carmen talk a maudlin lyric about a woman suddenly living alone.

Much of this purple poetry was written by Marilyn and Alan Bergman, who are capable of much finer work. Other contributors to the album have filled it with a story-song about the difficulty of working to support a family, and a metaphoric ode to Music, among others.

None of this is unpleasant, but after a few selections the album palls, and sadly, dulls. The two brightest spots are a silly, swingy piece called *I Ain't Here* with Carmen and pianist/producer Roger Kellaway; and *You Know Who You Are*, a bright, strong number with Carmen and chorus.

Too lifeless to command attention, too involving to qualify as background music, this ambitious album dissolves into a sorry limbo, despite the considerable talent that combined to create it. —maltin

## OLD WINE— NEW BOTTLES

### ARCHIVES OF JAZZ

- VOL. 1—LESTER YOUNG—AJ 501.  
★ ★ ★ ★ ½
- VOL. 2—YUSEF LATEEF—AJ 502.  
★ ★ ★
- VOL. 3—MILES DAVIS—AJ 503.  
★ ★ ★ ★ ★
- VOL. 4—LESTER YOUNG . . . AGAIN—AJ 505.  
★ ★ ★ ★ ½
- VOL. 5—DUKE JORDAN—AJ 506.  
★ ★ ★
- VOL. 6—VARIOUS ARTISTS—AJ 507.  
See below

VOL. 7—VARIOUS ARTISTS—AJ 508.

See below

VOL. 8—OSCAR MOORE—AJ 509.

★ ★ ★ ½

VOL. 9—MARTY PAICH QUARTET—AJ 510.

★ ★ ★ ★

BILLIE HOLIDAY—LADY DAY BLUES—AJ 504.

★ ★ ★ ½

The reissuing of significant performances from the jazz past is inarguably one of the most valuable services the record industry can perform for the listener, and for the music too. Historically important, influential recordings ought always be available the student and fan of the music, though we all know this seldom is the case nowadays.

For this reason and this alone, a number of the albums currently reissued by Archives of Jazz should be sought out by the interested collector before they go out of print, as did the original and, in some cases, earlier reissue albums of the performances. They are recommended solely on the basis of the music they contain and not for any great virtues they might possess as intelligently or carefully-produced repackages on the order of, say, Bluebird's or Blue Note's current activities in this area. Well produced reissues they are not.

The approach they follow is most kindly described as scattershot, in that an oddly heterogeneous batch of performances—good, bad and indifferent, by major and minor performer alike, no distinction apparently being made between the two—simply have been pushed out in the hope they can be merchandised one more time. The production is sleazy, with gaudily inappropriate covers, confusing titles and inadequate documentation. The breezy liner notes are all but useless, saying little of substance about the performers and the music, and much of that specious, erroneous or worse. There is no indication of the sources of the recordings, nothing to point out they are reissues of previously available material, no mention of when or where the music was recorded or even, in several instances, what musicians are involved. Only four of the ten LPs provide personnel listings.

More maddening still is the fact that much of the music treated so shabbily is quite good, and in one case absolutely magnificent. This is Vol. 3, titled *Miles Davis*, with no indication that the contents actually are ten superb 1946-7 recordings by Charlie Parker, of whose group the youthful trumpeter was then a member. All ten derive from the Dial label, for which the altoist made many of his most important mature recordings, definitive performances in the then fully emergent bop idiom. These and other of his recordings of the period have been studied by every young jazz musician of and since Parker's day for the very good reason that they are among the most powerful, flawlessly brilliant articulations of the harmonic-melodic-rhythmic advances of bop ever committed to record, masterly works by one of jazz' greatest artists, and just as grippingly, staggeringly beautiful today as when first recorded almost three decades ago. Davis was but a sideman, though quite an effective one.

The album offers no recording or personnel data, which are as follows: *A Night in Tunisia*, *Ornithology*, *Yardbird Suite* and

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*Moose the Mooche* were recorded March 28, 1946, in Los Angeles with Parker; Lucky Thompson, tenor saxophone; Davis; Arvin Garrison, guitar; Dodo Marmorosa, piano; Vic McMillan, bass, and Roy Porter, drums. *Embraceable You* and *Bird Of Paradise* date from an Oct. 28, 1947, session in New York City, with Parker; Davis; Duke Jordan, piano; Tommy Potter, bass, and Max Roach, drums. A week later, Nov. 4, the same group recorded *Out Of Nowhere*, *My Old Flame*, *Don't Blame Me* and *Scrapple From The Apple*.

While Davis' name might invite buyers, it is Parker's music that will overwhelm them. Still, however great the music, this is deceptive packaging, for the set can in no wise be construed a Miles Davis album—not with twice to three times the amount of solo space rightly being given Parker. After all, they were Parker's record dates and this is his, not Davis' music.

Of only slightly lesser historical-musical importance are the two albums by Lester Young. Archives of Jazz 1 and 4 are reissues of LPs 402 and 405, respectively, from the short-lived Charlie Parker Records label. They present the tenorist in a series of "live" performances. The first of the two LPs consists of radio broadcasts from unspecified nightclubs in New York City during the years 1951-3 (not from the Savoy Ballroom in 1950, as stated in the notes) with a probable personnel of Young; Jesse Drakes, trumpet; Earl Wright, John Lewis or Wynton Kelly, piano; Gene Ramey or Aaron Bell, bass, and Jo Jones or Lee Abrams, drums. The second album, the one actually recorded at the Savoy, has Young; Drakes; pianist Kenny Drew or Hank Jones; Bell and Jones.

Neither set is particularly well recorded: Young frequently is off mike and both he and Drakes often are all but obliterated by the audiences' exuberant responses. Still, poor sound quality and all, the albums are valuable additions to jazz discography for the simple reason that *any* recording that catches (I should say caught) Young in relaxed good spirits and near the top of his game, as these so thrillingly do, are well worth having. While more than a bit erratic, trumpeter Drakes also turns in some fetching solos in which his unusual stylistic mixture of swing and bop ignites into incandescence. But this is mainly Lester's show and that's cause enough for celebration; he's so gloriously himself that after awhile you don't even mind the poor sound.

Most of the other releases derive from albums released or, in several cases, reissued on the Charlie Parker Records label. Among the more effective is an unambitious, straight-ahead set of performances by a 1960 quintet led by tenor saxophonist Yusef Lateef. Initially released as *Lost In Sound* (Charlie Parker 814), AJ 502 boasts unassuming, sturdily attractive neobop by Lateef, trumpeter Vincent Pitts, pianist John Hormon (after Lateef the most consistently interesting soloist), bassist Ray McKinney and drummers George Scott and Clifford Jarvis. Nothing exceptional, mind, but well-done music that only occasionally betrays its age.

The album by pianist Duke Jordan consists of some of the music he wrote for the French film *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* and is played by tenor saxophonist Charlie Rouse, trumpeter Sonny Cohn, Jordan, bassist Eddie Kahn and drummer Art Taylor. Dating from January, 1962, it originally was issued as Charlie

Parker 813. Rouse and Jordan are by far the most impressive soloists, particularly the pianist who has any number of flowing, well-constructed improvisations throughout. However, the set bogs down in unnecessary repetitiveness, one musical motif (*No Problem*) taking up the entire first side in three separate but not greatly different realizations, and half the second side dominated by two versions of another theme (*The Feeling Of Love*). While acceptable for film use, this duplication makes for an LP of far too little programmatic variety. AJ would have served the listener (and Jordan too) much better by replacing some of the duplicated material in this set with performances by the Jordan-led quintet heard on half of Charlie Parker LP 805, a disc shared with the Sadik Hakim Quartet.

Incidentally, the Lateef and Jordan LPs are the only true stereo recordings in the series.

The gifted Los Angeles alto saxophonist Art Pepper is featured performer on the Marty Paich set, reissue (probably by way of Parker Records) of a 1956 quartet date for Tampa Records (LP-28) under the pianist's nominal leadership. Though Paich contributes his share of tight, flowing, thoughtful solos, it is Pepper's show all the way, so surely and completely does his taut, bittersweet alto dominate the proceedings. He's at his muscular, lyrical best in these nine performances, his horn singing with a warm but always firm melodism, plenty of fire and an unceasing, cascading invention, characteristics that always have distinguished his music at its best. It is for his participation that jazz devotees will be attracted to this album, yet Pepper's part is all but ignored in the liner notes and the album title and cover mention him not at all—strange omissions for so frankly commercial a reissue venture. Bassist Buddy Clark and drummer Frank Capp round out a fine group, by the way. The only thing one might take issue with is the album's playing time which at little more than 26 minutes is woefully short by any standards.

Still, this is generous when compared with the Oscar Moore LP's total playing time of 20:51. Mind you, that's for *both* sides of the album, and this amounts to almost criminal shortchanging of the listener, especially when one considers that there's another Tampa Records set by the guitarist (LP 10), recorded at much the same time as this 1954 effort, which could have been used in whole or part to bring the playing time up to an acceptable minimum, which for mono recordings should be no less than 20 minutes per side, and more if possible.

