

JUNE 17, 1976

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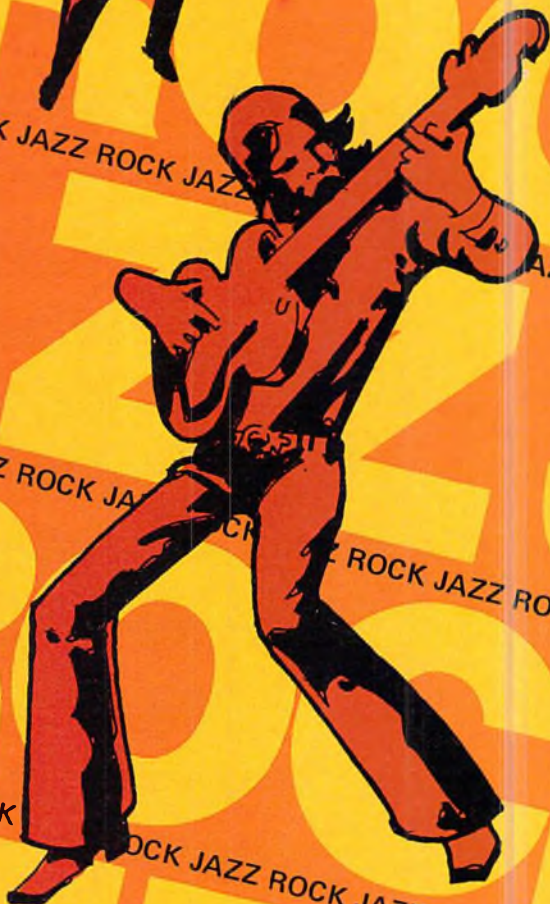
the contemporary
music magazine

downbeat

CRUSADERS

ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL

TOM WAITS



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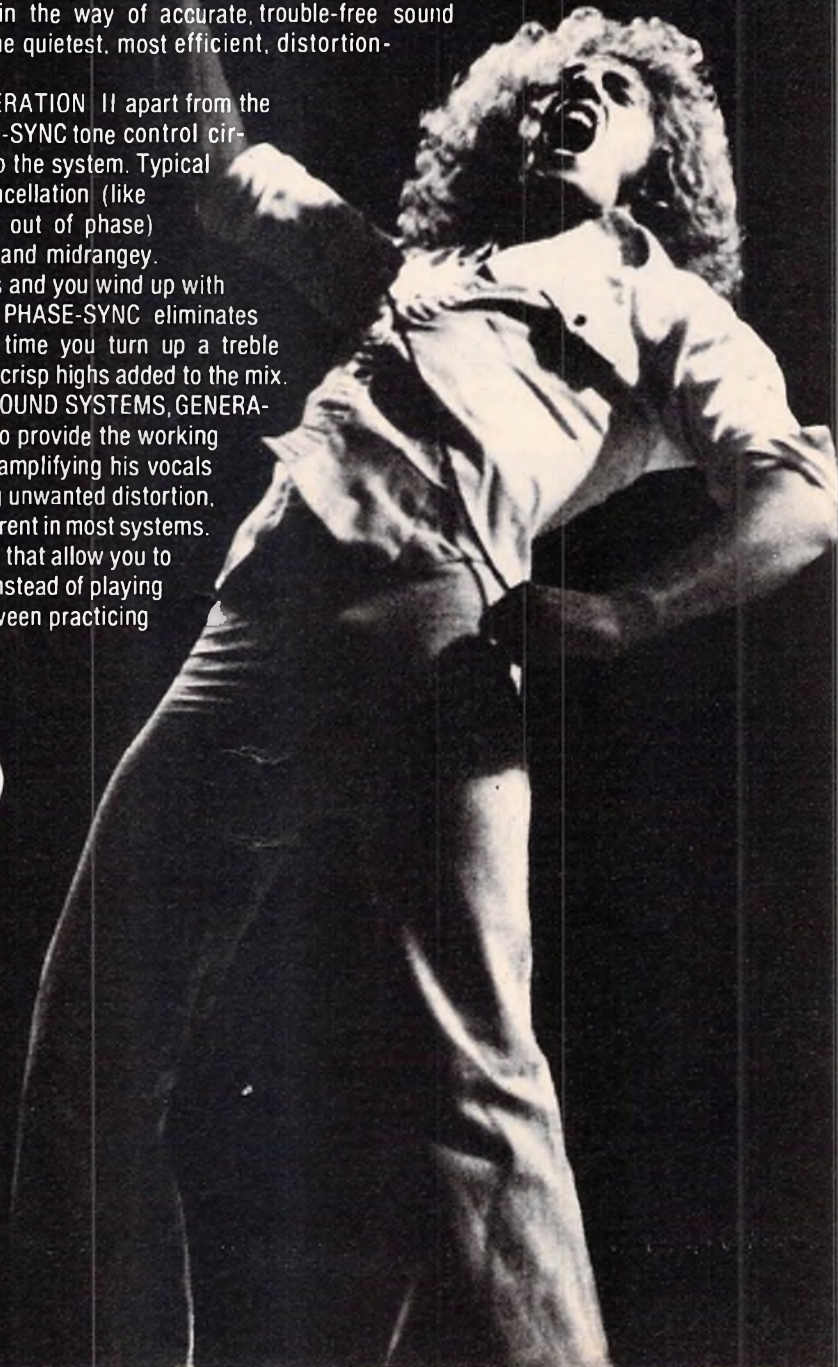
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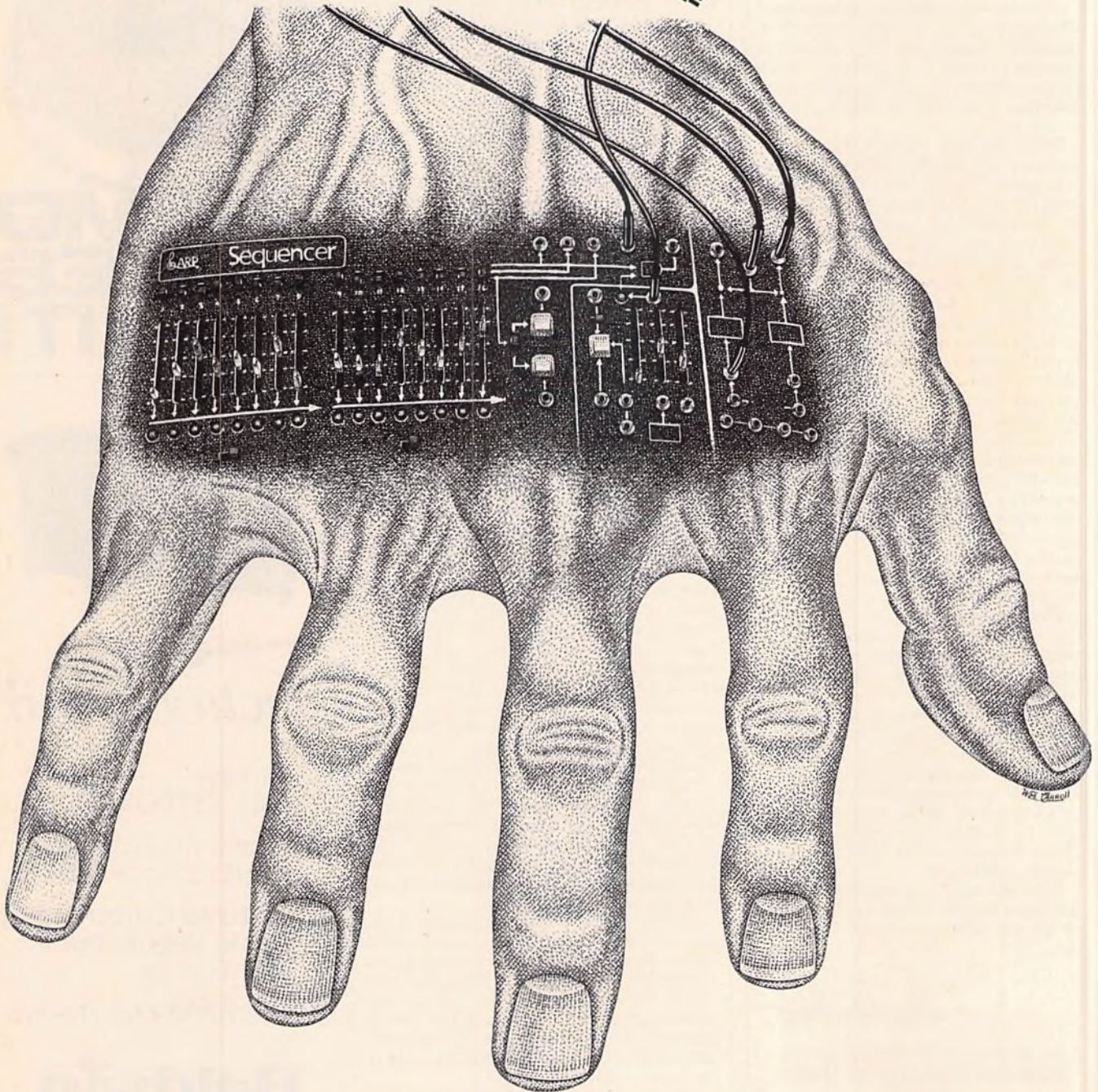
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education in jazz

by Alan Broadbent

Alan Broadbent, pianist-arranger-composer, currently with Super-sax; own solo Choice LP, *Where is Love*, with Irene Kral.



I came to Berklee from Auckland, New Zealand, in January, 1966 when I was 18—on the strength of winning a down beat scholarship, aided by down-home fund raising. By the end of the first semester, I knew that I could never go back. What I found in jazz, at Berklee, could not grow elsewhere. I was here, musically at least, for life.

While my first instrument is piano, writing is my first love—I've been composing since I'm six—and that's what I concentrated on at Berklee. The teacher that best put it all together for me was Herb Pomeroy, a brilliant arranger—just brilliant. He made me realize, for example, how the infinite range of orchestral colors that can be expressed through instruments: brass and reeds. I'll never forget an end-of-semester assignment I had. It was to condense Ellington's *Tone Parallel to Harlem* into a three minute suite that had the aspects of all the themes. I was limited to three trumpets, a flugelhorn, French horn, clarinet & bass clarinet, and alto & tenor saxes; and I wasn't allowed to write unisons or combine parts or sections. I learned from that and other challenges, and evidently Berklee thought so too. Four of my charts were recorded on volume XII of the *Jazz In the Classroom* series of which *Lisa, Lisa* remains a favorite of mine.

After the first year, I got a Peter Nero type solo gig at My Apartment, a club near school. That job not only kept me in school but was the basis of my first quartet with other Berklee friends and players: George Mraz, bass; Mick Goodrick, guitar; and Jeff Brillinger, drums.

Much of what Berklee taught me resulted from trial and error. I would write a line and ten minutes later hear it played by a band (with the proper instrumentation). I'd dash back and redo it—helped by my teachers on how to simplify, emphasize, and clarify.

What else can I say but that Berklee has given me the proper training for a varied and useful musical life. The rest is up to me.

Alan Broadbent

for catalog and information write to:
BERKLEE COLLEGE OF MUSIC
Dept. D

1140 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02215

the first chorus

By Charles Suber

The intended theme of this issue was to be "jazz-rock." But like most attempts to shorthand contemporary music, the thematic phrase is too confining. What we really have in this issue are a goodly number of musicians who play their music their way.

The Crusaders took a while to find their own way. The four original members—Stix Hooper, Joe Sample, Wilton Felder, and Wayne Henderson—started out in the mid-'50s as a "Gulf Coast r&b/jazz group." They were denied entry in the cool West Coast school as the Modern Jazz Sextet; scuffled a while as the Night Hawks; and in 1961 found themselves as the Jazz Crusaders, the first black group on the Pacific Coast label. Finally, in 1970, fed up to here with jazz critics and the commercial handicaps of "jazz," the Crusaders emerged successful and musically free. "When we took 'Jazz' off our name, we took the shackles off of what was hanging us up. . . . If I want to play a gospel chord out of my life's experience, I'm gonna do it."

Asleep At The Wheel, the ten-piece Western-type swing band, has a musical background similar to the Crusaders despite color and point of origin. The three original Sleepers—Ray Benson, Lucky Oceans, and Danny Levine—grew up around Philadelphia before emigrating west to Oakland by way of West Virginia. The Sleepers' musical forefather was Bob Wills (& his Texas Playboys). They were also consciously influenced by a passel of other folks, such as Lucky Millinder, Joe Turner, Hank Williams, Art Tatum, Merle Haggard, Bird, Basie, and Jerry Lee Lewis.

Chicagoan Brian Torff, the well-schooled 21-year-old acoustic bassist, also pays respect to older folks with whom he has worked or learned from on records. He continues to learn from Stephane Grappelli (with whom he's currently touring), Oliver Nelson, Mary Lou Williams, and Scott LaFaro.

Airpocket is a syncretic group formed by five Fowler brothers: Bruce, Steve, Tom, Walt, and Ed—all and each of whom are committed to a high degree of self-determination. Their music is derived from the healthy influences of Oliver Nelson, Frank Zappa, Beethoven, Cheech & Chong, Bach, Ussachevsky, Keith Jarrett, Bartok, Wuorinen, and Ellington. Brother Bruce explains: "The reason our music moves through classical, jazz, rock, and funk is because all of us are so varied. We love all different kinds of music."

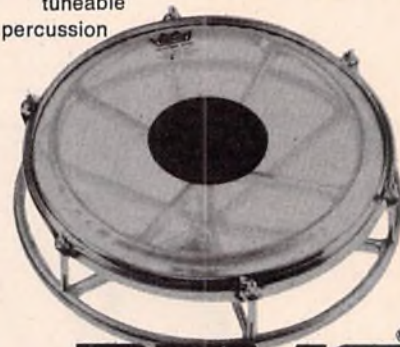
Tom Waits is variously a songwriter, vocalist, keyboard player, and yarnspinner who relates, among others, to Tom and Bruce Fowler, Zappa, Link Wray, Carson McCullers, George & Ira Gershwin, Lord Buckley, Kerouac, Basie, Monk, Memphis Minnie, Al Cohn, and Randy Newman.

Waits is, in my opinion, the most gifted and genuine American folk musician-poet around today. His ears and eavesdropping are reminiscent of Dos Passos' young man who "walks by himself searching through the crowd with greedy eyes, greedy ears taut to hear, by himself, alone. . . . it was the speech that clung to the ears, the link that tingled in the blood; U.S.A."

Next issue: down beat's 42nd anniversary and a long look at ourselves and the music and, above all, the musicians.

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The Daniels Backlash

First of all, comparing Kenton and Rich to Charlie Daniels is like comparing the Cincinnati Reds to the Y.W.C.A. junior girls softball team (db, 5/6).

Who is Stan Kenton, Charlie? He's a 65-year-old guy who lives mostly out of a bus playing in front of packed houses across the country night after night. A guy who has done more for the education of young musicians than anyone I know of. Where will you be at 65, Charlie? Sitting at home listening to your old albums, telling your friends how you used to be a musician?

I personally don't think Stan or Buddy will accept your ten thousand dollar bet. I don't think either one would be caught dead with any Nashville musicians. I also think your

vocabulary portrays your mentality.
Anonymous Allentown, Pa.

Thanks for printing Charlie Daniels' hilarious challenge. . . . His simpleness is perfectly suited to the kind of music he champions. When are the rustics in this country going to wise up and realize what country music really is? It's music's equivalent of comic books and gossip magazines. The very idea of country music being "beyond" anyone is ridiculous. . . . Charlie Daniels is a clown.
Chuck Estes Fullerton, Cal.

Charlie Daniels is my new hero. One more cheer for ethnic purity and everything it stands for.
Abe Lincoln Rockwell Buenos Aires, Arg.

A Pair Of Boners

In the past couple of years Bill Watrous has shot from relative obscurity to the top of the trombone world. . . . Although Watrous deserves every bit of recognition he has received, there is another demon on the bone who deserves just as much, if not more.

This person . . . is Jimmy Pugh, who presently resides in Woody Herman's band. His technique is as dazzling as Watrous', and the ease with which he plays in the upper register is just as remarkable. . . . Anyone who hasn't been fortunate enough to hear Jim Pugh should make a special effort to do so.
Chris Lay Darien, Ill.

Bill Watrous has received far too much acclaim as a jazz artist. . . . He has not contributed any significantly new innovations to the art of jazz trombone playing. He is highly indebted to players such as Phil Wilson and Carl Fontana, two of the most imaginative and swinging trombonists in the world. . . . He has drawn more attention to the art of trombone playing than anyone in the past decade. Young players who have never heard of J. J. Johnson or Frank Rosolino revere Bill as though he were the prophet of jazz trombone. This is precisely the problem: Bill Watrous, with his incredible facility and control, has recreated the innovations and original ideas of his predecessors. . . .

Bill, take a chance now and then. You may find that you have the power to make us laugh or cry.
Paul Brewer Edmund, Okla.

Salsa Salute

I feel compelled to write to tell you how very much I enjoyed your April 22 issue, devoted to Latin music.

Salsa is nothing new to me—I grew up in Miami Beach in the late '40s and early '50s, and my radio was always tuned in to Radio Progreso in Havana. In those days we were obsessed with dancing, and practiced for hours every day so that we could show off on weekends at such places as El Mambo Club. I can't tell you how many times we perfected our steps to the beat of Machito's *Asia Minor*. Our favorite bands then were Machito, Senora Matancera and Conjunto Casino. I still have all their hits on the original 78s!

My teen-aged children, while mostly into progressive rock music, have achieved an appreciation of both jazz and Latin music through osmosis, since they have been hearing it at home all their lives. We have a mutual respect for each others' musical tastes, and they respect their old mama because she bought the first Santana albums.

The salsa issue was enjoyed by all of us, as we all dig Latin music. . . . our favorites are Ray Barretto, Eddie Palmieri, Willie Colon, Orquesta Harlow and the Fania All-Stars and Tipica.
Helene Bernstein Baltimore, Md.

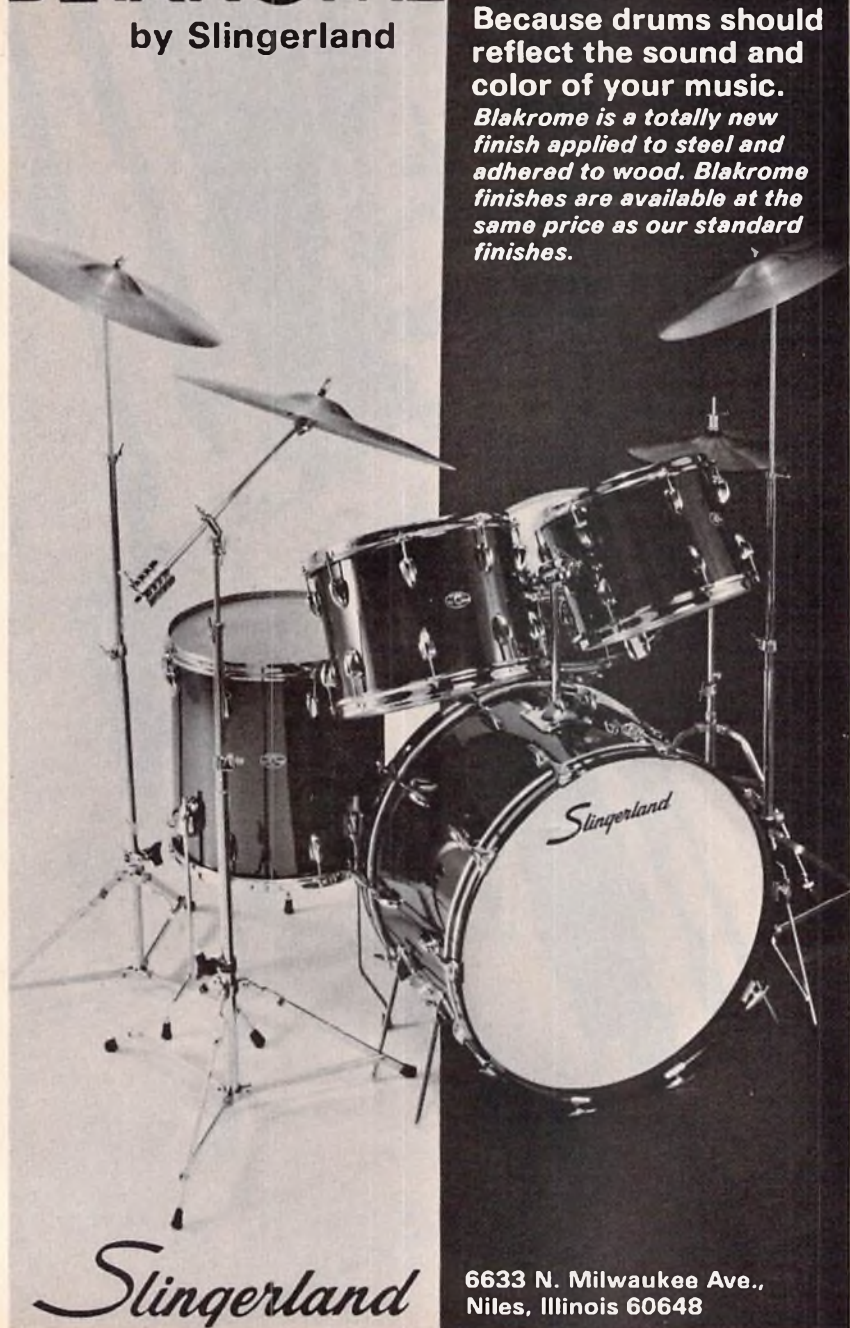
Bring On The Old

I agree that new talent deserves recognition, but we should also be concerned and interested in reading about the masters who are still playing.

I would appreciate reading feature articles on such greats as Ruby Braff, Dizzy Gillespie, Benny Goodman, Thelonious Monk, Zoot Sims, Buddy Tate, and Teddy Wilson, just to name a few.
Lorne Schoenberg Fairlawn, N.J.

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RAHSAAN RETURNS

NEWARK—In what has to be one of the most spectacular comebacks in memory, Rahsaan Roland Kirk has made his return to live performing. Felled only a few months ago by a stroke which left one half of his body paralyzed, Rahsaan unveiled his old form in a recent set at Newark's hottest spot, Sparky J's.

Accompanied by a quintet that featured Hilton Ruiz, Walter Perkins, and Steve Torre, Rahsaan wailed away on multi-instruments, evidently full of energy and glad to be back to his old tricks. He played a couple of cuts from his recent album, *The Return Of The 5000 Lb. Man*, and broke up the house with a rousing rendition of *Sweet Georgia Brown*.

Rahsaan now moves on to the Village Vanguard for a series of June concerts. Check City Scene for details plus additional Kirkian plans.

Sweet Smell Of Bayou Success

NEW ORLEANS—From its crude beginnings seven years ago, the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival has gone on to become a major musical event, as much a part of the city's cultural scene as Mardi Gras.

More than 100,000 persons sauntered back and forth among seven stages and two tents during two weekends in April in order to hear such luminaries as Professor Longhair, the Wild Magnolias, Earl Turbinton & Nucleus, and the Rhapsodizers. About 200 acts were presented out at the city's racetrack, including for the first time, out-of-Louisiana talents like ragtime pianist Eubie Blake, country-swing ensemble Asleep At The Wheel, and fiddler-guitarist Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown.

In the festival's new Jazz Tent, Charlie Mingus and Max Roach gave lecture-demonstrations to a packed house. At the same time, Bob Dylan's discovery Scarlet Rivera gave a debut performance of her new group Mammoth to the gathered thousands in a make-shift outdoor arena.

