JANUARY 13, 1977 60c

the contemporary music magazine

down beat®

ELECTRONICS– WHAT NOW?

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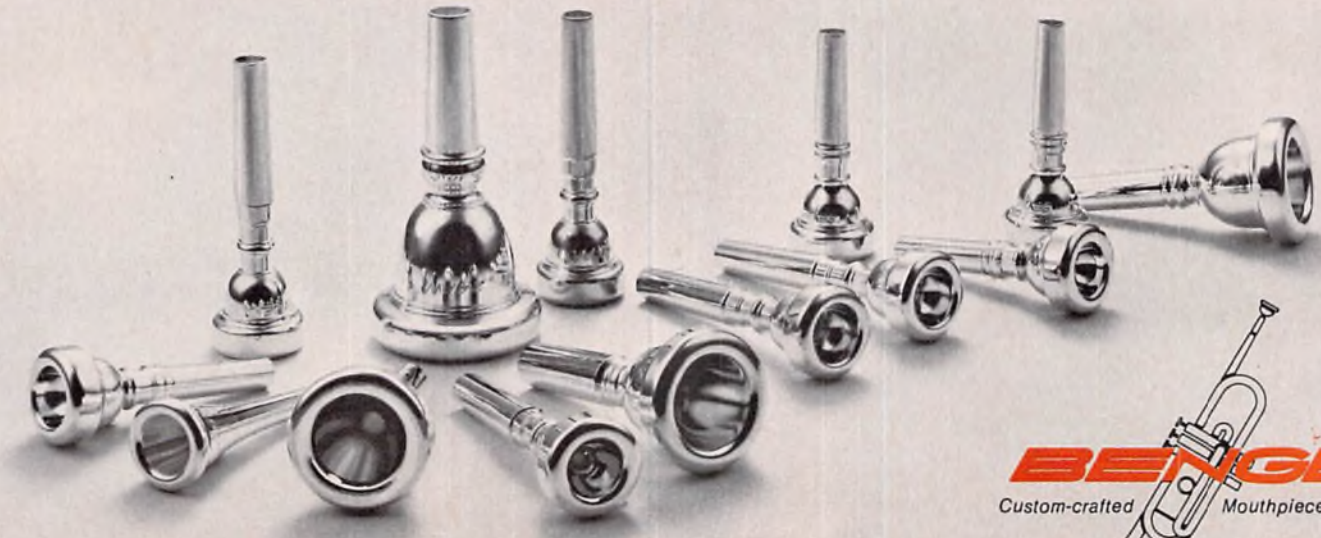

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down beat

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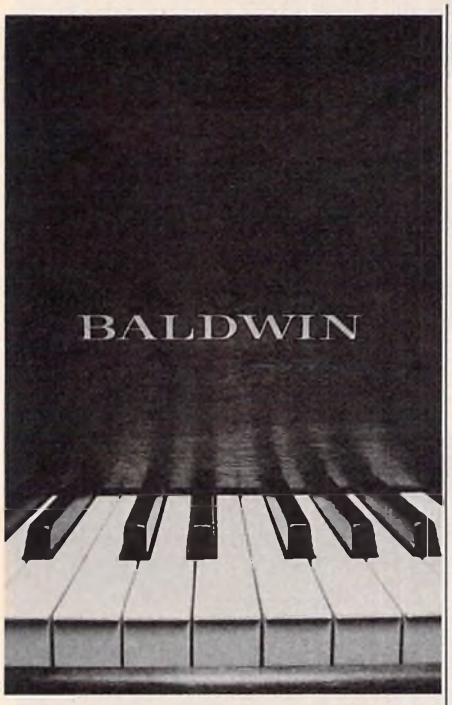

Gunther Schuller's Accompanist

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ABC

"Nobody has learned how to play the trumpet. It's endless."

Leblanc Duet No. 3, featuring Maynard Ferguson

We're having a beer and bratwurst with Maynard Ferguson at Summerfest, an annual two-week music festival on the shore of Lake Michigan in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Last night, his overdrive band and double-high-C trumpet perfection set an attendance record at the Jazz Oasis here. Now, as he talks, he holds a slide/valve trumpet he recently designed, the M. F. Firebird. Tonight, he'll hold another multitude in awe. And soon, he'll be relaxing pool-side, at his home near Shangri-la.

Ferguson: We live ninety miles north of Los Angeles, in Ojai. It's a beautiful valley. It's where they shot the original Shangri-la, for "The Lost Horizon."

Leblanc: *It must be hard traveling away from a place like that.*

Ferguson: I don't get tired of traveling. I'll go thirteen hard weeks, but then I'll take a month off. Our agent would book us every day of the year, twice, if we'd let him. But I find your band and music becomes stale if you don't take a break.

Leblanc: *Your music is anything but stale. How do you describe it?*

Ferguson: "Today." That's how I'd describe my band. "Today." I'm a great believer in change. You have to have change in your music . . . because that's where the real artist comes out, when you take a shot, as opposed to playing it safe. Nobody has learned how to play the trumpet. It's endless. Learning to play something only opens up the challenge to learn to play something else.

Leblanc: *Is this what gave you the idea to design new instruments, too? The three that Holton's come out with?*

Ferguson: You have a hair of an idea, and from that grows another idea. Then you put it together. What I really admire about the Holton people is that, when I come up with an experimental horn, they realize that we're going to experiment with it until we get a product. And that's what happened with the Superbone. I crushed three Superbones in my bare hands before we figured out the right braces.

Leblanc: *Your Bb trumpet — the M.F. Horn — did that take trial and error?*

Ferguson: They just didn't pull one off the line and stamp it "M.F. Horn." It was a trial and error thing. I said let's try it larger, let's try a bigger bell on it. Let's try less of a flare, more of a flare. All this takes time and energy.

Leblanc: *After all you put into it, what comes out?*

Ferguson: It's a large-bore instrument. That bigness gives you a mellow sound. When I play in the upper register I want it to sound beautiful. Screeching high notes — squeaking out high notes — that's a thing of the past.

The M.F. Horn has the size, the dimension, the timbre, the taper. But in the final essence, how does it play? The final decision rests with the players. For me, it's the best horn on the market.

Leblanc: *Don't quite a few players think* your *M.F. Horn is different from the one* they *buy?*

Ferguson: Right. Kids — sometimes — they'll have an M.F. Horn and they'll come up and want to play mine. To see if there's anything special about my horn. I say, "Well, you take my horn and I'll take yours, if you like." They're astounded by that. But, you know, they always take theirs back.

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HOLTON

the first chorus

By Charles Suber

This issue turns out to be a preview of what the new year may sound like. It illustrates the accommodation reached by many of today's musicians about yesterday's music controversy: electric *vs.* acoustic. These pages also reveal a deepening division between musicians: funk *vs.* jazz, today's version of the eternal dilemma, money *vs* art.

The sounds of any year are mostly determined by the arrangers. The arrangers speaking in this issue—Carla Bley, Mike Gibbs, Bob James, Walter Murphy, Don Sebesky, Pat Williams and Frank Zappa—agree that the recorded sounds of this year will include an electronic mix. Opinions vary about the extent and merits of the mix.

Pat Williams: It's a technical language, but it's no different than any other aspect of what's available to a composer . . . (The instruments) are day-to-day tools of scoring films today.

Bob James: The electronic instruments have a tendency to be very compatible with the kinds of equipment necessary to make records, e.g. mikes, amps, etc. . . . Very often it is easier to obtain better control through the use of electronic instruments than it is with the unpredictable qualities of acoustical ones. The best of electronic instruments provide the opportunity for a greater palette of sound. Creative musicians are always looking for new avenues of sound. Electronic instruments give them that opportunity.

Carla Bley: This drift away from human sounds . . . is the fault of the record business. There is such a trend toward super-clean sound in the industry that [the musicians]will become depersonalized. I would say we're locked into electronics. But those electronics are a means of capturing the humanity, not the enslaving of it.

Zappa: Thank God somebody put together a box that'll sound like a string section, because in a hockey rink who can tell the difference? As for where music will be in ten or fifteen years, all the jazz musicians will forget how to improvise and really get good at playing disco music. Each one of them will have three cars and a house in the country.

And speaking of money . . . The very successful, funky Brothers Johnson are, by their own admission, out for the buck and are willing, yea eager, to follow the public's taste in search thereof. Their aptly titled LP, *Look Out For #1*, is already platinum-coated.

Jazz trumpet player-leader Ted Curson is, by his own admission, out to create his own music and thus prepared to forego material awards. His latest album, *Tears For Dolphy* was rated 5 stars (**db**, 5/20/76) but its sale hasn't reached the silver-plated level.

The Bro-Js' artistic outlook is reflected in this dialog with interviewer Lee Underwood.

Underwood: Are you saying you just go whichever way the wind blows?

Louis Johnson: Yep.

Underwood: (Are you) simply going wherever the bucks go?

George Johnson: We have to. That's just the way I feel. I love money. And in order to make money and stay in business, you have to

continued on page 46

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chords and discords

Herman Hurrahs

I was particularly moved to read Herb Nolan's article on Woody Herman (**db**, 11/4). The many great arrangements in his book plus his style of performance have been a considerable influence upon me since I first heard the band back in the '40s. That he continues on as he does is truly amazing. As a longtime fan (and nostalgiac, I am sure), my few acquaintances with him over the years have all been considerate and friendly.

Your article as well as the recent TV program were both well done. Hopefully Woody will have many more years on the road.

Dr. Ralph Mutchler — Bremerton, Wash.

I want to tell you how much I enjoyed the Woody Herman article. Woody's band has always been my favorite and I buy every album of his that I can get my hands on. Most of his best stuff is unfortunately out of print. . . .

I am a drummer (22 years old) and I wish I could have been around to see Dave Tough, Shelly Manne, Don Lamond and Jake Hanna in action with Woody. . . . Jake Hanna and Mel Lewis are my all-time favorite drummers. . . . Neither one of these guys gets the recognition he deserves. I know Louie Bellson and Buddy Rich have all the superchops, but Jake and Mel have good musical taste, which is more important.

Ed Slanson — Anaheim, Cal.

Underrated Rockwell

Thank you for profiling one of the most impressive musicians in the United States today: Robert Rockwell. It's a crime that he and Natural Life have remained anonymous simply because of where they work.

They could probably waste most nationally-known acts and yet, thanks to blind, commercial attitudes prevailing in the music industry, they have been ignored. It was an inspiring article and I hope that Bob and the band can hang tough till the public wakes up.

Gabriel Smoke — Leavenworth, Kan.

Such Chords!

Thanks so much for including that great arrangement of *I'll Be Around* in the Wilder/Corea issue (10/21). It's kept me real busy at the piano since I received my copy.

It's the first arrangement I've seen from Bill Dobbins and I hope you'll publish more of his work. Such chords!

Gene Miller — Oakland, Cal.

Fathead Defender

If I had a subscription I'd cancel it! The Oct. 21 issue was the first I've read in a while and in it I read that one of my heroes, David Newman, is not an artist!

David Newman played on all the early Ray Charles classics and contributed some of the most beautiful rhythm and blues saxophone solos ever recorded. It is saddening that **db** would present such an unkind . . . review of him.

Bill Flannery — New York, N.Y.

Epileptic Facts

I was very sorry to learn of the death of Jimmy Reed in the 11/4 issue, but there was some erroneous information in your Final Bar column. You wrote that although Jimmy Reed suffered an epileptic seizure earlier in the week, he still fulfilled an engagement. There is almost no reason why an epileptic seizure would prevent a person from working a few hours after a seizure occurs. After several days the seizure is certainly inconsequential. Many epileptics resume their activities immediately after a seizure ends. . . .

It would be very beneficial to the large number of people with epilepsy if the media would begin to portray the nature of their disorder accurately.

Robert Angel — Huntington, W. Va.

Hartford Urban Renewal

In all the years I've been subscribing to **db**, I've found it hard to believe that there has been no mention or coverage of the excellent summer jazz concerts sponsored by the Hartford Community Renewal Team.

These concerts (free to the public) have highlighted talent such as Charles Mingus, Jackie McLean, Hannibal Peterson, the Howard Johnson Substructure, and Joe Lee Wilson, to name a partial list.

Mr. Paul Brown (the concerts are his baby) deserves special praise in not only bringing the Hartford area the finest music around, but also in drawing people back into our stagnating inner city. This is true urban renewal, people renewal.

David S. Crockett — Hartford, Conn.

ONCE MORE, THE ORACLE

HERB NOLAN

Guitar-twanging Dr. Nostradamus caught in demonstrative pose during delivery of dire '77 predictions

CHICAGO—A new year is once again upon us. And along with the advent of 1977, we've taken it on ourselves to again consult that supreme prognosticator and resident Windy City soothsayer, Dr. Esauitaw Nostradamus (see **db**, 1/15/76), who has eagerly consented to supply us with his second annual assault on the future.

Despite the fact that none of his predictions for '76 failed to materialize (including such much-awaited events as the takeover of the Kamikaze Sound and the awarding of the Pulitzer Prize to a Chicago-based music mag), Dr. Nos is undauntedly prepared to lay his reputation on the line with nine more blockbuster predictions concerning the Music Year '77. So, here we go with the Nostradamus Leap Into Tomorrow.

An ex-**down beat associate editor**, given to keeping on top of and in step with current trends, will scribe a best-selling novel called ***Funktime***. An obvious ripoff of **E. L. Doctorow**'s *Ragtime*, the book will be sold to a major film company, who will waste no time in casting **Alphonse Mouzon** as the lead character.

An organization called **SPONF (Society Pushing Old Nasty Funk)** will be formed at a beer hall putsch thrown at a famous New York City bath house. SPONF's first controversial move will be to erect a gigantic **Disco Duck** monument smack in the middle of the East Village and to declare the creation in question to be a sexual switchhitter.

A **well-respected electronic composer** will be arrested on a mountain outside Cuernavaca following a pre-dawn raid on a clandestine devil worshippers' ceremony. The composer will declare himself the reincarnate **Moussorgsky** and refuse to answer repertorial queries, uttering only a complex series of splutters and bleeps.

An intrepid **New York db contributor** will do an interview with Newark's obscurantist/flutist **Hashkish Faklm**, in the latter's "comfortable" rat-infested tenement apartment, lunching over stale Ritz crackers and Thunderbird wine. Cheese not included.

A **well-respected jazz entrepreneur** will build a nuclear-powered transcontinental bus (featuring a portable mockup of the famed **Savoy Ballroom**) and take a traveling show of stars on an ecological cruise throughout America. A live recording will leak forth from a concert given for members of the **Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)**, the album to be called *Strontium At The Savoy*.

Speaking of radioactivity, the **RAIN (Rid America of Idiotic Nashville) Crusade** will pick up momentum, as the organization spearheads a national campaign aimed at eliminating country & western music from the airwaves. **RAIN** will run into fallout when its Menlo Park, Cal. headquarters is destroyed by a high-speed convoy of hate-crazed c&w trucker freaks.

The **U. S. Army Band** will refuse to perform at the annual **Army-Navy** game, stating that they demand a contract with a major record label. Their holdout will prove successful and they will receive a six figure contract from a **Burbank-based** outfit. Their first album, called *Hohnerian Horizons*, will prove a rapid chart climber and contain a harmonica-tuba duet of *Get The Funk Out Ma Face*.

A **little-known German chanteuse** will release an album called *Songs In The Key Of Pain*. To everyone's unexpected displeasure, the disc will become a smash, instituting a new nationwide craze known as **"home offensiveness,"** wherein an apartment dweller dons sonic protectors and then cranks up his stereo full blast, thus wreaking physical wrath on his favorite neighboring targets.

The movie sleeper of the year, eclipsing *Funktime* by far, will be an exploitation film called **Rastaman Beach Party**, a ruthless parody of the Jamaician reggae craze. The film will detail the side-spliffing adventures of a crew of **Sarah Lawrence coeds** who visit Trenchtown in order to study the sociological habits of the Rastafarian culture. **Steve Allen** will star as the coeds' professorial chaperone. The flick will receive a triple X from the **Motion Picture Code.**

So there we have it—Dr. Nostradamus and his picks for '77. God help us all if he hits it on the head.

down beat NEWS

Gleeson And Apocalypse

CINCINNATI—Dr. Patrick Gleeson's synthesized version of Gustav Holst's *The Planets*, retitled *Beyond The Sun*, has been chosen by the Cincinnati Planetarium as a soundtrack.

The Gleeson record is featured during the Planetarium's *Earthquakes In 1982* presentation, a production hypothesizing that the near lineup of planets in our solar system set to occur in 1982 will have a catastrophic effect upon the earth.

Sat Eve Specials

KANSAS CITY—An innovative entertainment series has been initiated by the Kansas City Philharmonic. "Saturday Night Specials" premiered with Ella Fitzgerald recently and featured artists outside the periphery of classical music. The In-Vince-A-Bills jazz ensemble, co-led by two members of the orchestra, provided a post-concert session for ticketholders. Performances, scheduled through April, will be held at Music Hall.

potpourri

Composer-arranger **Pat Williams** is no longer with **Capitol** Records, but has tentative plans for an album on **MPS**, and another with **Bill Watrous.**

●

On The Lock-In is a new soul-jazz musical that got its start playing at prisons like Sing Sing, Yardville, Bordentown, and Green Haven. **David Langston Smyrl's** comedy is both streetwise and tongue-in-cheek, and has gained enough momentum to reach the off-Broadway Combination Cabaret/Theater. Pianist **Paul Griffin** is serving as musical director, with **Duke Clemmons** in the pits on bass, and **Reggie Taylor** playing drums.

●

In a presentation at New York's Hofstra University, **Nancy Wilson** was presented the **Ebony Mike Award** by the **Jazz Heritage Society.**

●

The 16th annual **Reno International Jazz Festival,** sponsored by the **University of Nevada at Reno,** will be held in two segments. Phase I will run from March 10-12 and will highlight instrumental bands, combos and soloists. Phase II is set for April 8-9 and will feature vocal, vocal jazz ensembles, small groups and soloists. For further info contact Dr. John Carrico, Jazz Festival Coordinator, U. of Nevada at Reno, 89557.

●

Don Ellis (whose recent travails will be described in an upcoming Perspective column) has put together a top flight new band. The orchestra includes **Glenn Stuart,** lead trumpet; **Glenn Ferris,** trombone; **Art Pepper** and **Sam Falzone,** saxes; **Milcho Leviev,** piano; **John Williams,** bass; **Dave Crigger** and **Ted Hawk** on drums; and **Steve Forman,** percussion. Ellis' string quartet includes **Bobby Bruce** on violin and **Jimbo Ross** on viola.

●

Senatorial info: S. I. Hayakawa, the new senator from California who made his reputation at San Francisco State College during the campus disturbances, is an avowed jazz fan. He was even once a record reviewer, for the Chicago *Defender* and dear old **db.** db

CAPITOL HILL FOLLIES—FUNK STYLE

Funkmarshal Lane socks Rocky with dublous handle as boogie fans turn envlous

WASHINGTON—Jeff Lane, the producer who has worked miracles for funk bands Brass Construction and B. T. Express, recently presented a copy of Brass Construction's million selling debut album to Vice President Nelson Rockefeller.

According to a United Artists promo printout, Lane then told Rocky he has renamed President Ford "Funky Ford" and the Vice President "Funky Rocky." (There is no information available as to how the executive pair reacted to their new appellations.) Lane and Rockefeller also discussed the possibility of Brass Construction doing a future Funk Extravaganza at the White House, a prospect that seemingly appears in jeopardy since Funky Gerry and Rocky will be forced to move in mid-January.

At last reports, Funky Jeff Lane is trying to line up a meeting with Funky Jimmy Carter to see if he can get the newly-elected Pres to agree to a funk-in somewhere in the funked-up future.

Babs Into Film

NEW YORK—*Movin' On Down De Line*, the second book penned and published by bop vocalist Babs Gonzales, is being made into a motion picture sometime this fall. According to the author, the film will be produced by DeMaurer Films of Switzerland and will be "tasty, elegant, historically correct, humorous and truthful."

Arrangements of the movie score (which is all original music written by Gonzales) are being written by Frank Foster and Ernie Wilkins. Among the cast are: Freddie Cole as Nat Cole; Etta Jones as Lady Bird; Ann Bailey as Dinah; Dizzy Reece as Dizzy Gillespie; and a host of others.

Filming will be done in Newark, N.J., New York City, Stockholm and Paris.

If the movie is anywhere near as colorful as the book—or Babs himself—it should be a winner.

Guitar Institute Info

HOLLYWOOD—A brand new, full-time professional guitar school, the Guitar Institute of Technology with a curriculum designed by Howard Roberts, will open its doors, Mar. 7, 1977, at the former Columbia Pictures Studios here.

In a recent meeting, G.I.T. faculty members Roberts, Joe Diorio, Ron Eschete, David Cohen and Tommy Tedesco lectured on and demonstrated their individual approaches to the guitar. A show of hands revealed the attendees to be evenly divided among professional guitarists, guitar students and aspirants.

Roberts described innovations such as the Tachistiscope, an electronic learning device which will be employed at the Institute to increase sight-reading speed. Tedesco distributed copies of the most difficult guitar part he ever played while the assemblage listened to his portion of the resultant motion picture soundtrack. **db**'s Frank Garlock analyzed the challenges of today's music, and guitarist Jimmy Stewart discussed his career. Stick Inventor Emmett Chapman and Dick Grove, whose Music Workshop will be affiliated with G.I.T., were in the crowd.

Guitar synthesizer, electronics, harmony and theory, ear training, arranging, composition, orchestration, improvisation and the latest new playing devices will be offered. Frequent seminars and workshops by leading guitarists and educators will be scheduled throughout the year.

Dr. Butler's Future

CHICAGO—Horizons for Blue Note Records and the jazz record business are brighter than ever, according to Dr. George Butler, president of the United Artists subsidiary.

"We feel good about what's going on at the moment in terms of the support we're getting from our own organization, in terms of the receptive audience out there, and in terms of the wealth of genuine talent around in the jazz area of music," said Dr. Butler during a recent promotional trip for the record label and guitarist Earl Klugh. "For the first time we have genuine support from United Artists in terms of giving me my own marketing head. We will be involved in marketing and merchandising our products, and placing as much emphasis on the catalog as well as artists currently on the roster."

Besides the label's extensive reissue program, involving not only its own hefty catalog but World Pacific and Solid State which the company owns, Dr. Butler says Blue Note is continuing to search for new young talent like Ronnie Laws, Earl Klugh and newly-signed violinist Noel Pointer. The label is also seeking to sign some older jazz veterans whom, he says, suffered in the past because record companies didn't feel they were commercial enough.