Guitarist Moore, who first came to prominence as a member of the Nat Cole Trio, is an engaging, low-keyed improviser of decided melodic bent whose conception bridged swing and bop without, however, achieving any great distinctiveness. Still, his sturdy, pleasant music was quite appealing and prepared the way for any number of electric guitarists. Moore never made many recordings on his own and those few have been out of print for years now, thus making this set, for all its brevity, doubly valuable as the only sustained evidence of his pioneering modern guitar work currently available. He is admirably supported here by pianist Carl Perkins, bassist Joe Comfort and, while uncredited, drummer Lee Young.

With one important exception, the material in the Billie Holiday set (AJ 504) spans the years 1944-51 and derives from a variety of

sources. *Lover Man*, *Don't Explain*, *God Bless The Child* (all with large orchestral accompaniment) and the quartet-accompanied *My Man* are from the Decca label for which she made her most successful commercial recordings during the 1940s. *Nobody's Business*, *You're Driving Me Crazy*, *Everything A Good Man Needs* and *He's Funny That Way* date from an October, 1951, engagement at Boston's Storyville with the backing of pianist Al Haig, guitarist Jimmy Raney, bassist Teddy Kotick and drummer Tiny Kahn, then members of the quintet of Stan Getz, who also is heard in spots. *Miss Brown To You* was recorded about the same time, with pianist Buster Harding, bassist John Fields and drummer Marquis Foster in support. *Detour Ahead*, from a 1949 New York television appearance, finds Ms. Holiday accompanied by trumpeter Hot Lips Page, pianist Horace Henderson and an unidentified bassist and drummer. On all the singer is in fine fettle, the informal location recordings contrasting nicely with the commercial impulses of the studio-made Decca performances.

Then there's *Don't Be Late*, touted on the album cover as a previously released 1939 collaboration between Ms. Holiday and tenorist Lester Young, a claim the notes elaborate as well. The only problem with this is that the performance does not sound like either of them but, rather, offers the work of a pair of vague sound-alikes so manifestly different in substance from the originals as to be immediately apparent even to the listener only casually familiar with the work of Ms. Holiday and Young. Nor for that matter does the recording, though of admitted poor sound quality, sound like one of late 1930s vintage. While I can't prove it through any sort of documentary evidence, other than comparing this recording with authentic ones by the performers in question, I am unequivocally convinced this recording is not as claimed. A voice print analysis would establish the truth or falsity of the claim, of course, but who's to arrange for that? AJ Records is not about to, nor is the lessor from whom they, I believe in good faith, acquired the disputed recording. So let the buyer beware.

The remaining two items in the Archives of Jazz series, 507 and 508, anthologize performances of such wide stylistic divergence, and duplicate material contained in other LPs in the series, so that inevitably one wonders just what their purpose is. Volume 6 offers material from the Tampa catalog—Pepper, Paich, Moore, Bob Enevoldson, Paul Smith, Bob Gordon, Plas Johnson, Herbie Harper, the Lighthouse All-Stars, etc.—while Vol. 7 derives from the Parker label—Young, Lateef, Jordan, Parker, Mundell Lowe, Cozy Cole, Slide Hampton, Sadik Hakim and singers Joe Carroll, Jerri Winters, Kevin Gavin and Alice Darr. Neither set is totally effective (not even the first, with its concentration on West Coast performers of the mid-1950s) for there is too much of the grab bag about them: they're too diverse and too aimless in content. I can see no reason to own them.

But by all means check out the Lester Young and the Art Pepper-Marty Paich albums if you don't have them. They're quite good. I am assuming you already have the Charlie Parker material in one of its previous incarnations: it is after all one of the true cornerstones of any library of recorded jazz. Modern music started there. —welding

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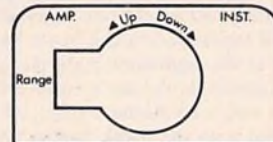
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# Harvey Mason



by Leonard Feather

Born the son of a drummer in 1947 in Atlantic City, N.J., Harvey Mason represents a new breed of musician. Although he is thoroughly qualified to pursue a jazz career, he at first set out to become a studio and free-lance musician.

That he has succeeded resoundingly can be attributed to a combination of natural talent, extensive training and determination to reach this goal. After a year and a half at Berklee College, he left to attend New England Conservatory on a full scholarship and emerged with a Bachelor of Education degree.

While at the Conservatory he led a quintet that included Jan Hammer and George Mraz. On graduation, he toured with Erroll Garner for four months, spent a little over a year in 1970-71 with the George Shearing Quintet, then settled in southern California and reached his multiple goals, working on countless film and TV scores, recording and/or gigging with Carole King, Donald Byrd, Seals and Crofts, Gerry Mulligan, Isaac Hayes, David T. Walker, Hubert Laws and hundreds more.

Mason co-wrote *Chameleon* with Herbie Hancock, for whom he also arranged *Headhunters* and rearranged *Watermelon Man*. His own first album as a leader, with Hancock, Dave Grusin, Lee Ritenour, Frank Rosolino and Hubert Laws among his sidemen, was recently released on Arista. This was his first blindfold test.

blindfold

test

**1. RON CARTER.** *Anything Goes* (from *Anything Goes*, Kudu). Ron Carter, bass; Steve Gadd, drums; Hubert Laws, flute; Eric Gale, guitar; Dave Matthews and Ron Carter, arrangers.

If I hadn't heard it the other day, I probably would have no idea whose album it was. I believe it's Ron Carter's album. I have no idea who the drummer is, but it could possibly be Billy Cobham. He does quite a few of Ron's albums.

The flutist is a great player. The musicianship is really high; the tune I'm not that crazy about. I'd give it three stars for musicianship. If it's Ron Carter, I'd give it four stars . . . just because of musicianship. Was the guitar player Eric Gale?

**2. JOHN ABERCROMBIE.** *Jamala* (from *Gateway*, Polydor). Abercrombie, guitar; Dave Holland, bass, composer; Jack DeJohnette, drums.

That caught me off guard. I have no idea who it is. I kept waiting . . . I thought it was an introduction and the tune was getting ready to start and it never really started happening. I couldn't really get into it at this point.

It sounded like it might have been Jack DeJohnette playing drums. Maybe Ron Carter play-

ing bass . . . no, probably not. I'd give it two stars. No substance at all. It's not my favorite kind of music.

**3. LOUIS BELLSON.** *Chameleon* (from *Explosion*, Pablo). Louis Bellson, drums; H. Mason, P. Jackson, B. Maupin, H. Hancock, composers; Blue Mitchell, trumpet; Bill Holman, arranger.

That's very familiar. I think that was the first cover on that tune. That was interesting, the way that tune came about. When I was playing with Herbie we were rehearsing for the album and trying to get tunes together. It was really a cohesive unit; we really felt good when we played together. We always carried tape recorders and just started playing and editing the things that we played in rehearsals. We came up with a great tune and put it together and it turned out to be . . . wow! Unbelievable success.

It was a group effort. Unfortunately Bill Simmons was left off a lot of the credit, but he contributed as much as anyone else.

On the version we just listened to, the arrangement is good. I'd give it four stars. It was performed very well. I believe it was Maynard; I hope it was anyway. The drummer I don't know. It was interesting to hear him play the same pattern that I played on the record. Fine. I really enjoyed it.

**Feather:** This is probably a version you didn't know was made. Did you know it was recorded by Louis Bellson?

**Mason:** If it was Louis Bellson, then it was Blue Mitchell on trumpet, not Maynard Ferguson. It was interesting to hear Louis. Beautiful, Louis!

**4. DAVID LIEBMAN AND LOOKOUT FARM.** *Sweet Hand Roy* (from *Sweet Hands*, Horizon). David Liebman, alto flute and tenor saxes; Jeff Williams, drums; Badal Roy, tabla, ektar and vocal.

I love it. I don't know who it is, but it's great! Five stars. A great match between the tabla, the ethnic rhythms and what's happening today. They engineered it well . . . the saxophones, the voice . . . it was really a great record.

**5. NIGHT BLOOMING JAZZMEN.** *Heavy Hearted Blues* (from *Freedom Jazz Dance*, Mainstream). Joe Pass, guitar; Willie Bobo, conga; Stix Hooper, drums; Andy Simpkins, bass; George Shearing ("Phil Johnson"), piano; Blue Mitchell, trumpet.

I'm going to take a wild guess. I think it's George Shearing! It sounded like Andy Simpkins on bass, which was one of the first things that tipped me off. For a moment I thought the piano could be Gene Harris, but I soon knew it wasn't.

I don't know who the horn players were, but that trumpet player sure sounded familiar. Anyway, overall, I enjoyed it. I was really a happy thing; and I'm pretty sure it was George. The guitar player sounded good, too, though I couldn't identify him.