A distinctively New Orleans bash with over 190 local craftsmen plus food vendors dispensing jambalaya, boiled crawfish and red beans with rice, the New Orleans festival might well be the most enjoyable of its kind anywhere in the world.

"Some people think the

festival has become too much fun," commented Quint Davis, the 28-year-old co-producer of the festival along with George Wein. "But it's New Orleans, not the Newport festival where audiences would sit passively in lawn chairs and listen to the darkies from down South."

Musical purity has never been one of the Jazz Festival's obsessions. Besides traditional New Orleans jazz by groups like the Imperial Brass Band, Kid Sheik, Kid Thomas and the Preservation Hall Jazz Band, there's every other kind of music the region has to offer: rhythm and blues by Robert Parker, Lee Dorsey, Ernie K. Doe; cajun music by Clifton Chenier, Allen Fontenot & his Country Cajuns; and a tent full of top area gospel groups.

In addition to the weekends at the Fairgrounds, the festival also featured a series of seven nighttime concerts, including performances by McCoy Tyner, Allen Toussaint, Keith Jarrett, B. B. King, Muddy Waters, Lightnin' Hopkins, Art Blakey & the Jazz Messengers, the Staple Singers, Harold Melvin & the Blue Notes, the Charlie Mingus Quintet and the Max Roach Quintet.

As a whole, the festival proved a resounding success. The foundation that runs the operation will show a substantial surplus for the first time in its history, according to Davis.

Disco Assaults Big Bands

LOS ANGELES—Chalice Productions, a production company directed by Lee Lasseff and David Chackler, is currently preparing a disco album of 1940s big band tunes, produced by Chackler and Joe Renzetti. The album will be released initially in Great Britain on Arista early in the summer.

Using the working title *Welcome Back To World War II*, the producers have assembled several of the original horn players who performed with big band era greats to update the tunes to the

disco style of today. The tunes include the Glenn Miller classics *In the Mood*, *American Patrol* and *Chattanooga Choo Choo*, an Andrews Sisters medley of *Three Little Fishes* and *A Tisket, A Tasket* and Count Basie's *Two O'Clock Jump*.

Musicians on the album have been associated with various big bands, including those of Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey, Jimmy Dorsey, Glenn Miller, Lionel Hampton, Duke Ellington, Harry James, Count Basie and Les Brown.

Kenton Coughs Up Rare Disc Daniels Billed 10 Grand



Why Is This Man Laughing??? Does He Have Anything To Laugh About???

LOS ANGELES—Scott A. Cameron recently sent Nashville's Charlie Daniels a bill for \$10,000 and a copy of the Stan Kenton/Tex Ritter album released on Capitol in 1962.

Cameron, Kenton's personal manager, is responding to a recent article (*db*, 5/6) in which Daniels stated, "I, Charlie Daniels, will stake my reputation as a musician and as a human being that Mr. Stan Kenton and Mr. Buddy Rich—neither one of 'em—can go into the studio and cut one decent country record." Daniels challenged, "—I defy Stan Kenton! I defy Buddy Rich! I'll bet \$10,000 with either one of those gentlemen—not an album, just one record."

"Daniels should have done his homework," Cameron said. "He is simply trying to gain publicity by latching onto the coattails of two of the real greats of modern music, and his challenge, on

which he has staked his reputation, is going to cost him \$10,000."

Both Kenton and Rich have gone on record recently as disliking the mass-produced, manufacturing-plant syndrome of country western music, arousing considerable controversy among Nashville devotees.

"I don't know who Charlie Daniels is," Kenton said in a telephone interview from Albany, New York, "but after reading his profane interview and tasteless challenge, I know he will never be the person that Tex Ritter was. I was proud to make an album with Tex. Tex was not only talented, he was sincere and he was a gentleman."

Cameron commented, "I've sent Daniels the album, which is a collector's item, and a bill for \$10,000. Let's see if his money is as good as his reputation as a musician and as a human being."

Teo At Cooper Union

NEW YORK—In a continuing series of exceptional musical fare, this city's Cooper Union recently presented a preview of the musical drama *The Shape*, lyrics by Rem Capra and music by Teo Macero.

Capra's view of the drama is as follows: "It is to be interpreted as having recaptured the same need for social commentary as has been recurrent throughout classical literature since the dramatists Racine and Voltaire. Fixed at the center point between the Phaedrian-Aesopian and Christian momentum, this drama establishes the unquestionable change of the universal morality that began with the advent of Christ's birth and death..."

He told *db* that to outline the drama would be tantamount to requesting a jazz buff to explain the essence of jazz. "It can only

be felt," he concluded.

The Macero music (it can hardly be called a score) ranged from *The Song Of Solomon* excerpt from the Old Testament (which had a recorded narration by Barry Ulanov backed by Miles Davis' musing), to a Bobby Scott vocal/piano selection, *The Preacher*. Other highlights included guest tubaist Don Butterfield in a magnificent *The Devil's Depth*. Lionel Hampton was on hand to sit in on vibes with a group called Cosmology, with help from tenors George Young and Dave Liebman. The segment, entitled *Laylah Triangle*, put Hamp through some astoundingly feverish paces.

Teo himself played alto and tenor saxes with Cosmology, while vocalist Dawn Thompson startled us with her fine musical sense on the difficult *Son Of The Morning*.

SID AVERY

down beat NEWS

CANNONBALL SALUTE

NEW YORK—The 1976 Newport Jazz Festival will pay tribute to Cannonball Adderley, at Carnegie Hall on July 2, with the world premiere concert version of his jazz musical, *Big Man—The Legend of John Henry*, which Cannonball composed with his brother Nat. The libretto is by Diane Lampert. Ms. Lam-

pert collaborated with George W. George on the concert version, based on material by Paul Avila Mayer, G. W. George, and Peter Farrow.

Joe Williams will sing the title role of John Henry (as on album), accompanied by the newly formed Nat Adderley's Black and Blues Band.

PEA SOUP AT STORYVILLE

NEW YORK—What could be more conducive to eating pea soup than doing it to the great jazz sounds at New York's newest club, George Wein's Storyville? Pea soup?! It's a Swedish tradition and since Rigmor Newman is Swedish... Ms. Newman, executive director of Jazz Interactions and the manager of the club, thought of the idea while sitting there with Mari-Louise Forsgren, the founder of Artornas Vanner, a group of Swedish women who meet regularly for pea soup and good conversation.

Rigmor combined her desire to get more Swedish-Americans interested in jazz with a fundraising event for the Swedish American Bicentennial Committee, the result being a one night bash starring Joe Newman, Illinois Jacquet, Bob Cranshaw,

Harold Mabern, Mel Lewis and Ben Brown, who sat in for Cranshaw at the outset.

Also on hand was Claes Dahlgren, head of the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation in New York and for more than 20 years the voice of "Jazzglimtar Fran USA," a monthly program from this city.

There were Scandinavian delicacies aplenty: herring, cheese, bread, ham, pancakes, aquavit and beer. (Aquavit is a liqueur that makes the eyes tear and the nose run a bit, at least that's what it did to this reporter.)

Record albums by members of the group were auctioned off for the cause, the highest price being \$30.00 for a Thad Jones and Mel Lewis' *Suite For Pops*, personally autographed by the drummer and the writer of the liner notes.

Ellington Forever

NEW YORK—A concert was recently presented on the 77th anniversary of Duke Ellington's birth at the Cathedral Church St. John The Divine, the massive edifice in the heart of Manhattan. The program was a benefit for Cuttington College, Liberia, West Africa, the only college of its kind in sub-Sahara Africa. Featured performers included Sarah Vaughan, Joe Williams, Dave Brubeck, Charles Mingus, the Hampton Choir and the Duke Ellington Orchestra under the direction of Duke's son, Mercer.

Anita Moore, the band's vocalist, began the musical part of the program following a speech by Betty Ford.

Ms. Moore offered *Come Sunday* and *Tell Me It's The Truth*, the former from *Black, Brown And Beige*.

Mingus played an a cappella improvisation that was lost in the reverberation of the cavernous concrete flying buttresses. It was in this Cathedral that the Second Concert of Sacred Music was first performed and it was here that The Man was laid to rest two short years ago.

Mercer got down to business with *Les Trois Pois Noirs* (*Three Black Kings*), dedicated to the King of the Nativity, King Solomon and Martin Luther King, Jr. Standout soloists were tenorists Ricky Ford and Percy Marion.

Liberian Suite was performed, with Joe Williams singing the opening *I Like The Sunrise* in place of Al Hibbler, who recorded the original. Joe later contributed some fine Jimmy Jones arrangements of Ellingtonia: *In The Beginning God*, (the theme of Sacred Concert I), *Ain't Nothing Wrong With That, Heritage*, and *Jump For Joy*. Brubeck did a trio of tunes consisting of his own *The Duke*, Mercer's *Things Ain't What They Used To Be* and Billy Strayhorn's *Take The A Train*.

Sassy offered two Duke numbers, *In My Solitude* and *I Got It Bad And That Ain't Good*, and another by George Gershwin. The Hampton Choir joined the orchestra and soloist Devonne Gardner for *The Majesty Of God* and *Praise God And Dance*.

10 □ down beat

Garner Greets Grappelli



LOS ANGELES—Erroll Garner and Stephane Grappelli recently got together in the violinist's room in Los Angeles, during Grappelli's concert stay here. The above photo of Garner is the first since he fell ill in Chicago in the spring of 1975.

Garner is working on a new folio of his music, plus several new collaborations with lyricists on his compositions. His ballad,

Nightwind, has received a lyric treatment by British writer, Marcel Stellman, and will be released this spring in England on British Decca, as recorded by a new vocalist, Lance Winsor.

Several TV appearances for Garner being scheduled for the near future. A new album by Garner titled *Erroll Garner Plays Gershwin And Kern* is due for May-June release.

potpourri

ABC/Impulse has signed both **Axelrod, Walter Booker, Jimmy Mayuto and Wade Marcus.** Brazilian percussionist Mayuto has worked with **Santana, Hubbard, Sam Jones, Roy McCurdy, Ernie Watts, and Nancy Wilson.** Many of these musicians participated in the free instrumental workshops that were held on campus, following the concert. All net concert proceeds went to the Julian Adderley Memorial Scholarship Fund.

Trombonist **Wayne Andre** and trumpeter **Marv Stamm** highlight the **Wilmington (Del.) Music School's** jazz workshop, from June 19-27.

The Board of Directors of the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP) has reelected lyricist **Stanley Adams** as its president.

Pianist **Thelonious Monk** has been honored with a 1976 **Guggenheim Fellowship** in music.

Chuck Mangione has added two new members to his quartet, following the departure of **Gerry Niewood** and **Chip Jackson.** The new Mangionites are **Gregory Herbert**, a saxophonist/flutist formerly associated with **Thad Jones/Mel Lewis** and **Woody Herman**, and **Kim Daragin**, an electric bassist who formerly performed with keyboardist **Monty Alexander.**

The U.C.L.A. Center For Afro-American Studies recently presented a concert as part of a three-day festival in tribute to the late **Julian "Cannonball" Adderley.** Featured musicians included **Nat Adderley, David**

Cleveland, George Duke, Victor Feldman, Louis Hayes, Freddie Hubbard, Sam Jones, Roy McCurdy, Ernie Watts, and Nancy Wilson. Many of these musicians participated in the free instrumental workshops that were held on campus, following the concert. All net concert proceeds went to the Julian Adderley Memorial Scholarship Fund.

Benny Goodman recently received an honorary doctor of fine arts degree from Union College in Schenectady, New York.

The **Las Vegas Jazz Society** held an Easter Doubleheader during the spring holidays. A 2 a.m. concert at the Hacienda featured **Phineas Newborn, Sweets Edison, Jerome Richardson, Jake Hanna,** and others. Later in the day, **Johnny Smith** and **Herb Jeffries** were among those to show at the **Judy Bailey Theater.**

Rutgers U. and Livingston College are collaborating on a jazz lecture series that will bring in noted jazzers to discuss their instruments. Among the speaker/clinicians: **Frank Foster, Budd Johnson, Billy Taylor, Barry Harris, Philly Joe Jones, Freddie Waits, Thad Jones, Quentin Jackson, Ron Carter, Bob Cranshaw, Kenny Burrell, Roland Prince,** and many others. The project director is **Kenny Barron.** Other faculty members include **Billy Harper** and **Larry Ridley.** db



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"Why Grandma, what big eyes you have!" cried Little Red Riding Hood.

"The better to see you with," grinned the Wolf.

"And what big ears you have!" "The better to hear you when it's time to boogie," drooled the Wolf.

"Maybe so," Red Riding Hood

challenged, "but you can't jive me about those teeth!" And ignoring the handsome Woodsman nearby, Red Riding Hood hooked up the Fuzz-Wah Pedal, Phaser and Fender Blender in her basket with her very own axe.

"Grandma says a person's outfit should always include the right accessories," she explained with a mighty chop. And lickety-split, the Wolf burst into song.

"Fender accessories!" he warbled. "You're just a babe in the woods without that extra edge."

"And of course," Red Riding Hood sang out...

"You really sharpen your axe with a Fender!"*

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THE CRUSADERS



Knights Without Jazz

by Lee Underwood

“We don't have a format—we always spring surprises on people. That's why we have been contemporary for 25 years. Tell all the critics I said that.”

If drummer Nesbert “Stix” Hooper sounds somewhat challenging in the above remark, it's because he and the other core-members of the Crusaders—Joe Sample, Wilton Felder, and Wayne Henderson—have waged a constant war against so-called “purist” jazz critics for 25 years.

“We have always been accepted more by the jazz listener than by the jazz establishment,” said keyboardist Joe Sample. “During the '60s, when we still called ourselves the Jazz Crusaders, we were among the top jazz groups as far as the public was concerned. In the public's eye we were up there with Miles Davis, Horace Silver, Dave Brubeck, and Art Blakey. But on a critical level, we were almost totally ignored by the people who set up the criteria by which jazz is evaluated.”

“That's right,” said Wayne Henderson, the group's heavy-set trombonist. “Critical acceptance has never matched our wide popular acceptance. There always seemed to be a kind of underground conspiracy against what we were all about. The critics didn't know where to put us, and that hurt us.”

Wilton Felder, the tall, thin tenor saxophonist, said, “Back in the two-beat dixieland era, everybody played two beats to the measure, and that was acceptable.

“Then the bop thing came along, and everybody played four beats to the measure, and that was cool. The only differences were in the standup vocalists, or maybe the front-line horn player, or a little different voicing in the orchestrations—but everybody played that groove, and that was okay.

“But now, jazz critics say everybody's playing that eighth-note rock groove, and they

put them down for it. Why is it different now than it was then? Why can't what's being done now be just as acceptable as what was being done then? So it's not two-beat, or it's not bebop: so what?”

“Why did jazz critics stop when Dizzy Gillespie played the last chorus of *Salt Peanuts*? Why have they set up the *Cherokee* approach to jazz as the only criterion by which jazz will be evaluated?”

Stix Hooper, the group's primary spokesman, leaned across the sprawling desk of his Sunset Boulevard office and said, “Let's just think about the word ‘jazz’ for a minute. If you put four people in a room, you will receive four entirely different definitions. Even the Oxford Universal Dictionary definition doesn't get it: ‘A kind of music in syncopated time, as played by Negro bands in the U.S. Hence, any syncopated dance music. . . .’

“Now let's take musicians. Dave Brubeck calls himself a jazz musician. Charles Lloyd calls himself a jazz musician. Sun Ra says, ‘I play jazz.’ Jack McDuff said, ‘I play jazz, man.’ Archie Shepp, Duke Ellington. Stan Kenton plays jazz. Shorty Rogers called himself a jazz musician. Charlie Parker. Look at all those diversified styles. And everybody says, ‘I play jazz.’

“Now let's take locale. You go to New York: on the East Side, Bobby Short is the king, baby. You go down into the Village, and you're into Archie Shepp and Sun Ra, the more avant garde movement. They say, ‘I don't know what Bobby Short's doin' over there with those people sippin' out of cocktail glasses. They're sayin' that's jazz over there, but *this* is where it's at.’ Then you go over to Count Basie's Club, and they got an organ trio, and they're funky, they burn: ‘We playin' some jazz, man.’ That's in one city.

“You leave New York and jump all the way to New Orleans, and it's Al Hirt, Pete Foun-

tain: that's jazz, baby. *This* is where it's at. You go to Chicago and you got a heavy organ jazz. You go to Boston, the supposed intellectual center of the U.S., and you got the cerebral approach of people like Jan Hammer, Alan Dawson, Chick Corea. Then you got the old ladies all over the world who say, ‘I'm goin' out and get me some jazz,’ and they go buy Bix Beiderbecke records.

“That's part of the reason why we said that we don't need to carry a banner that doesn't have any meaning.”

Stix, of course, was referring to the fact that the Jazz Crusaders dropped the “Jazz” from their name in 1970. Since that change, every one of their last five albums has reached the Top 40 on the pop charts and Number One on the soul and jazz charts. *Chain Reaction*, their last release to date, hit Number 26 on the pop charts, and, like *Southern Comfort* and *Scratch*, is still selling strongly, approaching gold status. *The Second Crusade* was nominated for a Grammy in 1973, and *Crusaders I* (featuring Larry Carlton's “weeping” guitar on Wilton Felder's hit single, *That's How I Feel*) and *Scratch* both received nominations in 1974.

As individual session men, Wilton, Wayne, Joe, and Stix have played on 150-200 gold albums. They are approaching 30 LPs under their own names, past and present. Their own music has been used extensively as background accompaniment for the Wide World Of Sports, various local and national newscasts, and other television shows.

You've heard their sound. It's a smooth blend of written and improvised music, with Wilton's tenor and Wayne's trombone often playing unison lines, and Joe's piano laying down a rich tapestry of r&b and traditional jazz changes. The whole affair swings with an infectious groove that appeals to black and white audiences alike.

While the music has wide appeal commer-

“Why is it that jazz is synonymous with being broke? Why do you have to be broke and ‘hip’ to play jazz? And if your music becomes commercial, even if you didn't mean it to be, they say you prostituted yourself to reach a commercial audience. . . . Once you have success, you are no longer acceptable to the jazz establishment.”

cially, it has also been scathingly attacked by certain critics: "formulaic," "bland," "shallow," "tedious," and "repetitious" are some of the common salvos. And the Crusaders continue to work long and hard to gain a critical respect that matches their undeniable popular acceptance throughout the Western world.

They hail from Houston, Texas, where even as lads of 11, 12 and 13 they yearned to become professional musicians. Listening to black AM radio of the time (1952-53)—Bobby Blue Bland, B. B. King, "Gatemouth" Brown, Smokey Hall, and Lightnin' Hopkins—the fledgling Crusaders weaned themselves on the blues and r&b.

"That's where the natural feeling came from," said Joe Sample. "From listening to black radio and learning the blues, and getting all those old gospel influences, the old Baptist churches that had tambourines and piano players and choirs."

They met in the school marching band, where Stix played drums, Joe played clarinet, and Wilton played sax. All Stix had was a parade drum until he decided to get a set and "play some other music besides march music. We'd get together and lock ourselves in our room and listen to music and really get into it. We were shuffling the blues; we were 12/8-ing the blues; we were just playing the blues and having fun. We called ourselves the Swingsters."

In an effort to make their music more interesting, they began to embellish and expand on the blues. Then, "a rebel disc jockey down south by the name of Vernon Chambers put together a one-hour jazz show. That was the first time we really got our ears tuned to hear jazz—bop music.

"Because of Vernon, we got turned on to the East Coast jazz (Dizzy Gillespie, Max Roach, Charlie Parker) and to the West Coast jazz (Shorty Rogers, Bud Shank, Chico Hamilton, Stan Kenton.)

"That music was different from the blues, so we started listening to it and developing our own style. We incorporated the refinement and spontaneous improvisation of jazz; but we never lost our earthy roots. We weren't West Coast musicians, and we weren't East Coast musicians. We were Gulf Coast musicians, and we were unique. Our roots were so deep that if we play 'Round Midnight, Straight No Chaser, Bye Bye Blackbird, or any of those other jazz standards, even then they had those funky r&b feelings under them. It was just natural for us to play with those inflections. Little did we know that was going to be a detriment to us later on."

In the early and middle '50s, "the epitome of what a black guy could be was a classy jazz musician. We looked at a Modern Jazz Quartet album cover and saw they were dressed in tuxedos, so we dressed in conservative, lookalike suits and changed our name to the Modern Jazz Sextet."

Adding various bass and horn players along the way (including flutist Hubert Laws at one time), they attended Texas Southern University, where they quickly became a major force on the local scene, playing their own brand of "Gulf Coast Texas r&b/jazz" at all of the proms and clubs.

"We really got involved in the whole jazz frame of playing," said Wilton Felder. "We listened to people like John Coltrane, and we realized it was strong, highly introspective

music. But beyond that, we always wanted to make the music *feel good*.

"We always rebelled against getting up on the stand and playing the music just 'because I'm me and I'm great.' We wanted the people to dig us for what we were, and not say, 'I have to dig 'em because they say they're great, and because what they're doing is beyond my comprehension, so therefore it must be good.'

"First of all, 90% of an audience—even in classical music—are average people who respond to two basic things: the pulsation and the mood that it generates. They can appreciate a guy's technical facility, but they don't know it would have been hipper if he would have altered the change in the third beat, and by so doing would have made himself into a genius. A lot of musicians were into that—that technical approach, that *chops* attitude—so we shied away from it."

Given a tentative offer to record, the "Modern Jazz Sextet" dropped out of school and came to Los Angeles in 1958, "but the bottom was falling out of the West Coast movement," said Stix. "The recording contract never materialized, and jobs were hard to find."

They changed their name to the Night Hawkes and took a gig for a year and a half in an L.A. r&b club called the Tailspin. Their success there led to the New Frontier Lounge in Las Vegas, where they worked for five months. "The money was finally flowing," said Wilton, "but, again, it just wasn't what we wanted to do. Joe had switched from piano to Hammond organ, and we had a whole new

SELECTED CRUSADERS DISCOGRAPHY

THOSE SOUTHERN KNIGHTS—ABC BTSD-6024
SOUTHERN COMFORT—ABC/Blue Thumb 9022
SECOND CRUSADE—ABC/Blue Thumb 7000
SCRATCH—ABC/Blue Thumb 6001
CRUSADERS I—ABC/Blue Thumb 6010
UNsung HEROES—ABC/Blue Thumb 6007
THE YOUNG RABBITS—Blue Note BN-LA530-HZ
TOUGH TALK—Blue Note LA-170-G

routine. It was a show act, complete with choreography. We wanted to get back to the jazz scene."

Dick Bock, president of World Pacific Jazz Records, had decided to alter his predominantly all-white roster of artists. He recorded Les McCann, who became a hit. He then recorded Curtis Amy, a fellow Houstonian who knew of the Modern Jazz Sextet. Curtis recommended the MJS to Bock. "We gave up all our contracts and pulled up stakes in Vegas," said Wayne. "We auditioned for Bock, and that audition turned out to be our first album, *Freedom Sound*. That album was released in August of 1961, and we had become the Jazz Crusaders."

From 1961 to 1969, the Jazz Crusaders released more than 20 albums, went on tours, performed at the major jazz festivals, and became one of the top instrumental groups in the nation. "We realized in 1969 that we had reached the pinnacle of what could happen in jazz," said Stix Hooper. "We were compositionally complex for many years, but that didn't mean anything. Some of those compositions were on a par with all of the jazz standards written throughout those years—*What's Happening, Till All Ends, Fancy Dance, Freedom Sound*—there were a lot of them. But the really hard-core jazz *buffs* still weren't heavy into our music. It was the average person who dug it. There was still that gap between popular and critical acceptance.

