

JUNE 16, 1977

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music magazine

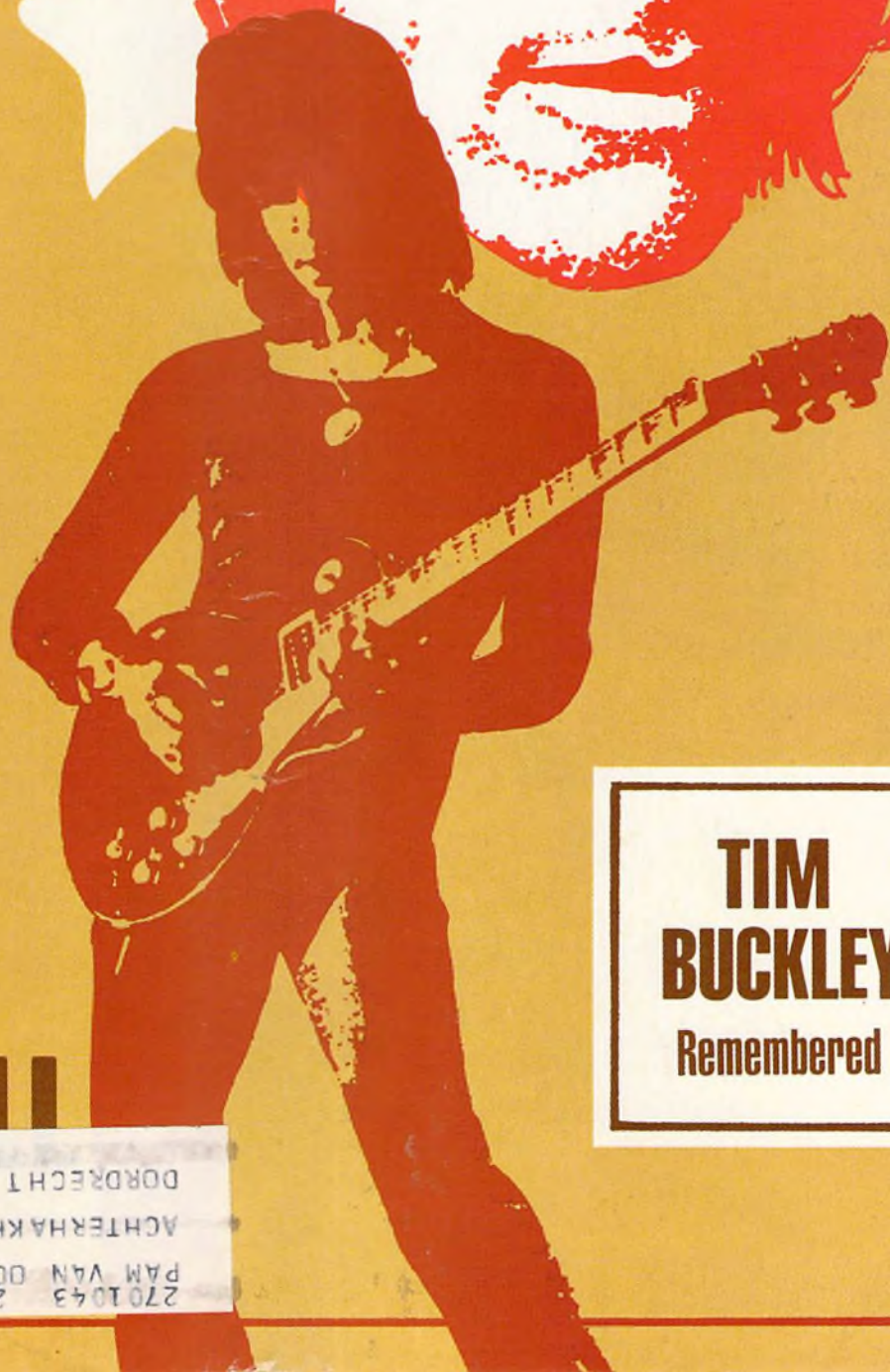