It was well done, and I'd give it four stars.

**Feather:** Incidentally, George didn't use his own name. On the album it says Phil Johnson.

**Mason:** Well, Phil's got it cooking! Giving it four stars is really a reflection of the whole atmosphere. It wasn't a put-on situation. It wasn't trying to be anything it wasn't. It was just straight ahead.

**6. AIRTO.** *Identity* (from *Identity*, Arista). Airtó, drums, percussion, vocal.

Airtó, I believe. I have that record. I'd give it four stars. If it was just rhythm—five stars. He's a master of percussion sounds. If it was just a rhythm track . . . beautiful!

**7. JAN HAMMER.** *Darkness* (from *The First Seven Days*, Nemperor). Jan Hammer, piano, electric piano, synthesizers, drums, percussion, Mellotron, composer; Steve Kindler, violin.

I wonder if it's Jan Hammer. It was really lovely. I love it. The music is well done and that was a great orchestration. The sound is good—the performance is good. I'd give it five stars. Real positive.

I think it's Jan Hammer because it sounds like a keyboard player's record, with interesting use of the synthesizers. The way the tension built reminded me of him.

On that record he recorded with Jerry Goodman, the two of them did everything. It was one of the best records I've heard this year. This one is remarkable too. A good record to end up with.

db

# Profile

## MICHEL LEGRAND

by len Lyons

It was 97°, even under the shade of the new Concord Pavilion, as Michel Legrand rehearsed the 42-piece orchestra for last summer's debut performance of his jazz composition, *Images*, written for alto saxophonist Phil Woods. After about twenty minutes of blowing, Woods turned white, his knees began to buckle, and Michel rushed over to help him to the piano bench. Later, stretched out on the hide-a-bed couch of his dressing room, Woods claimed it was not so much the mid-summer California heat as the ten consecutive one-nighters his band had just played in Japan.

Legrand continued to rehearse the orchestra. Sipping a Pepsi, he sang some of his more popular ballads (*Windmills Of Your Mind*, *What Are You Doing The Rest Of Your Life*) and played (*Brian's Song*), leaving the conducting to his music director, Roy Rogison. His style was to keep the orchestra relaxed. His vocal phrasing and ad lib solos on piano were full of surprises and eccentric meter changes, just to make sure the ensemble could come in as directed. There were no reproaches when they didn't. But that night, the audience received a slick performance. *Images* (released last year on an RCA album of the same name) was energized by lyrical, up-tempo passages. Woods, fully recovered, earned a standing ovation.

Following the Concord Jazz Festival concert, Legrand played a trio engagement at El Matador, accompanied by John Mosher (bass) and George Marsh (drums). That gig was all Michel's idea, inspired by his having heard Oscar Peterson playing solo in the club some months earlier. Michel was playing "simply for the pleasure of that traditional jazz setting," but his performance, if not of consistent quality, was revealing.

One of his earliest compositions, *Once Upon A Summertime*, was the most successful number I heard. He sang it in French, scatted ingeniously, and improvised with good keyboard dynamics. Unlike some of the other instrumentals, which became a bit aimless, this song was full of ideas, and it suggested to me the way Legrand's contribution to the jazz genre must be viewed. Not a pianist of great substance or a formidable vocal talent, the man's music comes out best in his composing and arranging. Thus, our conversations focused on his work with the pen, not the piano.

*How, and when, did you learn to arrange?*

When I was at the Paris Conservatory, I took all their writing classes: harmony, counterpoint, composition, everything. And I worked with people like Nadia Boulanger for seven years, and had piano classes for over ten years. When I was about 16 or 17, I wanted to learn how to orchestrate. What I did was learn how to play every instrument, every single one of them. All of them—very badly, too. But I do know what can be played on them, so whenever I write anything, I know how it can be played on each of the instruments. It's very important for an orchestrator.

*Musically, how do you distinguish jazz writing, like *Images*, from composing in other genres, like the popular song, the romantic film score, and so on?*

It's a simple discipline of the mind. You're like a piece of furniture with many drawers, one for each genre. When I wrote *Images* for Phil, a very simple, linear jazz piece, I decided on the style before I started writing it. Another time, I'll write romantic music. Then baroque. It's like an exercise of style. That's what attracted me to writing for the cinema. It's never the same. There's the challenge of a new style every time.

I did an album last year for Bell Records, before I signed with RCA, called *Twenty Songs Of The Century*. I picked 20 songs I love very much and

orchestrated every song in a different style. For my own pen, you know. Just to practice the skill.

I don't want to be classified as *Michel Legrand, the romantic*. Or in any other way. Jazz is probably the most important event in music of this century, so it's part of me now. But it's not enough. It's like something I have in my pocket, and I use it. But you have to be rich and do many more things. Everything influences everything else.

*Did you receive any formal training as an arranger at the Conservatory?*

There is no class in arranging at the Conservatory. You learn somewhat in the composition class. But most of all, you learn in the studio. You write charts, and you listen. You see what's wrong and what's right. As an arranger, you're self-taught.

*Are there particular arrangers you've learned from, or composers who have influenced you, especially in the jazz genre?*

Many. Yes, many. It's hard for me to say. Gil Evans. I don't know—everybody.

*It was once said of Ellington that arranging could be a kind of composing, re-composing. Do you feel that you've re-composed Debussy's Clair de Lune on the *Images* album?*

Not really. It's very faithful. All the notes in the orchestration are in the original piano music. The only thing I added were two jazz waltz sections in



the middle.

*Then you draw a clear line between composing and arranging?*

Usually. Sometimes I'll do both at once, if I don't have time to compose first and then orchestrate. *Images*, for example, was orchestrated right away. I put it on orchestral paper immediately, without even a sketch or first draft, because I wanted a clear, simple piece that would reach the audience on the first listening.

*Did you leave Phil a lot of freedom on it?*

The slow parts are written, but as soon as we reach the brighter tempos, he's on his own. Of course, the piano/sax duet is written, too.

*How do you feel about electronic instruments? You don't seem to use them very often.*

When I need that sound, I use it. Sometimes, I play a Rhodes or Hammond organ or a Yamaha. I like them very much.

*Wasn't your first job as an arranger to do an album for Dizzy Gillespie in Paris?*

That was my first jazz experience. I loved it, but I was very scared, I was trembling. I'd heard his albums for years, and suddenly I had to face him and work for him. I think I was 21 at the time. It didn't come off very well. I used strings and woodwinds in counterpoint with the rhythm sec-

tion and his blowing.

*What principles do you employ in arranging for a vocalist, for example, the recent album with Lena Horne?*

It depends who the vocalist is. I did an album with Barbra Streisand that had a certain style, but on the album with Lena, I decided to take a different direction.

*I had I Will Wait For You in mind. It's almost a jump tune on that album, which isn't typical at all. Was that her idea or yours?*

I chose that conception for her, and then we tried it in the studio. We made some changes.

*When you compose first, do you use the piano before you orchestrate?*

Sometimes it helps, if you don't know yet what color you're going to give all the notes. But orchestrating can't be done on the piano. It won't give you a true sound. You have to be able to read and listen on paper.

*It's clearer in your head than on a keyboard.*

Definitely. For years and years I learned how to read symphonic scores. Just reading a score should tell you how it sounds. Woodwinds, brass, harp, percussion, and so on. When I'm home at night, I take a score to bed and read it—and hear it—like some people read a novel. This is a technique you have to develop.

*As a composer within—and outside of—the jazz genre, do you feel there's some validity to the idea that jazz is black American music?*

No, not really. Every composer approaches music with his own emotion, his own attitude. When someone writes jazz, baroque, or improvises, or whatever, he has his own flesh and blood in it. Jazz doesn't belong only to black people just because it started with black people. When I write or play jazz, it's different from the way blacks or even white Americans write—or Japanese, or anyone else. Jazz exists. The question isn't whether jazz is mine, but what I am going to do with it.

*A jazz critic, named Stanley Crouch, once suggested that a black arranger should have been hired to score *Lady Sings the Blues*. Did you have any reservations about scoring a film about *Billie Holiday*?*

I was the first one to ask, *Why me?* I'll tell you a fantastic anecdote. I went to Hollywood to see the film, to see if I liked it and wanted to score it. As I sat in the projection room, I realized it was a completely black American movie. The actors, the director, the producer, Barry Gordy, who owns Motown Records. After the film, I went to see Barry Gordy. "I love it," I told him. "I'm proud you asked me, and I want to do it. But why me?" So he paced the room for a while—actually, he reminded me of a caged bear—and finally faced me. "I'll tell you why," he said. "You're the only one who can write real American music." I looked at him, absolutely astonished. Then I understood what he was getting at. I had just finished two films. One was *Brian's Song*, a film about football, a very American subject, involving a black man and a white man. The other film was *Summer of '42*, also typically American, of a certain era. In his mind, I was writing American music.