"If it was a matter of being *avant garde* . . . we went through that era when it was a matter of getting into a corner and running all up and down the scales, playing every possible mode that could be played, and saying, 'Okay, I learned the Lydian mode, the Mixolydian mode, the Phrygian mode, and man, I'm a *giant!*' Everybody isn't aware that we were involved in that. We can sit in on anybody's stand and get involved. But the critics bypassed that whole era with us, especially between, say, 1961-65.

"During the '60s," continued Stix, "we tended to lean more toward the established forms of so-called jazz, because we wanted the acceptance. It was hip to be accepted. It was hip to be #3 in *down beat*, #2 in *Metronome*, #1 in whatever. I suppose it was the youth in us that wanted that kind of respect from our peers and from the critics. So we watered down some of our true feelings, de-emphasizing our r&b roots and emphasizing the accepted jazz of the day.

"When we wanted to play *Straight No Chaser* with our funky, Southern, down home feeling, we didn't do it, even though it would have been sincere. That Texas r&b feeling wouldn't have been accepted, because it didn't fit the established criteria against which jazz was evaluated.

"I was reading through some old reviews in *down beat* and *Metronome*. Those reviews didn't have anything to do with the sincerity of the artist or with the artist's true intention. Those reviews remained in the confines of, say, classical music—a certain structure, a certain form, a certain pattern, a certain beat, certain chord progressions. The critics waited for that. It was a technical approach, and *only* a technical approach.

"We fell into it, because we wanted to be respected, but after many years we realized that that kind of respect really doesn't mean anything, because music is supposed to be totally sincere. We felt that if we really wanted to search out our r&b roots, we should do it. We took a leave of absence in 1969-70. When we came back, we changed our name to The Crusaders. A lot of people said we changed just to make our music commercial. No. What we really did was become more natural with ourselves. When we took 'Jazz' off our name, we took the shackles off of what was hanging us up. We said, 'To *hell* with it. If I want to play the drums with a *sledge-hammer*. I'm gonna do it!' And Joe said, 'If I want to play a gospel chord out of my life's experience, I'm gonna do it!'

"Money? We can make \$150,000 a year apiece without playing one concert. We wouldn't have to get on one plane, go to one strange town, or listen to a single bebop critic put us down. We could just lay back right here in L.A. and do the studio work and never have to do anything else.

"Why is it that jazz is synonymous with being broke? Why do you have to be broke and 'hip' to play jazz? And if your music becomes commercial, even if you didn't mean it to be, they say you prostituted yourself to reach a commercial audience. I mean, when Brubeck recorded *Take Five*, I don't think he prostituted himself. I think he just felt like he wanted to do *Take Five*. Once you have commercial success, you are no longer acceptable to the jazz establishment.

"Look how the critics raved over Cannonball Adderley's early work. Then he played *Dis Here, Dat Dere, Moanin', Mercy Mercy*, and all those other down home things with the

BITIN' THE GREEN SHIBODA WITH TOM WAITS

by
Marv Hohman

He looks as if he might have stumbled on stage by accident, this refugee from some chump change cafe, decked out in tattered sportcoat and weatherbeaten tweed cap. His white shirt soiled by who knows how many gas-forming bowls of chili, he barely glances up at the audience before launching into a torrid finger-snapping motion. When he tugs the everpresent cigarette from his mouth and starts to deliver the first monologue of the evening, he sounds every bit as deadly as he looks, his menacing rasp testifying to tales of chugged six packs and chain-consumed cartons.

Raconteur extraordinaire, poet laureate of the luncheonette, stripshow aficionado, voyeur of the great American downbeaten—all these terms serve to describe the 25-year-old songwriter, vocalist, sometime keyboardist, and yarnspinner known as Tom Waits. Jive talkin', speed rappin', equipped with an encyclopedic hunk of poetic street slang culled from a panoramic flirtation with the cavalcade of Great American Losers, Waits glories in the seamy world of after hours bars, all night cafes, rundown bus terminals, seedy tattoo parlors. Name the place you'd least like to spend the next week and chances are Waits not only knows about it, but plans to immortalize it in some still half-formed monologue of the future.

Rhythm is his forte, the manic finger-snapping serving as the backdrop to an incessant collage of fantastic characters and bizarre events. It's not an easy brand of music to peg; it owes more to the era of beatnik jazz than it does to rock, with a healthy dose of Tin Pan Alley more than occasionally making its presence felt. The songs never come across the same way twice, as Tom's rambling palaver mutates the arrangements as well as the general aura surrounding them. One night, *Semi-Suite* emerges as the sentimental lament of a truck drivin' widow. On the next, it will somehow be invested with an air of humor and whimsicality. *The Heart Of Saturday Night* can amaze with the sheer power of its imagery one night, and come in the next on the back of an uproarious monologue detailing the weekend antics of a group of dragstrip rowdies.

New images and occurrences are constantly popping up in the songs, phrases Waits hews from the conversations he is eavesdroppingly addicted to—the cliché-ridden, daily-burdened, color-frocked jargon of the working class, a language that runs the gamut of human emotion, lauding the mundane at the expense of the maudlin.

14 □ down beat



HERB NOLAN

"I think you'll probably never go broke underestimating the collective taste and attention span of the American public."

Waits first appeared on the recording scene back in 1973, via a debut album called *Closing Time*. Although few copies of the disc were sold, somebody was evidently listening. The album's opening cut was *Ol' 55*, a song dedicated to a steel Pegasus, well-worn but sturdy, and its highway adventures. Subsequently recorded by Ian Matthews and the Eagles, the tune has already achieved mini-standard status. Other *Closing Time* goodies such as *Rosie* and *Midnight Lullaby* marked Waits as a composer of promise, one who dared to fuse coherent lyrics with inventive melody.

As encouraging as this debut was, it failed to hint at the astonishing accomplishment that emerged on the follow-up LP, *The Heart Of Saturday Night*. Each of the 11 cuts is a small gem, Tom's musical maturity having been perfectly wedded with his private vision of Americana, circa 1970. Many of the songs sounded strangely out of place (much in the sense that the best Randy Newman material does), the tunes evidencing distinct ancestral connections, canvassing the spectrum of American popdom throughout the last century.

New Coat Of Paint and *Depot, Depot* both possess a light-hearted camaraderie, a bluesiness that genuflects back toward a simpler, less high-strung era. *Drunk On The Moon* and *Fumblin' With The Blues* conjure up the image of a citified Hank Williams, a late-night *loup garou* aimlessly cruising the porno book stores and raunch-laden swap shops. *Semi-Suite* and *Please Call Me, Baby* show Waits's compassionate side, the latter featuring one of the more poignant phrases in recent lyricdom: "If I exorcise my devils/my angels may leave too." *Diamonds On My Windshield* hints at what was to come on the third Waits album, *Nighthawks At The Diner*. Accompanied only by throbbing bass and drums, Tom delivers an amphetamine rap that conveys the feel of flying down an interstate during a driving rainstorm, metal-encased jockeys vying for the express lanes, the wind howling like a banshee. A modern day *Hellhound On My Trail*, if you will.

It is this adventurous, speed-spoken *Windshield* cut that prepares the listener for the radical experience of *Nighthawks*. A double album recorded "live" in July of last year, Waits broke new artistic ground on the outing, eliminating the restrictions heretofore imposed on him by studio recording. The entire set pulsates with urban verve, Waits skillfully stitching songs like *Better Off Without A Wife*, *Eggs And Sausage*, and *Big Joe And Phantom*

309 together with convoluted and many-faceted monologues that are themselves small works of art.

The following conversation took place on a blustery and bleak Chicago day, in the shadow of an overhanging elevated train platform and a world-famous tattoo parlor, and over interminable cups of coffee in a dingy round the clock cafe. Obviously, Tom found these surroundings to his liking.

Hohman: Let's start off by talking about *Nighthawks At The Diner*. Your previous two albums didn't really capture the ambience of your stage act. *Nighthawks* was a giant step forward in that it seemed to portray the real, live, onstage Tom Waits.

Waits: Yeah, I'm proud of it. Pete Christlieb played tenor sax on it, he's with the NBC Doc Severinsen orchestra. He also drives the Ontario Motor Speedway; he just plays with Severinsen as more or less of a sideline. Jim Hughart, the bassist, he's got a pedigree all his own. He does studio work in Los Angeles, he's done a lot of road work with Ella Fitzgerald. Bill Goodwin is on drums. He lives in Pocomo, Pennsylvania, so he flew out for the date. I'd seen him before with Mose Allison in New York. Hughart lives in L.A., so does Mike Melvoin (the keyboardist on the album) and Christlieb. I was just trying to find a band that could naturally play what I wanted and not have to teach or tell 'em what to do. I wanted them to stretch out on their own.

Hohman: The first time I saw you perform was back in St. Louis a few years ago, when you were playing Kiel Auditorium as a solo warm-up act for Zappa and the Mothers. Not only were you swamped by the sheer immensity of the hall, with your vocals almost totally inaudible, but the crowd was obviously a rock-oriented set. They were far from being into a lone guy up there singing tales of brokendown autos and barroom troubles. That was a bad scene.

Waits: Aw, man . . . the worst. I bit the green shiboda on that tour with Frank. That wasn't even the worst night, though; if I remember correctly, St. Louis was a snap. I had some real bitches on that tour. We played a lot in the South and ended up on Mothers' Day at midnite in the Philharmonic Hall in New York. That tour was my own decision, though, I wasn't doin' anything at the time and Frank's original opening act had quit. So he was stuck and I volunteered my services. It was like mercy killing, you know—an experiment that turned into a real catastrophe. The cats in his band were easy to get along with, it wasn't their fault. Tom Fowler was in Frank's

band at that time, Bruce Fowler on trombone, Napoleon Murphy Brock, George Duke, Ruth Underwood . . . I went out every evening and proceeded to ruin my evening, and the audience's too, I guess.

Hohman: Your songs all seem to have a rootless, wandering spirit to them. Where are you from?

Waits: I grew up in Whittier, California, lived in Hollywood, went to high school in San Diego, moved back to L.A. after high school. I've been on the road doing clubs for about four years now.

Hohman: Did you start out working in a combo, or were you a solo act right from the beginning?

Waits: I did a few rock things; I was in a group called the Systems. I was rhythm guitar and lead vocalist. We did Link Wray stuff.

Hohman: Link Wray—that's the guy who made all those killer rock instrumentals back in the late '50s, *Rumble*, *Rawhide*, *Comanche*, *The Swag*. . . .

Waits: Yeah, *Rumble* was his first hit. I've been trying to pin down Frank Zappa's guitar style for a long time and I think Link Wray's about the closest I can get. I think Frank's trying to be Link Wray. We did stuff by the Ventures, too, a lot of instrumentals. I finally quit that band; we had a drummer with a harelip and a lead guitar player with a homemade guitar. Actually, there were only three of us, so in a sense we were sort of like pioneers.

Hohman: An early power trio, huh?

Waits: Yeah, that's it. Anyway, then I started writing my own stuff, and that meant going out and getting a lot of different kinds of jobs.

Hohman: What kind of jobs do you mean, music or otherwise? Your songs mention a slew of gigs, everything from pumping gas to flopping pizzas.

Waits: I had a lot of jobs. I worked as a cook and dishwasher and waiter and janitor. I worked in a jewelry store, a hardware store, a cleaners. I drove a delivery truck, an ice cream truck, a cab for awhile. . . .

Hohman: Did you ever have any formal musical training?

Waits: No, nothin'. I never had any real academic stuff, which I think becomes sort of obvious when you notice my pedestrian style.

Hohman: There's an entire persona to your stage act that must cause some people to wonder whether you're really for real, whether you are the same guy offstage as on. Are you really you?

Waits: Well, the last time I checked I was. You see, there has to be a certain amount of

exaggeration in order for a performance to be educational as well as entertaining. I mean I don't normally wear bermuda shorts and white socks and wingtips and read Kahlil Gibran, you know. I'm the closest thing to myself that I know. Does that make any sense?

Hohman: That's surprising; I had you pegged for a *Prophet* freak. If you don't read Gibran, what are some of the things you do read? What literary influences have affected your style?

Waits: Oh, you know, I read a little, not passionately or nothing. I like John D. MacDonald, Damon Runyon, Carson McCullers. I like Charles Bukowski, Hubert Selby, Jr., John Rechy. . . .

Hohman: All the Grove Press gang?

Waits: Yeah, I like all those guys. I like Gregory Corso and Ed Sanders and Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac, Larry McMurtry some of the time.

Hohman: How about Richard Brautigan?

Waits: No, no thank you, uh-uh.

Hohman: When you look at the inside jacket of *Nighthawks* and see the amount of lyrics and monologue, it's almost overwhelming. How do you get all of your stuff down pat—the rapid-fire delivery, the rhythmic sense, the one-liners. . . .

Waits: I don't just sit down at a typewriter and write. I pick up stuff from conversations in bars and cafes and cabs and clubs. The monologue generally comes out of stuff I experiment with onstage.

Hohman: Some guy sitting in front of me during your set the other night said, "Where does he get all those one-liners?" It seems to me I've heard some of them before, yet others seem like they might be your own.

Waits: Yeah, I steal a lot of them from somebody else. There are a lot of tired, old one-liners hangin' around that aren't being used, it all depends on whether you can make 'em palatable for what you're performing and who you're performing for. I like to get a chortle or two from the crowd on occasion. . . .

Hohman: Do you think you'll always rely on the same sources for inspiration? Can you keep hanging around greasy spoons and Greyhound terminals and turning what you see and hear into fresh, vital material?

Waits: What you essentially do is just look around you, take the raw material and forge it into something meaningful. It's as much the way you deal with what you're dealing with as what you choose to write about.

Nighthawks was a result of spending eight months on the road; it's just a lot of travelogues

DAWNBUSTERS JARGON QUIZ

The first five readers to correctly match up the letters with the numbers will win a *Nighthawks At The Diner* LP, plus a bottle of Pepto Bismol.

1. Stacy Adams
 2. Overdrive
 3. eighty-sixed
 4. beehive
 5. Dynaflo
 6. naughahyde
 7. wolf tickets
 8. mice
 9. Thunderbird
 10. Red Sovine
 11. fat man
 12. Phthirus pubis
 13. Ivar Theatre
 14. Napoleon's
 15. deuces and a razor blade
- a. five dollar bill
 - b. subsidiary of vinyl that makes appearance in souped-up roadsters
 - c. greasy, cheesy, pizza palace in National City, Cal.
 - d. musicians slang for violins
 - e. from vaudeville to burlesque in an uneasy twitch
 - f. musical Buick transmission that powered TW's Ol' 55
 - g. highest hand in poker
 - h. trucker magazine famed for giving TW a good record review
 - i. inexpensive beverage loved by plasma bank habitues
 - j. big sole in the ghetto; pimp pedalpushers
 - k. item peddled in after hours clubs; sold by he who hasn't yet caught his lunch
 - l. objet d'art flaunted by middle-aged and celluliten waitresses
 - m. shit out of luck, Buck; shut out on the plate, Nate
 - n. c&w songwriter and spiritual ancestor of C. W. McCall
 - o. what you get when you fish in another man's pond

strung together. When you're on the road doing clubs, it's hard to stay out of the bars in the afternoons. You got time to kill before the show. Then you hang around the club all night and you're up till dawn, so you hang around coffee shops. It stops being somethin' you do—it becomes somethin' you are.

Hohman: Ken Nordine made a series of recordings in the late '50s, something called *Word Jazz*. Are you acquainted with it?

Waits: Oh yeah, I used to listen to that. I was listening to Lord Buckley and Lenny Bruce, too.

Hohman: You obviously didn't hear those guys on the radio. What did you listen to when you were growing up?

Waits: It was mostly the hit parade, that kind of stuff. There are a lot of composers I like: George and Ira Gershwin, Jerome Kern, Johnny Mercer, bless his soul, Cole Porter. . . .

Hohman: That stamps you as somewhat of a throwback these days, more than a little out of sync with the mainstream of the American music scene.

Waits: Well, I do like some of the current people. I like Martin Mull, Randy Newman. . . .

Hohman: That's one element that sets you apart from the majority of contemporary music. Both you and Newman write songs, tunes with a readily comprehensible lyric, and a discernible and oftentimes hummable melody. Certain songs of yours, especially *New Coat Of Paint* and *Drunk On The Moon*, somehow remind me of Hoagy Carmichael, and in a strange way, Hank Williams, and a lot of other '30s and '40s composers as well.

Waits: Another composer I like is Bob Dorough. He wrote *Baltimore Oriole* back in the '50s; nowadays he writes mostly for kid shows. The first time I got hip to him was on an album called *Poetry And Jazz*. John Carradine was on it reading some Dylan Thomas stuff. Dorough did a Ferlinghetti poem, something called *A Dog*, I think.

Hohman: Speaking of contemporary songwriters, one of last year's more depressing events was the unexpected death of Tim Buckley. In many ways, both of you guys work with the same subject matter.

Waits: Yeah, that was a real shock. Yeah, old Tim—I think you'll probably never go broke underestimating the collective taste and attention span of the American public. When it comes down to the hit parade, things are so tighttassed and exclusive that the stuff people have to base their own musical frame of reference on is limited, all except for the people that are curious enough to go out and do their own research. If all you do is listen to the hit parade, man. . . .

Hohman: That's one thing about *Nighthawks*, I can't imagine how the record guys can ever pull a three-minute single out of that album.

Waits: Myself, I like *Eggs And Sausage* and *Spare Parts*, I'd like to hear those as singles.

Hohman: I notice you're always carrying a small notebook around with you.

Waits: Yeah, I'm constantly jottin' things down. I keep the notebook in my pocket. That's why I'm so anxious to get home after a few months on the road, I just dump out all my suitcase full of things I've written. I take down people's conversations in cafes, then I make music over the notes. . . .

Hohman: You *can* write your own music then. Where did you learn to do it?

Waits: I taught myself, primarily so that I 16 □ down beat

could understand what I was trying to do technically on the piano. Usually you write within a framework, however limited you are, then that's as far as you'll go. Instead of learning theory and then learning to play the piano, I learned theory through writing.

Hohman: You pick out your melody on piano rather than guitar?

Waits: Yeah, I don't play much on guitar. Piano's my main instrument.

Hohman: Your voice seems to have grown steadily coarser over the progression of the last three years.

Waits: Yeah, that's due to a certain amount of self-abuse, I guess. . . . the beer, the greasy spoons, Old Gold filters. . . .

Hohman: Where do you live in L.A.?

Waits: I live in a little apartment in Silver Lake. It's almost to downtown L.A., a Mexican-Oriental neighborhood. I hang out in the Food House and the Casino Club, the Mohawk. I play a lot of craps. In fact, there's this club in D.C. where I did a week. After the place closed up one night, all the waiters, the bartenders, and the manager, we all hit this place down the corner and threw craps until dawn. I made a little more than chump change and somehow one cat had turned on the tape and got the whole thing down, taped a real serious crap game, the yelling, everything. That gave me an idea for something to do on an album, I'm going to take a trio in the studio and set 'em up in the corner, hunker down and roll craps and tape the whole thing.

Hohman: Let's go back to *Nighthawks* again. How long did it take to record?

Waits: Two nights. I spent two weeks

WAITS DISCOGRAPHY

CLOSING TIME—Asylum SD 5061
THE HEART OF SATURDAY NIGHT—Asylum 7E-1015
NIGHTHAWKS AT THE DINER—Asylum 7E-2008

rehearsing for it. It was done like a club date, nonstop. We invited 200 people and had booze, tables, chairs. A stripper named Dewanna opened the show. The band played *The Pink Panther* and *Night Train*.

Hohman: How much of your audience do you think is hip to all the slang terminology you use? It seems you've made an exhaustive study of American pop culture, especially the underside of it. There are terms I know that I'm sure most people don't, things like Thunderbird, Stacy Adams, names like Texas Guinan. . . .

Waits: Yeah. Kerouac made a record back in '59 on Hanover Records with Steve Allen and he talked about her. Her famous line was, "Hello, sucker." I use stuff that's an integral part of an American conversation, things we don't even realize until they're broken down. Like restaurant calls, you know, like "Adam and Eve on a log and sink 'em," "shit on a shingle," "eggs blindfolded," "eggs overwhelming," "chicken catastrophe."

Hohman: What do you have planned for the next album?

Waits: It's gonna be called *Pasties And A G String* and it'll dig deeper, even farther into the bowels of I don't know. We got ideas. . . . but it's hard to really talk about it until I get home and work with the concept.

Hohman: What would have happened to your head if *Nighthawks* would have started selling fantastically, like Springsteen's *Born To Run*? Would your outlook have been altered?

Waits: I don't know, man. I can't make no

predictions on anything like that, no. I think I'm my own handicap, so I don't know. I never really expected that to happen.

Hohman: *Nighthawks* did make it to 166 with a bullet on the Billboard charts, I think, that ought to be good enough to keep it out of the cutout racks for awhile.

Waits: Yeah, the bargain bin. . . . That's where I might find an album I been trying to get my hands on, it's called *Blues Haikus*, by Al Cohn and Zoot Sims. Al Cohn used to play strip joints with Lord Buckley. He's an amazing player.

Hohman: Do you think you could ever be really comfortable with anything other than the California life style?

Waits: It's okay, I grew up there, so at least I'm familiar with it.

Hohman: California has often been tagged the home of American crackpot culture, what with the various religious and social phenomena that dot the landscape. That's one thing—though you shoot lots of barbs at various aspects of America, you seldom make reference to religion.

Waits: What're you talkin' about, religious sects or religious sex?

Hohman: I mean the guru stuff.

Waits: Well, I do consult my guru before I do an interview.

Hohman: Who's that, Herb Cohen or Joe Smith?

Waits: "I don't know who the guy in the robe with the towel on his head is, but that guy next to him is Joe Smith." That's the punchline to an old story, one that's so old that I think it might even be a Damon Runyon story.

Hey, did you ever read that Kerouac novel—it's out in Grove—called *Pic*? It was written about '56, published after he died, it was written like a Mark Twain story, all in phonetic black jargon.

Hohman: What about *Mexico City Blues*? Do you know that?

Waits: Yeah, Kerouac had Charlie Parker in there, *The Wheel Of The Quivering Meat Conception*, a lot of real strange ones. I liked that a lot.

Hohman: Have you ever seen any of Lou Reed's poetry? Some of it is very fine, a lot better than the stuff he has put to music.

Waits: No, I haven't. Real good, huh? What do you think of Patti Smith? Her band buries her, on record and on stage, too. She's a merchandisable commodity and she's being marketed as a poet and it just seems that under those circumstances that she should be a lot more concerned about her storytelling and the way she comes across lyrically. A lot of it is just lost.

Hohman: What do you think about that whole genre of music, the deco-rock brigade; Patti Smith, Reed, the Blue Oyster Cult, the Tubes?

Waits: Well, you know, cosmic debris. . . .

Hohman: Do you know who Frank Zappa wrote that song about?

Waits: Yeah, well, I think it was about this little 15-year-old boy wonder from Denver, the little perfect master. He's got a Mercedes and a Maserati and lives in a castle. He's been 15 for about ten years now.

Hohman: I haven't seen you in front of a hostile audience, not since that fiasco with Zappa. Do you get heckled much nowadays? What's the worst club scene you've ever had?

Waits: Heckling, hell, that happens all the time. It's usually affectionate hostility, you know, somebody who really likes what I'm



ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL

Sage Defenders of Western Swing

by Howard Mandel

Chicago's suburban Lincolnwood Hyatt House is no home on the range. But for Asleep At The Wheel, the ten-piece band that's been reenergizing the vital American music known as western swing, it was a home on the road during the hectic week that had them taping a *Soundstage* segment for national PBS broadcast, as well as playing two and three sets an evening at the Quiet Knight.