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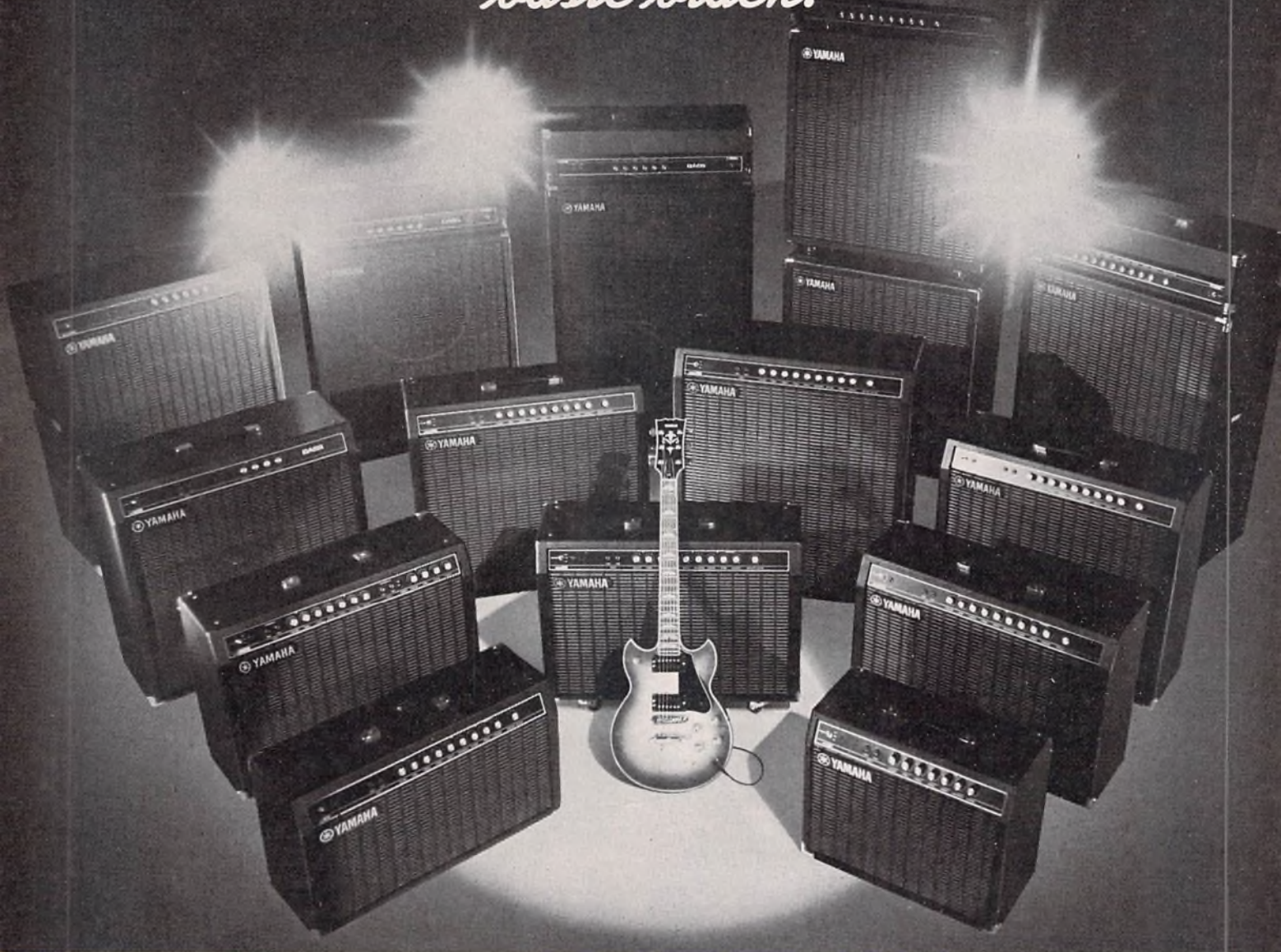
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# DRUM BEAT!