*Since you've done over a hundred albums, a discography of your work seems almost too formidable to print here. Are there albums that are favorites of yours? Or albums that you consider milestones in your development?*

No, I don't have any favorites. When I do an album, it's a great pleasure and I love it. As soon as it's over, it's dead, finished. I don't even want to hear it. What I'm going to do tomorrow is what interests me. Milestone albums? No, that's bullshit, really. If you start to think of albums as milestones, you're taking yourself very seriously—and you shouldn't.

# caught...

## BILLY COBHAM SPECTRUM

### La Bastille, Houston

**Personnel:** Billy Cobham, drums, percussion; George Duke, vocals, keyboards; Doug Rauch, brass; John Scofield, acoustic and electric guitars.

Billy Cobham's new group is a uniformly strong quartet of inventive and disciplined musicians capable of matching anyone of merit within the nebulous boundaries of the jazz/rock world. Despite all of Cobham's threats to go completely commercial (db, Dec. 4), Spectrum is probably the most uncompromising unit he has played with in quite some time. The live sound of the band is a far cry from the disco/funk formula of Cobham's latest album, *A Funky Thide Of Sings*. The simplistic frills have been exchanged for tightly constructed flights of exploratory energy. Even Cobham's choice of a venue, the basement jazzroom La Bastille (which he selected after refusing several concert offers), seems to belie any attempt on his part to follow the crowd down the money trail at the expense of his music.

Much of Spectrum's strength comes from George Duke. He complements Cobham's personality and musical temperament, while adding another distinct composing talent to the band. Duke is allowed plenty of room to roam experimentally and makes the most of it with keyboard stylings that achieve a most enjoyable synthesis of electronic instrumentation and tasteful traditional technique. Cobham also enjoys quite a bit of musical freedom within the group's format since Doug Rauch, who previously worked with Santana, supplies a sturdy and unusually supple bass line that requires very little reinforcement. Cobham's crisp style easily provides needed punctuation and leaves him free to lead the music off into interesting directions from time to time.

Guitarist John Scofield is equally adept at both ends of the energy and volume scale, ripping off electrifying runs during the faster paced musical moments and contributing lovely lyrical acoustic work in one of his solo spots. Scofield was in exceptionally fine form during Duke's vocal number, *Love*, as he energized the song out of Duke's floating cushion of keyboard sounds with gently coaxing that soon had the entire band in full flight on what had started as a relatively restrained tune.

Spectrum ran through a wide selection of past, present, and future recorded material during their three SRO days at La Bastille. The power and flexibility of the group came through most clearly on the tunes from *A Funky Thide of Sings*. They demonstrated the variance between Cobham's studio effort and the redirected live band quite well.

Cobham's new line-up may not be the savior of the once-exciting jazz-rock sound and style that now consists mostly of pseudo-soul and excessive exotic noise; but they proved here in set after set that they are a dynamic and stimulating band in the best jazz sense. That should be enough for anyone.

—michael point

Cobham strikes oil in Houston . . .

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## DAVE MATTHEWS BIG BAND

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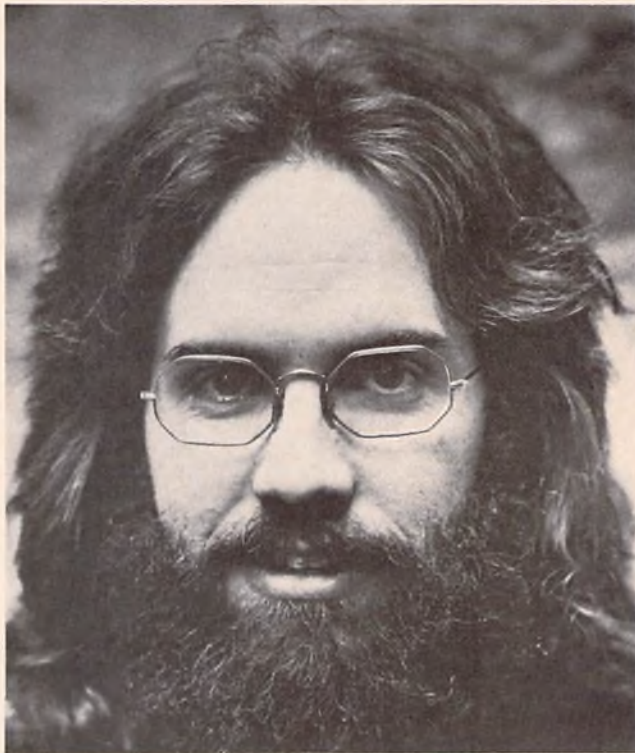
**Personnel:** Lou Marini, Frank Vicari, Kenny Berger, woodwinds; Joe Shepley, Bert Collins, trumpet & flugelhorn; Jimmy Knepper, trombone; Fred Griffen, French horn; Tony Price, tuba; Dave Matthews, electric piano; Sam Brown, guitar; Harvie Swartz, bass; Ronnie Zito, drums.

A recent live recording on Muse (MR 5073) does not do justice to the Matthews aggregation. What started out as a germ of an idea from the free-lance arranger (James Brown, Lyn Collins, Buddy Rich, Mark Murphy, Bonnie Raitt, T-Bone Walker, Blue Mitchell, et al.) and jingle-jungle habitue (Sunoco, Texaco, Magnavox, Champale, Welch's and Mary Quant) has solidified into a cohesive unit with a book made up of ma-

and Brown spooned out the chords.

Collins, another Konitz man, comes to play. His gutsy plunger work on *Sand Dance*, tastefully and excitingly projected, set the tone for Vicari's tenor. Bert's solo spot on *Shepherd's* tore us away from the Gil Evans-inspired underpinning of the tuba/French horn coloring, while the flute work hovered over it all.

Joe Beck's *Penny Arcade* is a syncopated item kicked along by Zito's off-tempo drum stabs. The effect was to propel the tune beyond the written line. In the out chorus, a written passage, repeated until the final bar, was carried by the horn, tuba, and trombone trio. The combination seems to be favored by Matthews, for he used it again in *Prayer*. The entire chordal structure of this tune is very Evans-oriented, lower register and dark. During Brown's solo there was a dramatic switch to a medium 4/4 from the otherwise moody



WAN BLACK

terial from Horace Silver, Miles Davis and Matthews himself.

All the reeds double and triple—soprano lead here, clarinet there, with a rich sounding bottom made up of the French horn/tuba/trombone combination. *Shepherd's Lament* does a deep bow to the '50s in a flute-led ensemble reminiscent of Moc Koffman's *Swinging Shepherd Blues*. Marini's flute is bright all the way with fine backing by Swartz' bass, as solid a foundation as you're going to find. He rarely walks straight ahead, favoring instead the Eddie Gomez-Ron Carter route, rendering the bass another section unto itself.

*Red Clay* and *Nardis* featured the rhythm section with Marini (on soprano) and Knepper feeding off their changes. Berger, who is also featured with Lee Konitz' fine new nonet, had the solo voice in Miles' *Nardis* and he, too, listened as Swartz, Matthews

tempo of the piece.

Silver's *Senor Blues* was beautifully handled. The harmonies that are the written lines were expanded for the whole band from the Silverian simplicity of the original. The solo chores were handled by Vicari's hard, biting tenor, followed by some smooth, effortless trombone work by the ageless Knepper. Price took an extended tuba spot that exploded as he dug in with torrid triple-tonguing.

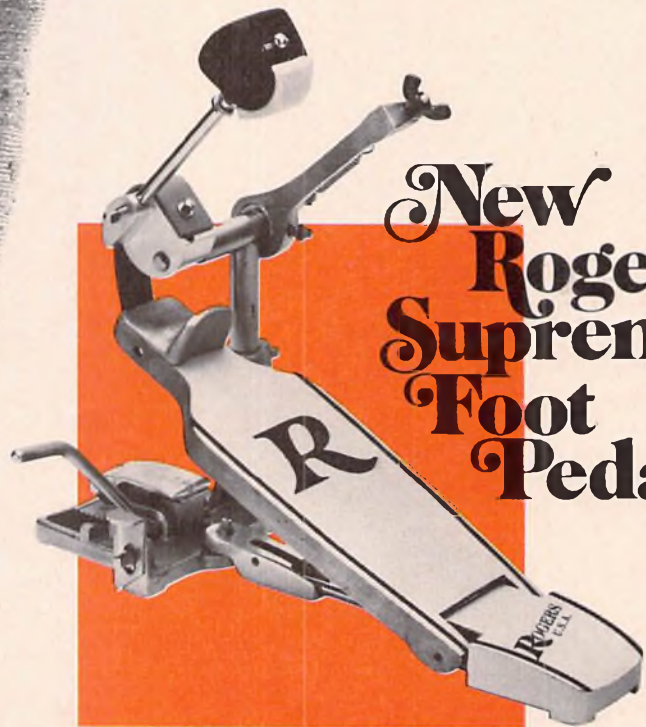
Nobody shouted, "Play *Melancholy Baby*," but they did anyhow, and I have yet to hear as unmelancholy a baby in my life. This flag-waver romped in an impossible cut-time. Shepley and Collins nudged each other in alternate choruses. Price showed his virtuosity at a fast clip for a half-chorus as the band raced to the finish for the final eight, leaving one breathless, but exhilarated.