For all the contrast with the plush-carpeted lobby, the phony-paneled corridors, and the formica coffee shop, it wasn't hard to pick out bandleader-guitarist Ray Benson. The tall, blondish man in the brocade Levis, snap pocket shirt, and cowboy boots was scarfing down the last of a Reuben sandwich. At the cigar stand near the hotel elevator, the saleslady recognized Benson for his good taste as he choose a 90¢ Jamaican smoke.

"That's the best," she approved, "all my doctors smoke those."

Well, yes, in a sense Benson's a doctor; maybe not the kind his parents would have preferred, but nonetheless capable of curing souls of malaise. When the lanky leader strides onstage, surrounded by vocalists Chris O'Connell and Leroy Preston wearing rhythm guitars over their fancy Texas clothes, there's a lightening of one's burdens. When Lucky Oceans picks up the slide bar for his pedal steel guitar and Floyd Domino begins to warm up the boogie woogie piano, there's the itch to tap a foot. Tony Garnier plucks away at his upright bass, Scott Hennige beats out country cum rock rhythms, Linc Davis picks up a riff on his tenor sax—anticipation plays over the audience. When fiddlers Danny Levine and Bill Mabry cut through with some hot licks, it's all whoops and hollers. Soon there's a foot stomping hoedown going on, prescribed by Dr. Benson and administered by Asleep At The Wheel.

It is hard for any music buff to dismiss this medicine, since anyone with an ear is sure to hear some likeable strain in the fine amalgam of styles that blend into Western swing.

"Ain't nothing I like better than hearing a blues, followed by a dixieland tune, followed by a waltz, followed by a swing number, a

hoedown, followed by a Western swing shuffle, two-beat foxtrot, into a blues; it's great!" asserts Benson. And so it is—great to hear Louis Jordan's *Choo Choo Ch' Boogie*, Basie's *Jumpin' At The Woodside*, as well as *Back Home In Indiana* and *Ornithology* played with respect, but not *too* much reverence.

"Our music is folk music," Benson continues, resting his boots on the back of an unoccupied chair. "So is a lot of jazz. As soon as it becomes non-contemporary, it's a folk music. Count Basie's an American folk music because he represents an era of music past; he's a folk artist now. Basie still does it, but it's not the same as his Kansas City band. That's history, right there.

"Innovation, which everybody's put such a premium on in the last ten years—I don't believe in it. Some people can come and innovate and do new things, that's fine, but it's like the first guy they approached to make a record, a New Orleans contemporary of Kid Ory—he wouldn't do it. He never made a record because he thought 'Then everybody will steal my licks, and then what the hell am I?'

"Before records, music was the same, year after year. It changed with the time, for sure, but it was based on what happened ten years before inextricably, as it was passed on from man to man. When the record thing came in as a whole industry, a stamp was put on innovation that made it good, because it will sell, because no one else is doing it. Go-go-go innovation, bang, bang, bang; ok—everything that hasn't been tried gets tried, but then you get to the point where you've tried it, it's done. And as a musician I've got to choose, because what am I going to innovate? Nothing—in terms of complexity, or non-complexity, or in terms of atonality . . . we've had music with atonality, with ten different tonalities, all over the world, thousands of different rhythmic ideas, so who's fooling anybody by saying they're

doing something innovative?"

"It's time we realized what Coltrane was saying: Om, what it is is that music is as it is. And *that* lasts. The blues is that, it's eternal. Everybody at some time, in some place feels that emotion, as it's expressed in that form. The blues runs the gamut of emotions. We've reached the point in music where innovation—what is it? Just play what you've got in your head and that's where it's at."

What sticks in Benson's mind, despite his disclaimer, is the result of an early innovation in folk forms. By adding blues-based big band jazz lines to the hopped up dance ballads of the Southwest during the '20s, Bob Wills created the first fusion music out of the elements of popular but dissimilar styles. Fiddle breakdowns satisfied his audience, Wills and his Texas Playboys never losing their West Texas-Oklahoma roots. But the sophisticated use of horns garnered widespread attention and the rhythm section helped them move, whether the band was heard live in a rented dancehall or at a party over the crystal set. There's not a Nashville musician who doesn't appreciate the innovations of Wills, and his spirit obviously inspires the Wheelsleepers.

"Wills didn't let a lot of boundaries bother him, he just played what he was going to play," says Benson, "and most of it was dance music. The way a lot of people have represented it to me, what Bob had most of was *style*, entertainment style. The Playboys drove on a bus, wore matching cowboy suits, had horns, electric instruments, and drums . . . and were also a string band, with fiddles, guitars, steel guitars, bass. That was a band.

"There wouldn't be no rock 'n roll bands if there hadn't been Bob Wills. There wouldn't have been no country-western bands without Bob Wills. Waylon Jennings, Buddy Holly, the Big Bopper, Roy Orbison, all those people were West Texas kids who grew up listening to Bob Wills, and because of him went out to do rock 'n roll.

"Bob loved the blues, the black music of the day, and that was carried over to those cats who listened to it. Waylon's first record had King Curtis on the saxophone. They had re-

ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL DISCOGRAPHY

ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL—Epic KE-33097

TEXAS GOLD—Capitol ST-11441

COMIN' RIGHT AT YA—United Artists LA 038G

spect for those musicians and their influence.

"He was a white person who emulated the people who were right down there doin' it, making the music, having a different way of life. . . . Bob's three favorite artists were Bessie Smith, it was like love, Emmett Muller, basically a jazz vocalist from the '20s and '30s, and Patsy Clyde, a great, great vocalist. And he just loved dixieland, and New Orleans music. I got a cut of his band from 1939 or sometime, and it sounds just like Fletcher Henderson.

"Bob tried it all and he did it all well. His fiddle players played horn lines—some of his fiddle players doubled on horns, which makes for an extremely versatile band. Three horns or three fiddles at the drop of a hat, or two fiddles and a horn; and that's the whole thing with our kind of band. I'm not trying to be Bob Wills, though if we do a Wills tune I'm going to do it like Bob did it, with our overtones. But I want to be able to do the music I like, and that the band likes. And to do that you've got to have a lot of different instruments, a lot of versatile players, and that's what we've got."

It was six years ago that the Sleepers started putting it together as a country band. Ms. O'Connell, Preston, Oceans, Domino, and Benson have been on all three of their records. Fiddler Levin was there at the beginning, though he left for Austin, Texas while the group stayed on in West Virginia, and returned to it much later, after they'd followed him west. The core of the unit goes back further.

"Danny and me and Lucky all grew up around Philadelphia," says Ray, "and I've known Lucky since I was about five years old. Played in junior high school bands with him, been good friends with him all my life; we met Danny in high school.

"We started out in West Virginia, and after two years we moved to Oakland, California for two and a half years, where we picked up Floyd, Tony, a drummer, and another fiddler.

"We've had other people in the band, too. We went where we wanted to, added and subtracted when we wanted to, never had an easy road, we always hugged it . . . so it took more than wanting to make a buck or wanting to be a star to be a band. We've got an exceptional bunch of players, and almost everybody's in their 20s, so a lot of good years are ahead of them, too."

Fiddler Bill Mabry is a bit older. His face has the tanned, weathered look of a ranch hand or Californian, and he appears to have been born in his jeans, boots, denim shirt, and wide-brimmed hat. He's the kind of musician you expect to meet in the parking lot at a bluegrass festival, jamming on standards with a circle of stringmen in front of a camper.

"When the swing was goin', back in it's heyday, I was too young," Mabry says. "I could only listen to those guys. Then when I came up it was gone, so I had to wait until the younger guys came in." He shows a picture of his grandfather taken in Texas around 1890. "He went to Oklahoma with a five-piece band that had three fiddlers—that's one reason I

never gave it up while the music was in limbo. For a long time I worked one nighters with everybody who came through Sacramento. I even played with the old cowboy, Rex Allen.

"I saw Bob Wills a couple of times. I used to listen to KBOO radio out of Tulsa. John Lee, Bob's brother, and Leon McAuliffe (pedal steel guitarist) broadcast from there. I heard them on a battery radio and got their licks down. Most of those guys I met later on, but they were ten or fifteen years older than me."

Though Benson fronts the band as singer, guitarist, arranger, planner, and gregarious host, the combo isn't totally unilateral. Everyone gets a spot in the light: Preston singing a wistful *Running After Fools*; Chris on a Loretta Lynn song, *You Ain't Woman Enough To Take My Man*; Floyd with a medley that includes a Pinetop Smith number.

"One of us will bring a song or a suggestion," says Benson. "The originals, we work them up a section at a time usually, depending what kind of song it is. Then we put it together, which is sort of the vocalist's chore. Leroy wrote the bridge on *The Letter That Johnny Walker Read*" (the tune which kicks off their *Texas Gold* album with a mariachi fanfare) "and I wrote the middle part. We know each other pretty well, so any song that's not one of our originals—about 60 per cent of our stuff—the people who've already heard it will react to, and the rest will learn a worked-up arrangement. Again, whoever's doing the vocal has something to say about it.

"We don't rehearse a lot; we rehearse for an album, we'll rehearse a month for an album. I call a number on stage and most of us will know it, but we'll play around with it, sing the words—it's better that way because things come out on stage under pressure that wouldn't happen if people weren't sitting there staring at us. We don't do this when we've got 45 minutes to do a show, but if we've got two sets, the second set I'll call a tune we haven't done before. Parts will come up on stage—you listen, and somebody will start a riff or a fill, and we'll follow; when you know people and you follow a riff, all of a sudden you've got three parts and the whole thing worked out. And that's fun. It eliminates the tediousness of rehearsing. We're highly arranged, but none of the parts are written out, and we don't rehearse because we rehearsed so many years as a younger band, and it'll kill you. We all practice individually, and that much singing and playing makes everything so stale."

Besides Wills, the list of influences Benson cites is long and encompassing.

"I'll listen to all music, anything I can get my hands on. I enjoy Wynonie Harris, Roy Brown, Lucky Millinder, Joe Turner. I like a lot of modern jazz, all the bop stuff, love Art Tatum, Benny Goodman, Hank Williams, Merle Haggard, George Jones, Spade Cooley. All the boogie woogie piano players—Fats Waller I love. I like good rock music, what there is of it: Lec Dorsey, all the '50s stuff, Jerry Lee Lewis, I can dig Johnny Cash sometimes—I used to do every song he hid when I

started. Then there's Lefty Frizzell, Loretta Lynn, Willie Nelson. The great people.

"There are so many, and not all of them are huge selling artists. Most are just good musicians, people who plied the trade, did the craft, and were great at it; they had something to say, emotionally.

"That's the whole point of music, which is so nebulous. The very personal reasons I do it come through to me in my music. I know the whole idea is to put it to everybody so when you hear somebody else doing it, even if they're using a different language, you can understand it. So it's an emotional thing.

"And you know, a lot of modern music is totally unemotional. People can do the same licks with synthesizers and things that a guy does on horn, or that a guitarist gets with his fingers moving the string, shaking his ax. But it doesn't have that quality: the synthesizer has absolutely no touch, nothing to do with *you*—it has to do with turning dials, or maybe manipulating slides, and they can't fool me with it.

"Well, maybe on an ensemble they could fool me, but when you solo, when you have something to say . . . I can't get emotional about it. It always sounds like it's coming from a machine rather than from a human, I can almost sense that. It doesn't get me off, it could never make me cry, and that's the thing that people can do.

"I love Tammy Wynette; I can sit there and see her on stage, and she does the whole thing: the way she looks, the way she acts, the way she sings, it just makes me go snap. I can't explain, except that it's an emotional reaction.

"I know better than anybody you don't sit up there night after night and emote on stage the same song you sang a thousand times, but beyond that, there's something there. Because I know I've sung songs a hundred times, a thousand times, ten thousand times, and it *can't* literally mean the same, with the words and all, as it did when we put it together, but somehow the emotions are there, or I couldn't do it at all.

"It's the fact that I have to take a breath, use this muscle and put forth this effort; you can't sing if you are not really physically putting something into it, and when you do it physically, you usually are doing something emotional, too. Horn playing is the same way, and with strings it's the same thing: it's the vibration of your tongue or your fingers. I've got a little more, but I don't use my electric controls too much—up and down volume, but I still use my right hand for volume because the harder you're playing the louder it is, and that's something I like about music. Why do we use an amplified bass, or acoustic guitars? They're a pain in the ass to carry around, but they sound just right, and they make the rhythm. If there are any arguments about what rhythm is, there it is. It's the drum and the bass and the piano and the guitars going chomp, chomp chomp chomp thump thump thump. There ain't no arguing about that, or shouldn't be.

"Oh, it's loud. You don't get two electric instruments together these days without getting loud. You play loud to get tone quality electronically. I like a fuzzy edge to the guitar, and I like a distorted edge with a lot of treble in it, and there's no way you can get that on a low volume, as I found out in over three years in recording studios.

"I tried playing with my amp set at 2 in the studio: onstage I set it at 4½. But then, most people never even use amps the size of what

"The record player is my university—I've got 50 years of the greatest teachers in the world that I can sit right there on the record player . . . I can't read music—well, I can read it but I can't just look at it and know it—so that limits me in a lot of areas. But it frees me up, too."

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*** good, ** fair, * poor

AL DIMEOLA

LAND OF THE MIDNIGHT SUN—Columbia PC 34074: *The Wizard*; *Land Of The Midnight Sun*; *Sarabande From Violin Sonata In B Minor*; *Love Theme From Pictures Of The Sea*; *Suite-Golden Dawn*; *Short Tales Of The Black Forest*.

Personnel: DiMeola, electric, acoustic guitars, vocals, synthesizers, chimes, gong; Stanley Clarke, bass, vocals (tracks 1 and 3); Anthony Jackson, bass (track 2); Jaco Pastorius, bass (track 4); Mingo Lewis; percussion; Steve Gadd, drums (track 1); Lenny White, drums (track 2); Alphonse Mouzon, drums (track 4); Barry Miles, electric piano, synthesizers (tracks 2 and 4); Patty Buyukas, vocals; Chick Corea, acoustic piano, marimba (track 5).

For a solo debut, *Land Of The Midnight Sun* is remarkably free of the self-indulgent tinkertoxy excesses many other coming out parties subject us to. The urge to strut your stuff is hard to discipline; it's your name on the marquee now, and you know the world will be watching and listening.

To DiMeola's credit, the mystical, chanting aura of this work is free from a trendy, gurdicated sense of cosmic dribble. In short, he's not another McLaughlin clone, or a windup doll whose purpose in life is to pursue endless variations of the lost chord. True, he's spacy, yet without the "mystical" drone which was once innovative but now has turned into shock. Where others would challenge their amps to an endurance contest, DiMeola remains lyrical and melodic.

The percussive contributions of Steve Gadd, Lenny White, Mingo Lewis and Al Mouzon lay a propulsive base for Al's long and exploratory solos. They seem to fire up and inspire the young guitarist; Lewis' feverishly beaten congas speed up the picking in a number of different directions. *The Wizard* finds an occasionally busy high-powered minor key rush to the top of the fretboard. On the way, notes are encountered, and squeezed like oranges in a luscious, yet tasteful, amplified ooze.

Return To Forever comrade Lenny White helps Lewis lay the rhythmic underpinning for the more interesting DiMeola work. The title cut features some interesting chicken-picking from a guitarist obviously enjoying his day in the sun. Mouzon replaces White on the three part *Suite-Golden Dawn*, and the cymbal-bashing trapper backs up a funky, repeated intro line.

In all candor, however, these reasons alone would not make this effort stand on its own, for DiMeola's tasteful treatment of volume is a matter of public (RTF) record. What is special, however, is his well-honed sense of mellow sound. True, when playing with Chick, he had to fit the high-volume demands of the group; but on his own Al shows his control down beat

summata skill as composer and arranger in a more quiet setting, both by transcription and composition.

Bach's *Sarabande From Violin Sonata In B Minor* does have a couple of annoying "pops" (he ain't no Christopher Parkening), yet is delivered evocatively. *Short Tales Of The Black Forest*, a duet with Corea, is occasionally frantic yet musically orgasmic in the coda; guitar and ivory in a private serenade. Yet DiMeola's *Love Theme From Pictures Of The Sea* stands alone; a wistful, dream cloud, held aloft on a sustained synthesizer chord, evoking images of that special, joyous night on a deserted ocean beach.

For a guitarist barely in his 20s to discover even a bit of the truth is quite rare. There are sure to be more albums, and more delights, from DiMeola. —shaw

MICHAEL MANTLER/ CARLA BLEY

13 AND 3/4—Watt 3: Side One: 13, for piano and two orchestras, by Michael Mantler; Side Two: 3/4, for piano and orchestra, by Carla Bley.

Personnel: No less than 75 musicians participated in the making of this record. While they all certainly merit mention, a full listing would be too lengthy to fulfill any reasonable purpose.

It only makes sense that Carla Bley and Michael Mantler would each decide to make half an album, similar in concept, and combine the two projects in a single package. They are, after all, adopted twins, creative extensions of one another's imaginative personalities, ideally kindred enough to be the sole principals of their shared record label, Watt. Although the record jacket conveys a shrewd ambiguity about the matter, 13 and 3/4 are two independent orchestral compositions, intended, undoubtedly, as companion pieces. Regardless of whether one takes them separately or jointly, they are the finest examples of progressive large ensemble work written and recorded in America in 1975.

Mantler's is the larger of the projects, conceived for two orchestras and a linking piano, a remarkably innovative, fairly challenging construction. As much as he uses the setting to pit contrary textures and movements against each other, Mantler employs the orchestras as devices for comparing and blending creative attitudes. One grouping, dominant, brassy, and given to circling motifs, captures the open air, grandiose German vision of Wagner and Richard Strauss; the other, responsive, swingy, and shamelessly bold, embodies the city night spirit of Ellington and Mingus. Both depend upon each other for contrast and are centrally connected by Carla Bley's emotional piano excursions, alternately crazed and gentle. Towards the end, all of the disparate elements jell for a prolonged, turbulent climax.

The dichotomous European-American influences abound in Bley's piece as well, but then so does a more apparent sense of warmth. Carla has opted for a cohesive approach, when, at this stage, one would expect her to play havoc with the orchestral format. But then she has always exhibited a fascination with the drone concept, and its inherent tonal gravity possibilities. She casts the piece in a wonderfully perverted waltz time (hence the title, 3/4), actually more of an undercurrent motion than an arbitrary time signature, for various soloists, including Bley, observe their own dictations. Still, this is orderly music, unfolding hypnotically from a simple raindrop motif, evolving into bluesy cascades and state-

ly martial passages. Only once, towards its conclusion, does the music burst of its own inner dynamism, then slips calmly, almost shyly, into its resolution, the restatement of the opening motif.

If it all seems a bit too much on the first listening, stick with it. This is friendly music, the harvest of true community. —gilmore

TOSHIKO AKIYOSHI- LEW TABACKIN

LONG YELLOW ROAD—RCA APLI-1350: *Long Yellow Road*; *The First Night*; *Opus No. Zero*; *Quadrille, Anyone?*; *Children In The Temple Ground*; *Since Perry/Yet Another Year*.

Personnel: Tabackin, Gary Foster (tracks 1, 2, 4, 5, 6), Tom Peterson, Bill Perkins, Joe Roccisano (track 3), Dick Spencer, woodwinds; Bobby Shew, Don Rader, Mike Price, John Madrid (track 1), Stu Blumberg (tracks 2, 3, 5), Lynn Nicholson (tracks 4, 6), trumpets; Charlie Loper, Britt Woodman, Phil Teele, Jim Sawyer (track 1), Bruce Paulson (tracks 2-6), trombones; Akiyoshi, piano; Gene Chericco, bass; Peter Donald (tracks 1, 2, 4, 5), Chuck Flores (tracks 3, 6), drums; Tokuo Kaga (track 5), vocal.

The arrival of the Toshiko Akiyoshi-Lew Tabackin Big Band is one of the most exciting musical events of the year. I first caught the band last November at L.A.'s Hermitage Theater along with several thousand other transfixed music fans. At that time we were transported to magical realms beyond the warm afternoon California sun. Now, *Long Yellow Road* makes available to us all the full range of spells, incantations and conjurations cast by the band.

Toshiko's approach, like Ellington's, is to write solo and ensemble parts tailored for each member's individual strengths. Her woodwind voicings are especially effective. On *Quadrille, Anyone?*, for example, the rich bari intro of Bill Perkins ends with a dramatic upward line which is taken to its lofty summit by Tabackin's piccolo. After the full band roars, excellent solo voyages are taken by Gary Foster on soprano and Tabackin on tenor. At the conclusion of the bands' energetic restatement of the head, Toshiko dramatically closes the curtain with a charmingly understated passage for a quintet of flutes and clarinets.

The most outstanding of the band's many strengths include: Lew Tabackin's eclectic, electric soloing on tenor and flute (Tabackin is simply incredible!); Toshiko's exotic, kaleidoscopic colors and textures; the band's spirited ensemble work; and the fine improvisations of such gifted players as Gary Foster, Bobby Shew and Bill Perkins. All of this, and much more, is available on the trip down the *Long Yellow Road*. —berg

GEORGE BENSON

BREEZIN'—Warner Brothers BS 2919: *Breezin'*; *This Masquerade*; *Six To Four*; *Affirmation*; *So This Is Love*; *Lady*.

Personnel: Benson, guitar; Phil Upchurch, rhythm guitar; Ronnie Foster, electric piano; Moog; Jorge Dalto, Clavinet, piano; Stanley Banks, bass; Harvey Mason, drums; Ralph MacDonald, percussion; unlisted string section.

Hearing George Benson on this album is like watching Marlon Brando in a *Three Stooges* movie. Such is the relationship between the artist and the "art."

It's not that Benson is bad; a musician of his caliber is never bad. He can always get by on craftsmanship. But disco music is not a form designed to bring out a talent of Benson's dimensions. He could have telephoned in this

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22 □ down beat

one. He's like the invincible gunfighter who between the big showdowns passes his time by picking off beer cans at a hundred paces from the hip. The skill is impressive, but misspent.

However it may be, Benson is a versatile musician. There's nothing he hasn't already proved in the company of the finest jazz musicians. So for this outing (his first for Warner's), he has put together a pleasant pop-oriented set with strings and disco overtones. Commercially, the title track, *Breezin'*, is about the strongest, with a catchy melodic hook made sharper by constant repetition. It's also probably the most vapid of the titles. It's likely to get disco play.

A hint of some real tension develops during *Affirmation*, but only in relation to the rest of the LP. Generally the mood is soft, even tempered and workmanlike. Production is sloppy. When five of six titles lack legitimate musical endings (and are just faded), one has to wonder about the amount of thought given this project.

Al Young's annotations heap praise on Benson's performance with Benny Goodman on the recent *World Of John Hammond* special over PBS, and with complete justification. But if that's the George Benson you're after, you won't find him here. Sit back and wait for the Columbia LP Benson recorded with Goodman two weeks after their first encounter on the Hammond show.

—mcdonough

EBERHARD WEBER

YELLOW FIELDS—ECM 1066: *Touch; Sand-Glass; Yellow Fields; Left Lane.*

Personnel: Weber, bass; Charlie Mariano, soprano sax; Sheni Nagaswaram; Rainer Bruninghaus, keyboards; Jon Christensen, drums.

★ ★ ★

In the last few years, a new classical school has taken form in jazz, and while it is neither in reaction nor symmetrically opposed to the current commercial-funk melange, it does provide an interesting balance. By classical, I mean that the elements of a piece's composition are more likely to emerge from European considerations than a blues orientation. Soloists still improvise, but they don't always "swing," nor do they always place a premium on emotional expression. Their music is, more often, for the appreciation of the listener's cerebral and intellectual sensibilities. (Compare this to the American "avant garde" movement, whose principals always emoted and swung, regardless of intellectual bents.)