"Jazz is enjoying a very healthy period," observed the Blue Note head. "What Warner Bros. and Columbia are doing is indicative of major companies being supportive. George Benson's first album (for Warner Bros.) justified the investment that company made in him. I think that was a pivotal factor in terms of other companies' really becoming seriously concerned about their jazz divisions."

In reply to criticism leveled at Blue Note and other big labels that their treatment of jazz has become overly commercial, Butler points out that "commercial jazz" at Blue Note was his concept, a concept born with Donald Byrd's *Black Byrd* album. "We were being insidious in what we were trying to do. The idea was to capture the attention of a younger audience. We felt that once we provoked their curiousity they would want to explore the jazz archives to find out what Coltrane did and what Clifford Brown did.

"We think a lot of young people now realize that many rock musicians have exhausted their creative possibilities, and they're borrowing from the jazz idiom," Dr. Butler continued. "They are marveling at what jazz musicians have been doing for years, and we think rock musicians are somewhat of a catalyst in getting jazz musicians across."

Jazz at Baden-Baden

BADEN-BADEN, GER.—The annual New Jazz Meeting Baden-Baden occurred recently and featured composers Carla Bley and Mike Mantler of the New York Jazz Composers Orchestra.

Other appearances were made by Roswell Rudd; tuba player Bob Stewart; British tenor saxophonist Gary Windo; German pianist and synthesizer-player Wolfgang Dauner; Swiss saxophonist Urs Leimgruber; German guitarist Toto Blanke; and trombonist Albert Mangelsdorff.

As usual, there was a double rhythm section, comprised of drummers Aldo Romano from Paris and Edward Vesala from Helsinki, and bassists Bo Stief from Copenhagen and Hugh Hopper from London's Soft Machine.

The New Jazz Meeting—produced by Joachim Ernst Berendt for Suedwestfunk Baden-Baden (Southwestern German Radio and TV Network)—has been an annual thing for 11 years.

FINAL BAR

Walter Piston, composer who won two Pulitzer prizes for his symphonies and teacher of many musicians (among them Leonard Bernstein), died recently in Belmont, Mass. He was 82.

Piston's *Third Symphony* won the Pulitzer Prize in 1948, as did his *Seventh Symphony* in 1961. When music critics complained that the *Third Symphony*'s finale was overly noisy, Piston retorted, "It was written while an artesian well was being dug just outside my window. I had to write music loud enough to drown out the noise outside."

Piston taught for 34 years, retiring from Harvard University in 1960. Some of the other notables taught by him include Elliott Carter, Daniel Pinkham, and Arthur Berger. His legacy of work includes eight symphonies, four string quartets, a ballet, several books on musical theory and orchestration, and numerous other pieces for orchestra and chamber ensembles.

Before Gibson designed the S-1, Ron Wood had his guitars customized.

The guitars that Ron Wood has played with Jeff Beck, Rod Stewart & Faces and now the Rolling Stones were customized to the point that the names on the pegheads were meaningless. But this isn't the case with Ron's new Gibson S-1 guitar. It's a genuine Gibson right off the production line.

Ron's forte is loud, hard, powerful rock & roll, and the three high frequency pickups put out everything he needs. They're flexible too, under the control of a four position pickup/phase selector switch, plus a bypass switch that shuts off everything but the lead pickup. So, Ron can evoke the mood he needs for a mournful *Maggie Mae*, or make the music burn for *Gimmie Shelter*.

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THE BROTHERS JOHNSON

The Funkiest Funk Ever Funked!!

by lee underwood

Known as the Brothers Johnson, guitarist George, 23, and bassist Louis, 21, reached a pinnacle of success with their 1976 debut A & M LP, *Look Out For # 1*. *Look Out* went gold (500,000 units sold) in only seven weeks, and has since gone platinum (one million units sold). To date, *Look Out For # 1* has sold more than 1,250,000 copies, and is still on the move.

The Bro-Js play a music known today as funk. Nobody can adequately define the word. As a verbal concept it is just as hazy as "jazz" or "classical" or any other generic label. The infectious rhythmic feeling of funk, however, infuses nearly all of pop music, both black and white. Funk is the latest, most pervasive extension of what used to be called "race music"—gospel, blues, and rhythm and blues, played and sung by blacks for other blacks almost exclusively.

By the early 1950s, the label "race music" sounded a bit too harsh for a society beginning to rectify racial discrimination; and, too, disc jockeys had begun to discover that young white listeners liked Bill Haley and Elvis Presley, whose white, quasi-gospel, quasi-blues, quasi-country & western concoctions gave birth to what Alan Freed and other DJs began calling rock 'n' roll.

On the black side, "race music" became rhythm and blues, and then, synonymously, soul. Soul music was a new black generation's answer to the blues. If gospel's glory shouters gave birth to soul on the altars of Sunday morning churches, the real-dirt-blues gave birth to soul in the Saturday night barrooms, dance halls, and bedrooms of black America.

White rock 'n' rollers such as Janis Joplin, Eric Clapton, Paul Butterfield, the Rolling Stones and many others embraced the blues as a form which adequately expressed their own feelings. Their black counterparts of the '60s rejected the blues as being a shuffling, apologetic, self-pitying music born out of their parents' humiliations under the crushing heels of white bigotry.

Berry Gordy founded Motown Records in the early '60s and gave rise to a fresh sound of new black identity based on pride, strength and courage. Diana Ross and the Supremes, the Temptations, Smokey Robinson and the Miracles, Gladys Knight and the Pips, Martha and the Vandellas, and Marvin Gaye are just a few who helped to both reflect and shape an emerging spirit of black liberation that had never been known in America before.

And then came Sly Stone, who experimented with soul music within acid-drenched rock contexts. Like rock, it was a loud, electric, earthy street music. It was based on extended one- or two-chord jams, with the bass right out front playing patterns. It was infused with a repetitive, hypnotic, rhythmic feeling, unequivocally geared for celebratory dancing—it was physical, it was sexual, it was aggressive, it was "dirty." Sly Stone, in a word, was *funky*. So was James Brown, who was saying in music what Martin Luther King was saying in politics—I'm black, I'm beautiful, I'm proud.

Soul split into two directions—the comparatively bland, formulated, violin-splashed pop-soul sound of Diana Ross, the Spinners, the Miracles, et. al; and the funk of Sly Stone and James Brown and their descendants.

Miles Davis altered the face of jazz when he released the funkified *Bitches Brew* in 1969. Isaac Hayes brought funk to further international attention with the opening "wah-wah" guitar licks of the theme from the movie *Shaft*. Kool And The Gang swept the nation's pop and r&b charts in 1973 with *Funky Stuff, Jungle Boogie* and *Hollywood Swinging*.

Since those days, the sound and the *feel* of funk has at least to some degree permeated virtually every corner of black and white popular music as well as jazz.

In black funk, we hear the Brothers Johnson, Parliament/Funkadelic, Bootsy Collins and his Rubber Band, Graham Central Station, the Ohio Players, War, the Commodores, the Meters, etc.

In white funk we hear "blue-eyed soul brothers" like the Average White Band, K.C. and the Sunshine Band, and Wild Cherry.

On the jazz/funk end of the spectrum we hear not only Herbie Hancock and Donald Byrd, but Freddie Hubbard, Grover Washington, Blue Mitchell, Sonny Rollins *(Nucleus)*, Mal Waldron, Billy Cobham, Alphonse Mouzon, and growing numbers of others, many of whom were diehard jazz purists at one time.

Those listeners who like their jazz "straight," i.e., bop-oriented and/or avant garde, dismiss funk as faddish commercial trash. Those who enjoy the music of, say, Herbie Hancock, regard funk as the musical and economical savior of jazz, which nearly wheezed itself into complex, terminal obscurity during the late '60s.

George and Louis Johnson find themselves at the top of the commercial heap because of *Look Out For # 1*, which initially caught on in the discos of Washington, D.C., moved up to New York, and then spread West to L.A., where guitarist George was born May 17, 1953, and bassist Louis was born on April 13, 1955.

They also find themselves surrounded by the whirlwind of aesthetic controversy because of the funky music they play. Are their hit singles, *Get The Funk Out Ma Face* and *I'll Be Good To You*, to be taken seriously as music? Because the Brothers are young, naive, and relatively uninformed about their historical roots, they offer little by way of defense or explanation. But they do not feel that their music has to be justified or explained in any way whatsoever, for the influence of funk in contemporary music is undeniable, and their role as promulgators of the idiom is firmly and positively established.

'Round Midnight may be a "standard" to Quincy Jones, who discovered the Brothers in February of 1975, introduced them on his own record, *Mellow Madness*, secured their A & M contract, produced and arranged *Look Out For # 1*, and took them on tour with him in 1975 and 1976. But Quincy is of another generation. If a "standard" to Quincy is Thelonious Monk's *'Round Midnight*, a "standard" to the Brothers Johnson is James Brown's *Papa's Got A Brand New Bag*.

Louis Johnson used to take his mother's broom out of the pantry and strum on it until all the straw fell out. George used to spend hours in front of the radio and the record player listening to Top 40 hits. If a record happened to break, he would lovingly carry the pieces around in his pocket.

When they were six and seven their father bought them a guitar assembly-kit. George and Louis fought over the guitar until their father bought Louis a bass. Dad thought it was a guitar, but there had been a mistake in packing. Louis loved the instrument, however, and now each had an instrument of his own.

By the time they were 11 and 12 years old, they had formed their own group along with their older brother, Tommy, a drummer, and their cousin, Alex Weir, another guitarist. They called themselves the Johnson 3 + 1 and became instant stars in the local party-dance-prom circuit. Other kids played football and baseball while the Johnson 3 + 1 played music and made money. They even got mobbed once by fans after a Charles Drew Jr. High School dance.

In 1968 they won radio station KGFJ's Soul Search contest. The prize was a set of guitars and amplifiers, and a one-shot recording contract with Venture Records. Their single, a version of Bobby Womack's *Testify*, sold all of the 1,000 copies released.

They were only 12 and 13, but they started opening shows as the lead act for established artists such as the Supremes, Bobby Womack and David Ruffin. They played predominantly Top 40 tunes, but every once in awhile they threw in a few originals as well. "People thought we were great, but mostly, I suspect, it was because we were just little kids up there gettin' down on stage."

In 1971, guitarist George graduated from high school, attended West L.A. Junior College for three months, and then met Billy Preston, who signed him on immediately for a European tour. When Preston's bass player quit, Louis Johnson took over the bass slot.

After a year with Preston, the Johnson Brothers decided to break out on their own. They stayed home for a year, wrote nearly 300 songs, and bothered one record company after another. None of the executives who decide what we will hear on our airwaves recognized the degree of commercial potential that sat in the chairs before their mahogany desks and stared them right in the face.

Then came the classic break. Joe Green, formerly Billy Preston's road manager, called Louis and George to play on a few tracks he was producing for Taka Khan (Chaka's sister). Joe took the tapes to Quincy Jones at A & M Records. When "Q" heard the tapes, he asked Joe to bring the Brothers in.

"We were nervous meeting Quincy," said Louis, "but when we started to play, our nerves settled and the funk started to flow from our music. Quincy just stared at us for the first few minutes, and then he stood up and hollered. In a matter of minutes the whole studio was on their feet and listening to us and partying to our groove."

"One of the greatest trips of being in this crazy business of music," said Quincy, "is the acquisition of new, young, and talented artists. The idea of finding musicians with incredible raw ability and helping to polish that rough talent into a fine gem really gets me off."

Quincy used four of Louis "Thunder Thumbs" and George "Lightnin' Licks" Johnson's songs on *Mellow Madness (Is It Love That We're Missin'), Listen (What It Is), Tryin' To Find Out About You,* and *Just A Little Taste Of Me).* Since going on Q's 1975 tour of the U.S. and Japan and recording their own *Look Out For # 1,* the Bro-Js have also performed as studio musicians on albums by Herbie Hancock, Bill Withers, Bobby Womack, Airto, Gabor Szabo, Grover Washington, Bob James, and several others.

Quincy has helped them develop their musical education. ("Listen to jazz. Get into the classics. *Expand* your knowledge.") He has also taught them about the business side of music—contracts, promotion, distribution, marketing, record sales, etc. And Billy Eckstine has taught them stage craft—how to use the microphones, how to move on stage, how to take a bow, etc.

"In my 20 years in this business," said Quincy, "I have never been so turned on by two young musicians as I am by the Brothers Johnson. As writers, musicians, vocalists, and performers, they are extremely talented individuals.

"Their striving for knowledge has led them to begin studying other forms of music to gain a fuller understanding of the components of all of music.

"In a short period of time, we have all become brothers. They are equally beautiful as people and as musicians. I really believe that the future of music is in the hands of young dudes like them. Needless to say, I am quite proud of them."

Underwood: Although you have been involved with music for some 14 years now, you are both still very young. How are you handling the first blast of stardom?

Louis: I don't like to look at it as stardom. I don't feel any particular pressure. I just groove with it. I don't think I'll ever feel any pressure. Sometimes people treat us differently, but when they do, I do the same. If they're gonna trip on me, I just sidestep them.

Underwood: Do you find that you're becoming public property?

George: Yeah, sometimes we get strange looks, or people follow us around or approach us. But that doesn't upset us too much. In the last two days I've written seven songs.

Underwood: In pop music, there is a "fascination" factor. That is, an artist will be on top for a week, a month, a year, maybe five years. But when the fascination wears off, nobody cares anymore. What kinds of preparations are you two making for when that happens?

George: I think it has to do with learning as much about music as you can, reading, picking up knowledge.

Louis: And also changing with the times. Maybe next year something besides the bass will be standing out. As long as we can do whatever the music is doing, we'll be there.

Underwood: Do you think you can do that just by choosing to, just by wanting to?

Louis: Yeah. I think I can change any kind of way. I can make the funk I play do anything.

Underwood: This assumes that you have all of the abilities necessary to go in any direction.

Louis: When I like somebody, I dig the way they play. When they come up with something new, and I like it, I can get it.

Underwood: Are you saying you just go whichever way the wind blows?

Louis: Yep.

Underwood: How about you, George?

George: I think the secret in pop is in staying near to the discos. It all depends on what the public wants. You can't just put out music and say, "I know they're gonna dance to this." You listen to what the people like to dance to, and you change with that. Our main concern is to satisfy the people and remain commercially solvent. You can please yourself, too, but it doesn't make sense to put something on an album that you know the public wouldn't like.

Underwood: It's not so much a personal vision that you are attempting to realize, but a matter of simply going wherever the bucks go?

George: We have to. That's just the way I feel. I love money. And in order to make money and stay in business, you have to change. If the public won't accept you, nobody will. Right now, the public has put us on a pedestal. They respect us as being musicians. We would let them down if we didn't satisfy them in return. The public controls music, I feel.

Underwood: Some people feel that music will go wherever the artists take it.

George: The secret to staying in the business is to stay close to the discos and the public.

Louis: That's also true, that people will follow the music.

George: Yeah, you can get an artist who changes the music. Just like when we came in, people picked up on what we were doing. Another artist may come in with a new kind of music, and people will pick up on that. People didn't pick up on Parliament when they started, then they did. In five years, if Parliament's doing the same thing, they won't be in the same position they are now. It'll be over.

Underwood: What does this word "funk" mean to you?

Louis: I used to dig the word "funk," but not any more. People misuse the word "funk."

To me, there is the real funk, like George Clinton and his Parliament/Funkadelics group and Bootsy Collins and his Rubber Band, and then there is simulated funk.

There's so much simulated funk that the people think some things are funky that really are not. K.C. and the Sunshine Band is not funky. Neither is the Average White Band or Wild Cherry. I'm not saying I don't like them. They're just not funky, that's all. They're simulated funk.

Underwood: Because they are white?

Louis: No, not because they are white. But because of the feel. The feel in the bass. The feel in the music. I could take Led Zeppelin and say they're funky, but they don't sound nothin' like George Clinton and the Parliaments.

Underwood: What's the difference?

Louis: I feel the funky way I play comes from my life's experiences—trips with record companies, trying to get jobs, being around hoodlums, things like that.

Playing music is telling everybody what you have been through. If they dig it, it's because they can apply it to themselves. They can just feel it in the music. They don't even have to hear the words.

Actually, I think "funk" is just a word. Soon there will be a new word. Our music is called "futuristic funk." But that's just a phrase the record publicity people came up with.

I don't know. It's just music. I told them our music is the funkiest funk ever funked.

Underwood: What do you think of people who look down on funk?

Louis: That's funky! Really, what makes me happy is when people honestly say what they believe. To me, that's what funk is, when people just do their thing.

Underwood: Charlie Parker did his thing, too. So did Louis Armstrong, and so does Cecil Taylor. How is funk different from jazz?

Louis: To me, they're real close. Funk is a feeling. Jazz is a feeling. And jazz and funk are the only musics I can really relate to. They do something inside you. When I listen to jazz, it's almost the same as when I listen to the Parliaments. The way the bass moves in jazz, and the way the bass moves in the Parliaments moves me in the same direction.

Underwood: That may be so today, but it wasn't always that way. George, what is the difference between yourselves, the Parliaments, Graham Central Station and Bootsy Collins, for example, and the music of Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Horace Silver and Thelonious Monk?

George: I think it's just updated music, that's all. Today we hear a lot of bass and drums out front; maybe five years from now people will just want to hear the drums out front with the bass layin' back.

Underwood: Many jazz fans complain that jazz is losing its identity, that it's becoming a vast, faceless kind of music due to the influence of commercial funk.

George: Strict jazz people stick with jazz. Others are sticking to jazz but putting funk rhythms up underneath it. I don't know why people complain about that. It could be, like, jazz is funk, funk is jazz.

What we are doing, however, is basically just commercial funk. There is no jazz with the funk. It's more or less just straight funk.

Louis: Plus, most jazz I've heard sounds like it's been planned, organized, rehearsed, then read off the charts. It doesn't sound spontaneous. Funk isn't reading. I wasn't reading nothin' in the studio. It was just natural.

Underwood: What about harmonies and melodies?

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George: All of that is important as far as recording. You have to have a melody inside of a tune. But actually, you can do practically anything as far as a song goes. It all depends on where your head is, and what the mood is.

Underwood: Okay. Time for the Devil's Ad-

HOT SHOTS

Glimpses of the Second Annual Soundstage/down beat Awards Show

Photos By Herb Nolan

A successful idea is always worth repeating. The response to last year's *Soundstage/***down beat** *Awards Show* prompted PBS producers Bill Heitz and Charles Mitchell to gather a stellar cast of **db** poll winners for an encore presentation.

Assembled in the WTTW-TV studios in Chicago were such heavy names as Chick Corea, Thad Jones, Ron Carter, George Benson, Jean-Luc Ponty, Bill Watrous, Sonny Fortune, Gary Burton, Stanley Clarke and Billy Cobham. Co-hosts Corea and Jones presented the players in a wide variety of settings, ranging from duets and trios to large ensemble arrangements.

The show will be presented in early January. Check your local listings for details.

Host Thad Jones greets Flying Frenchman Ponty.

Thad takes the spotlight for a hot moment.

Sonny wails away with supporting throb from Stanley.

Ensemble shot: (from l. to r.) Carter, Jones, Clarke, Fortune, Watrous, Ponty, Corea. Where's Billy?

Chick discusses an upcoming number with former **db** associate editor turned soundstager Chuck Mitchell.

Stanley, Jean-Luc and Chick Corea form a mighty triumvirate.

Ron grabs hands with Chick and a partially obscured Thad, as Stanley grins in the background.

Thad and George mull things over.

Chick ruminates, Gary tinkles, and Billy straightens out some details.

Dynamic duo in pulsating action.

Billy is almost dwarfed by his gigantic drum kit.

Billy does the hand jive as George looks on.

The controversy surrounding electronic instrumentation is certainly nothing new. In the middle and late '60s, the battle lines were fairly distinct. Many musicians and critics could give a definite negative or positive reaction to the artistic validity of electronics.

In 1977, however, it is clear that electronic instrumentation is here to stay. Opinions on the subject have become more ambivalent—the question now is not a clear "yes" or "no", but where can we go with electronics.

With this in mind, we talked to some of the foremost composer/arrangers in contemporary music. The responses to our intentionally broad question cover the entire range of the problems and possibilities of electronic instrumentation. We feel that these responses point to directions for the future and hope they prove interesting and enlightening.

ELECTRONIC PROJECTIONS

compiled by
arnold jay smith/bob henschen

Electronic instrumentation has reached a point in 1976 where it permeates much of contemporary music. How do you react to this trend, is this good or bad, and what is the future of music in regard to electronics? In short, where do we go from here?

PAT WILLIAMS: Well, uh, good or bad is a very oversimplistic way to view the impact of it, in my way of thinking. I mean it's a . . . my response would be that it's had an enormous impact and that it's going to be even more so in the future because of technology alone. And whether good or bad, you know, will depend a great deal on the capabilities and talents of the people who use it. It involves artistic taste and technical know-how of the composers and arrangers that use the technique. I mean, to me it's no different than any other language. It's a technical language, but it's no different than any other aspect of what's available to a composer. To my way of thinking, it's a very exciting prospect. It gives composers a whole new range of things that they can experiment with, and see if they can make some music out of.

Electronics, or certainly electronic-oriented devices or whatever you want to call them, are day-to-day tools of scoring films today. There's no question about it. I mean, from the days of ten years ago when somebody discovered an echoplex, you know, I mean, almost all the composers out here, or many of them, own their own synthesizers. . . . It's just becoming a very important part of the day-to-day activities, in and out of the studios here.

FRANK ZAPPA: I like electronic music, I think it will be around for a long time. I think that the instruments are going to have to be designed so that they're easier to operate in live performance situations.

On *Zoot Allures* (Zappa's newest album), most of the electronic events that are taking place are things that were done with studio electronics. There are some synthesizer things that I played on the album, but they're real simple-minded.

Electronics, for instance the string synthesizer, is the best thing that could happen to pop music because when you consider the attitude of normal string players, even jazz string players, it's so disgusting doing business with them that it's great that somebody has finally invented a box (the string synthesizer) that will help you do away with them and their aura. If you can get a better sound by using real musicians I would prefer to do it. But unfortunately the attitude of those kind of musicians toward the work that they do is so moribund, it just adds a cloud. . . . People are more worried about their pensions than the notes that they're playing, and I hate to do business with them. Working with many so-called "studio musicians," all they care about is their pensions, going to their union meetings, and maintaining their position in a musical community that has nothing to do with music, but

more to do with, you know, really horrible middle-class, middle-of-the-road lifestyle. It's depressing for me, in most instances, to deal with them, because they do not have my musical interests at heart, and I doubt if they have *anybody's* musical interests at heart when they come in to do those sessions. All you gotta do is stand in the hallway during one of their little union breaks and listen to their conversation, then you know where it's at. And it's the same thing in symphony orchestras. So thank God somebody put together a box that'll sound like a string section, because in a hockey rink who can tell the difference?