—arnold jay smith

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**SONNY STITT QUARTET**

Village Vanguard, New York City

**Personnel:** Stitt, alto and tenor saxophones; John Hicks, piano; Lawrence Evans, bass; John Lewis, drums.

Sonny Stitt, at age 51, is still the foremost living bebop saxophonist in the world. One hears him play many of the same cliched phrases he has played for years, but they are as much a part of his basic vocabulary as certain techniques and licks are a part of the vocabulary of more "modern" or "avant-garde" musicians, such as Ornette Coleman, or the late Coltrane. The better Stitt plays, the more sublimated and unapparent his guiding framework becomes, and vice versa.

Dressed to kill in a white pinstripe suit that matched his now nearly all-white hair, Stitt easily seduced the packed Vanguard house with his bebop wizardry. He began with a medium tempo ad-lib blues, while waiting for pianist Hicks to show up. Hicks arrived shortly, and proved to be well worth the wait, spurring Stitt on with his exuberant comping.

Stitt then led the quartet through a torrid *Tune Up*; a revitalized version of *Bennies From Heaven* (sic), with Stitt singing the opening and closing choruses in a confident tenor voice, and playing a luxurious solo in between; a tender, yet hard-boned treatment of *The Shadow Of Your Smile*; and closed the set with a quick-fingered *52nd Street Theme*. Stitt stuck exclusively to tenor throughout, on which he's more individualistic and less Bird-sounding. His compact codas were very unpredictable in development and resolution, and kept Hicks, Evans, and Lewis guessing.

Hicks is a stimulating pianist who reminds one of Harold Mabern in both playing and looks, and possesses an unusually active, driving left hand. He's been around awhile, but, as is often the case, is little known—undeservedly so.

Evans kept time and contributed little else, except for one short, innocuous solo. Lewis stayed in the background as well, but was very supportive and played an intelligent, assured solo in the second set.

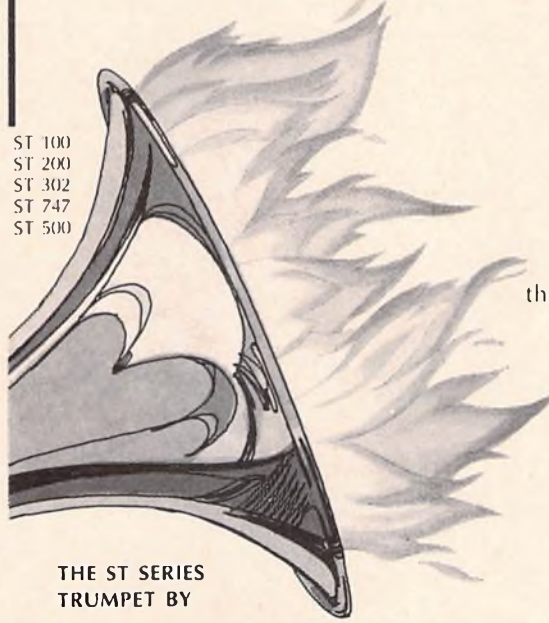
The music resumed with *Strike Up The Band*, which was taken at much the same medium-fast tempo as it was on the 1950 recording by Stitt with Bud Powell. On *Blues Up And Down*, an Ammons-Stitt classic, a very young tenor saxophonist, Harvey Kaiser, sat in at Stitt's invitation. Kaiser loosened up considerably after exchanging fours with the leader, and then launched into a remarkably mature, fresh solo. Lewis followed with another excellent drum statement.

*Body and Soul* was requested, and Stitt and Kaiser both excelled, with the former topping things off with a great coda. Stitt switched to alto for *I'll Remember April*, which gave us Hicks' best solo of the night, and for a delicate *'Round Midnight*. *Constellation* was the finale, with Sonny on alto for openers and finishing up on tenor. Kaiser, seemingly undaunted as well as bemused, got off a superb solo that anyone would have been proud of playing. Stitt obviously thinks much of him, and one can hear why.

Stitt may, to some small degree, lack the adventurousness and sheer genius of Charlie Parker, but anyone who dismisses him is neglecting—and missing out on—some unquestionably vital music. —scott albin

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### FORTUNE

continued from page 17

electronic instruments around and behind you?

**Fortune:** They definitely have their place. I use electric piano and bass. But in terms of what I really want—to write, to hear—acoustics suit me better. To my ears, acoustic and electric don't blend. I don't find it easy to play an acoustic instrument against a background of electric.

**Smith:** Some have stated that the soprano sax is the acoustic for the electronic age.

**Fortune:** No, no, no; I don't feel that way at all. Soprano is nothing more than what the tenor and the alto are; it's just as personal. At this point in time, we soprano players are confined to the limitations of the mouthpieces we have to choose from. Basically, we are all using the same brand mouthpiece, the Selmer, and there are a lot of mixed emotions about whether or not we really like it. Trane used a metal one; mine is hard rubber, but we're not happy.

**Smith:** How difficult is it to keep the soprano sounding like a sax rather than an oboe?

**Fortune:** The tenor is the easiest of the saxes to get an acceptable sound out of. Alto goes into something completely different. An alto can easily sound bad, while a tenor has really got to do something to sound bad, from the point of view of the instrument and the player. Slightly misshapen parts, or slightly poor embouchure technique, will hurt an alto's sound. On a soprano it's even more critical. When an electric piano player comes to a club it seems he's not as concerned with the sound of the instrument as he is with the touch. In his crib he's got an acoustic piano and he deals with that sound there. A bass player is definitely dealing with the sound of his instrument. I don't know what saxophone players deal with. Soprano is an instrument that is taken too lightly. It may be what you said before, that it has become identified with all those electronic instruments.

**Smith:** Bennie Maupin doesn't actually electrify his saxello via the mouthpiece. How does that type of pickup work out?

**Fortune:** I was thinking about that when I was with Miles. That setup is like a bass' bridge pickup, right in the bell. Bennie and I were talking about how that is really the true sound of the instrument. I simply wanted my sound to be amplified, not electronically converted. I want the sound that comes back at me to be the sound that I am putting into the horn. While I see some possibilities with electronics, I wouldn't want to do it exclusively.

**Smith:** What about the music you *would* listen to?

**Fortune:** It's hard to just go and listen to music when you do it. You tend to be over-critical and analytical, as opposed to just listening. In my house I often don't have anything on. And when I do, I put a corny station on. Why I do it is because I am not really turned on by what I am hearing. So it is best that I don't relate to it at all; it's better that I don't even hear an attempt, nor make the attempt. I listen to the piped-in Muzak a lot.

Electronics is bringing in more possibilities, so it is interesting to listen to what's happening. But I'm not overwhelmed because I haven't heard anything that wipes me out. Some of it is so loud that not only can't I hear it, but I fear for my most precious possessions, my ears. I cannot afford to have them

damaged, and some of the music is a bit too strong for me.

**Smith:** Do you think that some of the younger players can't hear what they play, necessitating louder amplification?

**Fortune:** There was a beginning and there was a bunch of followers. A lot of that is being done because someone started doing it and it sounds like a good idea to copy.

Jazz started with seriousness and all who followed it had a reverential attitude. I don't think there was that kind of attitude in the other music, specifically rock, for whatever reason. Maybe they played loud so that the people in a club couldn't talk while they were on. I really doubt that, but you can never tell. Maybe, at this point, it's a loudness contest. Whatever, it didn't come from anyone who was serious about the music.

**Smith:** How about your new alliance with Horizon Records division of A&M?

**Fortune:** John Snyder is a rare cat. (*Ed. note:* Snyder is the producer and motivator behind Horizon.) It is definitely another kind of stroke dealing with this company and John. They have been beautiful. They are good to the musicians, their music and their ideas. I hope he is rewarded for being the way he is, and I hope the industry doesn't change that. We want to see the product sell because we like the people we deal with. So we will work harder at it.

It's a relief to be dealing with Horizon, because we, the artists, are being treated fairly. At Strata-East, where I released my first LP, though we were producers, we received disdainful treatment. There is currently litigation being brought against them by myself and several others. **db**

### SCHULLER

continued from page 15

get down to specifics like rhythm and so on. My whole concept of music is in fact a global one, where all musics coexist with each other. To separate them out again is a little bit difficult to do. But again, America represents a confluence of so many cultures, always cross-fertilizing each other. It never stops.

You talk about Stevie Wonder. 20 years ago no self-respecting jazz musician would have allowed that world of black popular music to infiltrate his own. Now, years ago I formulated the Third Stream idea, by which I meant just a lot of musics coming into each other, intersecting in different ways with different strengths and in different combinations. That process is going on right now, and I wouldn't be able to predict where it will be ten years from now. We do that more than any other country in the world, and that, I think, is one of the characteristics of American music making. And it's very exciting.