On his second album, Eberhard Weber emerges as one of the more impressive and resourceful composers of this academy, possessing a sound grasp of aggressive dynamics, as well as passive buoyancy. He can hold you in a floating, calm state of trance, or crash that state with a furious plunge into headlong turbulence. Actually, the key figure in the successful communication of Weber's vision here is not so much Eberhard himself as it is Charlie Mariano, an amazing and evocative saxophonist whose work has gone too long unnoticed and too little praised. His strong flair for an Oriental temperament adds to the meditative quality of *Touch* and *Sand-Glass*, and his keen, oddly angular sense of bop phrasing turns *Yellow Fields* into a powerful and compelling show.

The other musicians, Rainer Bruninghaus and Jon Christensen, exert a warm presence in their performance, but neither has yet developed a startling or unique personality about his instrument. Bruninghaus limits himself to a bland raindrop tone on the electric piano,

which renders his solos as flat exercises; on the acoustic piano, however, he plays broad, oceanic sweeps, and his command rings convincingly. Christensen vacillates between pelt-ing his cymbals and hitting some rock-bottom rhythms, much in the style of DeJohnette and Moses, but with less decisive fervor. And Weber remains largely in the background, taking an occasional sparse but supple solo on his upright electric bass, and leaning forward (in *Left Lane*) to direct and drive the content of Charlie and Rainer's solos.

While Eberhard still has a few problems committing his ideas to vinyl, *Yellow Fields* is undeniably attractive music. The prognosis, at this point, is good.

—gilmore

MERL SAUNDERS

YOU CAN LEAVE YOUR HAT ON—Fantasy F-9503: *You Can Leave Your Hat On; Teasin'; Feel Like Sufferin'; Boogie On Reggae Woman; M.S.; I Feel Like Dynamite; Meet Me in the Morning; Bahia.*

Personnel: Saunders, organ, electric piano, piano, Clavinet, String Ensemble, vocals; Martin Fierro, sax and flute; Arthur Adams, Billy Fender, Chris Hayes, guitar; Tony Saunders, bass; Paul Humphrey, Larry Vann, drums; Shieila Escovedo, congas.

★ 1/2

Saunders is a mediocre keyboard player who happened to get involved with the right people (viz. Jerry Garcia, on some of his tired adventures apart from the Grateful Dead). Hence this, yet another installment of his solo career.

Now Merl was never much of an organist (his main ax) to begin with, but on this album he proves beyond any reasonable doubt that he can't sing worth a damn either. Indeed, his strained efforts on Dylan's *Morning* make even that scrawny hillbilly from Hibbing sound like Caruso in comparison.

To give the man his due, however, he does have good taste. The Randy Newman title song, Wonder's *Boogie*, and King Floyd's *Dynamite* are all great songs but, vocally, Saunders just doesn't have the emotional or technical tools necessary to convince the listener that he's the marvelously raw, high energy lover those songs portray. (The juicy cover illustration of the title cut communicates that persona far more effectively than any of the performances.)

Likewise, Merl'd like a band that, for the most part, grooves and shines, with the optional power to kick you to your feet, with arresting soloists to boot—an amalgam of Booker T. and the M.G.'s and James Brown's great groups. What he's got is a gang of West Coast sessionmeisters (excepting Tony Saunders and the solid funk that flows from his bass). Sorry Merl, this is mighty thin stuff.

—adler

THE BRECKER BROTHERS

BACK TO BACK—Arista AL 4061: *Keep It Steady (Brecker Bump); If You Want To Boogie . . . Forget It; Lovely Lady; Night Flight; Slick Stuff; Dig A Little Deeper; Grease Piece; What Can A Miracle Do; I Love Wastin' Time With You.*

Personnel: Randy Brecker, electric trumpet, flugelhorn; Michael Brecker, tenor sax, flute; Dave Sanborn, alto sax; Don Grolnick, keyboards; Steve Khan, guitar; Christopher Parker, drums; Steve Gadd, drums (tracks 3 and 9); Ralph MacDonald, percussion; Sammy Figueroa, percussion (track 4); Lew Del Gatto, baritone sax (track 2); Dave Friedman, marimba (track 6); Dave Whitman, synthesizer programmer; Luther Vandross, Robin Clark, Diane Sumler, background vocals.

★ ★

If you want the Breckers' band for your next high school sock hop this album won't disappoint you. They prove they can handle the

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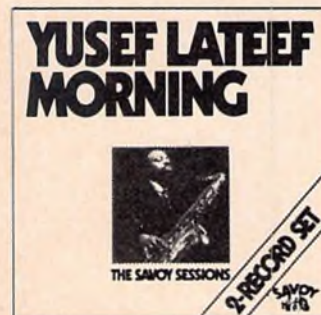
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 floor disc, the Brecker reputation isn't well
 served by such a revisionist product. Though
 their rhythm section is tightness itself and the
 production glistens with studio expertise, only
 a couple numbers offer any musical interest.
 And rockstar-like bassist Lee is a genuinely ir-
 ritating singer, who gargles, tongue clicks, and
 whispers like the sappiest of the Association
 right at the most dramatic moment of an
 electric trumpet ride.

One of the bright spots is Michael Brecker's
Flight, a space-aged instrumental spurred by a
 booming bass and a unison line that comes
 from the Corea/Mahavishnu/Coryell/Cobham
 school of experimentation, mixed with inten-
 tions a la Ventures. Michael is also the only
 player whose solos are fiery.

The vocal cuts are geared for AM radio;
Lovely Lady is heartsick, and *Dig or Wastin'*
 may please the palate of all the saccharine-
 addicted disco dj's. Randy's long break on
Slick shows off his smooth technique before an
 expertly formulated backdrop, and Khan has
 lots of moves, prominent pushing wah-wah
 and feedback despite synthesizer strains clut-
 tering climactic moments.

The album as a whole seems to be an em-
 barrassment: we expect better from such a so-
 phisticated bunch as the Breckers travel with.
 Do they dance to this music? Certainly they
 don't listen to it for amusement, though maybe
 they hope some gumchomper will. —mandel

ERIC KLOSS

BODIES' WARMTH—Muse 5077: *Lady; Joni;*
Bodies' Warmth; Scarborough Fair; Mystique; Headin'
Out.

Personnel: Kloss, alto and soprano sax; Barry
 Miles, acoustic, electric pianos, synthesizer; Vic
 Juris, guitar; Harvie Swartz, electric bass; Terry Sil-
 verlight, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

What strikes most about Eric Kloss is the
 emotional depth of his playing. A consum-
 mate alto player with a strong lyric voice,
 Kloss's music propels itself with such melodic
 feeling that one is drawn right to its core.

Take *Joni* (for Joni Mitchell), for example.
 The piece begins simply with acoustic piano
 and alto, the rhythm is added, then the tension
 begins to build, becoming tighter and tighter
 as Kloss moves up the register of his horn until
 finally he lets it all come down and unwind
 with a single note cry.

The musicians assembled for this date—all
 young—work beautifully with the sightless
 saxophonist; Juris is a guitarist with classical
 influences and formidable technique; Barry
 Miles (Silverlight) and his brother Terry (ac-
 cording to the extensive liner notes he is only
 about a year out of high school) have their
 own band and combine with Swartz to pro-
 duce a strong rhythm section.

Of the six compositions, all but one are
 Eric's. They range from *Lady*, a funky, r&b
 tune, to *Headin' Out*, an avant garde composi-
 tion with a 12 tone influence that does indeed
 head out.

Eric's rendering of Simon and Garfunkel's
Scarborough Fair is a Miles-Kloss duet that ex-
 plores the familiar melody without straying
 too far from the original. This duet concept is

used again in a section of the title tune, suc-
 cessfully mixing a jazz and classical feeling
 with Kloss's fine melody. —nolan

TERJE RYPDAL

ODYSSEY—ECM 1067/68: *Darkness Falls; Mid-*
nite; Adagio; Better Off Without You; Over Birkerot;
Fare Well; Ballade; Rolling Stone.

Personnel: Rypdal, guitar, string ensemble,
 soprano sax; Torbjorn Sunde, trombone; Brynjulf
 Blix, organ; Sveinung Hovensjo, 6 and 4 string Fen-
 der bass; Svein Christiansen, drums.

★ ★ ★ 1/2

Most of Rypdal's musical inspiration seems
 to be in the form of a chordal continuum, an
 often dirge-like attempt at picture painting.
 Immersion into the sound is not unlike soak-
 ing in a whirlpool bath with the door locked;
 there's a kind of magnetic feeling of magical
 hypnosis that catches you in its grasp and
 takes you on a soothing pleasant ride to a kind
 of fantasyland oblivion.

In the great majority of instances, the sus-
 tained, minor key organ notes of Brynjulf
 Blix, the ever-climbing scalar subtleties of
 Rypdal plus the Rudd-like growls and bleats
 of bonist Sunde are captivatingly enrapturing.
 At its frequent best, there are few peers: and
 very few comparative references or juxtaposi-
 tions. *Fare Well* is probably the most out-
 standing example, with the string ensemble
 work of Rypdal underscoring the trombone
 and guitar with a seemingly perpetual note,
 hanging in mid-air.

At frequent points, we are subjected to a
 bevy of melodic anchors, repeated lines in-
 tended to provide both a launching pad for the
 quasi-atonal vagueness and a rhythmic point
 of reference for the more-grounded listener.
 Oftentimes, these devices will be an endlessly
 reiterated bass line, such as Hovensjo's ghost-
 ly, marching cadence on *Midnite*, or his rock-
 like floorboard work on *Rolling Stone*, where
 his timely pulsations help restrain Rypdal,
 who, in a burst of occasional self-indulgence,
 plays footsie with the wah-wah pedal, obvi-
 ously trying for a higher reality.

These intermittent gymnastic exercises are
 one of the very few things keeping this ex-
 traordinary guitarist from the rarified air of
 true artistry. The mixes and textures are
 definitely first rate, yet over the course of a
 lengthy two record set, his main fault is
 revealed: either by choice or necessity, his
 scope and repertoire are limited.

True, there are significant departures: the
 bluesy tones of *Darkness Falls* are definitely
 something new for the Norwegian virtuoso.
 Overall, the playing is perfect, clean, spotless
 and uncommonly flawless. Yet the thought of
 a picker with such a sublime, pristine sense of
 dreamy beauty is sobered by the clinical ex-
 cellence of his work. Spontaneity is often ab-
 sent. Concurrently, one hopes that in the fu-
 ture his attack will be broadened. New vistas
 need to be explored, new frontiers conquered.
 Rypdal's gone far: he's even defined a new,
 highly individualistic approach. However, the
 spaciness is starting to wear a bit thin; he has
 the dexterity of style and imagination to grow
 further. —shaw

CHARLES EARLAND

ODYSSEY—Mercury SRM 1-1049: *Intergalactic*
Love Song; Sons Of The Gods; Cosmic Fever; From My
Heart To Yours; We All Live In The Jungle; Phire;
Journey Of The Soul.

Personnel: Earland, Arp synthesizers, organ, elec-
 tric piano, Clavinet, Echo-plex, background vocals;
 John Abercrombie, guitar (tracks 1, 3, and 7); Robert
 Lowe, guitar (tracks 1, 3, and 7); Jack Turner, guitar

(tracks 2, 4, 5, and 6); Ron Carter, bass (tracks 1, 3, and 7); Billy Colburn, bass (tracks 2, 4, 5, and 6); Abe Speller, drums (tracks 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7); Howard King, drums (tracks 1, 3, and 7); Norman Connors, drums (track 3); Lawrence Killiam, congas and percussion; Hosea Cheo Santos, percussion (tracks 2, 4, 5, and 6); Richard Himmsvark, Arp Odyssey synthesizer (tracks 1, 3, and 7); Arthur Grant, tenor sax (tracks 5 and 6), lead vocal (tracks 2, 5, and 6); Michael Urbaniak, violin (track 3); John Blair, violin (track 7); Randy Brecker, electric trumpet (tracks 3 and 7); Gene Skinner, Vernon Brown, Jr., and Robert Brooks, background vocals (tracks 4, 5, and 6).

★ 1/2

Wait a second! Do you ever read the personnel section above or do you go right to the heart of the review? Well, that list of musicians is a backbreaker to compile, and I would appreciate it if you would take the time to scan over it. Now, undoubtedly you recognize some of those names, respected and talented musical craftsmen all. Maybe, like me, you'll think, "Hmm . . . Earland, Abercrombie, Carter, Urbaniak, Brecker; this looks like hot stuff." Save your expectations. Never have so many joined together to create so little.

Partially, recording technology must take the blame. What little personality Earland's guests were allowed to project in their performances has been buried in an abominable mix. At points on *Odyssey*, ten musicians (including two drummers) play at the same time, yet only Earland's keyboards and, strangely, Jack Turner's guitar solos, penetrate the din. The rest are buried, lost in the nether world of a capricious mixdown, likely the computer variety.

Beyond that, Earland seems caught up in the mid-'70s jazz quandary, whether to fly or to bump, and his reluctance to commit himself either way results in some fairly uninspired music. The better moments, clearly, are the straightforward instrumental tracks, *Intergalactic Love Song*, *Cosmic Fever*, and *Journey Of The Soul*, all rough approximations of the two-chord style of rock modality, fused with genuinely moving Latin-derived rhythms. Pleasant enough stuff, but Earland doesn't know when to stop running engaging motifs into the ground.

The vocal tracks (*Sons Of The Gods*, *We All Live In The Jungle*, and *Phire*) feature saxophonist Arthur Grant's gruff Sly Stone imitations, and are virtual throwaways. Dressed undisguisedly for the disco market, they'll never make it unless somebody bothers to remix them. Discos like it hot, not dull.

Charles Earland once asserted that his music was not of this planet, and maybe once it certifiably embraced that possibility. But don't be fooled by the cosmic fever which grips nearly every title on the album: *Odyssey* is Earland at his most mundane. —gilmore

ARCHIE SHEPP

THERE'S A TRUMPET IN MY SOUL—Arista-Freedom Al 1016: *Suite: There's A Trumpet In My Soul*, *Samba Da Rua*, *Zaid Part One*; *Down In Brazil*; *Suite Part Two: Zaid Part Two*, *It Is The Year Of The Rabbit*, *Zaid Part Three*.

Personnel: Shepp, tenor and soprano saxes; Charles Majid Greenlee, trombone; Ray Draper, tuba; Roy Burrowes, trumpet and flugelhorn; Alden Griggs, trumpet and flugelhorn; Walter Davis, electric piano; David Burrell, piano; Brandon Ross, guitar; James Garrison, bass; Vishnu Wood, bass; Beaver Harris, drums; Nene Defense, percussion; Zahir Batin, percussion; Semanya McCord, vocal (track 1); Bill Willingham, vocal (track 4); Bill Hasson, poetry and recitation (track 7).

★ ★ ★ 1/2

Actually the brass in Shepp's bearing has been somewhat fogged in this lush outing by

echoing acoustics and the interruption of a storm of soul searching for a robust travelogue. Though there's the suspicion of tampering, the saxman's energetic, dramatic ideas ring out strongly; there are depths to be explored as well as surfaces to enjoy.

Semenya's sweet, spiritually sincere opening declamation, nearly severe, is at another end of the spectrum from the sophisticated, nearly decadent ease with which the saxist spins a *Samba*. *Zaid* is the meaty centerpiece, an exercise reminiscent of Doraueschingen concerts of '67. But before the listener gets to the wooly, reed-splintering, raw and howling jazz, Willingham comes on with a deep, rolling invitation to Brazil. The suite is picked up midway through on side two, and roars along until a solitudinous Garrison overdub leads

into the nicely framed poetry. This is disappointing because it appears trombonist Greenlee, *Zaid*'s composer, was robbed of a solo somewhere between the edits.

Each of the keyboard players gets a lengthy solo, Davis scampering on electric piano with little individuality, while Burrell makes the amazing discovery of a pianistic equivalent for his leader's smeared phrases and thereby recharges the blaze with his inspiration. Even through the wash of sound it's possible to hear guitarist Ross, delicate and wiry, stretching nylon strings.

Shepp himself is here, somewhere. The man is among the most complex black classical musicians. He's as bluesy as anyone, a superb colorist, an ambitious composer, a stylist capable of an evergrowing range, and a political

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literate who's frequently tried to fill his music with as much substance as fury. This LP is neither his most accessible nor his most successful, but provides another glimpse into a musical life that may inform the jazz of the '70s as it reformed the music of the '60s. If *Trumpet* doesn't strike a chord, don't dismay—there's always more Shepp to come. —mandel

PHIL WILSON/ RICH MATTESON

THE SOUND OF THE WASP—ASI Records ASI-203; *What Wasp?*; *Hey Man!*; *Hassles*; *Another Balance*; *Red Flannel Hash*; *The Sound Of The Wasp*; *Hills And Valleys*; *Carrob*; *A Breath Of Fresh Air*; *What's Her Name?*; *Kilgore Trout*; *That Wasp*.

Personnel: Wilson, trombone; Matteson, valve trombone, euphonium, tuba; Jack Peterson, guitar; Lyle Mays, piano; Ed Soph, drums; Kirby Stewart, bass.

★ ★ ★ ½

The Sound Of The Wasp is a positive indication of the vitality and health of the collegiate jazz scene. Combining the talents of teachers (Phil Wilson of the New England Conservatory, Rich Matteson of North Texas State, and Jack Peterson who developed Berklee's guitar program), alumni (Ed Soph, NTS) and students (Lyle Mays and Kirby Stewart of NTS), this set radiates a high level of professionalism.

Among the collection of fine charts, my favorites include Peterson's driving up-tempo samba, *Hey Man!*; Matteson's *Hassles*, a bouncy bopish line superimposed over the changes of *Just Friends*; Wilson's mysterious major/minor *Another Balance*; and the taut rock samba, *Kilgore Trout*.

The improvisations are generally first-class. Peterson, whom John Abercrombie credits as a major influence, is an outstanding guitarist; his work in the ballad *A Breath Of Fresh Air* and in *Hey Man!* is excellent. Mays' fiery pianistics highlight *Hey Man!* and the keyboardist's own *Kilgore Trout*. Of the two trombonists, Phil Wilson is by far the most impressive. His three-minute discourse in *The Sound Of The Wasp* forms a cogent but comprehensive lexicon of the trombone's full range of technical possibilities. In contrast, Matteson's valve bone work sounds forced. While Matteson is a good player, he seldom attains Wilson's level of drive, swing and daring.

The cohesive ensemble playing and the rhythmic interactions of Mays, Stewart and Soph are the other elements, which along with the compositions and improvisations, make this disc a solid effort. —berg

PATRICE RUSHEN

BEFORE THE DAWN—Prestige P 10098; *Kick-in' Back*; *What's The Story*; *Jubilation*; *Before The Dawn*; *Razzia*.

Personnel: Rushen, keyboards, synthesizers, tambourine, and cabasa; Josie James, vocal (track 2); Oscar Brashear, trumpet and flugelhorn; George Bohannon trombone; Hubert Laws, flute (tracks 3 and 4); Hadley Caliman, tenor sax (tracks 1 and 2); Lee Ritenour, guitar; Charles Mecks, bass; Tony Dumas, bass (track 3); Ndugu, drums (tracks 1 and 2); Harvey Mason, drums (tracks 3, 4, and 5); Kenneth Nash, percussion (tracks 3 and 4); Nate Alfred, percussion (tracks 1, 2, and 5).

★ ★ ★ ★

The last year or so has been an uncommonly kind period for ascendant stars of all sorts, but few of them have been able to eclipse the luminaries that shone before them. Which do you prefer, a new Dylan, or a new Coltrane? There are plenty of both to choose from. The growing popularity and acceptance of a de-

erving talent such as Patrice Rushen bears out the maxim that everything that rises must converge. Or, more simply, Patrice was in the right place at the right time. A young (21 years) female, Rushen plays keyboards dynamically, and fuses her approach to the instrument with a bright eclectic sense of contemporary jazz forms. The critics, and to some degree the buying public, have proved receptive to just such a phenomenon. While Patrice has hardly received the groundswell attention and promotion that might endanger her long-term acceptance, her first album, *Prelude*, received unanimous acclaim, and as a result she did too.

From the evidence of the new *Before The Dawn*, it would appear that Patrice can handle the praise. *Dawn* is as musically solid as its predecessor. Patrice sounds more assertive here as a group leader, plus a bit more interested in establishing her commercial credentials.

That commercial interest vibrates appealingly in the opening numbers, *Kickin' Back*, with its indebtedness to Hancock, and *What's The Story*, a vocal strut with Josie James doing the honors. On the remaining less-confined-to-ceremonious-cliche-numbers, Rushen displays a striking sense of personality on every instrument she touches, whether it be acoustic or electronic. This sense, combined with a mature approach to dynamics, is what renders Rushen such a refreshing force in the current jazz-rock amalgam muddle. Consider the closing piece, *Razzia*, a comparatively long, dramatic composition that never indulges in the kind of overstatement that Hancock and Corea are occasionally given to. Patrice's modesty underlines the other musicians' statements in an effective and intelligent fashion, without sacrificing her own profile. One suspects, however, that she does tend to restrain her adventurous proclivities in the interest of keeping her general audience comfortable. But Patrice has plenty of time. Her wings are young.

—gilmore

JOHN PAYNE

BEDTIME STORIES—Bromfield BR-2: *Snow*; *Fancy Free*; *Song For Love*; *African Brother*; *Scenes From A Journey*; *Thelonious Funk*; *Rush*.

Personnel: Payne, tenor and soprano sax, flute; Louis Levin, electric and acoustic piano, Clavinet, synthesizer; Scott Lee, electric and acoustic bass; Gerald Murphy, drums; Les Lumley, congas; Robert Kuumba, cow bell.

John Payne's music consists of an eclectic amalgam of rock, pop and neo-bop. Played with conviction and energy, the music reflects a high level of cohesion which suggests a working group with a fair measure of experience.

The dominant force is Payne. His Trane-inflected soprano is especially effective. On Donald Byrd's *Fancy Free*, for instance, Payne's lyrical and hard-driving sides are both effectively juxtaposed. Payne's poignant flute work on Levin's tender ballad, *Song For Love*, is also impressive. His tenor work, which seems to reflect the influence of Jr. Walker, King Curtis and Plas Johnson, is, however, unconvincing. It tends to be too cautious and tentative.

Louis Levin is the other prominent voice in the band. His writing—*Snow*, *Song For Love*, and *African Brother*—and electric and acoustic work are solid. Strong, supple rhythmic support is provided by bassist Scott Lee and drummer Gerald Murphy.

—berg

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OLD WINE—NEW BOTTLES

ANDREW HILL

ONE FOR ONE—Blue Note BN-LA459-H2: *One For One; Diddy Wah; Without Malice; Poinsettia; Illusion; Fragments; Euterpe; Erato; Pax; Eris; Calliope.*

Personnel: Hill, piano. Tracks 1-3: Bennie Maupin, Pat Patrick, woodwinds; Charles Tolliver, trumpet; Ron Carter, bass; Ben Riley, drums. Tracks 4-6: Maupin, woodwinds; Carter, bass; Freddie Waits, drums. Tracks 7-11: Joe Henderson, tenor sax; Freddie Hubbard, trumpet; Richard Davis, bass; Joe Chambers, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

SAM RIVERS

INVOLUTION—Blue Note BN-LA453-H2: *Pre-cis; Paean; Effusive Melange; Involution; Afflatus; Helix; Violence; Pain; Illusion; Hope; Lust; Desire.*

Personnel: Rivers, tenor and soprano sax, flute. Tracks 1-6: James Spaulding, woodwinds; Donald Byrd, trumpet; Julian Priester, trombone; Cecil McBee, bass; Steve Ellington, drums. Tracks 7-12: Andrew Hill, piano; Walter Booker, bass; J. C. Moses, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The last couple of years have seen an enormous increase in reissues, as major labels have sought to benefit from a younger generation's veneration for influential artists they may have missed. What especially distinguishes the Blue Note reissue series, though, are the several albums for which that heading is a misnomer. Producer Michael Cuscuna has unearthed a number of long-forgotten sessions which were never issues *once*, let alone reissued here, and the series' "twofer" format has been utilized to at last reveal these unreleased treasures.