## • Rim Shots

Summer clinic scheduled for: Carmine Appice at Quigley Music, Kansas City Missouri on 7/22; David Friedman will be featured guest at Northern Arizona Univ. in Flagstaff on 6/24; Jake Jerger will be part of a four day workshop at OBMA in Oklahoma City 7/19 - 22.

## • The Spotlight

Multi-percussionist Charles Dowd, recently joined the Ludwig Educational Clinic Staff as a clinician specializing in outfit, vibes, timpani, and all accessories. He is Assistant Professor of Music at the University of Oregon.

## • Trappings - Response to Reader questions.

Despite careful tuning of your drums at home or rehearsal, the acoustics of the performance club or concert hall will be much different than your practice area. Also, tuning once you set up for performance, should be done while the room is full of people. A "rule of thumb" is to use a little more muffling if the room is too live and the sound reverberates. Many drummers however, prefer a small amount of "ring" rather than a dead over muffled sound.

## • Pro's Forum

Clinician - Karen Ervin

Q. I am a beginning mallet player studying with a private instructor. How soon should I begin studying four mallet technique?

A. My students begin three and four mallet technique as soon as they have a working knowledge of the keyboard. This is usually by the third or fourth lesson. It takes quite a while to become comfortable with four mallets. By learning four mallets right along with two mallet technique, you will advance at equal rates of technique improvement and playing confidence.

*Drum Beat is brought to you by Ludwig to keep you up-to-date on the world of percussion. Comments, articles, questions, anything? Write to Drum Beat:*

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June 16, 1977

Vol. 44, No. 12

(on sale June 2, 1977)

## Contents

- 13 **Jeff Beck:** "The Progression Of A True Progressive," by Larry Rohter. In an exclusive interview, guitarist Beck discusses his musical evolution, with an eye on the future.
- 17 **Ed Blackwell:** "Crescent City Thumper," by Robert Palmer. It is often said that New Orleans is the breeding ground of all successful drummers. Blackwell is yet another example of that special bayou magic.
- 21 **Phoebe Snow:** "Stylistic Gymnast," by Len Lyons. Ms. Snow's meteoric rise has been plagued by both personal and legal difficulties. Hopefully she is now able to concentrate on developing her awesome talents.
- 25 **Tim Buckley:** "Chronicle Of A Starsailor," by Lee Underwood. A revolutionary experimentalist in the truest sense, vocalist Buckley never seemed able to gain the mass acceptance he so deserved. His close friend and ex-guitarist skillfully evaluates Tim's accomplishments.
- 28 **Ira Sullivan:** "Sentinel Of The Wellspring," by Arnold Jay Smith. Firmly ensconced in Florida by his own choice, the legendary Sullivan details the satisfaction of life away from the pressure of hectic giggery.
- 30 **Record Reviews:** Shakti with John McLaughlin; Warne Marsh; Jeff Beck with the Jan Hammer Group; Sonny Rollins; Ran Blake; Louis Bellson; Joe Farrell; Lionel Hampton; Gary Bartz; Gary Burton; Asleep At The Wheel; Gap Mangione; Waxing On—J. R. Monterose; Sam Noto; Mickey Tucker; Sam Jones; Barry Harris; Charles McPherson; Jimmy Raney; Sam Most; Teddy Edwards; Ronnie Cuber.
- 45 **Blindfold Test:** Gerry Niewood, by Leonard Feather.
- 46 **Profile:** Hal Galper, by Arnold Jay Smith. Barbara Carroll, by Michael Rozek.
- 48 **Caught:** Return To Forever, by Bob Henschen; Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Quartet, by Bill Kirchner; Jimmy Owens, by Arnold Jay Smith.
- 57 **Perspective:** "EmArcy Reissue Series—Back To The Vaults," by Tim Schneckloth.
- 58 **How To Deal With A Fresh Idea,** by Dr. William L. Fowler.