Also, the whole idea that in the end of the 20th century we would be limited to that which we considered the sacred part of the 19th century—that's preposterous. A lot of people are now saying that we can still play Chopin and Beethoven, but we can also play Duke Ellington. And not only we can, but we *must*. I think students are beginning to demand of institutions like this that they provide contact with *all* of these musics. That's relatively new; and that, incidentally, is why I'm still in education at this point. When a few key schools open up the spectrum, it's bound to have an effect—on individuals, on other institutions, and eventually on the whole musical culture. I think that effect is becoming noticeable already. **db**

for you to rip off, because what happens is they got the rip-off up here, and then the young cats come along and rip off the rip-off, which is being ripped off by the business vibe.

"And the less music you can play, and the more music you can think, and the more music you can prescribe, like medicine, the better you are, and the more money you're gonna make in this social setting. Whereas you talk to an African in the bush and say, 'Hey, man, come with me to the States and play some music,' he say, 'Man, nobody plays music! Music is like dirt! Music is everywhere!' That's his understanding.

"But in America, they're actually rippin' off the very space that they can continue to make money off for an infinite amount of time if they knew how to co-exist in a symbiotic relationship with other people, other than the rip-off vibe. And that's what I'm talkin' about, man, and I don't do that!"

Of contemporary artists, Taj likes Stevie Wonder, the late Duke Ellington and Albert King, among others, "'cause all three of them, for one thing, are Taurus. I'm a Taurus, too, but I didn't know that about them until all of a sudden a whole bunch of names started croppin' up, and I say, 'Hey! Them cats all play in the same direction, puttin' out plenty all the time, lots of whatever it is.' You don't never know where their ideas are comin' from. They ain't like everybody else. Like Albert King, every time I hear him he's hendin' new wire, man.

"All I'm tryin' to say to the consumer is go for the real stuff, like Bob Marley, or Bob Dylan, or purveyors of the music, like Richie Havens or Gil Scott-Heron, or even Ry Cooder, a person who really has basic principles and really takes time to make the music sound good."

"Why do your fans love you with such devotion, Taj, while many other people are completely bored by what you do?"

"Because of who they are as people, man! I have the ability to make room for a lot of people who are stuck in a crack. All kinds of people enjoy me. Like, some people are so stuck in a crack that they can only get out when somebody gives 'em somethin', but they can't give anything back. My music you can work with.

"It isn't about me liking to be fed by the audience, which is what rock says it's all about. They come out and do it to the audience, and get the audience to do it to them. It's not that.

"People have found out they can respond to my music without being held back, whereas the other music, the other cats that are rippin' off, they work out the excitement to the record industry. I don't work out my excitement to no records. My excitement happens in person. That's when you'll feel me. It don't happen to the records. The records can't get what's inside of me. They never have been, even if somebody produces me real good.

"You see, to me it doesn't matter. I might go out and listen to an old folk song, or go to Mexico, and hear people sing the music from whence they were, music that they played in the old days, up to music dealing with the modern day world as they knew it since the conquest by the Spaniards. And big Whitey's home ain't in any of their music!

"But in America, it's like shun your past, shun your roots, we're forward, everybody's progressive—and that really isn't true. You're as progressive as the gas or electricity or your credit card goes, and that's as progressive as it gets. When that stops, you stay right where you are. So there's other things to be seekin', other than the same dumb-ass things that everybody wants to get.

"This is not to discount any good musicians, like Sly Stone. Sly Stone make all the money in the world, 'cause he be playin'. He gives up the vibe. Bob Marley give up the vibe. Otis Redding gave up the vibe. So when those people come in there, you know they not about bullshit, where a lot of those other people are."

Near the end of our talk, Taj mellowed for a moment and said, "A lot of why I'm like I am musically is because I watched everybody go the other way, and they didn't enjoy the music, man.

"I'd see good musicians, and they would play, and then the money would become involved in it, and they'd either drink themselves to death, dope themselves to death, drug themselves to death, get killed in some foolish fight over some dumb stuff, and that did not ever have to happen for the intellect that the music passed forward.

"You gotta realize where you're comin' from. I enjoy playin' what I do, because I get something special from the people. I don't get commercial vibrations. I get personal relations. That's really more important to me than all this other stuff.

"Everybody says, 'Well, how do you avoid it?' I say, 'Because I don't want it! I'm strong enough.' Taj again gathered volume and momentum. "I got convictions about what I believe in! So something is being done in the world, rather than everybody just sittin' around, jumpin' up and down for the moment and takin' pictures because they're not quite sure they're there.

"I mean, why is everybody goin' for the bullshit? (Mock-screeches) 'Coca-Cola! Hot dogs! Sauerkraut! Blah-blah-blah-blah! Let's go to the ball game!' Everything's at that level, no in-depth.

"I mean, who is actually back there thumpin' it, while everybody else is out there sippin' lemonade? Who's really kickin' the goddamn mule around? Who is the mothah keepin' the shit goin'?" That's the cat that's gonna survive, 'cause he has!

"There's a trip in here, also. Black people been in this country so long, aspiring for those type of values, now they're havin' heart attacks and hypertension and bleeding ulcers. I don't want no part of it! It's gonna kill this cat, gonna kill that dude over there, gonna kill my brother, too. But, no!" Taj cried, his eyes rolling. "I'll tell you, no! It ain't fo' me!"

As indicated above, Taj Mahal is indeed a man of contradictory images. His bellicose attitude, his agrarian-reactionary musical values, and his questionable perceptions stand in marked contrast to the generally loving, buoyant, even exhilarating impact his performances have on his unquestionably worshipful followers.

Taj clearly indicates that his medium is music, not words. Perhaps we all would benefit if we were to heed his appeal, and "just let the music come right through, because all the people who let it come right through get it, and know exactly where I'm comin' from."

db



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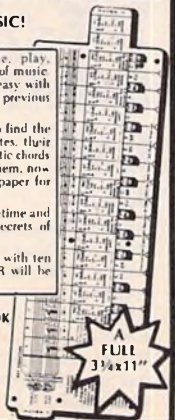
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Ask American musicians which style best represents their nation:

**Jazz improviser:** "When I pick up my horn I'm inventing. That's what Americans do—invent!"

**Folk singer:** "I'm expressing the roots of American life."

**Synthesizer player:** "I'm making music out of American technological know-how."

**Rocker:** "I'm speaking for the future generation of American leaders."

**Indian drummer:** "Mine is the original American music."

**Symphony conductor:** "The artistic prowess of the great American orchestras has raised the level of performance of great music to its highest point in history."

**Super avant-garde esoteric composer:** "I'm demonstrating my constitutional right to freedom of personal expression. That's true Americanism."

**Marching bandsman:** "During my half-time show, I keep alive the American spirit of competition. And then I build patriotism in the Fourth of July parade."

**Blues singer:** "I speak for minorities. America was built from minorities."

Right, Mr. and Ms. American!

Each style you've named represents an American trait: each undoubtedly is AN American music. But this is a truly multi-cultured nation: no one of its cultural components can represent the whole of its composite culture: none can be *the* American music; *the* American music has to be inclusive, not exclusive: for music would be colorless to an American without its red, its white—and its blue: flavorless without its *salsa*; cold without its electronic heat; anemic without its life-giving pulse-rhythm.

But who's to combine the American cultural particles into an artistic compound? Who's adept at string section as well as synthesizer?

Who can make a synagogue *melisma* swing?

Who knows the musical recipe for cooking apple pie?

If anybody, it's the film/television composer, whose daily bread comes from his ability to illustrate in sound all the matters of American life in its own manners of musical expression.

And now's the right time, the American Bicentennial time, for him to put his knowledge of and skills in the American musical characteristics into an encompassing, yet definitive idiom.

But to be more specific, this spring will be the time. Pat Williams and many of his film/TV composer friends are planning to express themselves in a totally American manner at a Colorado concert. Their orchestra the cream of the Denver area's multi-cultured musicians; and their sponsors, the University of Colorado at Denver.

Maybe at that concert made from genuine American materials put together by genuine American composers, and played by genuine American performers, the real American music will stand up.



**Pat Martino's Impressions Solo**

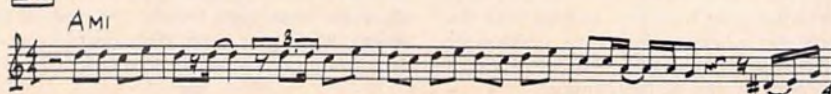
Transcribed and Annotated by Vic Milukoff

**T**his solo (from his current album *Consciousness*—Muse 5039) serves as an excellent example of the kind of magic Martino creates.