As for where music will be in ten or fifteen years, all the jazz musicians will forget how to improvise and really get good at playing disco music. Each one of them will have three cars and a house in the country.

WALTER MURPHY: First of all, I think it's very good, and they're being used very well for the most part, I think. I mean, I enjoy Herbie Hancock's music and people like that. . . . It's developing all the time. I think it's terrific. As far as the direction we're going, I'm getting involved in an area that's not totally electronics, relying totally on electronic instruments. I'm trying to incorporate them with natural instruments. For my own tastes, that's an interesting concept to pursue, and that's what I'm doing at the present time, and hopefully in the future also.

BOB JAMES: I don't think there is any question about the fact that electronics is part and parcel of today's music and will continue to be in the music of the future. I don't look upon it as a good or a bad trend any more than I look on any other instrument as having one or the other qualities; the result depends on who is manipulating them. The fact that they have become so prominent in today's music has a lot to do with the whole recording medium itself, which is an electronic medium. The way we listen to records is through electronic apparatus; it is essentially an electronic phenomenon. The electronic instruments have a tendency to be very compatible with the kinds of equipment necessary to make records, e.g., microphones, amplifiers, etc. Very often it is easier to obtain better control through the use of electronic instruments than it is with the unpredictable qualities of acoustical ones.

The best of electronic instruments provide the opportunity for a greater palette of sound. Creative musicians are always looking for new avenues of sound. Electronic instruments give them that opportunity. Jazz is a medium where creativity is vitally important. In order for creative musicians to be stimulated they have to have sound to be stimulated by.

An electronic instrument doesn't have to be dehumanizing, no more so than the drums, say. Electronic instruments have the same ability to sound good or bad, depending upon who is making the sounds. There are instruments that have the capability of making sounds without humans doing anything to them. There are synthesizers that are currently available where all you have to do is push a button and they will go into a pattern which is essentially not controlled by the guy who is pushing the button. If that's all you are interested in, then it is dehumanizing, I guess.

I think the same challenge exists for all instruments. It takes a creative person to use this tool and make music out of it.

Perhaps as the instruments get out there and

more people play them, we'll see more diversity. But the opposite is also true. The sophistication of the electronic instrumentation now used on records makes it much harder for students to duplicate the music than it used to be. You no longer have the conventional instruments. Take Herbie Hancock's on my records. You see $10,000 worth of gear and studios to match: Arp 2600, Odyssey, mini-Moog, an Oberheim, banks of mixers. Even Miles Davis, who used to go out to tour without even an amp for a bass or guitar, now he goes with a bank of items. Look at Joe Farrell—he's got a

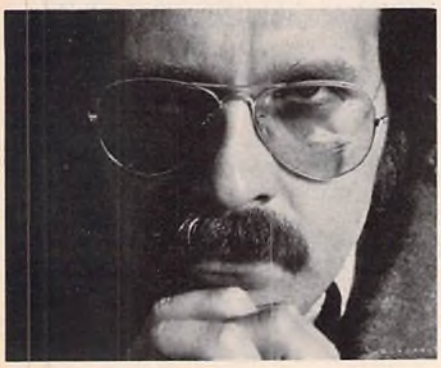
ring modulator and a phase shifter. No, it's definitely not easier for them to try and copy their heroes; it's harder.

The real deception about synthesizer is that it is easy to make some kind of music quickly, without practicing, without taking lessons, just by reading the instruction book. You have a dues-paying musician emerging on synthesizer as well as on other instruments. The youngsters have to realize that. There's Chick Corea and Barry Miles, accomplished synthesizer players who *do* practice 6 or 8 hours to perfect their skills. That's where I think the future of it lies, in the people who are willing to pay the dues that the people throughout history have been paying with any instrument they picked up.

DON SEBESKY: First, let me say that electronics is not my forte; I only use it when I need it. The dehumanization aspect is overdone. It's not natural sound; it wasn't there when God made the instruments. It's a natural 20th century development. We are using what's around us. It's a new avenue. You can use it as it conforms to your personality, or as it conflicts with it. A guy like Keith Jarrett can go against it and someone like Herbie Hancock can go with it. It's what's in your head. It can go either way. When I need it, I use it; when I don't need it, I leave it alone. It's just another way to get ideas across. I don't use any instrument all the time to try to create some pattern.

I think it's a natural development for people to find something different, something personal. Somebody comes along and finds something original, a mode of playing, that starts it. It seems everybody's reacting and grabbing onto the electronic trend because it's a novelty. Eventually, they will sort out the good from the bad. Some may even go back to acoustics, like Chick's new album *(The Leprechaun)*. It's merely a stepping back and taking a look at where we are, and where we go from here. Ron Carter wanted a totally natural sound and consequently it's (his new Milestone LP) all acoustic. The reaction may be to see what happens if we go the other way and touch base. Then we'll make a play for the center.

I think we're tied to electronics, but there



ALEN MAC WEENEY

will be individuality springing from it. If we don't try to make it our total field of vision, if we use it for a purpose, then we'll be okay. I have seen musicians take instruments to bed with them and surround themselves with them, closing off all the rest. If we use it as another instrument and place it in its proper perspective it will serve us. But if we jump at it as a fad and use it up, there will be nothing left to develop. We'll be sick of it. I guess there will be more and more sophisticated musical instruments, like synthesized guitar; there's no end in sight. It's what the musicians make of them. In any original musician's hands something good can come out of it. It's so tempting to try for gimmicks with something new like this. I think we realize that there is a limit to what people are going to want from electronic instruments and consequently we come back a ways and say, "Let's not desert our roots." With that in mind we can move ahead and add another instrument to our suitcase.

CARLA BLEY: I have nothing to do with electronics save the theramin and some of the string synthesizers. I like them; I think they are pleasant, musical sounding things. I can develop them improvisationally as well, but I don't appreciate the "beeps," the "squawks," the "bubbles," the non-musical sounds. There *are* some that I like, but they are all musical.

I just had an experience using human beings and their horns: Roswell Rudd on trombone, Carlos Ward on alto, and Mike Mantler playing trumpet. I was trying to get a smoothness of sound for the record that I was making. I was finding it impossible, so I tried harder. Finally, I realized that the essence of a human being is the *lack* of smoothness. That became something to be preserved and highlighted. My attitude took a 180 degree turn. As soon as Roswell got spit in his horn, I told the engineer to put that track a little higher so I could hear more of that spit. When Ros got to a high note that he couldn't reach, he used his voice to imitate the trombone note. I again thought of it as something precious, something incredibly human that might be disappearing from recorded music. I made them put that track a little higher in the mix as well. At the end of the experience of using these horns, there was more a sound of breath, voice and

VALERIE WILMER

spit on the record than there was metal. I went another step away from electronics, back through instrumental sounds into body sounds. Maybe that's just a reaction to snythesizers.

I don't think this drift away from human sounds is the fault of electronics. I think it's the fault of the record business. There is such a trend toward super clean sound in the industry that they will become depersonalized. If you happen to have a personal sound, it would interrupt the cleanness and disturb everybody. If any of those things I mentioned earlier were to occur in a session, the producer would stop and have it done over again. They are trying to get rid of personalities, to make everyone sound like a million other people. Maybe that's so people can be replaced by other people and nobody will have the industry over a barrel. They will create 300 horn players that sound exactly the same, like the strings in a symphony.

As the owner of a 16-track studio in my basement, I would say we are locked into electronics. But those electronics are a means of capturing the humanity, not the enslaving of it. I have never played a synthesizer; I haven't the ability to turn the switch. I played a very simple synthesizer in the Jack Bruce band and I was always caught with my banjo stop up when I was supposed to be taking a cello solo. I could *not* get my fingers to press the right button, or even remember three different things while trying to speak musically. I couldn't mechanically perform on this instrument. I can't get any sound out of an electric piano either, but I think the Hammond organ is an instrument in its own right. I can get music out of that, and it is an electronic instrument, after all.

Wherever it's all going, there will be people reacting to it. It's a battle, but we will fight the good fight, won't we?

MIKE GIBBS: My reaction is favorable. I think it's good and it is definitely part of the future of music . . . for me. Composers and arrangers are always looking for new sounds. The fear is that the instruments are going to take over, but that will never happen. They are always operated by humans and so it simply adds to the vocabulary, the language we have at our disposal. It's not going to replace anything; it's adding to it. I can't see pianos being done away with, or saxophones. It gives us more tools to work with. What specifically interests me is that there are a lot of sounds that I hadn't been aware of prior to hearing electronic instruments. Now I am able to better orchestrate acoustic instruments because of the way I heard certain electronic instruments.

Human limits are being stretched all the time. The very existence of these instruments stretches the human limitations. The danger is in the separation of the two, acoustic and electronic. There are instruments: some are electric, some are keyboards, some saxophones, etc. The danger is saying that this is one lot, this is another lot. They are all part of the same thing and the composer, arranger, player uses them to make his sounds. The instruments have sounds that the player or composer can learn from. It can only help. If there is a sameness it might be because of the human limitations. But that can only get better as he learns the sounds and starts to absorb them and they become part of his language. Individual patterns will develop from it as well. The fact that it is electric isn't going to hamper his development. If he can't do it on one instrument, he won't be able to do it on anything. The player has it within himself to be individual; it doesn't matter what he is playing.

Electronics is just a tool. You don't tie into instruments, the instruments make a big enough impression so that the people playing them want to continue doing so. The future of the music isn't tied to the instruments. The instruments are tied to the future of the music. Music is going on because of the people, not because of the instruments.

In one of (Leonard) Bernstein's lectures, he stated that tonality is back. I agree with that and even though it is influenced by the atonality around it, it has benefited by it. I only know what's happening now. The future will take care of itself. I can't do something to make a "next step." All I can do is what I am doing now. It cannot but be me. I am influenced by what's all around me, and if electronics are part of it, so be it.

I'd like to expound on one thought. There is a danger in stating "electronics on the left, acoustics on the right." It's like saying "classical music here, jazz there." Once you start separating them, they'll never get together. db

TED CURSON
Striving with Integrity

by chuck berg

For me, the discovery of Ted Curson was one of the highpoints of 1976. I had remembered an old album entitled *The New Thing And The Blue Thing* (Atlantic 1441). There were also vague recollections of Curson's associations with Charlie Mingus and Cecil Taylor. But it wasn't until last January on a wintery afternoon when the postman delivered an assortment of records to review for **down beat,** that my understanding and respect for Curson really began.

Included among those records was the poignantly titled Curson release, *Tears For Dolphy* (Arista AL 1021). The music's emotional depth, range and technical sophistication were spellbinding. In my ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ review (**db,** May 20, 1976), I singled out Curson's ability to generate fresh ideas through masterful combinations of mainstream structures and avant garde liberties.

I soon learned that I was but one of an army of Curson admirers. Ted's February engagement at the Tin Palace, for example, received rave notices from such diverse publications as the *New York Times,* the *Village Voice, Radio Free Jazz* and *Variety.* I missed that, but was on hand for his Newport-New York appearance at the helm of a fiery septet consisting of Curson on trumpet, piccolo trumpet and fluegelhorn; Chris Woods, alto sax; Nick Brignola, bari sax and saxello; Jim McNeely, piano; David Friesen, bass; Steve McCall, drums; and Sam Jacobs, percussion. In my review I wrote: "This is a dynamic, driving ensemble that with a few breaks could become one of the influential groups on the current scene" (**db,** September 9, 1976). Subsequent performances have only reenforced that view.

Ted's wife describes her husband as a "sunny baby." It's an apt description. His warmth, vitality and gently self-deprecating humor are disarming. A marvelous raconteur, his words are as compelling as his music. Our two hour conversation took place over sandwiches and coffee at the Stage Delicatessen and touched on past experiences, present activities and future plans and hopes.

* * *

Berg: Ted, in the liner information for *The New Thing And The Blue Thing,* Nat Hentoff notes that you were born on July 3, 1935 in Philadelphia. He also points out that your first musical influences were your neighbors, Percy, Jimmy and Albert Heath. Were there other major influences?

Curson: I studied some jazz things with Jimmy. And Tootie and I went to school together. We started out playing at the same time. But mainly I was into very modern jazz. In Philly it wasn't called avant garde or free; it was called "weird music." I was very interested in freer things because I knew I couldn't do anything like Dizzy. I always figured that you should play your own way, even if it stinks.

Miles was my influence. I liked Miles very much. In Philly, Miles heard me at Jazz City and told me that he dug my playing. He said that when I came to New York he'd get me a job at Birdland, which he did. So I eventually decided to go to New York.

When I got to Birdland Miles was sitting at the bar. We talked and he suggested that we go talk to the head of Roulette Records. On the basis of Miles' recommendation, he offered me a contract. They wanted me to sign right there but I said, "No, I want to talk it over with my wife." You must remember I was coming from Philly and had been warned about signing the first thing that came along. They were a little bit upset that I didn't sign right away, but it was agreed that I could take it home and bring it in the next day. The only problem was that the guy from Roulette got killed that night at Birdland. So that was one of the many mistakes I've made in the business. If I had signed that night, I probably would have been a star 20 years ago.

Berg: That sounds right out of a movie.

Curson: Well, that was one of my major mistakes. Another time I was standing on 125th St. with my trumpet case. This was around 1956 after I had just arrived in New York and a guy walked by, stopped, and asked me if I wanted to make a record date. I said "Yeah!" So we jumped in his car and drove to ABC Paramount. He never heard me play, never seen me, just saw me there standing with my trumpet. He asked, "Do you want a royalty or cash?" I said "cash" and he said "O.K." The date turned out to be a Lloyd Price session and we did *Personality* and *Stagger Lee.* Each tune sold in the millions. And I got $66.00. Years later I ran into the manager and he said, "See how stupid you were? You should have taken the royalty."

Berg: Well, that's show biz. By the way, what was the Birdland gig like?

Curson: After the murder, I began working Monday nights there in a cooperative group with Vera Auer, the Austrian vibist. We played opposite everybody, Brubeck, Mulligan, everybody. And there were trumpet battles with Lee Morgan, Freddie Hubbard and myself. But it wasn't really the music I wanted.

Berg: How was your stint with Cecil Taylor?

Curson: It was a very interesting gig. At first I had a little trouble because he is a continuous player. So I had to figure out how to make my thing work in with his. I finally got something to come out, but it was hard.

The thing is that between the time I left Philly to the time I went with Cecil Taylor in 1959, a big change had happened with my playing. I wasn't as modern as I used to be. Somehow playing Birdland had changed me.

Berg: You mean bebop, structured tunes, standards?

Curson: Yeah. I sort of drifted back to a bebop thing. In those days the critics weren't as open. And, if anything, the musicians were worse. They thought that if a guy was doing something new he couldn't play. For instance, on New Year's Eve in Philadelphia every musician would have a job. Even if they only played once a year, they would play New Year's Eve. Well, I saw John Coltrane one New Year's Eve and he didn't have a job. I told him to come with me. But he had a bad time. People always gave him a bad time in Philly. As a matter of fact, when he went with Miles they used to say, "Why did Miles take him?" So when John made it, he charged them extra whenever he played in Philly.

Berg: Let's get back to Cecil Taylor. In the liner notes for *Tears For Dolphy* you sum up your association with Cecil as "One concert, one record date and a whole year of rehearsing."

Curson: Yeah. But I had great faith in that band. In fact, I would have tried to manage him. I used to talk to him about the possibility of doing college gigs. That's how Brubeck started out.

As for the recording, it took about a year for it to finally come out. When it did, I took a copy of it up to Billy Taylor. I had met him years ago in Philly. Since he had a show on WLIB at the time, I asked him if he'd play the record on the air since it would help all of us. He looked at it and said, "I usually audition records before I put them on the air." I said, "O.K., I'll wait." So he left to play it. In a few minutes he came back and said, "The world's not ready for this." That's what it was all about in those days.

Again, it shows how close-minded musicians can be. They won't let you in until you

prove yourself. It's a circle. You think, how am I going to prove myself if I can't play anywhere. And until you prove yourself you can't make a record. They won't let you sit in until they know you. It's tough. And I'll tell you, I still have a bad attitude about letting people sit in. And that's not right.

Berg: How did you get involved with Mingus?

Curson: I knew Lee Morgan from Philly when he used to come and take lessons from me.

Berg: Lee Morgan took lessons from you?

Curson: Yeah, because I was the earliest of the young trumpet players at that time. Lee came after me but he got famous very fast. Anyway, Lee asked me if I wanted to join Mingus. I said no because Charlie had just knocked out Jackie McLean's teeth, or something wild like that. Later on I accepted.

It boiled down to the point where I had to always keep one eye on my trumpet and one eye on Mingus because I didn't know what he was going to do. I saw him kick the bass off the stage. I saw him throw drums. I saw him fire guys. It was the kind of situation where I felt like quitting every night. He could have been easier.

There were so many guys coming in and out of the band that each night I didn't know who to expect. We had horn players like Roland Kirk and Yusef Lateef. Then when Mingus was going through his bass thing he'd hire another bass and play piano. That brought in people like Wilbur Ware, Scott LaFaro and Ron Carter. On piano there would be people like Paul Bley, Jaki Byard and Roland Hanna. But Mingus would get bugged with somebody and tell them to go. Then later he would be sorry.

Berg: How was it musically? What did he say to people during rehearsals?

Curson: The music was extremely difficult for me. He would sit at the piano and give us our notes. We'd be sitting around him like little children on stools. He'd play something on piano and say "You got that?" By the time he gave everybody their notes I would forget my part. One time I asked him to give me the notes again. He said, "You've gotta remember those." Another time I said, "I'll write them down." But he said, "No, don't write it down." I'll tell you what it did. It made me pay attention. But thank goodness for Booker Ervin. Booker used to remember the parts for everybody and then give them to us after rehearsal.

I left Mingus after about two years and five albums. But the odd thing about Mingus is that we were great friends off the stand. We used to go to Chinatown together to eat and just hang out. But when we got to the bandstand, he was like a different man!

He's just a very unpredictable person. One time I had a gig in Canada and looked out and saw him sitting there in the audience. He said he had just come up to sit in. So he sat in and it was great. The manager, of course, loved it.

But if I hadn't quit, I would have had a nervous breakdown. Everybody was cracking up because it was just too much. I think Eric Dolphy got the worst of it, though. Mingus used to take him to the whipping post if Mingus didn't get enough applause, or if not enough people came. Whatever it was, he would take one of us or all of us apart. For example, when he was bothered, every time a tune would start with the bass, he'd change the key. The songs were already hard enough but he would go to another key!

Then he would say things like, "Ted, that was very nice, but don't play that again." It kept you on your toes, but at the time it would bug the hell out of you.

Berg: Let me ask you about *The New Thing And The Blue Thing* on Atlantic. Was that one of your first groups?

Curson: That was my original group. Bill Barron was on tenor, Herb Bushler played bass and I had Dick Berk on drums. But at that time I used to record for what we called "Secret Records." When the album came out, it would be a secret. Nobody would know about it but me.

As a matter of fact I have an album at Atlantic that's two years old and hasn't been released. Richard Davis and Herb Bushler are on bass, Nick Brignola and Robin Kenyatta are the saxophonists and then there are Tootie Heath and Kenny Barron. Recently I saw a guy from Atlantic and he said, "Ted, your name is getting bigger and bigger. When it's a little bit bigger, then the record will come out."

Berg: That's absurd. Atlantic should get that out now.

Curson: Yeah. If it gets out, that will really help everything. But the thing I'm really working on right now is to get a record out on the septet. I have a tape right now. I was thinking about taking it to Europe or sending it to one of the Japanese companies. The problem is that it would defeat my purpose to get greater exposure in the States because it would only be heard in Japan. Also, I'm in Japan right now. I just sold 10,000 albums on Japanese Columbia and I've got another album called *Why Not?* which is on a Japanese label called Trio.

Berg: In terms of the economics of the music business, I would guess that it's difficult to get decent bookings for a septet.

Curson: That's right. Everybody who has heard the group loves it right away. But, with the exception of George Wein who booked us for Newport, everyone who wants the septet is only able to pay for a quartet. So far, I've been putting up the dollars. It's come to about ten grand and I just can't go too much further unless I have a record. If someone will just put out the record of the septet I'm safe. Then I can get the money and promotion together.

Berg: The guys in the group are exceptional. Each time I've seen the band, there's an uncommon spirit, edge and vitality that gives the music a real snap. What are some of the things that make the group tick?

Curson: First of all, the guys in the band are not young cats. They're guys that have been scuffling. I've told them they're all leaders.

What it's all about is communication. I think the music should be a total experience, not just one kind of thing. So the guys should be able to handle all kinds of music which makes it more balanced.

Berg: The contrast between numbers also makes the music more accessible without pandering to the audience with gratuitous funk. Another aspect that intrigues me is the effective balance between definable structure and improvisational freedom.

Curson: That comes largely from my experience playing with Mingus and Cecil. As I said earlier, I started out playing free. I can't really see playing a whole set though, just off the top of your head, without something definite. The point is I don't want to have total chaos. I like to have it so we can play on the chords and still have room to go out too.

Berg: Another thing I love about the septet is the use of hits and riffs in back of the soloist.

Curson: I'll tell you what started me doing that. I used to go to a lot of concerts to hear other people play. Most of the time I would get bored unless the soloist was at the level of a Sonny Rollins, John Coltrane or Stan Getz. 20 choruses for most guys is just too much. There just aren't enough geniuses, unfortunately. So I thought if you give a guy a little boost, that will make him do more, make him stretch. So I built the band around shouts.

Berg: You know, the shouts not only lift the soloist, they also help the listener by providing contrast. It's a new color being introduced into the overall texture. It's really exciting.

Curson: Actually, I guess it's because I did a lot of big band stuff. That's one of the best things about a big band. Just as soon as it sounds like something is going to die, here comes a shout chorus. That's what I'm trying to do in the small group. It's really a small band with a big band sound.

Berg: Another thing that adds contrast is your switching between trumpet, piccolo, trumpet and fluegelhorn.

Curson: I'll tell you why I started. I used to get a lot of gigs for quartet, trumpet and rhythm. And I thought, who wants to listen to just one sound all night. I know I'd get bored. So the piccolo trumpet was first because I wanted to do some of my free jazz things such as quarter tones and half tones. And the fourth valve gives me the low register instead of just the middle and high registers of the three valve piccolo trumpet. So I can play the complete scope of the instrument.

Also, the fingering on the small horn is completely different. You have to hypnotize yourself to get into it. It's like switching from guitar to piano. That's how much difference there is. And because the mouthpiece is so small, I spent years investigating mouthpieces. But no one else has tried to play jazz on it as far as I know.

Berg: Tell me about the guys in the band.