## Departments

6 First Chorus

8 Chords & Discords

10 News

11 News/Final Bar

61 City Scene

Cover Design/Art; Kelly/Robertson

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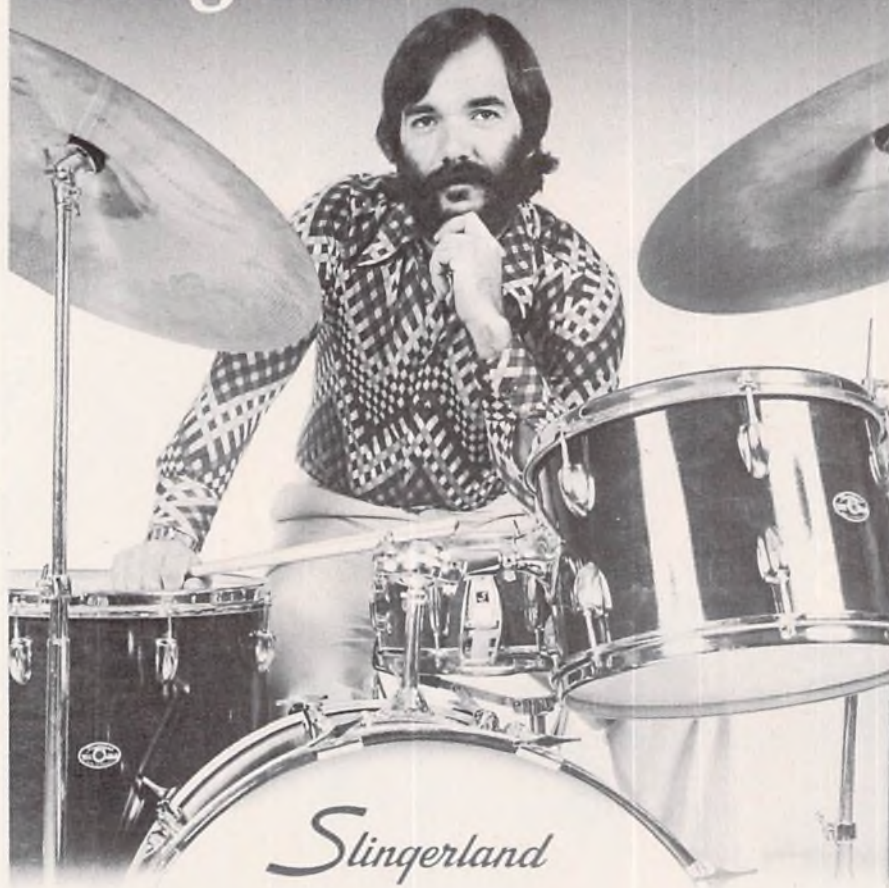


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By Charles Suber

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Support for music in your schools and in your community is on the way. Maybe. It depends on what a lot of people, including you, can do in the next few months.

The two most likely organizations to lead the way to an improved school music future are the American Music Conference (AMC) and the Music Educators National Conference (MENC). The former is the point organization for the music industry; i.e. instrument manufacturers, publishers, retailers and the like. The latter is the parent organization for the nation's school music teachers.

The AMC is currently setting its stage: a new president, Les Propp, former chairman of Norlin Music; a new quadrupled budget; a Washington consultant; and an unprecedented agreement among the industry's several factions that a healthy school music program is the foundation of their business. The AMC will soon initiate action on a number of fronts to demonstrate the values of a school music education to the student and the community. Research to these ends will (at last!) be initiated, and the results used to influence school bill payers to invest in comprehensive music programs that have a high payoff in the number of students involved. And so forth.

The MENC is also getting its act together. But it is difficult to convince tenured music educators that their students' welfare, and their jobs, are in peril. It is also difficult to convince deans of music educator training schools that fewer is better, or that teachers must be trained to deal with more than a band or an orchestra or chorus.

But in spite of these difficulties, the MENC, and its 50 state chapters, are beginning to form political action committees who will educate politicians at various levels of responsibility—from school board members to Congress.