Points of interest include:

1. Use of combined minor modes (Dorian, Aeolian, Melodic Minor, etc.) throughout.
2. Strong repeated figures: B19-25, C35-38, D52-54. These are utilized effectively as tension-creating ostinato patterns.
3. Shifting minor tonal centers—basically A minor and C minor against just A minor: B17 and 18, D54 and 55.
4. Syncopation: C41-44.
5. Highly complex and virtuosic passage work throughout. Martino's technical execution doesn't seem hampered by any tempo.

**A** ♩ =  $\frac{6}{8}$  152





# 1976 SUMMER JAZZ CLINICS

## 18th Annual BIG BAND Clinics: (Rich Matteson, Director)

June 29-July 4, Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan  
 July 18-24, Texas Lutheran College, Seguin  
 July 25-31, Miami U., Oxford, Ohio  
 Aug. 1-7, U. of Northern Illinois, DeKalb  
 Aug. 8-14, Mt. Hood College, Portland, Oregon

## 5th Annual COMBO/IMPROVISATION Clinics: (Jamey Aebersold, Director)

June 6-12, Wichita State U., Kansas  
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- 1776**—Francis Hopkinson, the first native-born American composer, signed the Declaration of Independence.
- 1855**—George Frederick Bristow wrote the first American grand opera on an American subject, *Rip Van Winkle*.
- 1866**—Charles M. Barres wrote the first American musical comedy, *The Black Crook*.
- 1874**—Arthur William Foote, the first totally American-trained composer, received his A.M. degree in music.
- 1896**—Amy Marcy Beach, at age 29, wrote the first symphony by an American woman, *Gaelic Symphony*.
- 1897**—Tom Turpin published the first ragtime composition, his *Harlem Rag*.
- 1903**—Scott Joplin wrote the first ragtime opera, *A Guest of Honor*.
- 1913**—Duke Ellington at age 14 wrote his first composition, *Soda Fountain Rag*.
- 1915**—Ferdinand Morton published a jazz arrangement for the first time, his *Jelly Roll Blues*.
- 1921**—M. F. Gaillard wrote the first score expressly composed for a film, *El Dorado*.
- 1928**—Dorothy Fields began her career as Broadway lyricist with *Blackbirds of 1928*, a career which led to her election to the Songwriter's Hall of Fame.
- 1929**—Explosion of film musicals with sound tracks. After two experiments in recorded sound with film, Jolson's *The Jazz Singer* (1927) and *The Singing Fool* (1928), no less than seventy-two movie musicals by composers such as Irving Berlin, Cole Porter, Sigmund Romberg, Nacio Herb Brown, Harold Arlen, and Jerome Kern, appeared during 1929.
- 1932**—George Gershwin, at age 34, wrote the first musical to win a Pulitzer Prize, *Of Thee I Sing*.
- 1792**—Congress authorized the use of real bands rather than fife and drum corps in American military establishments.
- 1880**—John Phillip Sousa took command of the U.S. Marine Band, which through the 12 years of his leadership evolved into the ideal for thousands of American bands. Through his more than one hundred march compositions, Sousa's music became the pinnacle of expression for America's patriotism and so influential that dances in duple meter (two-step) supplanted the waltz.

years for their improvisational fusion of the alto saxophone and the guitar-like sarod.

Handy himself calls their work together "a tremendous innovation and the most successful blending of jazz and Indian music to date." He also says that the fusion, "isn't difficult at all, because there's a lot of empathy between us. Our backgrounds in music are very similar. What we perform is based pretty much on theory and the inventing of notes."

"Of all the music I have heard around the world," he told *down beat* in 1966, "this (Indian music) is the most sophisticated by far. We are amateurs by comparison. I think music means more to the Indians. Here it's a luxury we take or leave."

When Handy has unpacked his alto for other musical events, it has usually been in jam session situations similar to the latest Charlie Mingus Carnegie Hall reunion, where his East Coast associates thrust a tenor upon him at the last minute. But he said he doesn't find it difficult switching from the more reserved setting of his Khan concerts to the stage at Carnegie where he blew with Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Charles McPherson, Jon Faddis, George Adams and Hamiet Bluiett.

"I find that the person I am allows me to cover a wide range of so-called fields of music. It's me and what I've allowed myself to become exposed to and influenced by."

Aside from his accomplishments in performance, Handy is responsible for elevating an awareness of jazz in the ears of countless Bay Area college students—he has taught at one time or another at seven different colleges there—to the level of sophistication generally accorded classical music. The best summation of his philosophy towards jazz education comes from a statement he made to Leonard Feather after hearing a cut of ragtime alto player Cap'n John Handy (no relation.) "Jazz is still in its infancy, I believe, and we've got a lot of growing to do. I wish the oldsters wouldn't close their minds, and the youngsters wouldn't close theirs—we can still learn from these people."

Although he has a secure seat on the music faculty at San Francisco State, he still feels some administrative reluctance about what he's trying to do. "It's due to an insecurity of music departments and faculties who could be open to new musical ideas, but are afraid to expose themselves, and are inadequately prepared to make intelligent comment on it. As a result, there is no money or appropriations. And when there's no budget, there's no curriculum and no courses. But there isn't enough active resistance to this trend on the part of students—especially the student musicians who want to go to school to learn this music."

"Students do more complaining to each other than to those who are in the position to make the changes," he concludes.

His survey courses cover jazz throughout the 20th century and explore each era through recordings from Handy's own extensive collection. Though a teacher 20 years from now would probably put Handy's work in with the avant-garde movement of the '60s, ignoring the heavy influence of be-bop that Handy has admitted, Handy himself calls that earlier movement "the most significant standardization of jazz. It made it possible to teach jazz and all the academics involved."

If anyone were to start pinning labels on John's music, however, they'd be asking for trouble. "Musicians seldom put themselves in any of those categories. The critics do, and then the musicians are typecast into a certain, often very restrictive area. And a lot of them can do a lot more than you'll ever hear. Most audacious musical endeavors today can eventually become commercially categorized."

A native of Dallas and the victim of an insecure childhood, Handy first took up the alto in 1949. While studying that instrument and the clarinet at S.F. State, where Paul Desmond had studied a few years earlier, Handy made his living playing "wild tenor" in Bay Area rhythm and blues clubs. A stint in Korea interrupted his education, but by 1959 he had hit New York and fallen in with Mingus. His career could have progressed naturally from there, and we might today be hearing Handy blowing funk with voices and expensive production work, but for his intellectual curiosity about jazz.

From his current vantage point, Handy sees a number of developments in jazz that don't bode well for its future as black classical music. "In 15 years it will be rare to see young black musicians. Unless some effort is made to educate young blacks that jazz isn't just older people's music, they'll turn off to it."

"I can see something happening to all of jazz that happened to ragtime and dixieland. At the rate things are going with the black audiences, the so-called jazz musician has become foreign element. The only identifiable jazz musicians are those doing things one would identify as black commercial music."

"Unless blacks discover the value of the music, and I mean the *cultural* value, they'll see exactly what happened to the blues when young whites took that music to their audience and found a pot of gold. As long as black music is not performed by blacks themselves, you're going to get imitations of it. And no matter how noble and how good those are, they'll still be imitations," he said.

One night last March, Handy broke up one of his classes early and invited his students to San Francisco's Keystone Korner to hear Elvin Jones. He led his group of students into the club, but before Jones had finished his first set, Handy had risen and invited everybody back to his house, leading the way out of the club. It was as if a protective father had mistakenly led his kids into a skin flick.

"Jazz cannot survive in those places," he told me when I asked about the incident, "and the image those places give jazz has hurt it from the beginning. You can't expect people to be on their best behavior... I personally don't want to go to a club to be a paragon of social grace. You just can't have all those distractions. When you go to a house of booze, you drink booze," he said, comparing the performance of music in such a "house" to the reading of the Bible in a brothel.

Handy himself won't ever have to read the Bible in a brothel anymore, having successfully turned his back on a nightclub scene he found insulting. He predicts jazz will get out of those clubs, but his reasoning behind that prediction lends a note of irony to everything he's been talking about.

"Sure it'll get out of the clubs," he said, "because more white people are listening to it. They don't like having to go to those places."

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**New England Conservatory:** *Ran Blake's Third Stream* (2/4); *Jaki Byard and Friends* (2/10).

**Michael's Baird Hersey** (1/30-1); *Original Jaki Byard Quartet w/Alan Dawson* (Feb.)

**Pooh's Pub:** *Claudio Roditi & Pete Chavez* (Mondays); *Talent Night* (Tuesdays); *Morning Sky* (2/4-8, 11-5); *Open Jams* (Sundays, 4-8).

**Scotch 'n Sirloln:** *Yankee Rhythm Kings* (Fri.).

**Berklee College of Music:** *Alfred Stone*, bassist (2/2); *John A. Bavicchi's Composers' Workshop* (2/5); *Barry H. Voth*, reeds (2/9).