Curson: Good. They haven't had any credit. Nick Brignola, he's legendary. He's from Troy in upstate New York and started out in Sal Salvador's big band. Then he was with Woody Herman for a while. He's the big fish in the pond around Troy and he likes that. He's just a fantastic person and a hell of a musician. He went to Europe with me on one of my tours and everybody loved him but he got trapped back in Troy again because I wasn't doing

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SELECTED CURSON DISCOGRAPHY

as a leader
THE NEW THING AND THE BLUE THING—Atlantic SD 1441
TEARS FOR DOLPHY—Arista Freedom AL 1021
PLENTY OF HORN—Old Town OTLP 2003
FIRE DOWN BELOW—Prestige PR 7263
ODE TO BOOKER ERVIN—EMI 5E 062 34201 (Finnish recording)
CATTIN' CURSON—Marge O1 (French recording)
POP WINE—GER 26 (French recording)

with Cecil Taylor
LOVE FOR SALE—United Artists UAL 4046
IN TRANSITION—Blue Note LA 458

with Charles Mingus
PRE-BIRD—Mercury MG 20627
CHARLES MINGUS LIVE WITH ERIC DOLPHY—BYG YX 7009 (Japanese recording)
CHARLES MINGUS PRESENTS—Candid 9005
MINGUS—Candid 9021

with Gil Evans
INTO THE HOT—Impulse A-9

with Andrew Hill
SPIRAL—Arista—Freedom AL 1007

RECORD REVIEWS

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

TOSHIKO AKIYOSHI-LEW TABACKIN BIG BAND

TALES OF A COURTESAN (OIRANTAN)—RCA JPL1-0723: *Road Time Shuffle; Tales Of A Courtesan; Strive For Jive; I Ain't Gonna Ask No More; Interlude; Village.*

Personnel: Akiyoshi, piano; Tabackin, tenor sax, flute, piccolo; Bobby Shew, Steven Huffsteter, Mike Price, Richard Cooper, trumpet; Jim Sawyer, trombone (tracks 3 & 6); Bill Reichenbach, trombone (tracks 1, 2, 4 & 5); Charlie Loper, Britt Woodman, trombone; Phil Teele, bass trombone, contrabass trombone; Dick Spencer, alto sax, flute, clarinet; Gary Foster, alto sax, soprano sax, flute, clarinet; Tom Peterson, tenor sax, alto flute, clarinet; Bill Perkins, baritone sax, alto flute, bass clarinet; Peter Donald, drums; Don Baldwin, bass; King Errison, conga (track 6).

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The cat's out of the bag about the Toshiko-Tabackin Big Band, and, delightfully, it's a bigger cat the second time around than we had a right to expect. *Long Yellow Road* was such a mammoth, jarring debut that who would have expected an equally stirring follow-up so soon? (Actually, the albums have been in release in Japan for nearly a year.) Plainly, Toshiko-Tabackin is the finest big band playing today, perhaps the finest to emerge in a decade. While some may be more adventurous (Gil Evans, Jazz Composer's Orchestra, Sun Ra), and others hipper (Doc Severinsen, Buddy Rich, Maynard Ferguson, Woody Herman), none wear the title of "Big Band" and all its implied stateliness and tradition with more color or versatility. Those are big claims to saddle any band with, but hearing is believing.

Arranger and composer Toshiko Akiyoshi is conversant and articulate in a broad range of musical languages, from Duke Ellington to George Russell, from European to Oriental traditions, both classical and folk. The most prominent aspects of her style would seem, thus far, to be a shaping of long, curvaceous lines for horn and wind sections (often played in unison for a seamless effect), and a bold marriage of dissimilar tonalities. *I Ain't Gonna Ask No More,* a lazy, elegant blues composition with Phil Teele playing the lead part on a contrabass trombone, and *Road Time Shuffle,* a swinging, rollicking piece driven by Lew Tabackin's fierce tenor and Dick Spencer's fluid alto, are typical of how Akiyoshi takes tested (some might even say dated) big band settings and revivifies them through juggling tonal and instrumental grains and, consequently, transferring dynamic accents. If all that may seem a bit calculated or strange in print, it's reassuringly warm and accessible on record.

At the other end, Akiyoshi willfully transforms the band into a vehicle for abstract expression. In the tone poem *Tales Of A Courtesan,* Toshiko utilizes the wavering, passionate voice of the flute to characterize the dichotomies of a courtesan's life, the gaiety that so thinly masks anguish. Lew Tabackin delivers the part with a nearly clairvoyant sensitivity, descending and ascending in a motile, irresolute manner, then concludes with an explosive, Stravinskian cadenza. Similarly, *Village* is an extended piece, but this time built on a recurring, pendulum-like ostinato, that gradually surges into a furious percussive race.

The music of the Toshiko-Tabackin Big Band will prove listenable and relevant two generations from now, which is far more than can be said about the latest Maynard Ferguson album a mere six months after its release. A proud tradition, sorely in need of a fresh and unifying vision, has at last found some new heroes. —*gilmore*

QUINCY JONES

I HEARD THAT!!—A&M SP-3705: *I Heard That!!; Things Could Be Worse For Me; What Good Is A Song; You Have To Do It Yourself; There's A Train Leavin'; Midnight Soul Patrol; Brown Soft Shoe; Superstition; Summer In The City; Is It Love That We're Missin'; Body Heat; If I Ever Lose This Heaven; Killer Joe; Gula Matari; Theme From The Anderson Tapes; Walking In Space.*

Personnel: Jones, Paul Beaver, Malcolm Cecil, George Duke, Dave Grusin, Paul Griffin, Herbie Hancock, Bob James, Edd Kalehoff, Eddie Louis, Robert Margouleff, Billy Preston, Bobby Scott, Richard Tee, Michael Boddicker, keyboards/synthesizers; Eric Gale, George Johnson, Louis Johnson, David T. Walker, Melvin "Wah Wah" Watson, Toots Thielemans, guitars; Ray Brown, Stanley Clarke, Ron Carter, Richard Davis, Major Holley, Louis Johnson, Carol Kaye, Chuck Rainey, James Jamerson, Alphonso Johnson, basses; Billy Cobham, Paul Humphrey, Harvey Mason, Grady Tate, James Gadson, drums; Eddie Brown, George Devens, Don Elliott, Bobbye Hall Porter, Ralph MacDonald, Harvey Mason, Warren Smith, percussion; Milt Jackson, vibes; Thielemans, Stevie Wonder, harmonica; Jones, Cat Anderson, Tom Bahler, Bobby Bryant, Buddy Childers, Chuck Findley, John Frosk, Freddie Hubbard, Lloyd Michaels, Danny Moore, Joe Newman, Ernie Royal, Marvin Stamm, Dick Williams, Snooky Young, trumpets; Wayne Andre, Garnett Brown, Jimmy Cleveland, Al Grey, Dick Hixon, J. J. Johnson, Benny Powell, George Jeffers, Frank Rosolino, Alan Ralph, Tony Studd, Kai Winding, trombones; Pepper Adams, Danny Banks, Peter Christlieb, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Joel Kaye, Hubert Laws, Jerome Richardson, Sahib Shihab, Clifford Solomon, Phil Woods, woodwinds; Seymour Barab, Harry Lookofsky, Kermit Moore, Alan Shulman, Lucien Schmit, strings; Jones, Don Elliott, Bruce Fisher, Joe Greene, Jim Gilstrap, Hilda Harris, Marilyn Jackson, George Johnson, Louis Johnson, Al Jarreau, Jesse Kirkland, Barbara Massey, Myrna Matthews, Minnie Riperton, Valerie Simpson, Maeretha Stewart, Stairsteps, Carolyn Willis, Leon Ware, Charles May, Sherwood Sledge, David Pridgen, Rodney Armstrong, Mortonette Jenkins, vocalists; Jones, Dave Grusin, Johnny Mandel, Tommy Bahler, Charles May, arrangements.

★ ★ ★

The ostensible purpose of this two disc package is to celebrate Quincy Jones' 20th year in the recording industry. This, in view of Jones' considerable musical accomplishments, is laudable. Unfortunately, there is little to celebrate because Jones has apparently surrendered his craft to the bitch-goddess, success.

Sides one and two were recorded in May, 1976. They mostly contain disco, studio-processed funk of epic banality and slickness. One problem involves the fragmented, multi-tracking process in which various complements of instrumentalists and vocalists are brought into the studio at different times to overdub their respective parts. Lacking the spontaneous kind of interplay and risk-taking that is the essence of improvised music, the resulting performances are mechanical, arid and sterile.

Another problem with the 1976 music is its tedious simplicity. This is largely due to the showcasing of the Wattsline, Quincy's new vocal quintet. Their pleasant but mostly forgettable efforts are made more bizarre by the liner notes which claim that Q spent six months auditioning over 2000 young singers. Ah, the Hollywood talent search is still with us. But while David O. Selznick got a Vivien Leigh for his Scarlett *(Gone With The Wind,* 1939), Quincy has come up with a nondescript group of no special distinction. So why all the fanfare? Is Quincy playing starmaker?

The one satisfying track from the 1976 sessions is Ray Brown's melancholy *Brown Soft Shoes.* Its freshness and vitality (the product of lively interchanges between Thielemans, Grusin, Brown and Mason) stand in marked contrast to the embalmed confectionary flatness that surrounds it. The quartet track also raises an interesting question. The cover trumpets that the album's contents were "Produced, Conducted and Arranged By Quincy Jones for Quincy Jones Productions." Now, did Quincy really stand over this quartet of giants with his baton aloft? Also, to what extent did Quincy actually "arrange" Brown's tune? While we're on the subject of credits, the dust jacket notes that the material was "Arranged By Quincy Jones, Dave Grusin, Johnny Mandel, Tommy Bahler and Charles May." Why, then, are the cover and dust jacket credits at odds? And why aren't the arranging credits for each tune listed? Quincy's involvement in the 1976 arrangements is just not made clear.

Sides three and four contain material plucked from six previous Jones' albums: *Walking In Space; Gula Matari; Smackwater Jack; You've Got It Bad Girl; Body Heat;* and *Mellow Madness.* Here, the real Quincy Jones begins to emerge. The substantial arrangements and legitimate solo spots for fine players like Freddie Hubbard, Hubert Laws and Rahsaan Roland Kirk make the music vital, accessible and marketable. *Killer Joe* and *Walking In Space* are especially potent reminders of Jones' extraordinary capabilities.

The inescapable conclusion to be drawn from this package is that Jones' recording career has reached its nadir. Judging from the Hollywood hype (the talent search, the inaccurate billing of Jones' contributions on the cover, the inside photo of Quincy's neatly arranged trophies and plaques) and the condescending music from the 1976 sessions, it also seems clear that Jones and his managers are embarking on a campaign to launch Q as a "Great Man." Well, it just won't wash. His latest efforts are pop disposables which will be discarded as fast as used Kleenexes.

The irony of the album, of course, is that Jones' earlier work clearly surpasses his latest. If Jones still has the ears to hear that and the strength to withstand the hucksters' pressures to make him a "superstar," he might then be able to regain command over his true talents. Otherwise, he'll merely be one more victim, someone about whom future generations will say, "Oh yes, it's too bad about Quincy Jones. He once showed promise but. . . ." —*berg*

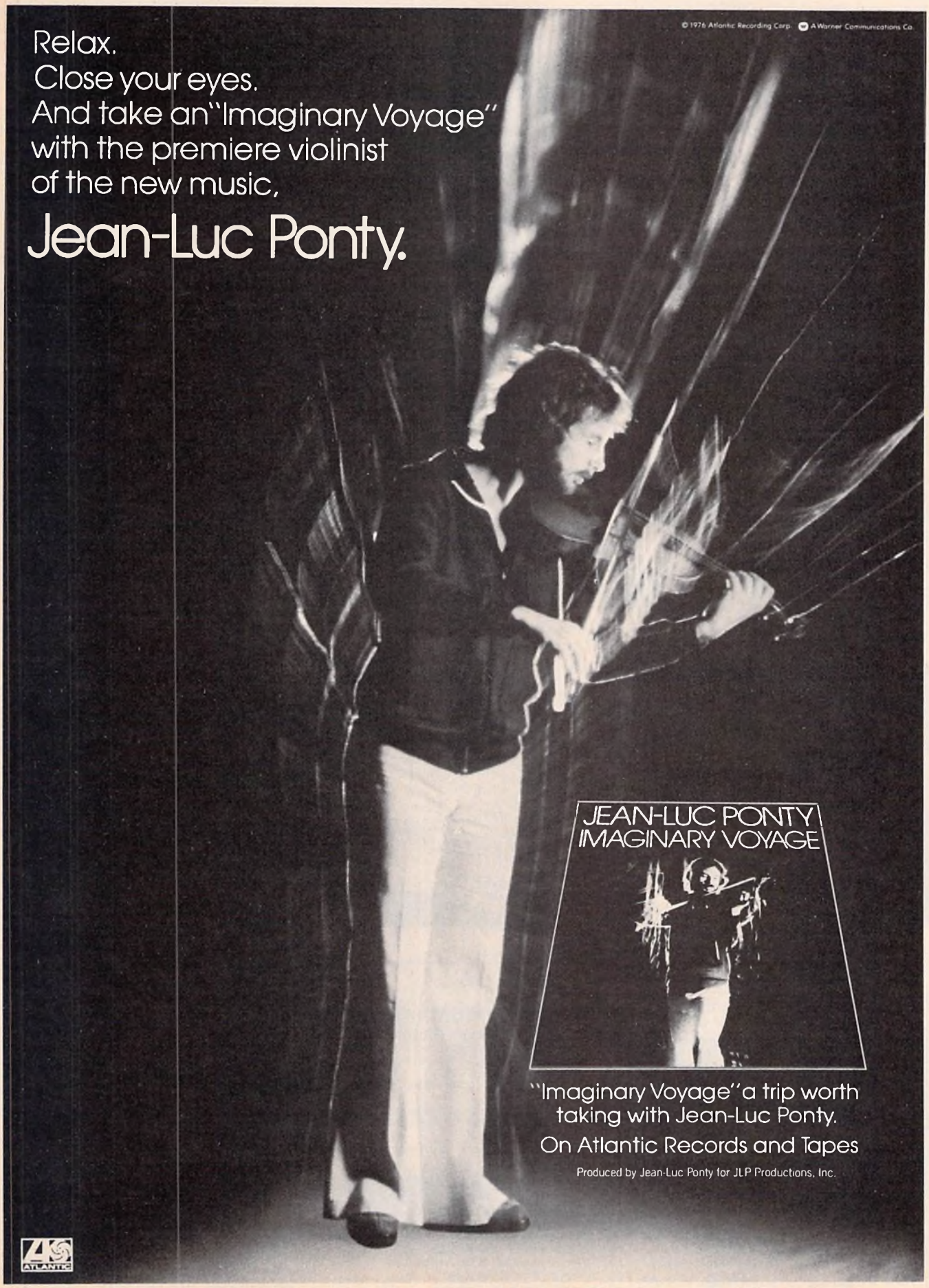
OREGON/ELVIN JONES

OREGON/ELVIN JONES TOGETHER—Vanguard VSD 79377: *Le Vin; Lucifer's Full; Charango; Three Step Dance; Driven Omens; Teeth; Brujo.*

Personnel: Ralph Towner, 12-string and classical guitars, piano; Collin Walcott, tablas, congas; Glen Moore, bass; Paul McCandless, oboe, english horn, bass clarinet, flute; Elvin Jones, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

Oregon, in its classically-auraed pre-set here, is an internally, narrowly rhythmic band. Then along comes Jones, shunning any



WINNER OF DOWN BEAT'S 1976 READER'S POLL-TOP VIOLINIST

spotlights, and sharpening the group's existing pulse, polyrhythmically; even better (I think), he often moves it to an externally fiery conception, one that also seems to fire Oregon's soloists, thus making the band sound more like a jazz group.

True, sometimes none of this happens. McCandless, in his soprano ride during Towner's *Le Vin*, rarely responds to Elvin's rhythmic challenges; Towner, on piano, is almost as wooden. And virtually the same problem surfaces during *Teeth*. But on the dusky *Lucifer's Fall*, Towner solos in beautiful reminder of the *Inner Space* Chick Corea, showing marked sensitivity to Elvin's delicate brushwork. And during *Three-Step Dance*, McCandless, on bass clarinet, sounds uncharacteristically funky—almost like Bennie Maupin—while digging into Jones' backing. The three remaining cuts are more conventionally Oregonian, but Elvin's overshadowing of Walcott's softer rhythmic function brings their lyricism to new levels of intensity; Towner, on 12-string, snaps off an exploratory yet burning solo over the Latinish groove of *Brujo*, and McCandless is about as strong on soprano. And on *Driven Omens*, a showcase for tablas and drums, Elvin pushes Walcott as hard as he's ever been pushed, with cooking results.

If there ever was an album that crystallized the differences between the white-Berklee-ECM-Boston-Burton school and good old black music, this one is it. But I'll let you decide who brings what, inspiration-wise, to whom; suffice it to say, this is also a collaboration that works very well. —*rozek*

GATO BARBIERI

CALIENTE!—A&M SP 4597: *Fireflies; Fiesta; Europa; Don't Cry Rochelle; Adios Part I; I Want You; Behind The Rain; Los Desperados; Adios Part II.*

Personnel: Barbieri, tenor sax; Lenny White, drums; Gary King, bass; Eric Gale, David Spinozza, Joe Beck, guitar; Eddy Martinez, keyboards; Don Grolnick, keyboards and synthesizer; Ralph MacDonald, Cachete Maldonado, percussion; Marvin Stamm, Bernie Glow, Randy Brecker, Irvin Markowitz, trumpets; Wayne Andre, David Taylor, Paul Faulise, trombones; Alfred Brown, David Nadien, Charles McCracken, Theodore Israel, Matthew Raimondi, Harry Cykman, Harry Glickman, Alan Shulman, Max Ellen, Harold Kohon, Max Pollikoff, Harry Lookofsky, Paul Gershman, strings.

★ ★ ★ ★

Believe it or not, Herb Alpert (who acts as producer on *Caliente!*) has contributed constructive input here, something Gato has needed badly.

One reason why Barbieri has not scaled the pinnacle of artistic merit is the fact that throughout his distinguished career an undeniably limitless library of compositional ideas, tonalities, different approaches, and unlimited technical expertise has been derailed by his frantic, hyperactive musical sense. How many times has Gato, in the middle of his lengthy and numerous solos, given it all he's got, so by the time the third track of the album finds the stylus he's as spent as a thoroughbred who fails to pace himself? On many occasions, this lack of restraint, this pure but over-indulgent wish to be passionate, has been his own worst enemy.

As producer, Alpert has corrected these deficiencies. Gato's excesses were formerly spurred on by several hornmen who, excited by the fast Latin tempo, often goaded Barbieri into a pointless blowing contest. However, by placing all other brass in this album into a muted background, Alpert gives Barbieri an unchallenged, vital spot in the center stage.

Gato responds by displaying more maturity.

The slow, torchy ballads, such as *Fireflies*, reveal a methodical, calculating sax man, feeding off a slow, funky Gary King bass line to weave an exceptionally melodic web. Even on Alpert's *Don't Cry Rochelle* the string section, which has singlehandedly ruined CTI Records, adds a tasty backdrop. There are the usual Barbieri shrieks here, but they bear more resemblance to emotive design than to a fleet of Buenos Aires taxicabs.

There are few real surprises on *Caliente!* Yet discipline, usually the bane of art, has managed to rope a wild steed into the corral. Gato is the better for it. —*shaw*

CONTE CANDOLI/ FRANK ROSOLINO

CONVERSATION—RCA APL1-1509: *Star Eyes; Conversation; I Just Don't Want To Run Around Anymore; Attention; Marla; Let's Burn.*

Personnel: Candoli, trumpet; Rosolino, trombone; Franco D'Andrea, piano; Giovanni Tommaso, bass; Gegé Munari, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

What were you doing on May 25, 1973? I can't recall either. In Milan, Italy, however, veteran L.A. studiomen Conte Candoli and Frank Rosolino were capping off a string of successful Italian television and radio specials with this happy, swinging celebration of bop-tinged mainstream improvisation.

While Candoli and Rosolino are not exactly household words, their musical efforts approach ubiquity. Candoli, for instance, has been a regular with Doc Severinsen's band since Johnny Carson moved The Tonight Show west. Rosolino, like Candoli, has been featured with Supersax and on an almost infinite number of recording, TV and film projects. For most of these outings, however, Candoli's and Rosolino's efforts have been confined to ensemble work or anonymous solo spots. One of *Conversation*'s main virtues, then, is in bringing these two outstanding players to the fore.

Among the album's many delights are the swirling up-tempo solos on *Attention* and *Let's Burn;* the showcase ballads, Rosolino's melancholy *I Just Don't Want To Run Around Anymore* and Candoli's tender portrait of *Marla;* the scat-singing dialogues in *Conversation;* and the misty but intense *Star Eyes*. While the playing of Candoli and Rosolino is predictably impeccable, the fine Italian rhythm section is a surprise. Their crisp, sparse support is a perfect match for the warm, outgoing styles of Conte and Frank. Moreover, pianist Franco D'Andrea displays a refreshingly provocative solo voice that, while echoing Bill Evans, is still his own. —*berg*

PAUL BLEY

LIVE AT THE HILLCREST CLUB 1958—Inner City 1007: *Klactoveedsedstene; I Remember Harlem; The Blessing; Free.*

Personnel: Don Cherry, trumpet; Ornette Coleman, alto sax; Bley, piano; Charlie Haden, bass; Billy Higgins, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

In the year between Ornette Coleman's first and second LP sessions, those extraordinary new highways into the '60s and '70s, his only playing gig was as a nominal sideman with Paul Bley for two weeks. Bley was already an "established" bop pianist then, but one suspects that he was new to Los Angeles, for his obvious involvement with Coleman's music suggests that he might have welcomed the opportunity for further collaborations. He recorded this set on his own machine (the bal-

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Earth, Wind & Fire—
"Gratitude"

#7

"Chicago X"

Tenor Sax—#2 Stan Getz/ **Trumpet**—#1 Freddy Hubbard,
#2 Miles Davis, #4 Maynard Ferguson/**Vocal Group**—#2 Earth, Wind & Fire/
Female Singer—#7 Phoebe Snow

...and Columbia and Epic Records.

ance favors the two horns, the piano is out of tune), but the tapes lay dormant until their being issued a few years ago by the rather eccentric America label in France. This reissue is their first opportunity to be widely heard in this hemisphere.