A test of the educators' resolve will be the MENC Biennial Convention next April in Chicago. If that national forum is devoted to counter-crisis workshops, then there's hope for us all. If they revert to lobby sings, then we all lose.

The most promising aid to community music is House Bill 1042, "Voluntary Citizen Financing for the Arts and Education," reintroduced in this session of Congress by Fred Richmond (D.-Brooklyn, NY). This bill which enjoys the co-sponsorship of more than 100 congressmen and virtually every arts organization, would allow taxpayers to be arts patrons by an income tax checkoff.

If this bill is to become law it needs grass roots support *now*. It needs the kind of commitment that actor Henry Fonda expressed when he assumed the chairmanship of the National Council for Arts and Education which was recently organized to fight for H.R. 1042.

Fonda asserts: "For the first time in my life, I have become active in a national cause. I have waited for a long time to find one in which I believe so strongly. This one is long overdue, and one which can and *must* succeed." For further information about the Richmond Bill and how you can help support the arts in your community, write this column. And write your Congressman expressing your support of H.R. 1042.

Next issue: down beat's 43rd anniversary issue. **db**

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**In Defense Of Ruby**

After reading the negative comments in your columns following the recent interview with Ruby Braff, I felt compelled to answer those comments with some positive statements concerning Mr. Braff.

Having listened to and appreciated Ruby's playing on records for many years, I had the pleasure of meeting and sharing some time with Ruby and George Barnes when they appeared in the Twin Cities with Tony Bennett on a concert tour. Ruby and George were asked to stay over and hear some of our local musicians and possibly sit in. They happily consented to stay and appeared the following night at the Hall Brothers Emporium of Jazz in Mendota, Minnesota, and provided a great evening for musicians

and audience alike. The next day I took Ruby to the airport and found their company and reminiscence of some of their experiences a great joy.

This warm side of Ruby might be just one man's testimony, but I feel it must be stated. For further proof, I suggest any of the 20 or so albums Ruby has appeared on in the last 25 years as basic understanding of a style of jazz playing that is all but forgotten in 1977!

Tom Diehl Eden Prairie, Minn.

**Rehak Accolade**

Now and then, somebody like Marv Hohman will do a piece on a very musical human being like Frank Rehak (5/5) and in a few well-constructed paragraphs, will demonstrate to a newly-emerging readership

in their 20s and 30s, what it was like to be a Herd-studio-recording bebopper in the '40s and '50s.

For a hack trombone-jazzer like me and many others, Rehak was, and happily still is, a true guiding light. Along with J. J., Bill Harris, Winding, Fuller, Fontana and Bobby Burgess, Frank unshackled the trombone from its Dixie straightjacket. I sincerely hope he finds the peace he's seeking. Thanks, Frank. . . . Thanks, Marv Hohman. Tommy Hodges Las Vegas, Nev.

**Kentonese Energy**

Thanks very much for the excellent review of the recent Stan Kenton album, *Journey To Capricorn*, printed in the May 5 issue. In an age where it seems electronic music is about to engulf us all, it is a relief to be able to dig on the pure human energy which pours without fail from the Kenton bands. Thanks again for the deserving credit, and may "Stan the Man" live forever!!!

Ron Davis San Francisco, Cal.

**Critical Frustration**

I am beginning to get rather frustrated at the way the record reviewers and some interviewers are taking it upon themselves to wage war on a very progressive sound combination of pop, rock and jazz.

These guys *are* producing records that sell, and why not? Is it a written law that musicians with that kind of talent have to be poor? I agree that there has to be artistry involved in music and that people demand artistry in performance, but I believe that the music produced by these musicians has a very definite place in today's contemporary music scene.

For example, I recall the record review of George Benson's *Breezin'*. The reviewer cut the record to pieces (it's now a platinum album and still listed on the charts) and it seems that whenever a comment is made about George's music, I get the idea that everyone thinks he's sold himself down the river.

It seems to me that even though you guys couldn't find too much worthwhile with George and Stevie's music, there are some people who find worthwhile artistry in their music. Let's see, didn't George get three Grammys, and Stevie four?