**Reflections** (Cambridge): *Kemp Harris* (1/30-1); *F & F* (2/6-7).

**Plough and Stars** (Cambridge): *Bunny Smith* 5 (Sun. 4-7).

**Bowl's Town Tavern** (E. Providence, R.I.): *Duke Belaire's Big Band* (Mon.).

**Murphy's** (Hartford, Conn.): *Icarus* (Wed.); *Kitty Kathryn & Norman Macklin Duo* (Fri./Sat.).

**Millpond Tavern** (Branford, Conn.): *Galvanized Jazz Band* (Sun.).

**Sheraton Tobacco Valley Inn** (Windsor, Conn.): *Billy Gault* 5 (2/1). Presented by the Hartford Jazz Society.

**Bayview Street Garage** (Camden, Me.): *Charles Bechler/Jim Cameron* 4 plus guests (Sun. 5-12).

## TWIN CITIES

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**Guthrie Theater:** *Sarah Vaughan* (2/8, two shows).

**Northrup Auditorium** (Univ. of Minn.): *Carole King* (2/1-2).

**St. Paul Civic Center Theatre:** *Kiss* (2/6).

**Longhorn Eating Emporium and Saloon:** *Bill Evans* (2/18-22); *Sonny Rollins* (2/25); *Natural Life* (Thurs. thru Sat.); *Wolverines* (Sun.); *Mike Elliott* or *Bobby Peterson* (Mon.); *Tommy O'Donnell* (Wed.).

**Hardy's Stagedoor** (St. Paul): *Irv Williams Trio w/Roberta Davis* (Fri.-Sun.); *Jam Session* (Sun.).

**Orion Room** (IDS Building, Mpls.): *Manfredo Fest Trio* (nightly).

## CHICAGO

**Jazz Showcase:** *Bobby Hutcherson* (1/28-2/1); *Jack McDuff and Heatin' System* (2/4-8); *Maynard Ferguson* (2/10); *Shirley Scott Trio w/Harold Vick* (2/11-15); *George Benson* (2/18-22, tent.).

**Ratso's:** Jazz and other contemporary music nightly.

**Perv's House:** Jazz, soul acts nightly.

**El Mirador:** *Latin Fire* (indefinitely).

**Salaam Restaurant:** Name jazz booked periodically on weekends.

**N.A.M.E. Gallery:** *Julius Hemphill Ensemble*, in performance of *Homage To Ants and Other Symbiotic Creatures* w/film by A. G. Devdas, text and choreography by *Emilio Cruz*, performance by *Patricia Cruz* (2/1).

**Sybaris Lounge** (John Hancock Center): *Rich Fudoli and Feelings* (nightly).

**Amazingrace:** *Odetta* (1/30-2/1); *Bill Quateman* (2/6-8); *McCoy Tyner* (2/13-15); *Vassar Clements* (2/17); *Gary Burton* (2/20-23); *Kenny Rankin* (2/29-3/1).

## MONTREAL

**Place des Arts:** *Benny Goodman* (2/15).

**Café Prague:** *Jazz Knights* (Thurs.).

**Cock & Bull Pub:** *Al Peters* (Sun.).

**Mojo:** *Al-Hajj Sayyid Abdul Al-Khabyr* (Tues. thru Sat.).

**Café Campus:** Various blues groups (Mon.). **Rockhead's Paradise:** *Ivor Symonds* (nightly); visiting r & b bands.

**Nelson:** Various Québécois groups.

**National Arts Centre**, (Ottawa): *Don't Bother Me, I Can't Cope* (1/28 - 31); *The World of Jelly-Roll Morton* (2/6); *Cleo Laine and John Dankworth* (2/12).

**University of Ottawa:** Luncheon jazz sessions (Mon.).

**La Paloma** (Ottawa): *Vernon Isaac* (Mon.).

**Bowl & Platter** (Ottawa): *Apex Jazz Band* (Fri.).

**Chez Lucien** (Ottawa): *Capital City Jazz Band* (Fri.).

## LONDON

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**Royal Oak** (Plaistow): *Chris Watford's Elite Syncopators* (Fri.).

**Old Gatehouse** (Highgate Village): *Doug Murray's Thursday Band* (Thurs.).

**Phoenix** (Cavendish Square): *Embryo w/Frank Roberts* (1/28); *Ray Russell Quintet* (2/4); *John Warren Band* (2/11).

**Seven Dials:** *Dick Wellstood* (2/5); *Peter Ind Septet w/Bruce Turner* (1/29); *Major Surgery* (2/12).

**Red Lion** (Hatfield): *Dick Wellstood* (2/16).

**100 Club:** *Champion Jack Dupree* (2/3).

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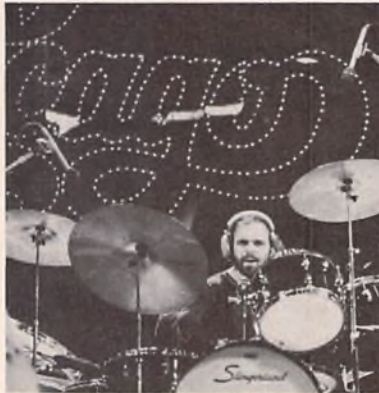
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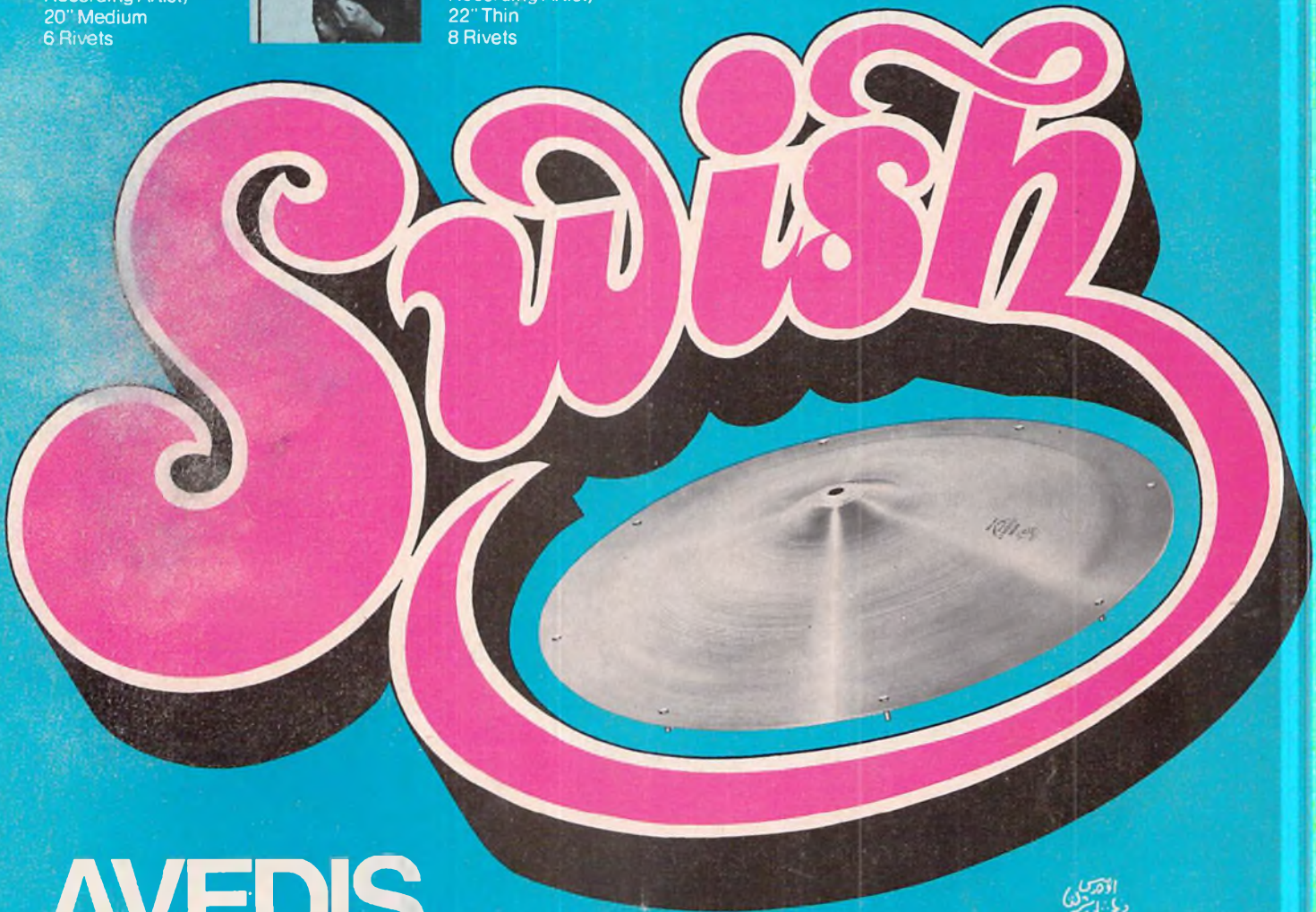


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