Without Bley, this is the group that is heard on Ornette's first Eastern recordings over a year later. While Ornette's conception and his immense sense of presence clearly dominate these performances, ears accustomed to 18 years of jazz development initiated by him will inevitably notice the cast of bop over most of this music. All tracks carry the weight of the AABA song form, so that however freely the soloists relate to chord or key changes, the force of each new strain as it comes around again effectively hampers the embryonic pure devotion to line that Ornette stood for. He was to solve this problem in his second Contemporary LP, but meanwhile, here, the break with tradition is incomplete. Yet this record includes superb improvising, and its historical importance is of course beyond argument.

The chief problem seems to be Higgins, for he was far from the master drummer he became in the '60s. There is an imprecision to his work that is wholly uncharacteristic, and the insensitivity of his rimshots on beat four behind Cherry's *Blessing* solo and the accumulated layers of density in the *Free* drum solo—like a thoughtless Blakey—even hint that perhaps the liners got the wrong drummer's name. Bley and Haden keep their accompaniments harmonically oblique, the pianist generally laying out behind the horns, Haden only demonstrating a distinct personality behind Bley in *Harlem*.

But this music makes no pretensions about being a fully matured group art. Bley emphasizes this when he has bass and drums lay out for whole choruses in his solos. If it permits his moving from bop piano to harmonically open-end areas, it also is unfinished music marked by a stiff sense of rhythm and querulous forays into, variously, the harmonic relationships that Monk and Taylor had already stylized. His Powell-dependent style, with bass and drums in support, is far more vigorous, imaginative, and, especially in his *Harlem* showpiece, harmonically creative. Cherry has his ups and downs.

Two solos are disjointed, with his *Blessing* invention particularly returning to hard bop phrasing, yet his *Klactoveedsedstene* solo finds a comfortable place within the prevailing key, and his structure encompasses both long, rhythmically busy but clearly articulated lines and strikingly placed "popped" phrases. As you'd expect, each of his solos includes passages of genuine beauty.

It is to Ornette's familiar works that the listener is first likely to turn. His beautiful *Blessing* theme is *sung* by him and Cherry in a way superior to the Contemporary version, and while that slightly earlier alto solo offers bright, mercurial movement, this version is the work of a man at peace. He is recurringly concerned with improvising lines spun off theme fragments, a reminder that a return to the "thematic improvisation" method was popular then. His *Free* of the next year is one of his special *tours de force*, but the spontaneity of this version is also rewarding. The solo flows through a delightful course bent by theme paraphrases, wild rising flurries followed by less complex passages, and a final climb from a remarkable rumble into chants,

little admonitions, and reworked melodic fragments at length.

Nowhere is he more exultant than in his long *Klactoveedsedstene* solo, with its opening choruses based on the internal rhythms of Parker—in fact, there are moments when Ornette sounds more like Dolphy than he ever did since. Thus his phrasing is uncharacteristically segmented, though long lines begin to appear in mid-solo, so the wonderful spirit of his playing is most expansive in his brief second solo: it abandons given outlines in free-wheeling fashion, balances momentarily on repeated staccato notes, and ends in a zany quote. Clearly the optimism that pervades Ornette's music with this group has found justification in his own creations—and those of so many others—in the years since 1958.

—litweiler

EDDIE HENDERSON

HERITAGE—Blue Note LA 636-G: *Inside You; Acuphuncture; Time And Space; Nostalgia; Kudu; Dr. Mganga; Dark Shadow.*

Personnel: Henderson, trumpet, fluegelhorn; Julian Priester, alto, tenor, bass trombones; Patrice Rushen, keyboards; Hadley Caliman, bass clarinet, soprano sax, flutes; Paul Jackson, bass guitar; Mtume, piano, percussion; Mike Clarke, drums; Woody Theus, drums (track 5 and 6); Billy Hart, drums (track 7).

★ ★

Heritage offers post-*Headhunters* disco jazz at its most controlled and unimaginative. But its slick, skillful production yields professional enough results to prohibit a one star rating of complete incompetence.

Frankly, I fail to find anything here that hasn't been tried—with a deeper textural range—on Herbie Hancock's three most recent Columbias. Henderson himself appears happy to float around as a tepid carbon copy of later Miles, substituting sheer effect for the master's customary piercing incisiveness. He and the rest of the crew try to loosen up a bit on side two, but the funky prison sustains fairly well.

Eddie's first two discs for Capricorn and his previous Blue Note with George Duke were explosive extensions of Hancock's wild and wooly *Crossings* band, of which Henderson, Priester, and Hart were all part. But *Heritage* follows Herbie's path into more rigorously defined areas which, on this occasion at least, seduce Henderson & Co. into empty clichés. It'll probably sell real well. *—mitchell*

DUKE ELLINGTON

DUKE ELLINGTON'S JAZZ VIOLIN SESSION—Atlantic SD 1688: *Take The A Train; In A Sentimental Mood; Don't Get Around Much Anymore; Day Dream; Cotton Tail; Pretty Little One; Tricky's Licks; Blues In C; String Along With Strings; Limbo Jazz; The Feeling Of Jazz.*

Personnel: Ellington (except track 6), Billy Strayhorn (tracks 6, 9), piano; Stephane Grappelli, Ray Nance, violin; Svend Asmussen, viola; Ernie Sheppard, bass; Sam Woodyard, bass. On tracks 6 thru 11 add: Russell Procope, Paul Gonsalves, saxes; Buster Cooper, trombone.

★ ★ ★ ★

This is probably one of the least characteristic Ellington small group dates ever to come down the pike. All those violins, no familiar Ellington horns (Procope, Gonsalves and Cooper are barely noticeable background figures), the strong compositional sense replaced by a free swinging jam session lineup.

Yet it's successful, exciting and should stand alongside *Back To Back* as superior small group Duke, even if the show really does belong to the three stringers.

Cotton Tail and *Blues In C* both steam along at a swift clip. Grappelli, Asmussen and

Nance solo in that order, toss the ball around for a couple of choruses more, and then, after Duke has concluded the ride out, cook up a sizzling little riff in the best Benny Goodman sextet manner. The tension on *Blues* builds as choruses are passed quickly and the horns purr nicely underneath it all. Grappelli and Asmussen swing rings around Nance, whose lines have a way of fading in and out like a shaky short wave signal.

While we're on the subject of Nance, it's interesting to hear him translate to violin all the notes and nuances of the trumpet solo he'd been doing on *A Train* for 22 years.

String Along, a moderately slow blues with a melancholy aroma, lets everyone stretch out at a less frantic and pressured pace. It builds in a conventional way with the three horns puffing up the backgrounds toward the end.

I have mixed feelings about *Limbo Jazz*, just as I did on the version with Coleman Hawkins (Impulse A 26). On the one hand, I like the simple changes of the 16 bar chorus, reminiscent in many ways of Stompy Jones. And certainly the treatment here is far more subtle and delicately fine tuned than the clubfooted (by comparison) Impulse. Gone too is the grunting hocus pocus. And when the time signature goes to 4/4, Duke's bobbing bass line against the pizzicato string line is a witty delight. But Woodyard's voodoo rick-a-tick continues to be a dissonant note in an otherwise delightful piece. Woodyard's other contributions are fine, though, particularly his excellent high hat work on *Blues* and *Cotton*.

—mcdonough

DELBERT McCLINTON

GENUINE COWHIDE—ABC 959: *It's Love Baby; Please Please Please; Lovey Dovey; Before You Accuse Me; Blue Monday; I'm Dyin' As Fast As I Can; Lipstick, Powder And Paint; Pledging My Love; One Kiss Led To Another; My Baby Comes To Me; Special Love Song; Let The Good Times Roll.*

Personnel: McClinton, vocals, acoustic and electric guitar, harmonica; Ken Buttrey, drums; Bobby Wood, piano; Bobby Emmons, organ, Clavinet (track 12), electric piano (track 10); Reggie Young, electric guitar; John Lee Christopher, electric and acoustic guitar; Ron Eades, baritone sax; Harrison Calloway, trumpet; Harvey Thompson, tenor sax; Charles Rose, trombone; John Christopher, Bergen White, Don Gant, Tom Brannon, backing vocals.

★ ★ ★ ★

Delbert McClinton is a graduate of the Texas honky tonk scene. He's at home equally with country tunes, old blues numbers, or '50s rock and roll. Some, in an attempt at classification, have termed his music rockabilly, but such brandings are inaccurate for their generality.

McClinton is so much more than another Billy Swan-type hack. Unquestionably one of the best white rock singers America has ever produced, he must be ranked right up there with people like Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins, Jimmy Hall of Wet Willie, and Mitch Ryder. His experiences as a backup for several black blues artists combine with his country roots (Ft. Worth, Texas) to produce a vocal sound full of rural twang, yet with all the soul and conviction of true r&b.

On his second solo album, Delbert has depended mainly on '50s material. *Please, Please, Please*, the James Brown standard is delivered with plaintive, barely-suppressed abandon. Domino's *Blue Monday* is given a rote, yet passionate interpretation. The highlight, however, is an evocative reading of *Pledging My Love*, a true love ballad for the ages.

Delbert the tunesmith also functions well, as witnessed by the piano-dominated *Special Love Song*, a sincere, yet non-wimpy number; and especially through *I'm Dyin' As Fast As I Can*, a miniature barroom Iliad of a man drinking to forget his woman.

The only inconsistency here is in the musical personnel. Most of these players are Nashville studio men, folks who can literally play anything, but unfortunately exude clinicism when dealing with material outside their genre. One pictures the wonders that McClinton and his mighty tenor could have done fronting groups like the Nighthawks (the best white blues band in America); Tower Of Power; Bobby Bland's band; or even the Asbury Jukes. If Delbert's commitment to old r&b here becomes a career direction rather than an experiment (his last work was fairly country) he'd do best to front a cooking crew of soul cats rather than some hired hands on a holiday. Meanwhile, we'll have to listen to a great artist attempt to overcome handicaps that prevent legendary greatness and leave lesser tastiness in its wake. *—shaw*

WALTER BISHOP, JR.

VALLEY LAND—Muse 5060: *Invitation; Lush Life; Sam's Blues; You Stepped Out Of A Dream; Valley Land; Killer Joe; Make Someone Happy.*

Personnel: Bishop, piano; Sam Jones, bass; Billy Hart, drums.

★ ★ ★ ½

What makes this album such a delightful experience? Is it Bishop's new method of harmonizing? While it hasn't touched the internal lines he plays, it certainly makes the chorded

portions of his improvisations more interesting, and aids mightily in the exposition of this less-than-inspired choice of songs. The personal content of *Lush* is Bishop's harmonizing, in fact, for he adds no linear improvisation or decoration. He recasts poor old *Killer Joe,* though, and its new harmonization is its salvation. The postwar tradition could have used Bishop's discoveries by the late '50s, for his revitalization of the Powell piano tradition avoids all sentimentality and conscious romance. *Lush* and the title song especially are potential emotional traps, but the beautiful chunks of chords in the former, steadily following the line, are not interrupted by so much as a cocktail chromatic scale. Lovely!

Maybe it's Bishop's linear improvisations that are so rewarding? True, he invents superbly lyrical melodies, tossing off ideas like Sir Bountiful, music to revel in. They are bop lines, of course, as curiously linked one to another as Powell's, with that "touch of madness" so close to the romantic tradition in any art. A chorus in, say, the bossa nova *You Stepped* might begin with an overtly funky phrase, revert to pure melody, turn wholly out-of-whack rhythmically two or three times, include a bar or two of block chords, then rise into the next chorus with lines that include moving harmonic parts. It's truly eccentric, and it's the method on which jazz piano has been based since Tatum, that most un-Bishop-like man, implied it long ago. Occasionally his lack of form works against Bishop. The chorded middle section of his blues solo is weak, and more unfortunately, *Valley* is a modal piece wherein a firm sense of structure is necessary for survival at all.

What communicates most in this LP is joy, and it's surely shared by Jones and Hart, given their lively arts. That spirit pervades the record throughout, even in the weak points in the piano solos; it carries the music to occasional heights of spontaneous creation. The jazz tradition is by definition not the sequence of great innovators such as Tatum, Parker, Powell, etc. It *is* the very many dedicated, tough-minded, self-searching, hard core players such as Bishop, and any interpretation of the music's history that neglects this fact is thereby weakened. For your own spirits' sake, partake of Bishop's joy. *—litweiler*

BLUE MITCHELL

FUNKTION JUNCTION—RCA APL1-1493: *I'm In Heaven; AM-FM Blues; Then Came You; Daydream; Love Machine; Delilah; Collaborations.*

Personnel: Mitchell, trumpet & fluegelhorn; Harold Land, tenor sax; Clarence McDonald, piano; David T. Walker, Michael Anthony, guitar; Henry Davis, Bob Brown, bass; James Gadson, drums; Gary Coleman, percussion; Mike Lipskin, synthesizer, percussion; Jon Faddis, John Gatchell, Wayne Andre, Alan Raph, George Young, horns; Norman Carr, Alvin Rogers, Harold Kohon, David Moore, strings; Patti Austin, Frank Floyd, Gwendolyn Guthrie, voices.

* *

First things first. I don't like disco music. Nor do I care much for overproduced vocals, slickly mindless drumming, saccharine strings . . . in short, all of the familiar and formulized gimmickry that infuses a good chunk of this album. So at least you know where I stand, and you can take it from there.

The disco crowd, as well as the light-light pop-soul-funk market, is obviously where producer Mike Lipskin is aiming with his project, and I'd guess he's right on target. Of course, solid musical values and questions of artistic worth are strictly that target's outermost rings, and are correspondingly paid the least attention here. So we get such bell-ringers as *I'm In Heaven,* with its arrangement, softly strident choir and rippling guitar riffs slavishly imitating the "sweet soul" style. We get the cloyingly vapid pleasantry of *Then Came You.* And we bump along with the reverberating *Love Machine,* a classic sentiment in the great modern tradition of Alley Oop mechanism.

But we also get Blue Mitchell and Harold Land, who somehow manage to put the depthless surroundings out of mind, the money in their pockets, and their years of mainstream experience to work. Like weak but welcome beacons through the mist of schlock, they cut through with simple, unpretentiously melodic solos: nothing to set the world on fire, but something to grab onto in the morass. One might carp that Mitchell's trumpet work has grown little since his halcyon days with Horace Silver; but amid this sludge, the perversely oppositional power of crass commercialism transforms that flaw into a definite virtue.

The four tracks I haven't mentioned are straight instrumentals and come across somewhat better, except for the Ellington-Strayhorn *Daydream.* Sorry, but some things *are* sacred, and I'm at a loss to explain Lipskin's apparent need to butcher classics by Monk or Ellington whenever he gets in the producer's chair. As for the personnel, it's good to see all these nice folks getting the work—especially Land—and the solos aren't too bad, once you get to them. But on *Funktion Junction,* getting there is none of the fun. Was this trip necessary? *—tesser*

HAMPTON HAWES

THE CHALLENGE—RCA JPL 1-1508: *Tokyo Blues; Summertime; What's New; It Could Happen To You; My Romance; Autumn Leaves; Just One Of Those Things; Who Can I Turn To; Bag's Groove; Clementine; Young People's Tune; Shinjuku.*

Personnel: Hawes, piano.

★ ★ ★

One of the true tests of a pianist's mettle is the solo piano album. Without the customary support of bass and drums, the keyboardist's overall mastery of melodic, harmonic and rhythmic elements through the coordination of left and right hands is completely exposed. It is therefore fitting that this Hampton Hawes solo voyage be entitled *The Challenge.*

In general Hawes meets the test head on. There are, however, some faltering moments, as in *Tokyo Blues* where the momentum of both hands experience some wobbliness. In Hawes' words: "There's a space between me and the piano." But considering the impromptu nature of this session (recorded in Tokyo during May, 1968), Hawes' accomplishment is considerable.

Among the 12 selections are several solid performances. *My Romance* is a poignant essay which nicely balances both tender and turbulent dimensions. *It Could Happen To You* is an eloquent sketch with an impressive rhapsodic rubato intro and a shimmering series of concluding flourishes. *Bag's Groove* is an appropriately bluesy workout, while *Just One Of Those Things* is a pyrotechnical *tour de force* that borders on the type of bravado grandstanding found in the repertory of show-biz oriented keyboardists.

While a mixed bag, *The Challenge* is nonetheless a solid musical effort by one of the finest pianists on the current scene. Hopefully, Hawes will soon embark on a more carefully conceived solo project. He, and we, deserve it.

—berg

NIGHTHAWKS

NIGHTHAWKS LIVE—Adelphi AD 4110: *Intro: Josh; Jailhouse Rock; Hound Dog; Can't Get Next To You; Shake And Fingerpop; Whammer Jammer; Triple Face Boogie; Nineteen Years Old; Shake Your Moneymaker.*

Personnel: Mark Wenner, harmonica, vocals; Jim Thackery, lead and slide guitars, vocals; Pete Ragusa, drums, vocals; Jan Zukowski, bass, vocals.

★ ★ ★

Even before this LP was released, members of the Nighthawks let it be known to some acquaintances that it was not the best. Recorded live at the Psyche Delly in Bethesda, Maryland early this year, *Nighthawks Live* leaves something to be desired.

Here is an all-white D.C. area band who can step up on *any* stage with any of the black greats (Muddy Waters, James Cotton, etc.) who are still touring—and fit right in. They have, on several occasions, opened for and jammed with just about all of the contemporary blues people. Honest, they're that good. You literally have to see them to believe them. The only trouble is that this LP doesn't show the 'Hawks in an accurate perspective.

There is plenty of energy and funk and all that, but too many of the tunes are frantic crowdpleasers on which the group is apparently trying a little *too* hard. A good example is *Whammer Jammer.* Why a band with the red-hot talent of the Nighthawks would want to record a song from a nowhere group like J. Geils is beyond me. (In the rock world, you hear a lot of hype about how hellacious a harp player Magic Dick is, but he's not even in the

same league with Wenner—who has given James Cotton a run for his money on more than one night.)

Thackery is easily one of the very best white blues guitarists alive today, and he proves it on several points here, although the pace gets just a little too nervewracking. The rhythm section (Zukowski and Ragusa) works together beautifully and both are masters at their respective instruments, but again. . . .

One exception is notable. Their version of the Muddy Waters' classic *She's Only Nineteen* is a heartwarmer. Each member stretches out—Thackery and Wenner especially—but one track is not enough. This would be a five star LP if every cut on *Live* had the combined punch and restraint shown here.

With all its drawbacks, *Nighthawks Live* is still one of the best albums released this year by a white rock/blues band, far surpassing anything else in its immediate genre.

One might say that they're better represented on *Open All Night*, the previous Adelphi LP, or even the ultra-raw (and hard to find) first album, *Nighthawks* (Adelphi).

With all this aggregate talent, the Nighthawks don't need to prostitute themselves to audiences with a lot of rave-ups, and in the future, I hope they don't.

They already have an all-night jam with Muddy Waters and his band in the can, which should be released sometime soon. Commenting on the new LP, Wenner said, "Yeah, we haven't made the *real* Nighthawks album yet." When they do, it's going to be a mother of a blockbuster. —*pettigrew*

RAY BRYANT

HERE'S RAY BRYANT-Pablo 2310-764: *Girl Talk; Good Morning Heartache; Manteca; When Sunny Gets Blue; Hold Back Mon; Li'l Darlin'; Cold Turkey; Prayer Song.*

Personnel: Bryant, piano; George Duvivier, bass; Grady Tate, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

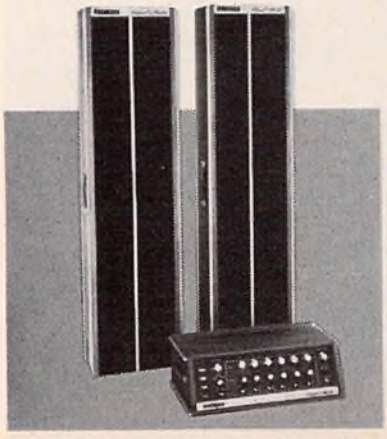
This is a typically strong Bryant work, offering many of the strengths of his best material. As usual, there is a mixture of many constructive inputs: clarity of tone, feeling, technique, musical imagination that is always productive yet never indulgent. In a word, flair.

The fare here is a representative sampling of Bryant originals and old standards. Of the former, there is not a weak link in the chain. *Prayer Song* is a spiritual, a toe-tapping rhythmic number, as is *Cold Turkey*. While Bryant dominates, the other members of the trio get their chance to shine. A running, rather than walking, Duvivier bass solo on Bryant's *Hold Back Mon* stands out.

On the cover tracks, Bryant's ability to somehow play mellow cocktail rolls without falling prey to the evil trappings of that bag attract immediate notice. His solo, for example, on Neil Hefti's *Girl Talk* is gentle, easy rolling, and quite laid back; but the frequent embellishments work to the version's credit, thanks to stolen left hands of stride and mid-phrase punctuations of silence.

The tour de force, however, is unquestionably *Manteca*. The tune features a brilliant solo by each musician, with Tate's cymbal work and Bryant's Latinesque, repetitive left hand hammering away, casting the role of the ivory in its base gender as percussion instrument. Even though perfection would demand the inclusion of something stunning and grabbing (which is absent here) the omnipresent class and quality makes the album a disc to be played and treasured. —*shaw*

Our pal George...



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BLINDFOLD TEST

Marlena Shaw

by leonard feather

"My musical education was not a formal one," says Marlena Shaw. "My uncle taught me chords on piano, and the rest has been God-given and self-taught."

Born in Rochelle, N.Y., the method has served her well. She played her first real gig in 1964 with Howard McGhee. Two years later she began recording for Cadet. Along the way there were Playboy Clubs, concerts with Marian McPartland, college dates, mostly in the South, and a measure of jazz recognition when she joined the Count Basie orchestra in 1968.

Marlena remained with the band off and on for two years, touring Europe and playing several times in Las Vegas, where she soon took up residence. She played the Onda Nueva Festival in Caracas, returned to the club circuit, and in 1972 became the first female vocalist to sign with Blue Note Records under the new regime of that company.

She is a composer of notable talent *(Woman Of The Ghetto, Street Walkin Woman, You)* and a pianist with a strong gospel flavor: in her recent album *Just A Matter Of Time* she accompanied herself compellingly on *No Hiding Place*.

It should be just a matter of time before she reaches a level of acceptance commensurate with her talent and beauty. This was her first blindfold test; she was given no information about the records played.

1. CAVRIL PAYNE. *Feeling Good/Sunny* (from *Cavril,* Ruval Records). Payne, vocal.

Well, it was a good production. She has a lot of chops; but I could only guess at names that have that certain timbre in the voice. I loved the big band sound. It's not something I'd be encouraged to buy, but she's more than competent as a singer —sure. Excellent. Four stars. The one name that did come to my mind was Helen Humes—the high notes and things. Also Damita Jo—she has that . . . a lot on tension in her voice.