Three of the four discs here were recorded in the latter '60s under the aegis of Andrew Hill. For most of this decade, Hill's highly personal piano and subtle, nervous compositions have been absent from the jazz scene, but in the last two years he has recorded for two labels in a variety of contexts. If the slow fade on electric music continues, the time and place may be right for Hill to once again emerge as an important creative leader for modern jazz.

He was certainly that during the '60s, although his music was, comparatively, unknown. His Blue Note dates established him as a composer of taut, challenging vehicles and as a quirky, economical and understated pianist whose asymmetrical use of space and crafty retooling of a small motif extended certain stylistic aspects of Mal Waldron. A good illustration of this is the thinking-man's funk of *Diddy Wah*, where the typically short piano solo is nearly empty of "ideas," preferring to dissect a single riff with the dual scalpels of space and melodic inversion.

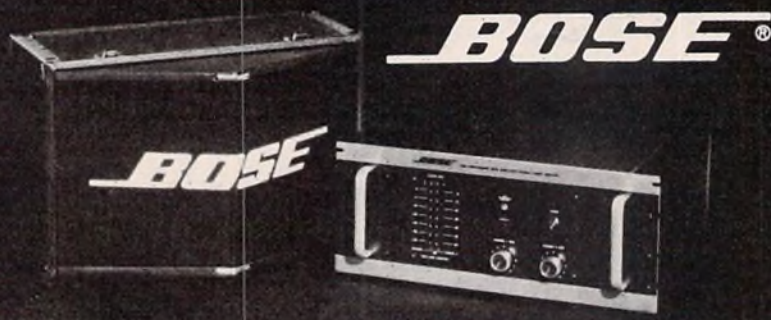
In addition to offering priceless material for Hill aficionados, *One For One* is an excellent introduction to Hill's music. It comprises three sessions of divergent goals and makeup, a panorama of the pianist's musical interests. Side one, sporting the front line of Maupin, Patrick and Tolliver, is from 1970 and forms an interesting counterpoint to other developments of that time. Maupin's bass clarinet on *Diddy Wah* has echoes of his participation in Miles Davis' *Bitches Brew*; Tolliver's solo on

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the same tune makes use of the three-note phrase Miles initialed as his own on *In A Silent Way*.

Here and on sides three and four—featuring Henderson and Hubbard in a 1965 session—Hill proves himself an exquisite small-group arranger: the horns dance and weave on the heads, and bracket and underscore the piano solos with aggressive support.

Side two (1969) features Hill's quartet in conjunction with a string quartet, directed by Kermit Moore. As expected, Hill's writing for strings is like nothing else; it is thin, often anemic, but correspondingly gentle and fragile, even at the faster tempos. Like his own piano work, the lines often stem from no clear melodic pulse; instead, they skirt around the always strongly defined rhythms in a gratifying off-balance.

The pianist's style at this time was strongly disposed towards this nervousness, the phrasing often tenuous if not exactly unsure. But his earlier dates, like his recent ones, literally explode with authority and assurance at the keyboard. Sides three and four, with another fortuitous rhythm team—Richard Davis and Joe Chambers—is tough and lean, yet full-bodied and strongly swinging. *Euterpe* is busy as hell, with Hubbard a raging fire-eater and Henderson's grounding in Coltrane never more evident: he's ordered and brash. Hill's accompaniments, as throughout all his work, are peerless. His compositional sense of structure is a pervasive force working in everyone's solos, and his solos are expansive and bold, reveling in long lines that retain his essential thrift. This is a giant session bridging the hard-bop mainstream and the edges of the avant-garde, and an important addition to the recorded legacy of all concerned.

Only six months later, Hill was leading a session that trod that same bridge from the other side. Although it was Hill's date, the six emotion-titled pieces that resulted have been released on Sam Rivers' *Involution*—Rivers played as part of Hill's quartet—along with a major and truly remarkable sextet session Rivers led in 1967.

Again, Hill's playing at this time was forcefully directed. His compositions, though, stem from different sources than earlier: *Lust And Desire* are less lyrical in any traditional sense, and the aptly-named *Violence* is an uncompromised avant-garde performance owing at least something to Cecil Taylor. On the faster pieces, Hill accompanies sternly with great crashing chords; on slower tunes, the chords muse quietly, with undiminished energy, behind the main event.

And the main event on most of the tracks is Sam Rivers. Virtually unrecognized in 1966, this material thrusts his individuality under our noses. For even then he was one of the New Music's most fascinating players, ranging freely with intense imagination and order. Restricted to tenor for this date, his solo on *Violence* slashes across the liberated compositional landscape, flycasting emotionally in a sustained bout with "cliche-free" improvisation. On *Illusion*—which is also presented, quite differently, on *One For One*—Rivers opens with a solid riff-idea that is organically enlarged, Rollins-like, into a strong-willed solo of resilience. And on *Hope*, he sings heartily, at first yearning on the slow introduction and then determined when the tempo picks up. The quartet was rounded out by Walter Booker, whose bass is an important anchor and empathetic melodic contributor,

and J. C. Moses, adapting himself to the shifting moods.

A year and ten days after the Hill recording, Rivers led Spaulding, Byrd, Priestler, McCall and Ellington in a session that should be ranked among the key events in Rivers' career. Preceding his startling big band LP *Crystals* by some seven years, Rivers' linear compositional style is shown here in full, if miniaturized, bloom. The resulting tracks offer stupendous charts and clear, adventurous performances by a group that deserved to be recorded more than once.

Rivers' solos are the least constricted—actually, only drummer Ellington was as far along as Rivers at this time—but they avoid all the avant garde pitfalls. Foreshadowing his later recordings, Rivers puts in appear-

ances on tenor, soprano and flute, erupting from the ensembles or after a sideman's statement with his clear, mature perspective on musical freedom.

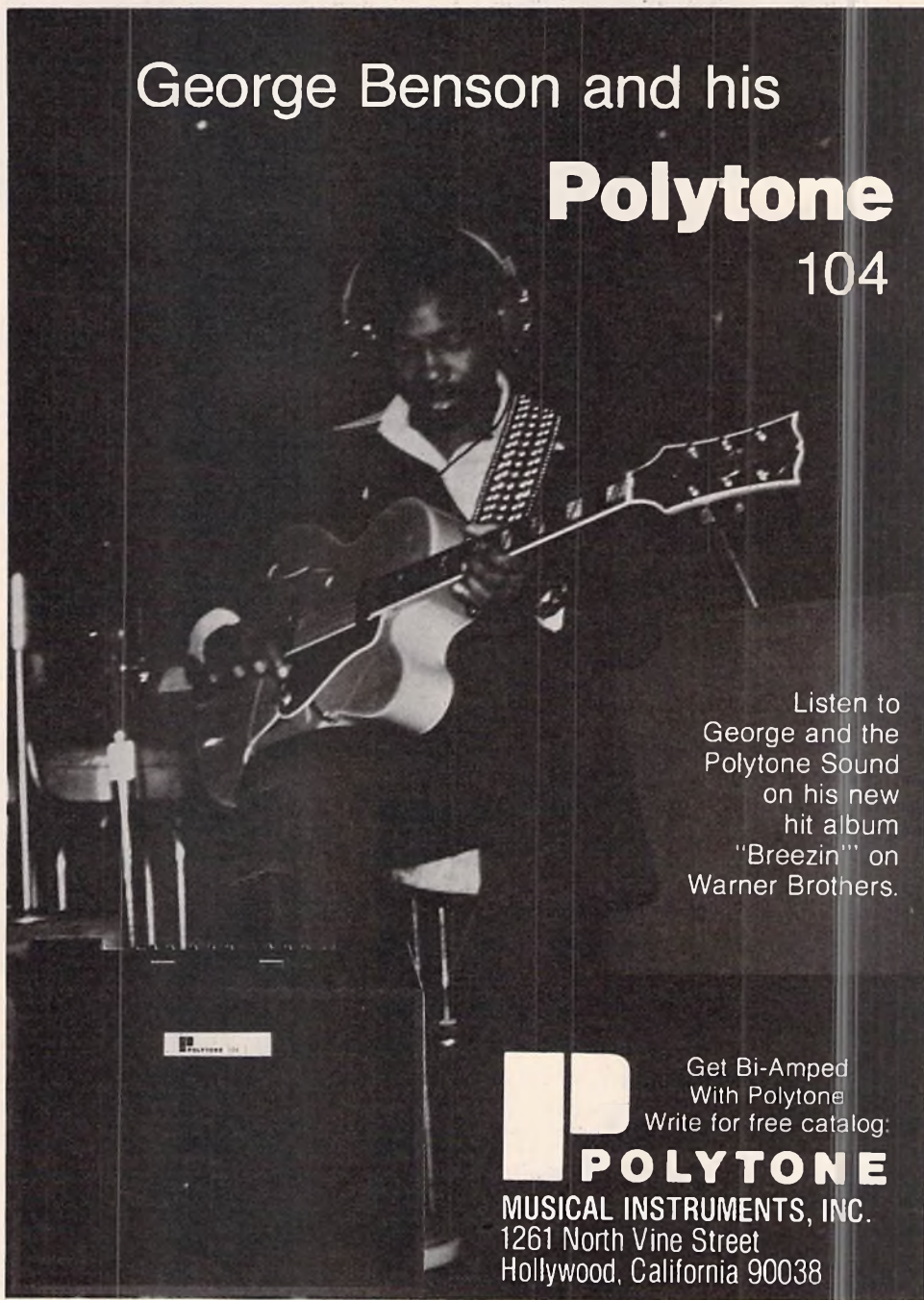
The contributions of all are vital and strong. Cecil McBee is the axis on which the music revolves; Ellington's choice of coloristic figures and multi-metered solos are outstanding. Priestler and Byrd acquit themselves well, but Spaulding will probably be the underrated participant; his playing, both tonally and conceptually, is the unifying factor linking Rivers' advanced precepts and the older style of the brass men. Rivers had taken the "little big band" format and given it a unique, wrenching twist on this session. It is a most significant milestone in his brilliant career.

—tesser

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BLINDFOLD TEST



Sarah Vaughan

by leonard feather

At the time of Sarah Vaughan's last Blindfold Test (db 1/9/69) she was in the middle of what turned out to be a five-year hiatus in her recording career. Eventually she returned to the LP scene for a series of Mainstream albums. That association ended a while back and Sass has recently signed with Atlantic.

Regardless of her affiliations or record sales, she has continued to impress her contemporaries as a nonpareil artist who, as Duke Ellington would have put it, is beyond category. Though she came up in the bebop era, is a proficient pianist, and was frequently associated with Gillespie and Parker, there is no doubt that had she been trained for it, she could have made a superb opera singer. (The Leontyne Price track was included in this test at the suggestion of her husband, Marshall Fisher, who had tipped me off that this was her favorite singer.)

Though she is singing more exquisitely than ever, she still has not won a Grammy Award; such honors are reserved for the likes of Bette Midler and Olivia Newton-John. Sarah was given no information about the records played.

1. ESTHER SATTERFIELD. *Lift Every Voice And Sing* (from *Once I Loved*, Sagoma). Satterfield, vocal; Chuck Mangione, arranger.

You know, that song is, to me, like *The Star Spangled Banner* is. I really don't appreciate it like that. Period! I have nothing else to say (laughs) ... I really don't. I never heard it done like that before! We used to sing it in church ... you know? I don't like *nothing* about it. I'm sorry. I really don't.

I guess the middle must have been too high, or something, so they changed key, and then when they got back to the last part they went back to the original key again ... (sighs) ... I don't know.

Feather: Just no message?

Vaughan: Well, no. Who was it?

Feather: No stars?

Vaughan: Well, who was it?

Feather: One star? Half a star?

Vaughan: Well, if you can gather from what I said, I'll let you give it the stars (laughs).

Feather: It was Esther Satterfield. You're shocked?

Vaughan: I am, because she doesn't sound like that with Chuck Mangione, does she? I like some of her stuff. I wonder why she did it like that, or, rather, I wonder who arranged it that way.

2. LINDA HOPKINS. *You've Been A Good Old Wagon* (from *Me And Bessie*, Columbia). Hopkins, vocal.

I know who it is but I just can't think of her name, because I recorded one of her songs, and if I told you the song, then you'd know I know who she is. It was *Blues ... Blues ... mmmmm*. Something like *Blues In The Night*, or something. Anyhow, I would say that's excellent, because I love the way she sings. I just can't think of her name, but I have the album. I'm not really up on my blues singers, you know. I just know Bessie ... and Dinah. But she attacks the blues—she just gets right into it—hits it hard and tells it like it is. And that's it. I'd give it

five stars, because you know there's so few people, I think, that can sing the blues. I mean, there's a lot of people who sing the blues, but there's so few I think who can *sing* the blues—and I think she can sing the blues, in fact, I know she can sing, period! ... I remember the name: Linda Hopkins!

3. PATTY WEAVER. *Spring Will Be A Little Late This Year* (from *As Time Goes By*, RE/SE). Weaver, vocal; Mundell Lowe, arranger; Gerry Vinci, violin.

That was nice. I don't know who it is. I've heard the voice before, or maybe I haven't. Sounds like I have. The song is beautiful, and I think I recorded that some time ago. Yes, I liked the sound, the phrasing. A baby-type sound, but it's nice. The arrangement is beautiful. Who is the fiddle player? Who's playing the violin on the end? It's beautiful. I'd give it three and a half stars. The arranger I'd give five stars.

4. FLORA PURIM. *San Francisco River* (from *Open Your Eyes, You Can Fly*, Milestone). Purim, vocal; Purim, Neville Potter, composers; Airtio, percussion.

Nice. I don't know who it is. It has that South American flavor, which is always good. If I was rich I'd have me a home in South America. Now you know I'm not rich, because I don't have a home in South America. I love South America. Rio, anyway.

Feather: Does she sound like Rio to you?

Vaughan: Yeah, it sort of has that straight tone—no vibrato. Was that both her, or someone else? She dubbed the other part? That rhythm was just no end! I'd give her three stars. I've heard ... I have a lot of records at home which, everytime I go to South America I bring back a bunch ... and I've heard ... I hate to say, better. I'd give it three stars.

Feather: It was Flora Purim.

Vaughan: You know, that's the first time I've actually sat and heard her, and I've met her—just met her recently. In fact she was backstage at the club to see me when I played the Roxy. Now I'm glad I've heard her.

5. LEONTYNE PRICE. *Un Bel Di* (from *Highlights From Madame Butterfly*, RCA).

It must be Leontyne Price. Got to be. I'm going to see her, I think. (To her husband) Have you got the tickets? The last time I saw her she was by herself, just the piano, and the page turner, who is the most important person up there. I've never seen a concert like that before, but this time she's going to be with the Philharmonic, I think. That's my favorite singer. But a person like that, you just listen to ... and wish you could. Five stars.

Feather: Did you never even start to sing opera?

Vaughan: No, I just always thought of it. I don't even think my mother knew. But now I've been doing things with the symphonies, and I feel as though I am. I heard an album of Barbra Streisand doing classical. I liked it. She must have been doing this for years, because ... the language, it's hard. She put a lot of time in it, I'm sure.

Feather: Well, you could do that, I'm sure.

Vaughan: Yeah, English. I don't know any foreign languages too well. I could do it if somebody was there coaching me. My favorite language is Portuguese.

Well, that's five stars. Whatever you play of hers is five stars.

6. CAROLYN FRANKLIN. *From The Bottom Of My Heart* (from *If You Want Me*, RCA). Franklin, vocal, composer; Wade Marcus, arranger, conductor.

Is that the girl with the Staple Singers? I'm not sure whether she's ever made one by herself, so I really don't know who it is. Pretty song. I don't think it's Gladys Knight. You don't ever hear Gladys Knight without the Pips, do you? The arrangement's not bad. Could have been Gene Page, but I don't know. I'd give it two and a half stars.

7. MARIA MULDAUR. *Squeeze Me* (from *Waitress In A Donut Shop*, Warner Bros.). Muldaur, vocal; Benny Carter, arranger, conductor.

I can't think of her name. I think I met her at Earl Palmer's house. What's the song she recorded that I like ... the first song I think she did. It was a hit. *Midnight At The Oasis*, that's it.

Feather: You recognized the arranger before you recognized the singer.

Vaughan: Well, yes. Benny Carter. He's just one of the greatest musicians, arrangers, and persons.

I've heard the song. I know it's an old, old song, but I never heard it done like this. She reminds me of the singer who was married to Red Norvo. Mildred Bailey. Yeah, I liked that. I'd give it four stars.

8. RAHSAAN ROLAND KIRK. *Giant Steps* (from *The Return Of The 5000 Lb. Man*, Warner Bros.). Kirk, tenor; John Coltrane, composer; Betty Neals, lyrics; Frank Foster, arranger.

Well, there are probably some very good musicians on there, but it didn't do nothin' to me. I don't know. I guess I heard it, but didn't. Let's put it like that. I don't know the tune; that's the first time I ever heard it.

Feather: It's an old Coltrane tune, *Giant Steps*. But it's not Coltrane playing.

Vaughan: Oh, what a pity. Gee, I'm glad it wasn't him and I didn't recognize him. I'd give it one star. I didn't like the harmony that the vocal group—I don't think it was their fault; I guess it was whoever wrote it.

Profile

THE FOWLER BROTHERS

by lee underwood

Even if you're not a long-haired musician who digs Duke Ellington, Frank Zappa, Johnny Griffin, Igor Stravinsky, Jimi Hendrix, John Coltrane, Aretha Franklin, Eric Dolphy, Mahavishnu, and Chick Corea, Salt Lake City is a peculiar place in which to grow up.

On the one hand, it's an odd, out of the way, "pass-through" town that perches on the ledge of a giant saltwater lake in the middle of what seems to be an endless wasteland of flat and rocky desert country. It is a close-knit, clean-cut community dominated by Mormon Puritanism.

On the other hand, Salt Lake boasts the world-famous Tabernacle Choir, Brigham Young University, and the University of Utah. The last of these included, for a while, a full-scale jazz course under the direction of Dr. William Fowler. And the city itself heartily supports classical music and ballet.

But not only did Dr. Fowler bring jazz to Salt Lake; he raised five musical sons who today constitute The Fowler Brothers' Airpocket.

Bruce Fowler, 28, is widely known as one of Frank Zappa's former trombonists, and last year's TDWR Critics Poll winner on the instrument. When profiled in *down beat* (December, '74), he said he blends the compositional aspects of classical music with the improvisational elements of jazz. He also said he looked forward to forming a group with his brothers. Airpocket is the resulting group, an extension of an earlier Fowler Brothers aggregation, Blind Melon Chitlin.

Bruce writes much of the material for Airpocket and plays trombone. Steve, 26, also writes, and plays flute and alto sax. Bassist-violinist Tom, 24, writes lyrics, and also plays with Jean-Luc Ponty. Walt, 21, plays (self-taught) trumpet, used to work with Zappa, and is presently touring with Billy Cobham. Ed, the baby of the group, at 18, plays piano, bass, and drums.

All of the brothers, except Ed—who attends the Denver branch of the University of Colorado—live in Los Angeles, where they are now busily turning Airpocket into a viable jazz/rock/classical group.

"When we were kids," said Steve, "we often felt excluded from the Mormon social fabric. That left-out feeling was strong. The teachers would ask you which ward you were in, or they would make you recite the Lord's Prayer to get a grade in class."

"Yeah," said Tom, who enjoys wiggling his eyebrows like Groucho Marx when he makes a point. "That was strange. I mean, it violated all of the elements of the constitution."

"They just couldn't conceive of the fact that you might not be a Mormon," Bruce said, "especially if you were a good student."

For all of its prudery, however, Salt Lake experienced a burgeoning of the arts some six or seven years ago. "It was one of the strongest areas of hippie drug culture I've ever seen," said Walt. "There was a tremendous flowering of the arts, and people from all over the country came to live there and create."

Dr. Fowler, presently a professor at the University of Colorado and education editor for *down beat*, encouraged each of his five children to become involved with music; perhaps surprisingly, each one of them did.

"Dad used to make us practice an hour a day," recalled Bruce, "which was really the only thing that he would ever make us do. If we missed a few days, he might make us practice three hours to make up for it."

"But then it clicked. When it did, one hour a day wasn't enough for us. We began generating music ourselves, and Dad would feed us by playing Duke Ellington and Beethoven and other heavy people. It started to snowball."

Tom said, "It got to the place where we didn't think of time as a factor any more. We began to

base things just on how much we got done, how much we improved."

The Brothers transcribed Bach pieces and played them at church, using trombone, flute, trumpet, and violin. Soon, young Ed was old enough to join them, and they formed their first major group, Blind Melon Chitlin, lifting the name from a Cheech & Chong LP.

They wrote about 50 tunes, and for three years, said Steve, "we put on our own concerts about once a month. We couldn't play the clubs, because we were too young, and we were musically too original for Salt Lake. So we did it ourselves, developing a nice little following of maybe 400-500 people."

Blind Melon became the foundation for Airpocket. "We used a lot of jazz," said Bruce, "some free playing, some jazz/rock arrangements, and a few weird, complex electronic compositions that I wrote."

In early 1975, the late Oliver Nelson asked them



Fowlers All: Tom, Steve, and Ed above. Walt and Bruce below.

to record an LP for the Japanese label, East Wind. "I met them back in maybe 1970 when I was a guest soloist and judge at the University of Utah music festival," said Oliver. "When I first heard them, I couldn't believe it. They were very, very young, but every time they played they caused a sensation. I wanted very much to record them."

Record them he did, but the Brothers are not fully satisfied with *Fly On* (East Wind, EW-8015). "Oliver just co-produced us," Steve explained, "and he didn't hear the music beforehand. He liked us from before, and he knew we were good, but he didn't really have enough time to do the kind of job we would have liked."

"We did eight charts in only four hours," said Bruce. "It was all live, no overdubs, and mostly first takes. We don't know about sales, because Oliver died the day we were supposed to get the albums. We're in touch with the right people now, but we haven't found out anything yet."

"We don't plan to release that album in the United States," said Walt. "We'd rather redo some of the things and add new material."

Bruce explained that he avoids the one-chord funk syndrome so prevalent in commercial music today. "I've done that drone thing too many times. It's just not interesting any more. My experiences with Zappa definitely have had an influence on my writing. I learned a lot of those rhythmic things from playing his music. Before joining Zappa's group, I never had to play that stuff. I was already into a few weird things before I met him, but I've been writing steadily since he inspired me. I'm still just learning about it, and that takes time, especially if you're trying to come up with some new things. I don't want my music to be just random. I want it to have a motion and some real feeling."

"We'll have some free sections where there isn't any time. Or we'll start out with a trio—bass,

trombone, flute—and then there might be a horn thing with no rhythm section. Then the rhythm section will come in, so the piece doesn't stay in the same bag. We try to keep a lot of variety. We like to cook and funk-out too."

"I'll write some really complicated, difficult material, both rhythmically and harmonically. We'll go from that extreme to really simple, pretty pieces, or some out-and-out funk."

"I also tend to write about some of the things we see in today's society. I purposely put some ugly things in there, and things that are sarcastic, too. I don't know if people will perceive and understand them that way, but that is the intent."