2. ANNIE ROSS WITH LAMBERT, HENDRICKS & ROSS. *Farmer's Market* (from *High Flying,* Columbia). Ross, vocal.

Oh yeah, that's smokin'! I liked that! Annie Ross. Oh yeah, beautiful. Just fantastic. If I get a chance I want to see her in person. I like the idea of throwing a lot of lyrics together on top of the notes. I like songs that are fun—fun to sing. They don't have to be heavy messages, you know. I'd say five stars for sure.

3. WEATHER REPORT. *Cannon Ball* (from *Black Market,* Columbia.) Joe Zawinul, keyboards, composer/producer, orchestrator; Wayne Shorter, saxes, and Lyricon, co-producer.

I want to say . . . what is the man's name? He wrote *Mercy, Mercy?* Joe Zawinul! And Wayne Shorter. But I can't think of the name of the group . . . Weather Report, right. It was the sound of the electric keyboard that he gets that tipped me off. Mmmm! He gives you this feeling . . . very emotional. Oh yes, five stars. I've never heard the group in person but, as a matter of fact, this is one of the groups that get a lot of airplay in Vegas. Which is unusual. We're really starved for good music there. Yes, I'd give them five stars.

4. BETTY CARTER *Sunday, Monday Or Always* (from *Betty Carter,* Bet-Car). Carter, vocal, arranger, producer; Buster Williams, bass; Onaje Allan Gumbs, piano; Chip Lyles, drums.

It's the high priestess of control: Betty Carter. Well, I'd give a hundred stars to Betty Carter because of her control and the way she works. But I didn't particularly like this track—the arrangement. A lot of cute things—overcute. Somehow this just didn't come off. Maybe it was the feeling, the sound they were going for; but I love her.

I've never seen her in person but I've seen her on CBS. I can't name the specific songs I've heard her sing, but then I don't remember the names of songs *I've* recorded! I've enjoyed her over the years—she was very good with Ray Charles. So three stars.

5. ANTONIO CARLOS JOBIM. *Boto (Porpoise)* (from *Urubu,* Warner Bros.). Jobim, vocal, composer; Miucha, vocal; Claus Ogerman, arranger.

A nice, warm feeling. My first thought was Milton Nascimento, but I don't know. I got a great feeling from it; I really like it—and the melody. I would say five stars. I'd like to hear it again. The blend they get with the two voices—just beautiful.

There were so many things going on, but they weren't gimmick sounding—it seemed like they all belonged there. Who did the arrangement? I liked the arrangement very much.

Feather: Have you ever tried much Brazilian singing—have you sung in Portuguese?

Shaw: No, I haven't. As a matter of fact, I had talked about learning some songs like that after I had gone to the Onda Nuevo Festival in Venezuela. It was some great music. I finally found out what the samba was! I love doing parts of songs with that kind of beat.

6. ELLA FITZGERALD & OSCAR PETERSON. *I Hear Music* (from *Ella And Oscar,* Pablo). Fitzgerald, vocal; Peterson, piano; Ray Brown, bass.

Five. Oh, I'm sorry, I'm putting the numbers before the people here. It was Ella . . . with . . . Oscar? I just loved it. I just thought about the first time I had ever seen her in person. It was an experience I don't think I'll ever forget. I just can't say enough about her. What *can* you say? Her musical ideas—they swing! It's just a total . . . total feeling, yeah. And Oscar—Mr. Chops! He puts it all together.

7. URSZULA DUDZIAK. *Papaya* (from *Urszula,* Arista). Dudziak, vocal, composer; Michal Urbaniak, co-composer, arranger, producer.

Well, whoever it is, it's a lady with a fantastic range. I liked it; it was very inventive. I feel very good—I seem to be giving almost everything five stars for some reason. I liked the concept, I liked the feel of it. I don't know what else I can say about it except it was very different.

Feather: It was Urszula Dudziak. Have you heard of her?

Shaw: No. But I'd like to hear her again.

db

Profile

PAT BRITT

by gary g. vercelli

Many outstanding West Coast sidemen and studio musicians are now being afforded the opportunity to record as leaders of their own groups, playing original compositions in an atmosphere relatively free of commercial concessions. This sudden upsurge in the documentation and distribution of creative music on the newly formed Catalyst label is due largely to the awareness and influence of producer-player Pat Britt.

While an increasing number of American producers seem determined to plug the creative improvisor into a regimented, confined setting of predictable commercially-oriented arrangements, Pat adheres to a laissez-faire production philosophy. He encourages his artists to develop their own adventurous approach in interpreting material and to select the players with whom they feel most comfortable in a recording situation. Pat's philosophy is based on his belief that a mature musician should understand the conditions under which he operates best.

"My main goal," says Pat, "is to establish a stable of capable players who have paid their dues as sidemen, and give them the opportunity to express themselves as leaders. While I may exercise constructive criticism during mixdowns, and even suggest certain approaches to miking the players, the choice of material is 100% theirs. I'll help guide the musician and attempt to make his recording experience a productive one. But I'll never demand that a set formula or format be followed."

Hadley Caliman, Frank Strazzeri, Mark Levine, and Michael Howell are among the talented, under-recorded musicians who felt they could benefit by recording under the liberal guidelines Pat has defined for the label's domestic sessions. Britt, who is actively seeking out new talent in both Los Angeles and San Francisco, seems content with the artists he's signed thus far. "I feel these guys are capable, when left to their own decision-making, of generating quality music that's on par with the excellent recording efforts that are coming out of Europe and the Orient these days. If we are to aspire to be one of the leaders of quality domestic presentations, it's important that our catalogue be geared in concept toward longevity, and that the artists be allowed to speak for themselves."

No novice to the recording scene, Pat spent a productive period of development with VJ Records before joining Catalyst. "When I first came to VJ I went through the vaults and found some valid recordings by Wayne Shorter, Lee Morgan, and Yusef Lateef (originally recorded by Sid McCoy, 1958-61), some of which had never been released." While coordinating the company's reissue program, Pat also familiarized himself with studio operations and developed a working knowledge of editing, mastering, and album design. "By the time I joined Catalyst, I had laid the groundwork and acquired the knowledge necessary for recording the musicians that I have respected and performed with for many years."

Born in Pittsburgh 36 years ago, Pat was raised and schooled around the San Francisco area. Due to the limited scope of AM radio in this country, his early exposure to music was centered in the r & b idiom. Pat was totally absorbed by the soul scene until, at age 16, an enlightened family member started dropping ten-inch Bud Shank and Art Pepper records his way. Pat was so impressed and inspired by this belated exposure to the West Coast jazz scene that he purchased an alto and decided to teach himself how to play.

"I thought I was becoming quite proficient," recalls Pat with a smile, "only to learn shortly thereafter that I wasn't using the octave key at all. I was overblowing the entire upper register and never knew the lower register was even there." At this point, a friend heard Pat struggling and suggested he contact Bud Young, a teacher and alumnus of the Artie Shaw and Woody Herman bands, who was developing an 18-piece band at the College of San Mateo. Pat credits Bud with teaching him proper notation, voicing, and harmony. "I had formed a lot of bad habits, but Bud was a patient and thorough instructor. He also helped me get my feet wet in arranging."

Fresh out of school, Pat started gigging around the city, developing working relationships with prominent local r&b leaders, including Sly Stone (then known as Sylvester Stewart). He also did some top-forty charts for Bobby Freeman and the Checkmates.

Britt eventually became the music director of a 15-piece house band that backed up r&b artists at the Cow Palace in San Francisco. "Many singers would come in to town with inadequate charts," remembers Pat, "and I would attempt to alter or complement their material." While his charts enhanced what the singers had to offer, Pat's relationship with these performers was a mutually beneficial one, in that it enabled him to get in touch with the awareness that he enjoyed composing and arranging.

Although backing pop singers was paying the rent, Pat soon became dissatisfied with the limitations that idiom imposed on his compositional efforts. He decided to form his own jazz group and play the local clubs, while also seeking non-musical part-time jobs in order to make ends meet.

Pat's first quintet, which included George Muribus on piano, recorded an album for Mainstream in 1966 that wasn't released until 1971, when Crestview Records bought the masters. "We did some straightahead pieces as well as a few blues tunes. It's kind of unfortunate that the album had to sit in the can for so long. Since all the players on the date lived in the area, we decided to title the album *Jazz from San Francisco*."

Britt's second album, *Jazzman* (VJ), was—by his own admission—a contrived commercial effort. "I compromised my beliefs in the hopes of reaching a wider audience, but revamping commercial tunes just didn't work for me." Britt feels he learned a lot from that recording experience. He now has a renewed confidence that the American people are ready to accept jazz in its pure form, just as the Japanese do. His new album, *Starrsong*, reflects his renewed dedication to playing in a direct, unpretentious manner. The album is a contemporary composer's forum which features five original tunes by Pat, plus one apiece by trumpeter Gary Barone and pianist Dwight Dickerson.

Pat's longstanding relationship with Gary

Barone is readily evident upon hearing the album. "Gary and I interact in a catalytic manner; we complement one another. In fact, my entire recording unit is like a family. We're all on the same wavelength, striving for a sensitive approach to the art of collective improvisation. We're not as concerned with demonstrating technique as we are with achieving a proper interplay and feeling among all members of the group. People can feel this contagious energy, even on record."

Pat anticipates the acceptance of his music and his production philosophy both here and abroad. The company has even worked out an overseas distribution deal with a Japanese firm. "It's unfortunate," says Pat, "that some of our most gifted composers and players have had to go overseas in order to have their music accepted and properly documented." Britt refers to Jackie McLean and Dexter Gordon as cases in point, adding, "I personally can't see leaving the U.S. This is where it should happen."

Pat Britt is a highly energetic yet modest musician. "I don't consider myself that much of a major soloist. Writing music and setting up moods have always been my main areas of interest. Perhaps my forte lies in my ability to recognize talent and assemble great bands." Another obvious quality that Pat neglected to mention about himself, is his sensitivity to the needs of the artists he signs and works with.

DON THOMPSON

by mark miller

"If Don Thompson didn't exist, *nobody* could invent him."—Paul Desmond.

It's not one of Desmond's more original lines, but there's some truth in it. Thompson is, at least literally, a fantastic musician: a bass-playing pianist, piano-playing vibraphonist and vibraphone-playing recording engineer who sometimes (though not often anymore) plays drums.

The most accurate description, and one with which Thompson would likely agree, is "bass-playing pianist." Although his prominence has come as a bassist, first with John Handy some ten years ago, and more recently with Desmond and particularly Jim Hall, he is apparently a pianist at heart. "The problem is, people keep calling me to play bass. If it was just me, if I didn't have to contend with anyone else, if I had my own band, I'd probably play piano." As it is, he works regularly as a pianist only with reedman Moe Koffman, and on the occasions when guitarist Sonny Greenwich is willing and able to play.

However, his third album as a leader, and second as a pianist, has been released by Gene Perla on the P.M. label. Titled *Country Place*, it features Perla on bass, Joe LaBarbera on drums and, accidentally, Thompson on both piano and vibes. "Sonny Greenwich was going to play guitar on the record. A couple of days before the session, he became ill and couldn't come. I was stuck with a recording session and no lead player, so to speak. I didn't want to get just anybody, so I wound up doing it on vibes myself."

His other albums, the rare *Love Song For A Virgo Lady* (1969) and the unreleased *Secret Love* (1970) were recorded by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's Radio Canada International (RCI), and ironically, it was the CBC that got him started professionally sixteen years ago in Vancouver by firing him as a mailboy and turning his full attention to music. He had played piano from childhood, trumpet in high school and dixieland bands in Powell River (north of Vancouver), and had developed a casual interest in bass and vibes. "There were three good bass players in Vancouver, and they would always be working. The other guys were just jobbing players, so I figured I might as well play the bass if no one else would." In the company of his long-time associate, drummer Terry Clarke, he worked with the late Chris Gage, a legendary pianist who was reputedly almost the equal of his Montreal contemporary, Oscar Peterson. And although Thompson contends that he "played piano just in case of emergency" at the time, he cites both Gage and Peterson as his early influences.

It was as the house rhythm section at Vancouver's Flat Five club that Thompson and Clarke first worked with John Handy. "I played piano for a couple of nights with Handy, then the bass player got sick, and I had to play bass. . . . In the summer of '65, we went to San Francisco, worked at the Both/And for three or four months and played the Monterey Festival. The whole thing was nice, because going from Vancouver to San Francisco is like going from San Francisco to New York." While with Handy, Thompson and Clarke recorded the famous "live" album at Monterey, the *Second Album*, and one track at Carnegie Hall for *Spirituals to Swing*. They also met Sonny Greenwich.

"Sonny's band is my main thing, short of having my own band—the closest to perfect conditions. Of all the people I've ever played with, he's the strongest." Nevertheless, their initial attempt to form a group in Montreal (in 1967) failed. Thompson returned to Vancouver, and following two more years of musical frustration, moved east again to Toronto in 1969. On his second night in town, he was playing percussion with Rob McConnell's Boss Brass, a big-band assortment of high-profile studio musicians. Very exclusive company, and Thompson quickly joined it as the city's first-call bassist. Today, he's still playing (bass) with the Boss Brass, but works in the studios only on occasion with arranger Jimmy Dale.

His time is otherwise spent in Toronto clubs, playing regularly as sideman to Koffman, Ed Bickert (see Profile, **db** May 20, 1976) and pianist-composer Doug "Dr. Music" Riley at George's. He plays less regularly with Desmond, Jim Hall, Barney Kessel, Frank Rosolino and other visiting musicians at Bourbon Street. For all of this activity, Thompson has become one of the very few, indeed

perhaps the only Canadian jazz musician who has established a reputation of substance, rather than rumor, outside of Canada without leaving the country much. (There was a time, in the mid-60s, when he would have stayed in the United States, had draft registration not been a requirement for the continuation of his work permit.) He still casts an envious ear to the south though. "I know that the people I want to hear, and the people I want to play with, are just not here. They're in New York. I don't even know who they are, but when I hear it, it's different. Different class of playing, different calibre of musicianship, different attitude." Recently, when the occasion, and U.S. Immigration has allowed, he has travelled to New York to work with Jim Hall.

BERNIE SENENSKY

The association with the masterful guitarist developed out of a session at Ed Bickert's home, when Hall first worked Bourbon Street in duet with another bassist, and led to a subsequent gig with Desmond at Hall's recommendation. That, in turn, has resulted in Thompson's appearance on the two "live" albums by Hall and Desmond on Horizon. Thompson is, in fact, the musician in common to a half dozen or so albums recorded in Toronto clubs within the last two years. Others include a quartet album by Doug Riley for P.M. and two trio albums by Bickert. Tapes of Kessel and Rosolino are also available for release. As often as not, Thompson has "doubled" on tape recorder. "I happen to own a tape recorder and some mikes, so I take them down to the club. I don't know very much about engineering; all I know is what it's supposed to sound like. I just push the button and play . . . change the tape between sets."

Although it speaks well for his versatility that he should be comfortable doing so many things on a highly professional level, it also gives rise to a question of identity which is evident, as he freely admits, in his piano playing. "If I just played piano, I might be able to play it with more originality. It's a problem I have; if I hear something, I can usually recreate it. . . . One of these days I'll find a sound of my own. The fact that I'm almost always a sideman and don't play that much piano doesn't help. If I play bass on a gig for a week, then I play piano, my hands are all messed up. And I get out of shape on the bass if I don't play."

It's interesting that Thompson brings a similar thought process to the playing of both instruments, as uniquely different as they may be. "I think like a horn player whenever I play anything. When I play piano, I don't think of it as a piano. I never think as a bass player. . . . I know my main influences in jazz are different horn players, Charlie Parker, John Coltrane, Miles. . . ."

And then there are the drums. He was capable enough to work with some frequency with guitarist Lenny Breau five or six years ago—not an easy gig. Today, he plays only for fun. The reason? "Every now and then I think about it; that's as far as it goes. I'm too busy doing everything else." Indeed. . . . db

caught... Beck and Hammer: A Different Kind of Boogie . . .

Loft Jazz: Musical Vitality in the Big Apple . . .

JEFF BECK/ JAN HAMMER GROUP
The Palladium, New York City

Personnel: Beck, guitar; Hammer, keyboards; Steve Kindler, violin, guitar; Fernando Saunders, electric bass, guitar; Tony Smith, drums.

Jeff Beck is not—as some have claimed—the best purveyor of fusion music so far. He's only the most tasteful, intelligent rock guitarist yet. And he's merely found in fusion a more complex/complementary structure, one that suits his erudite chops. Thus, if you've been weaned on Larry Coryell, Bill Connors, or John McLaughlin working the cutting edge of the genre's setup, Beck may not be your cup of tea. But he simply *can't* be as sensitive to jazz-rooted challenges; he's a rocker.

So, this night, my attention sometimes flagged while Beck played what he knew best over a heckuva backup band. Yet there were riveting moments too, since part of fusion's strength lies in its compressed energy, and Beck and Hammer cranked *that* up to ungodly levels. In short, I heard a fusion performance of ups and downs, but I suspect the evening was more phenomenal as a rock event. Why? First, because the Hammer group is a landmark band. Backing Beck, the Czech is the first musician to cross *back* over. He often falls on the floor after his spirited keyboard runs, his scarf flailing; he speaks of a "different kind of boogie" to the audience; he dances with himself. In sum, he shuns the Mahavishnu complexity he built his band to play; thank goodness they're flexible enough to adjust. Well, perhaps all except for Steve Kindler; soon after he and Hammer essayed almost violently intense tradeoffs during an opening *Magical Dog*, the violinist seemed to assume a pout, perhaps distressed that the "hot Mahavishnu music" he recently told **db** he loved was gradually taking a back seat to easier forms. (Even Smith, who put on a remarkable show using a relatively small set of traps, sometimes seemed too polyrhythmic for Hammer's new Beck-*schtick*.)


HERB NOLAN

After a few increasingly simple Hammer songs, the guitarist sneaked onstage. And a friend of mine who'd come all the way from Nashville to see his rock idol tear it up yelled in my ear, thirty minutes hence, "He's not tryin'!" His evaluation made perfect sense a moment later, when the aural air snapped—on one tune Beck suddenly cut loose with emotion, channeling years of experience into exactly-right note selection. But then Beck would do something lazy, like leaving out the hard parts of *Goodbye Pork Pie Hat*. Yet soon he was back at beauty again, comping exquisitely on *Thelonious*, wringing *Love Is Green* dry. It was a rock phenomenon, because you simply *heard* that Beck was at the top of his idiom when he wanted to be. You could hear the freedom that mastery gave him. It was a bit like watching O. J. Simpson or Jim Brown run; in their strides, you can see the dominance of an art.

While Kindler stood in the shadows, mostly not playing at all, or strumming an electric guitar, Hammer, Smith and Saunders were gleefully supportive. And Beck even talked to the crowd, something he usually avoids doing. All this high spirit culminated in two charged encores—Kindler cut loose on *Blue Wind*, and everybody else rocked out on the Yardbirds' classic *Roll On*.

After the at least two hour set, Hammer and

Beck hugged in joy. It was more than a gesture of good feeling; it asked where music could be going in the next few years. —*michael rozek*

LOFT JAZZ GRAND PARTY

Environ, New York City

Personnel: Interface (John Fischer, piano; Mark Whitecage, alto sax; Perry Robinson, clarinet; Frank Luther, acoustic bass; Randy Kaye, drums—guest, Jimmy Giuffre, soprano sax); The Brubecks (Dave Brubeck, acoustic piano; Darius Brubeck, electric keyboards; Christopher Brubeck, electric bass; Danny Brubeck, drums—guests, Giuffre, soprano sax; Robinson, clarinet; Glen Moore, acoustic bass); Benny Wallace Trio (Wallace, tenor sax; Glen Moore, acoustic bass; Leo Mitchell, drums—guest, Frank Luther, acoustic bass).

Loft jazz is a New York phenomenon that has had several manifestations over the last two decades. In the fifties, it was an integral part of the beat generation whose music and poetry fused in cramped smoky garrets. In the sixties, artists started moving into downtown lofts vacated by businesses seeking relief from increasing tax and labor costs. For musicians, the lofts were ideal for living, practicing and rehearsing. They also stimulated informal sessions which proved to be fertile breeding grounds for gifted new players. While the informal sessions are still part of the current scene, the seventies have witnessed the rise of a new species of loft jazz.

Today, loft jazz has come to symbolize an artistic and economic concept that puts the artist in control of his work and performance environment instead of a club manager or concert producer. Often run as cooperatives, the new lofts provide viable outlets for musicians whose work otherwise would have difficulty getting exposed. Improved publicity, dependable schedules of upcoming events, warm rapport between musicians and audiences, comfortable listening conditions and modest admission fees (or "contributions" as they are usually called) are indications of the lofts' credibility and promise. The basic point, however, is that the loft concept offers the musician the opportunity to manage virtually all facets of his music. And that is nothing short of a revolution.

In New York, the vitality of the loft jazz movement is evident from the busy and diverse schedules of Studio We, Ali's Alley, Jazzmania Society, Ladies Fort and Environ. It was with great anticipation, then, that I headed for Environ's first anniversary celebration, a fete that had been advertised as a "Loft Jazz Grand Party" to benefit the loft's varied programing.

Located on the eleventh floor of 476 Broadway in the heart of Soho, the current epicenter of the city's art scene, Environ has provided a forum for such diverse talents as Jay Clayton, Ambrose Jackson, David Murray, Stanley Crouch, Muhal Richard Abrams, Steve McCall, Leroy Jenkins, Fred Hopkins, and Hamiet Bluiett. As I disembarked from the elevator at the eleventh, I, like the other guests, was immediately greeted by John Fischer and Chris Brubeck. After profuse welcomes, I was ushered into the main area where food, drink and good conversation occupied the guests before the music began.

The first set belonged to Interface, a cooperative unit whose spellbinding free-form interactions glide effortlessly from one episode

to the next. John Fischer's *Poum* provided the frame for Interface's initial venture. Opening with the pianist's rhapsodic swirls and eddies, the tempo settled at a swift pace with the entry of drummer Randy Kaye and bassist Frank Luther. Barefoot altoist Mark Whitecage marked his arrival by initiating a charged dialectic with Fischer which revealed each musician's formidable technique, empathic interplay and mature musicality. Throughout *Poum*'s various sequences, Luther's woody resonances and Kaye's tasty accents were effectively employed to produce a remarkably high degree of purposeful cohesion.

Foggy, another Fischer composition, was a shimmering post-Impressionist tone poem featuring the broad Whitecage tonal palette which ranges from pure French classical to hard-driving dirty funk; Fischer's wide repertory of rolls and tremolos; Luther's precisely articulated runs and double stops; and Kaye's controlled timbral effects. Jimmy Giuffre and Perry Robinson then stepped to the stage for an adventurous reading of *Outness Gardens*. Interface then dissolved into the Jimmy Giuffre trio with Luther and Kaye still aboard for the reedman's *Squirrels*. Following the crystallization of the free-floating intro into an intense driving groove, the trio generated structurally rich intertwining lines.

After a half-hour intermission for more conversation, food and drinks, the Brubecks started assembling on stage. Working with standards and familiar Brubeck material, the family unit demonstrated the fallacy of the generation gap and a stimulating eclectic approach. Their tour de force, however, was an extended medley of Ellington chestnuts with guests Giuffre, Robinson, tenorist Benny Wallace and bassist Glen Moore. The sharing give-and-take on stage, the musicians' obvious delight and the crowd's warm encouraging responses led the ensemble to unexpected plateaus. Among the highlights were Dave's daring solos ("He's not getting older, he's getting better!"); Wallace's gutsy tenoring; Robinson's musical embodiment of the spirits of Dada and Surrealism; and the surging inventive rhythmic carpet provided by Darius, Chris and Danny.

The last set I caught featured the Benny Wallace Trio plus friends. Wallace is a big-tone player in the Hawkins/Webster/Ammons tradition whose cascades of notes, crisp tonguing and familiarity with the major stylistic branches of jazz give his improvisations unusual strength and depth. Also impressive was Luther's multistring arco work and the rich bass counterpoint essayed by Luther and Moore in tandem. The Wallace set perfectly illustrated one of Environ's basic functions and goals, i.e., to serve as a launching pad for new and deserving talents. Wallace is a player from which we can expect more good things.

After four hours and enough note taking for ten articles, I decided to head back into the street. And as I walked onto Broadway, the after-image of the large enthused crowd, good vibrations and fine music gave me encouragement to hope that projects like Environ will succeed. Loft jazz is a viable alternative/supplement to the established club and concert scene and holds the triple promise of giving musicians greater control of their output, providing a forum for music not deemed commercially exploitable, and offering the unknown a chance for exposure and recognition.

—chuck berg

BROS. JOHNSON continued from page 13

vocate. How's this?—Funk is totally mindless and completely physical. Essentially, all you've got is a drummer and a bass player. Horns, guitars and everything else relate strictly to the physical pulse of the rhythm. Anything melodic, harmonic, or the slightest bit intelligent is abandoned. Funk is all groin and no brains. Now you take it.

Louis: It has to do with the things you been through and the people you know. People who haven't been through the feeling you play in your funk can't relate to it.

Underwood: If funk emerges from the black experience, which non-blacks supposedly can't feel, then how is it that mainly white people support the discos, which are founded on black funk?

George: It's a psychotic social trip. They haven't had the experience, but they psychologically want to pop into it. If their friends dig Parliament or Bootsy, they want to hang with Parliament and Bootsy. It's a social trip.

Underwood: Let's talk about the bass a little bit, Louis. How does this "thumbs" style of playing actually work?

Louis: It's like being a percussionist. You have the rhythm inside you. Then all you do is hit the strings with whatever that rhythm is. You hit each string with the side of your thumb, like beating a drum.

Underwood: You're playing "walking" or "rolling" octaves, but what do you physically do?

Louis: You hit the low note with your right thumb, then pick up with your index finger. Hit, pick, hit, pick.

Underwood: Who started this style of playing?

Louis: I would say Monk Montgomery. He was the first cat to play the electric bass. Then came James Jamerson, the Motown studio bassist. Then Sly Stone and Larry Graham came along. I feel they got it from James Jamerson, who was inspired by Monk.

Underwood: What is the difference between the way you are playing and the way that, say, Stanley Clarke or Bootsy Collins do it?

Louis: We're all basically the same, but, like, Stanley Clarke writes something out. He's off into the paper side of it. Bootsy Collins is used to playing just a certain pattern. He just does that, and that's all. Me, I just play whatever I feel. I only read a little, and don't write at all. If I had my bass right now, whatever I feel, I just play it.

I went into the studio with Stanley Clarke once, and we started jamming. It was kind of weird, because he really wasn't used to jamming, just sittin' down and playin'. But he's got a lot of good ideas. I think he's the baddest bass player I ever met in my life. He knows all the scales, everything. He even made up his own. He's a baaaaad bass player! I really look up to him. I like Bootsy, too. I guess he'd be second.

I really dug Larry Graham, until I checked him out on the bass. He's bad—he's good—but he's not as good as I thought he would be. He doesn't have that much feelin' for the bass as he used to.

Today is the bass age. A long time ago, the bass played one-two, one-two, way down in the back of the band. But when bass players got so they could play the bass better, they put the bass up in front. That's a different thing to hear. Now, people can listen to the music and pick out the bass and the guitar. I can remember when people couldn't do that.

Underwood: Who are some of the guitar players who have influenced you, George?

George: I got stuck on B.B. King comin' up. My father had a lot of his records, so I sat down and picked up riffs and learned to play by ear.

As I got older, I really dug Jimi Hendrix for four or five years. By the time he died, I was gettin' into playing sessions with Billy Preston. I also met David T. Walker about that time, and he taught me a lot.

Underwood: As a soloist, B.B. King turned four or five notes into a national institution. Hendrix used conventional techniques in his solos with the addition of all of his innovative explorations into electronic effects. Where are you taking the guitar?

George: I don't consider myself as being a heavy lead guitar player. I mostly play things to complement whatever's going on, a kind of rhythmic counterpoint.

Underwood: What advice would you give to a young player?

George: When I came up, I got frustrated. I'd throw my guitars down, I'd get depressed, I'd get discouraged. But you got to stick to it. Just stick to it.

Underwood: I've heard some professional musicians tell other musicians to just get out of music altogether, that the odds against your ever making a living at it, much less becoming a star, are overwhelming.

George: It's a hard business, because not everyone will accept what you are doing. You may be really good at what you're doing, but be the only one who likes it.

Underwood: Do you think the record industry really cares about music that much? Or do they care just as much, or more, about that indefinable but highly marketable thing called "charisma?" There are thousands of top-flight musicians walking the streets because they don't have any flashy magic to their personalities.

George: A musician should look closely at this. He should acquire all the musical knowledge he can. He should prepare his audition tapes as best as he can. And he should be himself. If he wants to come up to the office in blue jeans and messy hair, he should do it. If they like the music and they like him, then they'll sign him. Just stick with it, do what you do, and success will come when what you do matches what the public wants. **db**

CURSON

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anything after the trip. But he knows I'll use him anytime the septet gets a gig.

I met Chris Woods in Europe. He's from St. Louis and started playing very late in his career. What I really like about Chris is his projection. But Chris and Nick are into a funny thing. First of all, these two guys are very fine players who are into their own thing. And there are a lot of players around who aren't nearly as good as they are but who are making it. So they feel bugged that they're not better known. Even in the band it's almost a fight. Not a racial fight. It's a saxophone supremacy fight! But I love this because it's what I want. It's the kind of thing Mingus had happening. With the tension you can never be cool. None of your solos can be mediocre because the other guy will wipe you out.

Berg: So some sort of interpersonal tension is necessary to keep the band functioning at a high level.

Curson: Well, that's what I have. And they don't dig it. One of them will say to me, "Ted, you and I could do it." At some point each one will say this to me, but I just laugh and say to myself I'm keeping these guys together. The thing they don't understand is that they're completely different types. Chris is the fiery, earthy, gut-bucket type while Nick is that straightahead type out of the Sonny Stitt school. So with this kind of situation there's nobody sitting back trying to be hip. That I don't have to worry about.

The rhythm section is really straight. The drummer, Steve McCall, is one of the big names in jazz. He's one of the originators of the AACM (Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians) in Chicago. He also plays with a free group called Air. I met him in Paris. I was playing a club and he asked me if he could sit in. Usually I say no but he caught me in the right mood and I said yes. Well, he was just perfect.

I first heard Jim McNeely at the Tin Palace where the septet had a gig. Jim was playing in the group opposite us and was constantly killing my piano player. We were supposed to be the main attraction. I just couldn't believe this guy. So I asked him if he'd like to be in my group.

And then there's Sam Jacobs, our conga drummer. He was an alto player and had a band years ago. Now he's a drummer, a straight drummer. He said he'll play congas if he can play drums some of the time. But he's a good conga player and that's where I want to keep him.

Now the bass player, David Friesen, had heard me back in 1964. He recently told me that he knew at that time that one day he'd play in my band. Last winter I heard him playing with the Billy Harper band when they toured Europe. He was wonderful. In fact, he got a lot of the rave notices out of that group. In addition to bass, he's a guitar player and banjo player. On bass he's got a whole different concept with an interesting strumming bit.

So in the band I have these super egos to deal with. When I kick off a tempo, for instance, sometimes the drummer will take it where he likes it and the bass player will take it where he likes it. And when they start fighting over the tempo it's really something. So I say, "Let's try it again. Let's try to come close to the tempo I kick off." But when they're together, they're really great. You always have to soft-pedal everybody. It's quite a band. Keeping it together is just a matter of wider recognition because that's what brings the gigs.

Actually what I'm looking forward to is a record company that will have faith in me. In other words, if I make a record and it doesn't sell that well, I don't want them to just drop me. All I want is a decent chance because sooner or later we've got to click. But I don't want to have a crossover group. I'm not going to do that.

Berg: It must be difficult to resist the temptation because that seems to be where the big market is.

Curson: In addition to the temptation, there's the pressure from the record people. They say, "How about *Ted Curson Goes Disco?* Then you could be a star overnight." The

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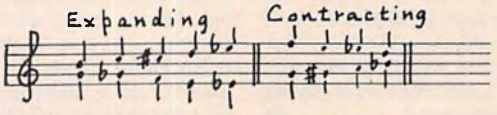
HOW TO drive chromatic wedges into harmony

by Dr. William L. Fowler

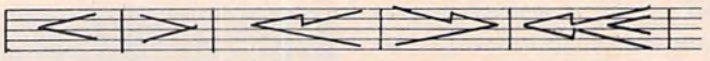
In this era of musical dissonance, the chromatic devices which might have confounded yesterears now merely compound harmonic interest. One such device, the chromatic wedge, might particularly interest musicians seeking ways to amplify the now-standard chromatically-altered chord concept. . . .

* * *

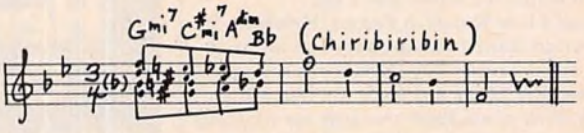
Chromatic wedges move by half step and point their upper and lower branches in opposite directions:



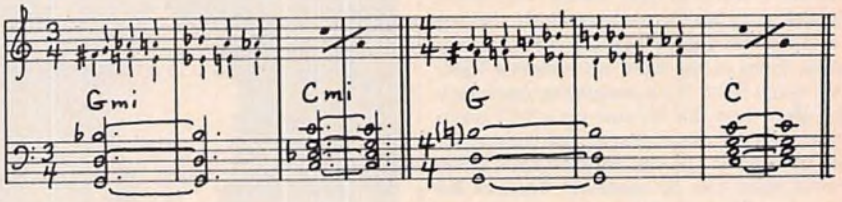
During their contrary-motion flow, wedges can assume assorted shapes and sizes:



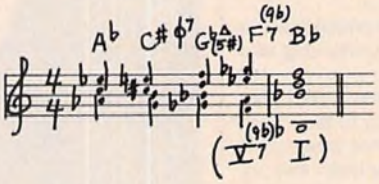
Wedges can harmonize:



They can decorate:

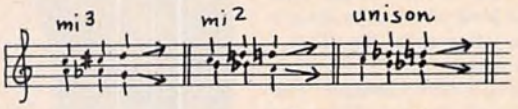


They can modulate:

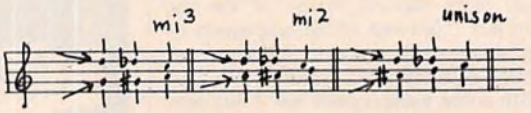


They can toss tonics around, point toward the far-out or turn homeward. They can transform linear predictability into vertical surprise, melodic plod into harmonic twist—like enharmonic alterations, substitute chords, deceptive resolutions, and unexpected turnarounds.

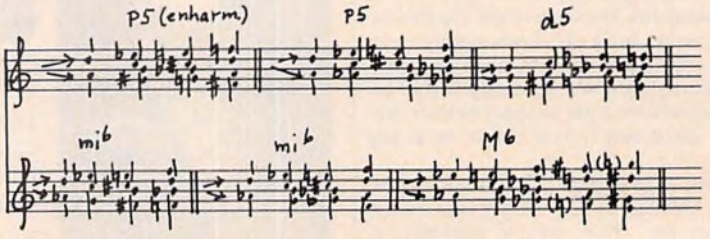
Expanding two-voice wedges can begin on any small interval or on a unison:



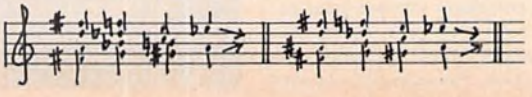
Contracting two-voice wedges can end on any small interval or on a unison:



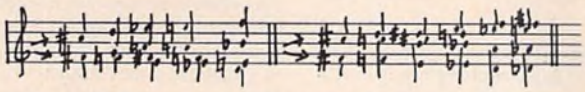
When an expanding two-voice wedge reaches a fifth or sixth interval, an internal wedge can begin. This action sets up continued expansion in parallel thirds or a combination of parallel thirds and fourths:



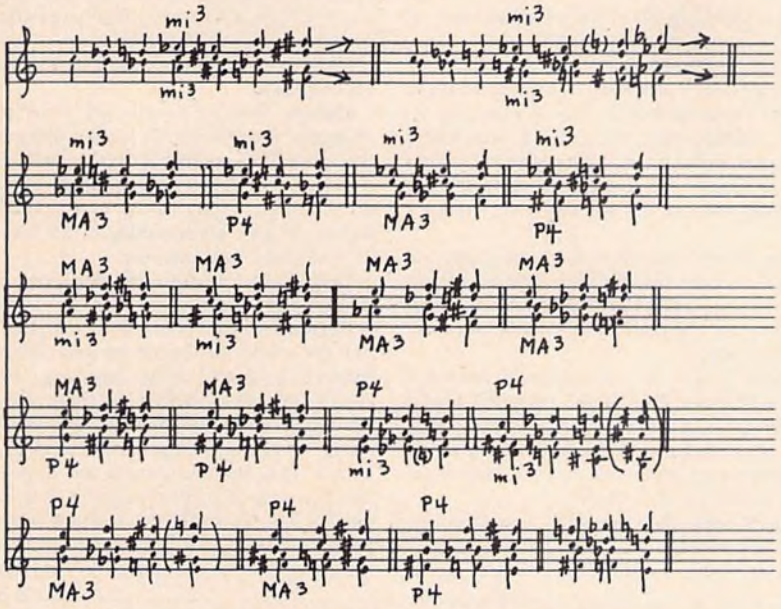
When the inner parts of a multi-voiced contracting wedge reach a minor second or a unison, they drop out:



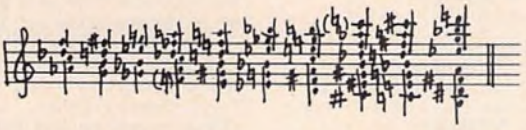
Added internal wedges forming parallel seconds and/or fifths with the outer voices offer unique effects:



But combinations of the smoother parallel intervals—minor thirds, major thirds, and perfect fourths—themselves add up to eighteen possibilities. The following chart, which shows the starting notes of each possibility, therefore might prove a handy way for wedge-investigators to begin their search. The first two examples illustrate procedures for the remaining sixteen (and each example, though shown expanding, works equally well contracting):

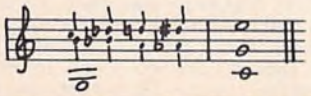


Here is an example of the densities arrived at by continuing a wedge into eight voices:



If these uses of the wedge aren't enough, certain segments make nifty multiple trills:

And finally, pedal tones below chromatic wedges furnish harmonic stability plus oblique motion against each wedge voice.



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problem with that is that everyone winds up sounding like the Brecker Brothers, Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea or Weather Report. So I'm going to stick with what I'm doing. I've never copied before and at the age of 41 it makes no sense to do it now. Maybe you won't make great money. Maybe you won't have everything that you want. But I believe you've got to be true to yourself.

It's a matter of what's really important to you. If you like lots of material things you can't afford to take the attitude I take. It's hard to fight the things because you have television constantly feeding you more things that you must have, that you can't live without. Things or art, that's the question. Let me tell you about a recent experience.

Donald Byrd is a friend of mine. Recently I was in Philly seeing my parents and I went down to a place where he was playing. He announced me and had me sit up in the first row, which was nice. But when I left, my ears were ringing. Even though the place was packed and the audience ate it up, I felt a little sad. He said, "You know Teddy, if you're planning on staying in America you're going to have to get your thing together, man." And I said, "Well, I guess I'm going back to Europe." But Donald's got his things, an airplane, a brand new car.

The problem is you get trapped in all those things, you get trapped by the money. And the record companies today only ask how many records can you sell. They say you can't sell an acoustic band. You *can* sell it! You may not sell them as fast, but they can sell.

I'll tell you, you have to try to keep your sanity, try to keep your equilibrium. Sometimes things get so rough in America you have to go to Europe just to relax. When you're in New York you have to go out and find the job. In Europe, the job finds you. That's a nice feeling. For a lot of guys it's so comfortable that they don't want to go find a job anymore. But you've got to keep telling yourself that if you get too lazy then you won't do anything. I think you need New York, even though many of my New York friends say the city is finished. Maybe it is finished, but there's more jazz now than there ever was before. There's more energy. There's more new guys coming

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in trying new things. It's important that you be right in with these guys, rubbing elbows with them, and trying to dig into yourself and see what you can come up with. In Europe, you have your name and the gigs are there. And there's nothing wrong with that except you tend not to do very much and you forget to practice.

Berg: Speaking of practice, what kind of practice routine do you have?

Curson: I practice everyday. And I'm now writing a book of exercises. I don't know if I'll ever get finished with it. I keep changing it. But I practice everything: tone, flexibility, long tones, pedal tones, high register. I'm one of those people who loves to practice. It's the best thing you can do. It's really very important.

Berg: That's interesting because I get the impression that a lot of players quit practicing after a while. I think it's something you can hear because the music just doesn't have the edge and finesse.

Curson: That's the advantage of having a group like mine. One of the reasons I hire a Nick Brignola or Chris Woods is because they have big techniques. So if I don't do my thing, I'm going to get wiped out. And I'd hate to get wiped out of my own band!

Berg: It does take courage to have guys like that in the band.

Curson: Well, I want to continue to grow. And you really need someone to keep kicking you. And these cats are not only pushing each other, they're pushing everybody. So that's the reason for hiring the best guys you can find. In this business, the tendency is usually to get someone in your band who is less than you are. And the reason for that is so you can play leader and so you can dish out the orders. It's also economic. You can get the new guys breaking in for less money. My idea is a little different. If you get people in your band that are at a high level, they make you better. It's better for everybody, I think.

Berg: Ted, where do you think the music is headed today?

Curson: Well, I'll tell you. I've seen it change so much since '56 when I first came on the scene. It looks like it's going right back to a mainstream/bebop sort of thing. I think the disco thing is going to die soon. It's already falling off. One curious thing is that there isn't so much free jazz anymore.

Berg: Is that because the musicians are no longer interested?

Curson: I don't know who's changing it. It's like the world turning on its axis. It happens without anybody doing anything. For instance, between '56 and '60 there was a big movement in the East Village right in the area where I was living. And that went away. Now people like Stanley Crouch are doing some free jazz, but still it's not as big as it used to be. The one exception is Germany where you get a lot of free jazz. But overall, it looks like it's going back to that hard blowing again. **db**

CITY SCENE

NEW YORK

New York University (Loeb Student Center): Highlights In Jazz Presents A Salute to Milt Hinton w/*Cab Calloway, Richard Davis, Ron Carter, Jon Faddis, Panama Francis, Budd Johnson, Hank Jones, Al Cohn, Chet Amsterdam,* others (12/16).

Carnegie Hall: *Judy Collins* (12/17-18); *Bob Greene's* World of Jelly Roll Morton (1/15/77).

Richard's Lounge (Lakewood, N.J.): *Jeff Williams Quartet* (12/16-19); *Barry Miles* (12/30-1/2/77).

Village Gate: *Bill Evans Trio/Kenny Burrell Quartet* (12/17-18); *Stanley Turrentine Quartet* (12/21-1/2/77); *Memphis Slim* (12/31 & 1/1/77).

Patch's Inn: *Don Elliot Quartet* (Wed.).

Gulliver's (West Paterson, N.J.): *Mike Jordan & Tony Lombardozzi* (12/20); *Bucky Pizzarelli* (12/27); *Mike Diase* (1/3); *Rio Clemente Trio* (12/17-18); *Bob Romano/Vinnie Carlyle Trio* (12/15); *Taksim-Middle Eastern Jazz Quintet* (12/22); *Mack Goldsbury & The Jazz Explosion* (12/29); *Jack Reilly* (12/16, 19, 21, 23, 26).

Harley Street: *Jimmy Rowles.*

Day School Of The Church Of The Heavenly Rest: *Al Cohn* and *Zoot Sims* (1/9).

Brooklyn College (Brooklyn): *Mel Torme w/Warren Covington & His Orchestra* and the *Pied Pipers* (1/15).

On The Air (WNYC-FM, 93.9 MHz): American Popular Song w/host *Alec Wilder;* The Artistry of Mabel Mercer: Part I (12/19); Part II (12/26).

Central Synagogue (St. Peters Church): Jazz vespers 5 PM *Howard McGhee* (12/26).

Village Vanguard: *McCoy Tyner* (12/14-19); *Betty Carter* (12/21-26); *Rahsaan Roland Kirk* (12/28-1/2).

Michael's Pub: *Anita O'Day* (thru 1/8); *Dick Hyman* (opens 1/11).

Damian's Jazz Club (Bronx): Open jam session nightly; *Mary Connelly Quintet* (Mon.-Tues.); *Harry Shields & the Bones of Contention* (Wed.); *Peter Ponzol & Pyramid* (Thurs.); *Lou Romano Trio* (Fri.-Sat.); *Kenny Kirkwood Trio* (Sun.).

P.S. 77: *Bucky Pizzarelli* (Mon., Thurs.-Sat.).

The Kitchen: *Dick Landry* (12/16-17); *Peter Van Riper & Simone Forti* (12/18); *Greg Borst* (12/22); *Charlie Morrow* (12/23).