"In *Kaiparowitz High*, for example, I write about the Kaiparowitz Plateau in southern Utah where they're strip-mining now, and they've started burning coal. It's going to ruin all the national parks down there if they go ahead as they're planning."

"I'm really attached to the natural side of things. See those stacks of rocks and fossils over there?" he said, pointing to various shelves around the living room of his Silver Lake house. "Utah is a great place to grow up if you're involved with the naturalness and geological beauty of nature, as we all are. Why destroy that area just so we can have more electricity here in L.A.? That makes me want to write a tune about it. *Kaiparowitz High* is that tune."

The synthesizer plays a great role in Airpocket's music. "People who don't think you can make music with a synthesizer or a computer are weird," said Bruce. "They draw these arbitrary lines about what constitutes a musical instrument or what constitutes a musical experience. That doesn't make sense to me."

"The synthesizer's great at doing exactly what a synthesizer does—which is a lot. It's not 'mechanical' if the human being who controls it does so in a musical way."

"Sometimes we will combine electronics and natural sounds, manipulating the tapes like Ussachevsky, Davidovsky or Wuorinen."

"However, people in general still have a hard time relating to electronics. That's why we don't do a total electronic freak-out and expect to earn a living. Nor would a total freak-out be all that much fun. The reason our music moves through classical, jazz, rock, and funk is because all of us are so varied. We love all different kinds of music."

While Ed attends school in Denver, "listening to Keith Jarrett, Oliver Messiaen, Bartok and other musics, especially those with a non-bounded concept," the other four brothers—Bruce, Steve, Tom, and Walt—continue to mold and shape their Airpocket concepts, sending Ed charts and cassette tapes as they go.

If their *Fly On* album is any indication, The Fowler Brothers are soon going to make a major musical splash—just as soon as Ed gets out of school, that is. Salt Lake City will never be the same.

BRIAN TORFF

by arnold jay smith

His story is classic. The scenario has our young, good-looking hero walking down a Greenwich Village street. He steps into The Bottom Line, the City's most successful rock/jazz/pop/folk showcase, to buy a ticket for that evening's performance of the Oliver Nelson band (his last appearance in New York, as it turned out). After purchasing admission for later that evening, our hero hears the band rehearsing and steps into the club—just in time to see Richard Davis, the bassist for the gig, walking out. Our boy gets up the nerve to ask if he could go home, get his bass, and sit

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in—at least for rehearsal. Oliver Nelson says something like, "Sure kid."

Brian Torff is our hero, and he stayed aboard the Nelson band until they went back to California, stopping long enough to record with some of the members on Sonny Stitt's *Dumpy Mama* for Flying Dutchman.

"It was Shelly Manne who casually said to me after the last night at the Bottom Line, 'See you tomorrow at the studio?' My reply was an incredulous, 'Huh?' That's how *Dumpy Mama* came to be."

Brian first caught the attention of some of us because he was always there: in the clubs, with singers, on the scene. He backed Cleo Laine for her New York appearances in 1975, played with David Amram, and also supported Mary Lou Williams for her long stint at the Cookery before he joined Ike Isaacs and Diz Disley in Stephane Grappelli's touring group. His other credits include Erroll Garner and Roswell Rudd. Chicagoan Torff is 21 and has studied at Berklee and Manhattan School of Music. He plays both acoustic and electric bass, depending on the circumstances.

"Because there were no really good jazz radio stations, I guess I started in rock 'n roll. The jazz I started to hear was either watered down—Eddie Harris, Les McCann—or cut with rock like Blood, Sweat and Tears and Chicago. I drifted toward the latter. I started acoustic bass when I was 11 and Fender when I was 13, being much more dedicated to Fender. I couldn't see much point in the acoustic at the time; I played it in the orchestra and it was no fun, because my early teacher was a big drag. I got into Fender because no one told me how to play it. I could come into the bands and experiment."

"At about 17 or 18, I began going to the clinics that my high school would run with guys like Clark Terry. They started to turn my ears on to new sounds. I had never experienced the sensation of swing and big bands and a jazz format in general. *Sketches of Spain* was the only jazz album in my house. On it Paul Chambers played some very interesting background things. I can remember being four or five and listening, wondering what that was. That's where the fascination for the bass sound began. The correct approach to the bass came from my Berklee and Manhattan training."

"Ear training was my first training, taking things off of records. It also taught me harmony and the



function the bass plays. My idea is to be a strong soloist, melodic. I would listen to Ron Carter; he was so recorded that you couldn't miss him. Then, of course, Scott LaFaro. Now I listen more to horn players, because I'm trying to get that melodic conception of playing.

"I'm getting into the melodic and musical bass players, not just those who are technically proficient. Some of them are Ron, Eddie Gomez, Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen and George Mraz. You will notice that they are acoustic players. The acoustic/electric question has confronted me quite a bit, especially in the last year when I have been getting more calls for gigs. All they want you to do is go on the road for months playing Fender. Cleo Laine, Horace Silver, Woody Herman were some I have turned down because of it."

"The technical demand on acoustic is about fifty times what it is for Fender. When you pick up a Fender after you've worked at acoustic for a while, it's like swinging a lighter bat. I feel that the expressive possibilities on the acoustic bass are far greater than on Fender. There comes a time when you have to make a decision. I chose to go acoustic and make my career on it. I am very disappointed to see that some heavy players are going in the other direction. While I'm happy for their commercial success, I am not so thrilled about their artistic bent."

Torff is still idealistic enough to believe that self-truth is more important than financial reward. "When jazz is at its greatest, it is very close to chamber music—for me, a very deep source of self-fulfillment. I can make four times as much

playing with Cleo than I can with Mary Lou. But we are an art form, and that's a responsibility that takes dedication."

What Brian has touched on, Ron Carter was emphatic about in a recent *db* interview. If more of the young bass players turn their backs on the electric bass repertoire will dwindle, making it harder for those that still prefer it to find material. "The repercussions of that," notes Torff, "could be polarization of rock and jazz and the entire fusion movement's dissipation. Right now, we are in the minority. The hot groups—Weather Report, Return To Forever—maybe they're just fads. I know they can play acoustic instruments, and they will, should the industry revert to its former attitudes."

"I think re-education is in order for those that package and sell jazz. The idea that jazz doesn't sell unless it has some pop tunes thrown in, is false. It's just a matter of exposure and promotion. The media controls the music so much that it breaks my heart. The few jazz things that I have seen on TV have been so poorly produced that, if I were sitting in the audience listening, I would say, 'What is this?' And Mary Lou Williams is treated like some intermission pianist."

Dealing with the idiosyncracies and individual working methods of various artists has always been a problem with accompanists who work a lot of gigs. In a piano/bass duo format, one might think it would be a fairly easy thing, what with only one other person to listen to.

"With most artists, yes, it's that easy. You get their schtick down and it's the same thing every night. But not with the likes of Mary Lou. She's constantly changing every tune, every set, every night. It's always a challenge and she's always feeding me ideas and cues. I listen like crazy. The longer I am with her, the more I can feel her vibes. I can tell from a look on her face which direction she's going to go."

"A lot of artists don't even try to be creative every night; so many can't be creative every night. They are not giving anything new, so it's hard to feed them anything new. They're not receptive. I played with Tiny Grimes for a while. He forced me to play in a certain mold. It was very confining. I would offer a new idea, or direction, and he would totally reject it. You can't make music like that. No, you can't be creative like that. I'm too young to be in a musical straitjacket." **db**

caught... McLaughlin's Shakti and Weather Report: Some Defused Fusions . . . Stone Alliance: Buffalo Embryo . . .

WEATHER REPORT

Personnel: Wayne Shorter, reeds, Lyricon; Joe Zawinul, keyboards; Jaco Pastorius, electric bass; Alejandro Acuna, drums; Manolo Badiera Medina, percussion.

SHAKTI

Personnel: John McLaughlin, acoustic guitar; L. Shankar, violin; Zakir Hussain, tabla; T. H. Vinayabram, ghatham (claypot).

Beacon Theatre, New York City

Shakti, an all-acoustic group, is John McLaughlin and three Indian musicians. A different pair of females joins the band in every performance, and these ladies play drone instruments. Opening at the Beacon, the entire robed sextet sat in a close gaggle, front and center stage on a smaller platform. And a whooping audience loved 'em, though I found their ultimate achievement as modest as their format.

I'm told by manager Nat Weiss' office that Shakti's no exercise in purism. Their charts, by Shankar and McLaughlin, use some Indian

scales; but the band's thrust is improvisation—something new for the Indians involved. "Yet," reflected Carlos Santana in a recent *Rolling Stone*, "it's hard to say (Shakti's) music is new because it was played before Christ." My feeling exactly. Santana goes on to say Shakti "sounds new because [McLaughlin's] combining the West and the East." But I couldn't hear any sweeping fusion—the Indian influence predominated.

Shakti's sound was linear, patterned, repetitive rhythm. And accompanying melodies and solos seemed harmonically restricted, only handmaidens to the pulse. McLaughlin's occasional, blues-inflected note-bending provided a slight Western tinge, but his speedy phrasing, percussively jampacked, showed the predominate Eastern influence it always had. There have been no significant stylistic alterations, a point further borne out by his duets with the drummers and Shankar, strongly reminiscent in their paces of past duels with Billy Cobham and Jerry Goodman.

So, Shakti suits McLaughlin fine. And it was a cooking little set, which is why the audience whooped. Vinayabram's frantic drumming was a particular hit; it got the lusty reac-

tion usually accorded Airtio or Bill Summers. And of course, the crowd cheered McLaughlin's technical prowess. So what else is new?

Past that rhetorical question, I have a real one. Where is this music going to go? Santana calls Shakti's efforts "... not loud ... but ... the most intense music that I've felt since John Coltrane was alive." Yet Coltrane—if the comparison must be pursued—explored *all* the physical properties of music, not just its percussive power. Perhaps Shakti's vision is equally comprehensive, but I couldn't hear it on this occasion. However, maybe I was as unattuned as Woody Allen once claimed to be viewing mime. I think he went to watch Marcel Marceau, who was supposed to be "setting the table." Allen only saw the Budapest String Quartet climbing in and out of a large trunk.

Weather Report has a new bassist, Jaco Pastorius, who has contributed a batch of new pieces to the ensemble's book. Instrumentally, he appears to have a greater aptitude for counter-melodic movement than his predecessor, Alphonso Johnson, but his role in the group is nonetheless much the same: the keeper of time and funky bottom. Alejandro Acuna has

moved from the percussion table over to the trap set, and was far too light and weak to support the instrumental weight of the band.

After a wonderful first half-hour or so of workings of tunes from the last three albums, things began to bog down. Zawinul had been a key orchestrator of movement in that first segment, filling gaps strikingly, suggesting original colors as a matter of routine. But Acuna's rhythmic uncertainty became more obvious as the ensemble balance shifted heavily to Shorter's side. For a time, the usually finely-tuned and well-oiled Weather Report became the rather tentative, mildly perplexed Wayne Shorter Quintet. After some uneventful solo Pastorius (his exercise on Parker's *Donna Lee* that opens his recent LP), there was a slight regrouping of forces on two more Jaco tunes and a heated Afro-Cuban duel between the percussionists. From that point, however listlessness and lack of invention prevailed for another 30 minutes.

But chalk it up to a bad night. At its best, Weather Report is far and away the most compelling fusion group because of the way its members surprise/improvise within a seamless flow. Smooth movement seems to be the be-all and end-all of most fusion ensembles, but this one strikes me as the only one around to recognize that the flow can be intricately patterned with changes in color, tempo, and harmonics. Their first half-hour on this occasion—and six years of albums and memorable appearances—are conclusive evidence of their potency.

—Michael Rozek

STONE ALLIANCE

Trafalmore Cafe, Buffalo, New York

Personnel: Steve Grossman, tenor and soprano saxes; Gene Perla, bass; Don Alias, drums.

This combination is a natural. Alias, Perla, and Grossman have played together in various combinations on several albums and live dates, and have individually exhibited their talents as sidemen for the likes of Miles Davis, Elvin Jones, and Nina Simone, among others. They chose the Trafalmore, an intimate club conducive to high listener involvement, for their debut performance, which found a receptive audience despite the necessary rituals of adjustment a new combo must make to their playing environment and each other.

Strenuous demands of interplay in the trio format were generally well met by these three, though an opening number found Perla keeping his bass lines elementary and repetitive, allowing Grossman acres of solo space over the versatile, unflaggingly imaginative Alias. First impressions may have been powerful, but they gave little indication of any group unity. As Perla, who may accurately be described as the group's "thermometer," tested the climate created by the ensemble's mood and audience reaction, his playing took on a more animated, aggressive quality that brought him into better balance with the exuberant Grossman and Alias.

Grossman was only 17 when he came up with Miles five years ago; today he remains out of the Trane bag, an emotional soloist who flirts intermittently with the outer limits but also exhibits enough control of tone and feeling to play ballads with the best of the young reedmen.

As the ensemble worked out some of the stiffness heard in the opening numbers of the

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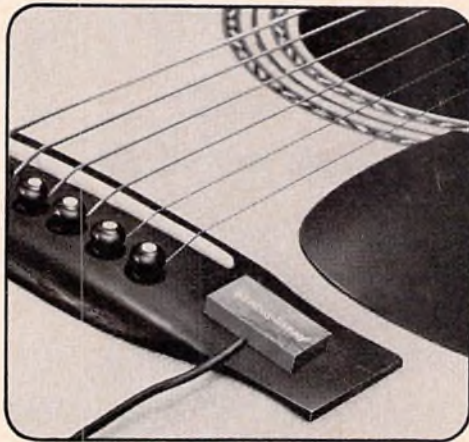
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ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL

continued from page 17

we've got. I've got a Pro Reverb, your standard high school band amp; in fact, Lucky bought it in ninth grade. Most bands have a bare minimum of double that. I'm not into equipment, I'm into guitars, and I'm into playing through my amp and letting it roar.

"I played in a square dance band as a kid, and in a bluegrass band in college, those were my only acoustic bands. I'll *jam* acoustically any day of the week, but you get to like the *power*—and I understand when I hear a hard rock trio. I don't enjoy them, but the power is there. What used to take a 20-piece band, Count Basic or Artie Shaw, now is replaced by three jerks playing at top volume. That's the basic appeal, but it's so crass, man, so crude, you can't hear nothing 'cause there's nothing to hear. I can dig Mance Lipscomb. Now, here's Mance Lipscomb 20 times louder—what's that all about?"

Like many revivalists, Benson is a musical conservative, referring to modern acoustic jazz, as well as electronic instruments, as fad-dish noise.

"I saw John Coltrane. I saw Ornette Coleman. I even played in a couple of jazz bands like that. But I just don't dig it. I dig getting as far out as you can, but that off the wall emotionalism, it don't make sense. Melodic sense and harmonic sense are part of music—as soon as you say there's no melody, there's no harmony, there's no meter, there's only tonality, that's a wall. If you want to be on the other side of that, fine, but it has nothing to do with what I do. I like meter in music, because I think rhythm is what it's about. I can understand what they're doing, but it's a wall; we couldn't do something like that because it's not what we're into.

"Music loves people. Their despair, their joy; the thing that makes music worthwhile is people, the emotional component of the music. It exists on a level so far away from the university. How can it survive there? Learning how to have a good time is not one of the objectives of the university. You take jazz or blues or country music and stick it in a classroom, and all of a sudden you're analyzing it and not reacting to it.

"I think that's one of the biggest problems with jazz—it's like hillbilly music, where they were once so ashamed of what they were called, and that the music sometimes came from junkies or prostitutes, and was associated with lowlifes. Now jazz has been elevated to the academic. The music belongs in the honky tonks and the bars, it belongs in parties, in small concert settings, even in large concert settings—anywhere that people aren't subjected to it in a weird way. I like people to think they can do what they want, within reason. They can scream and yell a whole set—it don't bother me none. If they've got something to say, I'll hear them and react to it.

"It's nice—the record player is my university—I've got 50 years of the greatest teachers in the world that I can sit right there on the record player. And that's how *they* learned, too, by listening to other musicians, and by developing their ears. I can't read music—well, I can read it but I can't just look at it and know it—so that limits me in a lot of areas. But it frees me up, too. If I had it down cold, it wouldn't lay at my fingertips all the secrets these guys sweated to get at school. And also, one of the terms we use when we're copping

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somebody's licks is that we're sweating their records. I like it being that way . . . but I've got a lot of practicing to do, still."

Ray's cigar was down to a butt when pedal steel guitar player Lucky Oceans rapped on the door. After a moment's reticence, Oceans consented to provide a concise history of his complex instrument, whose sound is virtually a necessity for any country or western recording, but yet is virtually unused outside that genre.

"The predecessor of the pedal steel would be the dobro," the bearded Mr. Oceans explained intently, "which is I don't know how many hundreds of years old. In the '20s, they made the first Hawaiian guitars, called lap steels today, which were electrified before other guitars. Bob Dunn was supposedly the first guy who put a pickup on a steel guitar, sometime around 1935. He played with Milton Brown And His Musical Brownies. He put a pickup on his dobro because it couldn't be heard over all the other instruments in the band. He played with kind of a slap effect—it sounded like a corny bass saxophone, but the phrasing of the day was hot on the steel.

"Pretty soon after that, they were marketing electrified Hawaiian guitars, usually with six strings in a straight A major tuning. Schools developed, and they'd sell people an A guitar, and then they'd say 'Well, you finished your A lesson, it's time to buy your E guitar.' They just sold them another guitar, which made for a big racket.

"The original Hawaiian tuning, hundreds of years old, was the A major. A few guys developed an A6 tuning, and people began to realize you could fool around with tunings. In the mid '40s, they made the first double and triple neck guitars, which they went into because, unlike a regular guitar, the pedal steel is fretted with a bar, like fretting a regular guitar with one finger. They had to add other necks to add different tunings if they wanted to get more complicated chords. Some chords were accomplished by sliding the bar, equivalent to bottlenecking. The whole idea was to expand the harmonic scope of the instrument so you could play more chords like that, and the guys who developed this were the guys who developed a jazzy style on steel during the '30s and '40s: Bob Dunn, Leon McAuliffe, Herb Remington, Joaquin Murphy, and Noel Boges. Each of these guys developed their own kind of tuning, which got spread around through all the other players.

"During the late '30s, some guys were already experimenting with putting pedals on Hawaiian guitars, but they were really primitive. It would change the tuning for a whole song. At that time a pedal only raised the string, put more tension on it, like pulling the string through the tailpiece of the guitar. Your pedal would only go down so far, like to raise a C to a D. A few guys experimented with this, but mainly it was popular to use four necks on one guitar to get all the chords. It took a lot of jumping with both hands, and affected phrasing, too.

"I don't know when Alvin Rey came in, during the '40s sometime, but he was the most popular steel guitarist in terms of reaching people. He had a big band. He brought in a lot of effects, stuff that was used for about 20 years, but that we don't use so much anymore."

"It could be argued that he ruined the appeal of the steel guitar to lots of people because he was so corny," Benson observed.

"True," continued Oceans. "It's a novelty instrument and he appealed to all the novelty aspects. He made all kinds of sound effects, all kinds of weird glisses and shatters. But of course the saxophone used to be a novelty instrument. The first thing you do with a new instrument is figure out all the funny things you can do with it.

"In the mid '50s, Bud Issacs figured out that you can take a pedal and bounce off and on it, like choking a string on a guitar, and from that point on the pulling of the strings has influenced country steel. Since that point, what's called the E9th Chromatic neck is used—it's a country tuning that almost every steel player uses. Also by the mid '50s, the C6 neck was being standardized by Buddy Emmons and Curly Chalker. The C6 for jazz and Hawaiian and the E9th for country have been standard for the past ten years or so.

"Of course, every guitar is different, because one steel player will want to raise a set of strings a certain way, and he'll have a little idea of how to do it, and the company will put it on for him. There is a standard set up but very few players stick to it.

"In the '60s also, knee levers were developed. You can only press two levers at a time with your feet, but by putting pedals onto places where they're accessible to your knees, still using a volume pedal, you can depress two changer levers and two knee levers. The coordination's easy, you do it until it becomes unconscious. The chops on a steel are still in your hands, although it looks difficult with your knees moving and your feet moving. This is a minor discipline. Your left and right hands give you sound, technique, speed.

"I taught myself. I used some instruction records, I played a little guitar before, but I didn't know much about music. The problem is that there's no formalized technique. Right now I'm trying to teach myself right hand technique, a theory of picking, but there are already 50 million ways. You ask Buddy Emmons, who's the Bible on steel guitar, how he does it, and he picks a certain way that wouldn't make sense for me because his chops are so much greater than mine. I'm just trying to figure out my own idiosyncratic way. It's such a primitive instrument that people just pick it up and learn it whatever way they can. Right now the public has it categorized as a country instrument, so there's a prejudice against it being used in other fields."

"There's no other instrument that has that kind of tonal quality at all," Ray said, admiringly, and added, "There are no black steel players."

"It's a great instrument" agreed Lucky, "There just aren't that many great players. There are no great players who are able to take it out of country. Every steel player for a livelihood has to play in a country band and make country sessions, because it's an inbred thing. People just aren't hip to steel—a guy can't walk up to a jazz and/or rock band and say 'I'm a steel player.' It's making inroads, though, mostly through the country rock thing, but that's a prejudice right there—any band that's got a steel is country rock. It's been forced into this mold and people get forced to play it the same way over and over again. Which exaggerates the limitations rather than its possibilities."

"Motown never uses it," Ray grumped. I suggested it might fit in with salsa music. We decided we had the makings of a great, innovative fusion. db



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CRUSADERS

continued from page 13

same feeling and conviction that he played *There Will Never Be Another You* or *The Song Is You*. But the critics bombarded him.

"You see, the sincerity of that music is sometimes not *allowed* in things that are more complex, because the complexity of the music itself often overshadows the heart—another one of the reasons the Crusaders went the other way.

"There's something unnatural about taking that cerebral approach of jazz, you know. It was evident to Cannonball, and it is evident to the Crusaders. Okay, it's good to go to music school and learn all about technique and composition, and then get on stage and say, 'Look what I learned!' But it's also good to approach music with a raw sincerity that doesn't have anything to do with making the pieces fit into some critic's complex, preconceived technical puzzle.

"Because of that word 'Jazz,' we were getting only a certain kind of radio play. Once the people heard our music—even if they liked rock 'n roll—they liked our stuff; but they weren't getting to hear it very much, because they were listening to the other stations. We couldn't get played on those, because we were the *Jazz Crusaders*.

"As soon as we dropped 'Jazz' from our name, we began getting programmed on the AM stations, and all those barriers were dropped. We proved to ourselves that there was *always* something in our music that appealed to the masses. And we proved there was something in black instrumental music that could open the doors for people like Herbie Hancock and Donald Byrd.

"The critics, of course, immediately panned us, saying, 'They prostituted themselves! They're not being true to the art form!' Well, who says you have to remain true to one musical cause for all of the rest of your life? You'll stagnate if you do. If we were playing exactly the same way today that we did in 1961, where would we be? After you've played *Cherokee* and played all of the possible harmonic concepts and all of the alternate harmonic chord progressions, then you gotta go somewhere else—to some other rhythmic concept, some other approach. In bebop, you took the standards and turned them inside out. Okay, that's been done, so let's go somewhere else. Let's not henceforth, for now and evermore, establish the *Cherokee* approach as the only criterion from which jazz will be evaluated.

"The challenges of the music are not always in the complexities. The so-called simplicities can be *very* challenging. As much as I respect Chick Corea and Mahavishnu and a lot of other great musicians, it takes a different kind of person to sit in on a Mahalia Jackson soul session. Joe Sample can do it. He was one of her favorite pianists. He can play gospel music, but he can also play on a Quincy Jones soundtrack.