Eddie Condon's: *Red Balaban & Cats* (Mon.-Sat.); guest artist (Tues.); jazz luncheon (Fri.); half-note nights (Sun.); *Al Grey, Jimmy Forrest, Shirley Scott, Bobby Durham* (12/19).

Muggs: *Alan Palanker,* piano.

Cookery: *Helen Humes* (12/8-1/5).

Folk City: *Albert Dailey & Friends* (Suns. 4-8 PM).

Surf Maid: *JoAnne Brackeen* (Thurs.-Sun.).

Arthur's: *Mabel Godwin,* piano.

Fearn's Harness Shop (Roslyn, L.I.): *Jeff Cohen, Bill Miller* (Thurs.).

Blue Moon II (Lake Ronkonkoma, L. I.): *Mickey Sheen* and his famous contemporary jazz all-stars.

Hotel Carlyle: *Marian McPartland* (Bemelman's Bar); *Bobby Short* (Cafe Carlyle).

Storyville: Dixieland courtesy of the New Jersey Jazz Society (Mon.); Jazz Today (Tues.); American Song (Wed.); Jazz Classics (Thurs.); Group sessions (Fri. & Sat.).

Creative Music Studio (Woodstock, N.Y.): New Year's Intensive Workshops, performances, personal communication, listening (12/30-1/8).

Kings Palace (Brooklyn): Bi-weekly tribute to artists by *Harold Ousley.*

Uris Theatre: *Barry Manilow w/Lady Flash* (12/21-1/2).

Madison Square Garden: *Aerosmith* (12/16-17).

Sweet Basil: *Glen Moore Quartet w/Paul McCandless* (12/15-19); *John Abercrombie, Mike Nock & Dave Holland* (12/20-23); *Jack Wilkins & Eddie Gomez Quartet* (12/29-31); *Bill Durango* (Mons. in Dec.).

Ali's Alley: *Frank Foster & the Loud Minority w/Charlie Persip & Earl May* (Mon.); Call club for balance of week.

Bar None: *Dardanelle* at the piano.

Beefsteak Charlie's (Fifth Avenue & West 12th St.): Jazz (Wed.-Sun.).

Boomer's: The last of the great jazz joints. Great

bands all week.

Bradley's: Pianists and duos all week.

Cleo's: Call them for top acts.

Crawdaddy: *Sammy Price.*

Gaslight Club: *Sam Ulano and the Speakeasy Four.*

Gregory's: *Warren Chiasson Trio w/Chuck Wayne & Wilbur Little* (Mon.-Tues.); *Brooks Kerr w/Sonny Greer, Russell Procope* (Wed.-Sun.).

Hopper's: Where the names greet and eat.

Jazzmania Society: *Jazzmania All Stars* (Wed., Fri., & Sat.).

Jim Smith's Village Corner: *Lance Hayward* (Mon., Tues., Thurs., Sat. & Sun.); *Armen Donelian* (Wed.).

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

Ladies Fort: Weekend loft jazz.

Mikell's: Call them for their bookings.

Sonny's Place (Seaford, L.I.): *Phil Lasley w/Frank O'Brien Trio* (12/17-8); *O'Brien w/Ernie Byrd* (12/19-20, 26-7, 1/2); *Long Island Jazz Quintet* (12/21, 28); *No Gap Generation Jazz Band* (12/22, 29); *Dom Minsi Trio* (12/23, 30); *Arvell Shaw Quartet* (Mons. in Jan.); *Ray Alexander Quartet* (Thurs. in Jan.); *Tone Kwas* (1/7-8).

Stryker's: *David Matthews Big Band* (Mon.); *Eddie Daniels* (Tues.); *Lee Konitz Nonet* (Wed. & Thurs.); call club for balance.

Three Sisters (West Paterson, N.J.): Jazz all week.

Tramps: *Patti Wicks* (Fri.).

West End Cafe: *Franc Williams Swing Four* (Mon.-Tues.); *Jo Jones & Friends* (Wed.); *Swing to Bop Quintet* (Thurs. & Fri.); *The Count Basie Alumni Band* (Sat. & Sun.).

Environ: Concerts (Wed.-Sun.).

Studio Rivbea: Concerts (Wed.-Sat.).

The Brook: Call them for concert schedule.

Memorial West Presbyterian Church (Newark, N.J.): Jazz vespers (Sun. at 5:30 PM).

Jazzline: 212-421-3592.

LOS ANGELES

Concerts By The Sea: *Eddie Henderson* (12/14-19); *Mongo Santamaria* (12/21-1/2); *Max Roach* (1/4-9); *Ahmad Jamal* (1/11-23); *Esther Phillips* (1/25-30); *Yusef Lateef* (2/1-13).

Lighthouse: *Dexter Gordon* (12/14-26); *Kenny Burrell* (12/28-1/9); *Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee* (1/11-16); *Joe Pass* (1/18-23); *Mose Allison* (1/25-2/6).

U.C.L.A. (Royce Hall): *Count Basie Orchestra* (1/11); *Woody Herman Orchestra* (2/3).

Donte's: Jazz all week; call 769-1566 for details.

The Cellar: *Les De Merle and Transfusion* and guests (Sun. & Mon.); call 487-0419 for details.

Roxy: Occasional jazz; *Don Ellis* on most Mons.; call 878-2222 for details.

Hop Singh's (Marina Del Rey): Top name jazz, pop, and blues.

Little Big Horn (Pasadena): *John Carter Ensemble* (Sun. 4-6 PM); *Bobby Bradford Extet* (Thurs. 8-10 PM).

Sand Dance (Long Beach): Jazz Thurs.-Sat.; call 438-2026 for details.

Parisian Room: Top name jazz artists all week: call 936-0678 for details.

Baked Potato: *Seawind* (Mon. & Tues.); *Don Randi* (Wed.-Sat.); *Harry "Sweets" Edison* (Sun.).

Hungry Joe's (Huntington Beach): *Orange County Rhythm Machine* (Mon.); *L. A. Four* (12/17-19); *Gabor Szabo* (12/24-26).

Sneeky Pete's: *Dave Mackay Trio.*

Troubador: Occasional jazz; call 276-6168 for details.

Beverly Cavern (Wilshire District): Jazz every Mon. and Tues.; call 662-6035 for details.

King Arthur's Restaurant: Big bands every Fri. and Sat.; call 347-3338 for details.

Studio Cafe (Balboa): Jazz all week; Sunday jams (12-6 PM).

Memory Lane: *O. C. Smith.*

Eagle Rock High School: Jazz concerts (2nd Sun. of month).

Jimmy Smith's Supper Club: *Jimmy Smith Trio* plus special guests (Thurs.-Sat.); jam session (Mon.).

Total Experience: Top soul groups; call 296-3457 for details.

BOSTON

New England Conservatory: *George Russell* conducts his own music (12/16); *Frank Epstein's* percussion ensemble (12/19); *Ran Blake's* Third Stream concert (1/23); student composers' premieres (1/27).

Michael's: Good local bands nightly.

Pooh's Pub: *Heat w/Lee Genesis* (12/29-1/2).

Merry-Go-Round Room: *Dave McKenna* (12/4-18).

Wally's: *Payton Crossley* and friends (Fri.-Sun.); jams, no cover.

Pub 'n' Grub: *Bo Winiker Swing Six* (Thurs.).

Zachary's: *Maggi Scott Trio.*

Boston Symphony Hall: *Two Generations of Brubeck* (1/21).

323 Lounge (Dorchester): *Houston Person* and *Etta Jones* (12/16-19); *Jimmy Pelham* and *Tiny Pratt's Show Biz Associates* (12/30-1/2).

1369 Club (Cambridge): *Isaacs Brothers* (12/15-16); *Lester Parker* (12/17-18); *Interface* (12/20-21); *Cambridgeport Jazz Ensemble* (12/22-23); *Dave Bragdon Quintet w/Gray Sargent* (12/27-28); *Animation* (12/29-1/1).

Speakeasy (Cambridge): Blues bands nightly.

Plough & Stars: *Bunny Smith* and friends. (Sun.).

Western Front (Cambridge): Live jazz and/or rock weekends.

Squeeze Inn (Revere): *Ernie West, Mel Bloom, John Neves,* et. al. (Wed., Sun.).

Jazzline: 262-1300.

CHICAGO

Jazz Showcase: *Rich Matteson/Harvey Phillips Tuba Ensemble* featuring *Louis Bellson, Tom Ferguson* and *Jack Peterson* (12/15-17); *Air* (12/18); *Dizzy Gillespie* (12/22-26); *Yusef Lateef* (12/29-1/2); call 337-1000 for details.

Amazingrace: Name jazz and contemporary music regularly; call 328-2489 for details.

Ratso's: Name jazz and contemporary music nightly; call 935-1505 for details.

Rick's Cafe Americain: *Coleman, Pickens and Atlas* (12/14-12/18).

Orphans: *Synthesis* (Mon.); *Ears* (Tues.); *Joe Daley's Jazz Quorum* (Wed.); *Ed Palermo* (Thurs.).

Enterprise Lounge: *Von Freeman* (Mon.).

Ivanhoe Theater: Name jazz and contemporary music nightly; *Donald Byrd* (12/16-19); call 549-3410 for details.

Transitions East: *Muhal Richard Abrams Big Band* (Mon.).

Wise Fools Pub: *Roger Pemberton Big Band* (Mon.); Chicago blues regularly.

Biddy Mulligan's: Chicago blues regularly; occasional jazz; call 761-6532 for details.

Ron's Pub: Live jazz regularly.

Harry Hope's (Cary): Name jazz and contemporary music regularly; call 639-2636 for details.

Auditorium Theater: *Grover Washington* (12/19).

BUFFALO

Ontario House (Niagra Falls): Live jazz with *Transition* (Fri.-Sun.).

Trailamadore Cafe: Live jazz Wed.-Sat.; open jam (Sun. 5-8 PM); *Jack DeJohnette's Directions* featuring *John Abercrombie* (1/7-9); call 836-9678 for details.

Mulligan's: Live jazz Wed. with *Dick Griffin Quartet.*

Jack Daniels': Live jazz with *Spyro Gyra* (Tues. and Sun.).

State University College at Brockport: Jazz at the Rathskellar (Tues.).

Falcon Eddie's: *Spyro Gyra* (Wed.).

Anchor Bar: *Johnny Gibson Trio* (Fri.-Sun.).

Statler Hilton Downtown Room: *Gap Mangione* (12/14-1/2); *Stanley Turrentine* 1/4-16); *Monte Alexander* (1/18-30); live broadcast by WBFO on alternate Tues.

St. George's Table: Live jazz six nights a week.

Jaico Marina: Live Dixieland with the *New Dixie Minstrels* (Fri. and Sat.).

Holiday Inn (Delaware Ave.): *New Wave* (Fri. and Sat.).

DENVER

Denver Coliseum: *Bee Gees* (12/14).

McNichols Arena: *Kiss* (1/15, tentative); *Gordon Lightfoot* (1/22, tentative).

Harvest House: Occasional jazz; details 443-3850.

B.B.C.: *Forecast* with *Lannie Garret* (12/7-1/1).

Broadway: *Phillis Murray Band* (12/21-1/1); *Karen Karsh* (1/3-1/7); *Melody* with *Billy Miles Band* (1/11-1/15).

Emerson Street East: *Denver Affair* (Tues.-Sat.).

Greenstreets: *Ron Henry* and *Pride* (12/16-12/31); *Forecast* with *Lannie Garret* (1/1-1/31).

Club Gambu: *Gene Rush* (Tues.-Sat.).

Fernando's: *Right Combination* (Fri.-Mon.).

Cherry Creek Inn: *Les James Trio* (Mon.-Sat.).

Yorkshire Inn: *Bopportunity.*

Rogues Gallery (Boulder): Jazz and contemporary music on the weekends.

SAN DIEGO

Oceanus: *Joe Marillo Quartet* (Wed.-Sun.).

Sports Arena: *Blue Oyster Cult/Montrose* (12/17).

Back Door: *Eddie Harris* (12/8-9); student groups (Tues.-Wed.).

Crossroads: *Equinox* (Fri.-Sat.).

Safety: Soul weekly; jazz jam (Sunday).

Fat Fingers: *Fat Fingers Jazz-Rock House Band* (nightly).

Convention Center: *David Bromberg Band* (12/3); *Barry Manilow* (12/12).

Cafe Del Rey Moro (Balboa Park): *Orange Music Ent.* (Wed.-Sun., tent.).

Albatross: *Island* (Thurs.-Sat.); *Nova* (Sun.-Wed.).

Southwestern College: Jazz night (Tuesday).

U.C.S.D.: Jazz scholarship benefit (12/3).

Le Cote d'Azur: *Island* (Mon.-Wed.).

Mississippi Room: *Bob Hinkle Trio* (Tues.-Sat.).

Joe's Fish Market: *Storm* (Thurs.-Sat.); *Rich Hunt* (Wed.-Sun., lounge).

Chuck's Steak House (La Jolla): *Zzaj* (Thurs.-Sun., tent.).

Culpepper's: *Mark Augustin,* jazz guitar (Thurs.-Sun.).

Santa Monica Civic: *The Chieftains* (12/6).

MONTREAL

Rising Sun: Various jazz groups every night.

Rainbow: Various jazz groups (Tues.-Thurs.).

Mojo: *Sayyd Abdul Al Khabyyr* (Thurs.-Sun.).

Clevitos: Dixieland (Fri.).

Friday's: Dixieland (Sat.).

Cock and Bull: Dixieland (Sun.).

The Flick: Various groups (Tues.-Sun.).

National Library (Ottawa): Jazz films (12/4, 12/18).

Black Bottom (Ottawa): Jazz Ottawa members' jam sessions (Tues.); *Apex Jazz Band* (Fri.).

Wildflower (Ottawa): *Frank Koller Trio* (Thurs.).

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

Beacon Arms (Ottawa): Various groups (Tues.-Sat.).

Bar Elite (Quebec City): Various groups nightly.

L'Harmonique (Quebec City): Various groups nightly.

CLEVELAND

Benji's (Sherator-Beachwood, Chagrin at I-271): *Sam Finger's Dixieland* (Tues.); *Joe Cooper Trio w/Weasel Parker* (Wed.-Sat.).

The Boardinghouse: *Bill Gidney/Chink Stevenson Duo* (Tues., Thurs., Sat.).

Pickle Bill's: *Ralph Gruegel* and the *Eagle Dixieland Jazz Band* (Fri. and Sat.).

The Agora New World of Jazz: National jazz artists (Tues.); acts to be announced.

The Theatrical: *Billy Butterfield Band* (12/13-23); *Jim "Mudcat" Grant* (12/27-12/31); *Jerry Tiffe* (1/3/77-1/29/77).

FIRST CHORUS

continued from page 6

change. If the public won't accept you, nobody will. . . . What we are doing, however, is basically just commercial funk. There is no jazz with the funk . . . just straight funk.

And, 180 degrees the other way, is Ted Curson's dialog with interviewer Chuck Berg.

Berg: It must be difficult to resist the temptation [to head a crossover group], because that seems to be where the big market is.

Curson: In addition to the temptation, there's the pressure from the record people. They say, "How about *Ted Curson Goes Disco?*" Then you could be a star overnight. . . . I'm going to stick with what I'm doing. I've never copied before and at the age of 41 it makes no sense to do it now. Maybe you won't make great money. Maybe you won't have everything that you want. But I believe you've got to be true to yourself.

Who's right? Who has the right to sit in judgment?

Next issue: We get into why the bass has moved up front, with commentary from many of the top low string players and an interview with Jaco Pastorius, the most rapidly rising bass star; plus a conversation with salty dog Ruby Braff; as well as the not-so-usual array of **db** feature and reviews.

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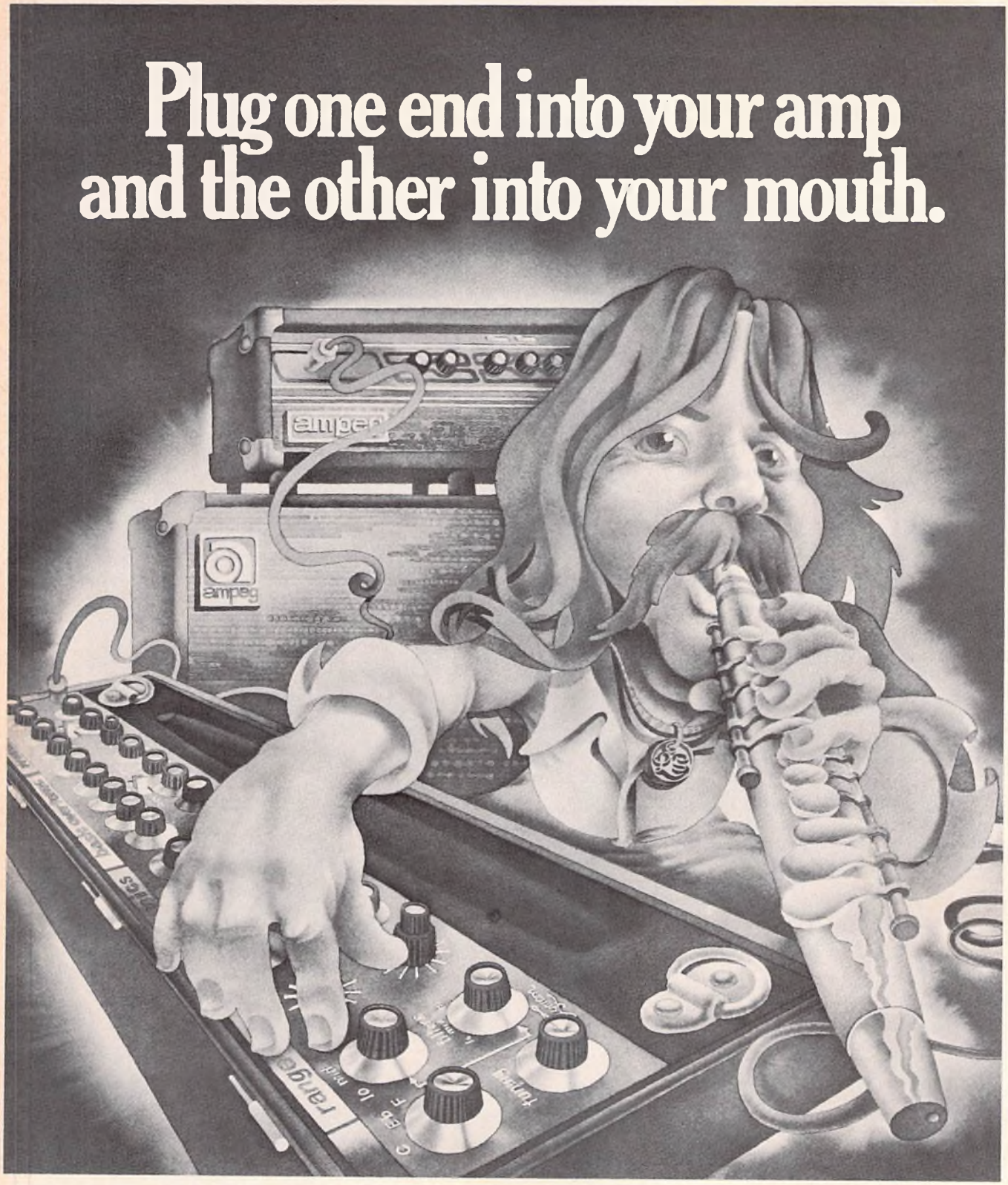

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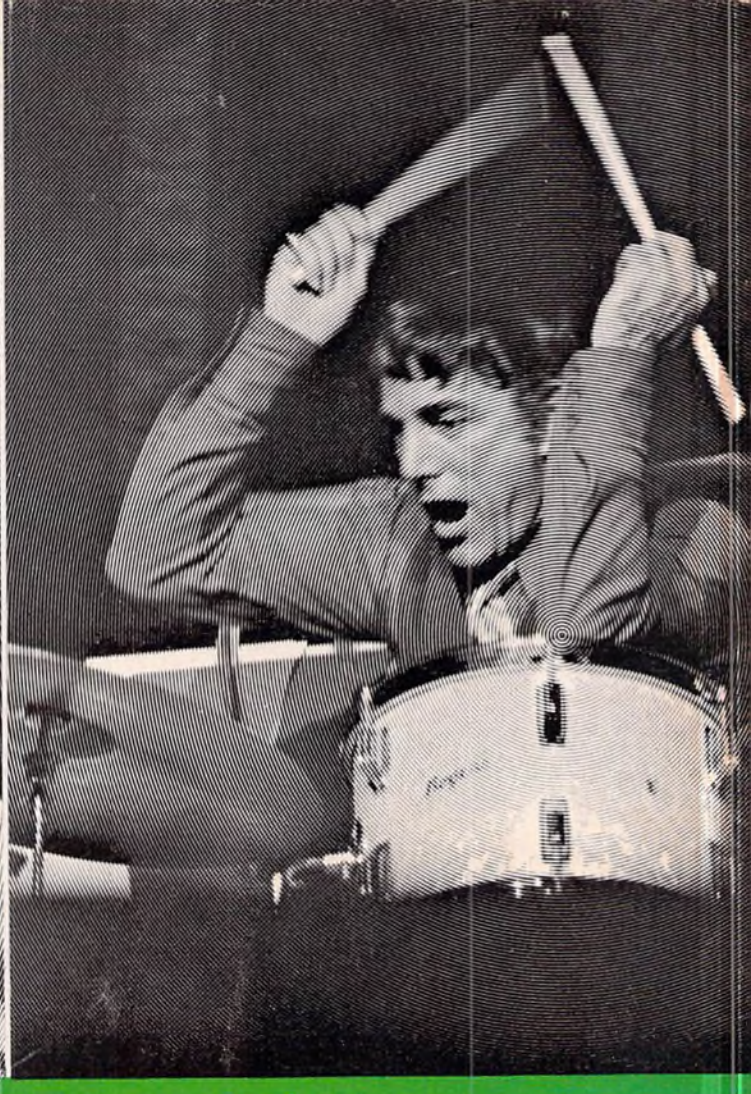

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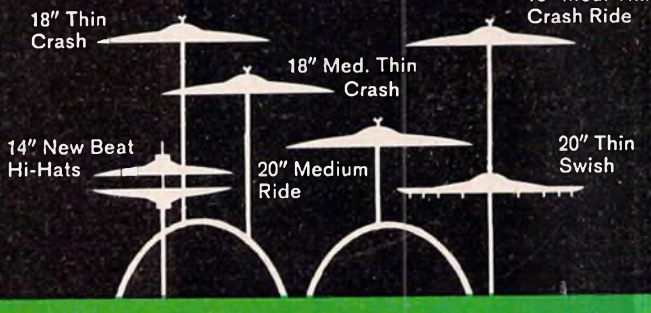

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