"Whatever your line of work, you want to communicate with people. And, let's face it: everybody didn't go to music school, but *everybody* can feel some kind of pulsation and relate to a melody if it's something they can hum. If you communicate with people, they will respect and appreciate you for it.

"Now, if you come in with a conglomeration of scales and superimposed rhythms and dump it on them, people just can't relate to it. We like to bring the audience along with us, which does not mean devising formulas and condescending to the audience. If you devise a

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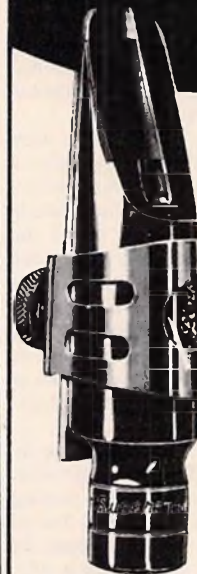
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formula music and do that for the rest of your life because you can make a few bucks, then you might as well be a carpenter.

"But if a man uses his music to bring people in, then he can say, 'Okay, now that you're in, listen to this. Now hear this. Now get this.' It's like what happens in a clinic. This is a 4/4 beat: these are the eighth notes on top; on top of that is superimposed three. Now they can get the relationship, and you're communicating, and everybody feels good."

Now in their mid-30s, the Crusaders drafted guitarist Larry Carlton, 28, when they returned from their leave of absence in 1970.

"I used to sit in my room after junior high school," Larry said, "and work out third-part harmonies to the Crusaders' *Tough Talk* horn lines. I would memorize Wilton's tenor solos on the guitar. In effect," he laughed, "I've been in the group 14 years now, although I've been making records with them for only six."

For the six years Larry has been on board, the group has remained stable. There was a problem, however, acquiring an acceptable bass player. As a result, Wilton Felder would often record the bass tracks for the albums. "When we were playing more jazz-oriented things," said Sample, "we could always get competent bass players, because everybody knew the jazz library. I mean, we've had them all—from Buster Williams to Leroy Vinnegar to Monk Montgomery.

"But when we made the transition back to our hybrid Texas jazz/funk, nobody else was doing it, so we had a problem. Great as all these other players were, they couldn't play the jazz-funk that we were playing. It really happened on *Chain Reaction*. The original bass player on *Chain Reaction* laid down the original tracks, but they didn't work. So Wilton had to overdub the entire album, which limited us because we weren't able to flow as much as a creative unit. Now, however, we've found a new bass player from Atlanta—Robert Popwell—and he's working out fine. You'll notice the difference when you hear our new album.

"Robert added a new incentive, a new impetus for everything. He's listened to our music, and his ears are in tune to the contemporary idiom. He can play funk things and he knows traditional bebop. He debuted with us at the Roxy Theater a couple of months ago, and he'll be a regular working member of the group from now on."

On their new album, *Those Southern Knights*: "We have moved into some new areas," said Stix. "We've gotten into some electronics, and we are compositionally much more involved. We've added some strings and even some vocal colorings. Larry has done some excellent string writing on this one, excellent.

"We play black influenced music, which is very ethnic. We draw on the classics because of our involvement in the academics. And we do a lot of improvisation. It all comes out to be our music, the music of the Crusaders."

And regardless of reaction by the jazz "intelligentsia," that music is listened to by those who know in other musical areas. Dig part of the guest list at the group's Roxy Theater opening in L.A. several weeks back: Elton John, Eric Clapton, Ronnie Laws, Rick Danko of The Band, and members of AWB and Chicago. As Stix Hooper rests his case, "We must be good for something." **db**

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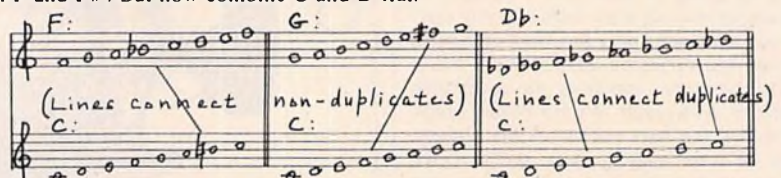
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In Part I of this article (down beat, June 3), the general effects of two different keys sounding at the same time, and the particular effect of keys with tonics an augmented fourth apart, were indicated. For those not familiar with the information contained in Part I, there is one main point to be recognized before the study of Part II begins: When two different keys occupy two different pitch areas, the key occupying the lower of these areas tends to predominate. Usually, then, the lower key sounds like the tonal base while the upper adds decoration. And this effect becomes invariable when the actual sounds of the lower key are in the general pitch area around middle C, supported by bass notes in that same key. And now, Part II.

Within bitonality, there are a number of formats concerning what key's the melody, what key's the harmony, and which is above what. Melody in one key over harmony in another, for example, or melody over melody, harmony over harmony, or more complex textures such as a melody-harmony combination in one key plus harmony in another key either above or below.

But no matter what the format and no matter what the key combination, a minimum of two scale notes in one key will duplicate two scale notes of the other key. Why? Because there are only twelve chromatic pitches within the octave (C# and Db are the same in our tempered scale); but there are a total of fourteen pitches, be they duplicated or not, in any two diatonic scales.

Combine C and F, for example. All the letter names except B will turn out to be identical. Or combine C and G. Again, there will be only one non-duplication of scale tones, this time between F and F#. But now combine C and D flat.



Now only the notes C and F remain common to both scales. Yet even though they are duplicated in actual pitch, they are diametrically opposed in their melodic function within their respective scales. The note C, for example, is the tonic—that completely restful scale degree—when the key is C. But in the key of D flat, the same note—C—becomes the leading tone, that most active of scale degrees. And in other keys that same note assumes still other roles, like adding a tinge of the blues to both key of A and key of D.

From such apposition of melodic function between duplicate scale notes, plus the color clashes between a non-duplicate scale note and its chromatic alteration, come the individual characteristics of the eleven possible major key bitonal relationships, ranging from tonics a half step apart, such as D flat above C, to tonics a major seventh apart, such as B above C.

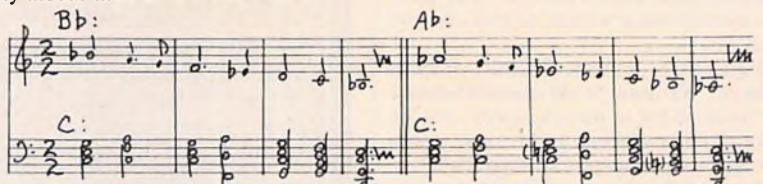
When the tonic of the tonal-base key (again, the key in the lower pitch area tends to dominate the total key feeling) is duplicated within the scale of the decoration key, the total effect tends towards the smooth, the modal, the blue:



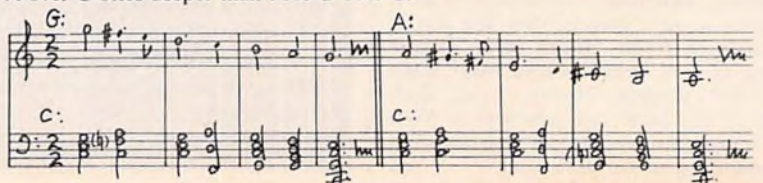
But when the tonic (or the dominant, for that matter!) of the tonal-base key appears within the decoration key scale chromatically altered, the effect tends toward the rough, the brilliant, the biting:



And the intensity of these two opposite general effects seems to deepen as the number of chromatically altered tones between keys increases. The A flat over C combination sounds more intensely modal than does B flat over C:



And A over C bites deeper than does G over C:



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by Pat Williams

The following excerpt from Pat Williams' new *An American Concerto* (BMI)—premiered May 2, 1976 at the *Colorado Fusion* concert—indicates Pat's use of polytonality. This is a transposed score (B^b clarinet and trumpet, for example, will sound a major second below the score notation). The function of Pat's polytonality in the first movement is to clearly delineate the superimposed, jazz-style historical quotes from the surrounding orchestral textures.

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WAITS

continued from page 16

doing wants to be a part of it, wants to ask me something or yell something at me.

Hohman: As far as pianists go, who do you listen to and admire?

Waits: I like Al Red Tyler, Huey Piano Smith, all of Art Tatum, Professor Longhair. I like Mose Allison a lot; we did a *Soundstage* show together a while back.

What's Thelonious Monk doing now? The best thing he had out was called *The Man I Love*. The last time I saw him in San Diego, his son was playing drums. I certainly admire him. I love his private solo version of 'Round Midnight, the way it drags and pulls at your heartstrings. Al Cohn and Steve Gilmore played that one night in a storeroom of some club in New York, it just killed me, man. It's such a low, moanin', lonesome, real tragic style.

As far as other musicians go, I like Charles Mingus, Tampa Red, Bo Carter, Memphis Minnie. ... I saw Count Basie, Ella Fitzgerald, and Frank Sinatra at the Spectrum in Philadelphia a while back, Ella was amazing. That's the worst place to hear anything, but it's a great place for hockey.

Hohman: One more thing, Tom. Let's say you're putting together an anti-Michelin Guide to cheap diners. How would you decide whether or not a greasy spoon is a five star joint?

Waits: Anyplace I can come out of with enough gas to open a Mobil station is alright by me.

HOW TO

continued from page 42

Because it is a pure major scale, I have used the first phrase of *Joy to the World* to show the sounds of several key relationships in the melody-over-harmony format. The other key relationships now should be tested for their individual effects, using that same melodic phrase over the same chord progression in C. Here are the melodic phrases in the other keys, each beginning on its own tonic:

Now each of these keys should again be tested against the C major chord progression, this time starting the melodic phrase on the notes C or C sharp, whichever happens to be in the scale of the bitonal melody, exactly as was done in the second and third examples above (keys of E flat and E). Such a bitonal option is often more interesting than the literal transposition of a melody.

CITY SCENE

NEW YORK

New York University (Loeb Student Center): "Highlights in Jazz" presents *Helen Humes w/ Gerry Wiggins, Major Holley, Panama Francis; The Countsmen* featuring *Doc Cheatham, Bennie Morton, Buddy Tate and Earle Warren* (6/15).

Environ: New York Loft Jazz Celebration: *Jankry Ensemble, Sheila Jordan* (6/4, midnight); *Blue Winds* featuring *David Eyges* (6/5, 4-6pm); *Inter-*

Right before this article was scheduled to be sent off to the printer, Tom swung back into Chicago with his new trio, a group featuring Frank Vicari (formerly of Maynard Ferguson and Woody Herman's bands) on tenor sax, Dr. Fitzgerald Hunnington Jenkins III on upright bass, and Chip White on drums. Tom explained that he had been performing with the trio for a while, and that even though it was costing him money every night they stayed together, he had already lined up a European tour for midsummer, the highlight of which would be a two-week stopover at Ronnie Scott's in London.

The addition of the trio has finally allowed Waits the freedom to really stretch out on stage, lending an added dimension to his already powerful ramble. He sat down to the keyboards for a brief *New Coat Of Paint*, unveiled the title song of the upcoming *Pasties And A G String* album, delivered a slambang *Depot Depot*, and kept the overflow audience in the palm of his grubby hand throughout.

Waits is indefinite as to how long the present trio will stay with him. Although he claims that he and his sidemen are "thick as thieves," financial worries may dictate the future course of Tom's ensemble plans.

Irregardless, Waits is on his way to Europe, in his first attempt to see whether he can communicate his individual vision of America to music buffs on the other side. Odds are that he will succeed. For Waits defies classification, remaining a true original in a world of exploding imitations. He is one performer you can't afford to miss. **db**

face, Earth Forms Rituals (6/5, midnight); *Ben Wallace & Jack Six* (6/6, 4-7pm); *Weirdness Factor* (6/6, 8-11pm).

JazzMania Society: New York Loft Jazz Celebration: *Jazz Open House* (6/4, from 9pm); *Bagel Brunch: Clifford Jordan* (6/5, noon-3pm); *Reggie Moore Trio* (6/5, 4-6pm); *Jazz Open House* (6/5, from 9pm); *Bagel Brunch: Dave Friedman/Harvie Swartz Quartet* (6/6, noon-3pm).

Ladies Fort: New York Loft Jazz Celebration: *Jess Cohen & The Left Field In 'N Out Band* (6/4, 8-11pm); "Jazz At Dawn" w/*The Bond Street Gang & Marvin Blackman* (6/5, 6-10am); *Monty Waters Big Band* (6/5, 4-6pm); "Jazz At Dawn" w/*B. Parker's 4th World* (6/6, 6-10am); *Joe Lee Wilson & Bond Street* (6/6, 4-7pm).

Sunrise: New York Loft Jazz Celebration: *International Percussion* (6/4, 8-11pm); *John Shea's*

Bass Choir (6/5, 2-4pm); Laurence Cooke (6/5, 4-6pm); Four Rivers featuring Mike Moss (6/5, 8-11pm); John Fischer & Perry Robinson (6/6, 2pm); Intestinal Skylark (6/6, 4-7pm); Lookout Farm (6/6, 8-11pm).

Sonny's Place (Seaford, L.I.): Ray Alexander (6/3, 10, 17); Clyde Lukas' Positive Force (6/4-5); Frank O'Brien (6/6, 8, 13, 15); Tree Guitar Quartet (6/7, 14); Attila Zoller (6/11-12).

Hotel Carlyle (Bemelman's Bar): Marian McPartland.

Central Presbyterian Church (St. Peters): Jazz Vespers: Joe Newman (6/6); Mark Shrode (6/13).

Sherry Netherland Hotel (Le Petit Cafe): Hank Jones.

Sparky J's (Newark, N.J.): Jeff Hittman Quintet (6/15); Arthur Prysock (6/9-13).

Richard's Lounge (Lakewood, N.J.): Zamcheck (thru 6/5); Dr. Lyn Christie (6/9-12); Terry Silverlight (thru 6/16).

Gulliver's (West Paterson, N.J.): Joe Morello Quartet w/Mack Goldsbury (6/4-5); Zoot Sims Quartet (6/11-12); Masuo (6/7); Jack Lillo (6/14); JoAnn Brackeen (6/16-17); Ron Carter Quartet featuring Buster Williams, Kenny Barron & Ben Riley (every Tues.).

New School: Duke Ellington Society presents "Small Band Ellingtonia" starring Bob Wilber w/ Joe Newman, Jack Gale, Kenny Davern, Hank Jones, George Duvivier, Sonny Greer (6/13, 2:30pm).

Arturo's: Masuo & Bob Mover (Wed.).

Folk City: Albert Dailey & Friends (Sun. 4-8pm).

Eddie Condon's: Red Balaban & Cats (Mon.-Sat.); guest artist (Tues.); guest group (Sun.); jazz Luncheon (Fri., noon).

Gregory's: Warren Chaisson Trio w/Attila Zoller & Wilber Little (Wed.-Sat.); jazz all other days.

Jim Smith's Village Corner: Lance Hayward (Mon.-Tues., Thurs.-Sat.) add Jane Valentine

(Sun.); Jim Roberts (Wed.).

Jimmy Ryan's: Roy Eldridge (Mon.-Sat.); Max Kaminsky (Sun.).

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Surf Maid: Jim Roberts (Sun. & Mon.); Nina Shelton (Tues. & Wed.); Frank Herman (Wed.-Sun., 6-8pm); JoAnn Brackeen (Thurs.-Sat.).

Village Vanguard: Mill Jackson (6/1-13).

West End Cafe: Franc Williams Swing Four (Mon. & Tues.); Earle Warren Group (Wed.); Swing To Top Quintet (Thurs.-Sun.).

Information Not Available At Presstime. Call Club Or Jazzline (212-421-3592): Angry Squire; The Barrister (Bronx, N.Y.); Blue Water Inn (Seabright, N.J.); Boomer's; Bradley's; Churchill's; Hopper's; Michael's Pub; Monty's; Studio We; Sweet Basil; Tin Palace; Top Of The Gate; West Boondock; Jimmy Weston's; Willy's.

CHICAGO

Jazz Showcase: Flip Phillips w/Eddie Higgins (6/2-6, tent.); Yusef Lateef (6/9-13); Phil Woods w/Art Farmer (6/16-20); Jimmy Smith (6/23-27); all listings subject to change, call DE7-1000 for details.

Amazingrace: Bill Quateman (6/18-20); Tracy Nelson (6/25-27); frequent jazz, other name contemporary acts, call FAT CITY for up-to-the-minute schedule.

Ratso's: Name jazz, contemporary music nightly, 935-1505 for details.

Uptown Theater: Steve Miller (6/19).

Orphan's: Synthesis (Mon.); Ears (Tues.); Joe Daley Jazz Quorum (Wed.).

N.A.B.: Bobby Christian Big Band (Thurs.).

Backroom: Kim Martell (Tues.-Sat.); Eldee Young (Sun.-Mon.).

Club Misty: AACM groups nightly, 664-0778 for details.

Enterprise Lounge: Von Freeman (Mon.).

Harry Hope's (Cary): Jazz, folk, or rock—name acts—nightly, call 639-2636 for details.

J's Place: Fred Anderson (weekends after-hours).

Lurlean's: Lee Roland Quintet w/Joyce Williams (Fri.-Sun.).

Transitions East: AACM groups, 723-9373 for details.

Wise Fools Pub: Dave Remington Big Band (Mon.).

LOS ANGELES

Concerts By The Sea: Stan Getz (6/1-6); Cal Tjader (6/8-13); Tito Puente (6/15-17).

Lighthouse: Gloria Lynne (6/2-6); Rahsaan Roland Kirk (6/15-20).

U.C.L.A. (Royce Hall): "Guitar Summit 2" w/Laurindo Almeida, Barney Kessel, Herb Ellis, Sandy Bull (6/12).

Concerts At The Grove: Ray Charles, B. B. King, Carmen McRae, Dizzy Gillespie (all tentative for June).

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TV: "Mark of Jazz" on KLCs-TV Ch. 58, Fridays at 8:30pm; *Rulus Harley* (6/4); *Ramsey Lewis* (6/11); *Chris Connor* (6/18).

SAN DIEGO

San Diego Stadium: KOOL Jazz Festival (6/18-19).
Catamaran: Stan Getz (5/24-29); George Benson (5/29-31); McCoy Tyner (6/1-6); Kenny Burrell (6/8-13); Ahmad Jamal (6/15-20); Stanley Turrentine (6/22-27); others.
Sports Arena: Paul McCartney's Wings (6/16).
Convention Center: Bob Marley & the Wailers (5/25); Charlie Daniels Band (5/30) boo, hiss; Leon & Mary Russell (tent., 6/4).
Mississippi Room: Jim Boucher Swing Quartet (Sun.-Mon.); Bob Hinkle 3 (Tues.-Sat.).
Cote D'Azur: Cottonmouth D' Arcy's Jazz Vipers (Tues.).
Knight Club (Vista): Joe Marillo Quintet (Sun. afternoon).
Crossroads: Equinox (Fri.-Sat.).
Albatross: Island (Tues.-Sat.).
Bacchanal: Satisfaction (Wed.-Sat.).
Another Bird: Heat Treatment (Wed.-Sun.)
Chuck's Steak House (La Jolla): *Accapriccio* (Weds.-Sat.).
Fat Fingers: Kirk Bates (Tues.-Sat.).
Le Chalet: J.J. and Preston (tent., Sat.).
Safety: Jim Willis, jazz jams (Sun. afternoon).
Boat House: Cottonmouth D' Arcy's Jazz Vipers (Sun.).
John Bull: Rubyat (Wed.-Sat.).
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Webb's: Threshold (weekends).
Wong's Golden Palace: Taste (Thurs.-Sat.).

CLEVELAND

New Jazz Emporium Room (Eastown Motor Hotel): jazz and soul nightly; Joe Williams (6/1-6/6), Bill Doggett (6/11-6/13), Jr. Walker & the All-Stars (6/18-6/20), Hugh Masakela (6/25-6/27), Martha Reeves (formerly "Martha" of Martha & the Vandellas; 7/2-7/4).
The Theatrical: Glen Covington (June 3-5), Dennis Martin (6/7-6/19), Glen Covington (6/21-7/3), Jimmy Butts Trio, w/ Lady Ellen, vocals (7/6-17).

KANSAS CITY

Mr. Putsch's: Bettye Miller and Milt Abel.
Top of the Crown: Means/DeVan Trio w/Cindy Fee.
Twenty-five Grand: Blend w/Leslie Kendall.
Zorba the Greek: The V.I.P.'s.
Pandora's Box: Mike Ning Trio w/Linda Ott.
Alameda Plaza Roof: Frank Smith Trio.
Plaza Inn International: Don Gilbert Trio w/Janie Fopeano.
Jeremiah Tuttle: Pete Eye Trio.
The Uptown: Freddie Hubbard and Stanley Turrentine (6/3).
Drum Room: Sunday night sessions.

Pandora's Box: Saturday afternoon sessions (3-6pm).
Poor Richard's: Saturday afternoon sessions (3-6pm).
Papa Nick's: Roy Searcy.

BOSTON

Allary's (Providence): Mike Renzi 3 plus guests.
Columns (West Dennis): Dave McKenna plus name guests.
Jazz Workshop: Yusef Lateef (5/31-6/6); Mose Allison (6/7-13); Kenny Burrell (7/12-18).
Merry Go Round: Marilyn Sokol (5/31-6/12); George Shearing 5 (6/14-26).
Michael's: good local bands nightly.
Oxford Ale House: Jazz Mondays.
Paul's Mall: Esther Phillips (6/7-12); Muddy Waters (6/14-20).
Pier Union Oyster House: Al Vega 3.
Pooh's Pub: Band X (6/2-6); Clarise Taylor (6/9-13); *Comic Strip* (6/23-27); Peter Fish 5 w/Jan Clayton (7/7-11).
Sandy's Jazz Revival (Beverly): Red Norvo (6/1-6); Art Farmer (6/14-19); Sheila Jordan & Ronnie Gill w/Manny Williams 3 (6/20); Fatha Hines & Marva Josie (6/21-26); Phil Woods (7/12-17).
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LONDON

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Fulham Volunteer (Fulham): West London Line-Up (6/5, 6/19).
Bird's Nest (King's Road): Max Collie Rhythm Aces (Mon., Wed.).
Seven Dials (Covent Garden): Bobby Wellins (6/10); Ruby Braff/Lennie Felix (6/17).
100 Club (Oxford Street): Brooks Kerr Trio/Chris Barber (6/4-5); Art Hodes (6/9); Legends of Jazz (6/11); Ruby Braff/Lennie Felix (6/25-26); Gene Allen Jazzmen (every Sun.); modern and avant-garde (every Mon.); blues/rock (every Tues.); soul (every Thurs.).
Ronnie Scott's (Soho): Monty Alexander, Tom Waits (till 6/12); Tony Oxley (6/13).
King's Arms (Bishopsgate): Mike Osborne and Friends (every Fri.).
Tile's Wine Bar (Victoria): Dave Gelly/Jeff Scott Quintet (every Wed.).
Red Lion (Hatfield): Alex Welsh (6/7); Chris Barber (6/21); George Melly (6/28).
Prospect of Whitby (Wapping): Alvin Roy Jazz Band (every Fri., Sat.).

CAUGHT

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set, Alias exploded a little less and drew on a broader, subtler scope of percussive ideas. His tenure as percussionist with Elvin Jones obviously influenced his drumming technique, but those who are familiar with Don *only* as a percussionist (or not at all) should get to what he's saying on the traps as well. His restless, inexorable, propulsive flow of ideas truly fueled the movement of this trio.

After spirited readings of Grossman's *Haresah* and another original, *Aw Funk*, the crowd was buzzing, truly primed for Alias' *Zulu Stomp*, a funky cooker that received a roaring reception. After that reaction, Stone Alliance knows they'll be welcome in Buffalo anytime, and I imagine they'll be an asset to most music scenes elsewhere as well.

—john h. hunt

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