Pat Daniel Chicago, Ill.

**Latino Affront**

I do not think that Ray Barretto needs any defense when it comes to his conga playing or his contribution to latin music. However, in his interview with Arnold Smith (4/21), Mongo Santamaria would have us believe that Ray took credit for composing *Guarare* when he recorded it in his *Barretto* album. This is absolutely not the case. Ray is a composer, himself, and he has too much respect for talent to take credit for something he did not do. The composer was not given credit on the record because he could not be located and because of the Cuban embargo.

Puerto Ricans will surely take offense to much of what Mongo had to say in his article. I have never heard a Puerto Rican musician deny that "salsa" has its roots in Cuba, but many of latin music's giants are Puerto Rican. Mongo's comments were an affront to his fellow Latinos.

Harriet Wasser New York, N.Y.

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## MCCOY WAXES ON



PHIL BRAY

McCoy and Orrin take a break during recording sessions

BERKELEY—In a remarkably quick four days—April 9 through 12—McCoy Tyner (with assists from producer Orrin Keepnews and engineer Jim Stern) recorded two discs worth of material with two special trios.

The first two days, a Tyner-Ron Carter-Tony Williams group played a combination of straight-ahead Tyner originals and standards including Coltrane's *Moment's Notice*. Later, with Jack DeJohnette and Eddie Gomez, McCoy stretched out into more abstract musical spheres with another mix of originals and standards including *Lush Life*.

During the next four days, Tyner rejoined Keepnews and Stern for the album mix, thus completing the projected two-record set in barely more than a week's time.

Most of the above occurred during daytime hours; evenings, Tyner was working a ten-day engagement with his regular sextet at Keystone Korner.

Back at the Fantasy studios, Tony Williams was heard to ask Tyner: "Hey, McCoy, when are you going to check out one of those new Oberheim synthesizers?" Tyner's reply was a soft chuckle.

## Maynard In Europe

NEW YORK—Trumpeter Maynard Ferguson and his orchestra will be touring major European cities in July, following Ontario's Sault Ste. Marie Jazz Festival, the Canadian National Stage Band Festival in Willowdale, Ont., and the Newport Jazz Festival. Beginning July 2nd, Ferguson will be performing in such cities as Warsaw, Poland, Kongsbury and Oslo, Norway, Aarhus and Copenhagen, Denmark, Montreux, Antibes and Amsterdam. Maynard's performance in Montreux, Denmark and Antibes (July 2-9), will be part of the

European Jazz Festival.

Ferguson's fall/winter tour included such major halls and clubs as Boston's Music Hall, Pittsburgh's Carnegie Music Hall, Montreal's Plaza des Arts, Miami's Rico's Bus Stop, and San Francisco's Great American Music Hall. New York's Felt Forum and The Bottom Line were played this past January and February, respectively. Ferguson will be returning to New York for a third appearance at The Palladium in June, which will be preceded by the Newport Jazz Festival date.

## Miniature Drum Exhibit

NEW YORK—A recent exhibit at the Donnell Branch of the New York Public Library featured miniature drums. Why drums, you ask? Well, first of all they were part of a collection of Terry Mayer, a publicist who wishes to raise money for the library. "What better way to do it than to 'beat the drums for donations,'" she stated.

The collection, gathered from all over the world, included all shapes and sizes, ranging from

one to 15 inches. They were made from tin, wood, nuts, candle wax, carved apple core, shells, rubber tree gum, glass and ceramics. There were soldiers of various sizes and nationalities, African statuettes formal and tribal, American and Mexican Indians, frogs playing drums, windups, pulltoys, paperweights, U.S. quarters (check out the obverse side of the '76 issue); there were angels, devils and Salvation Army drummers.

## potpourri

The Ladies' Fort in New York City will dedicate 30 special evenings to different musicians like **Tommy Turrentine, Clifford Jordan, Dizzy Reece, Archie Shepp** and **Ritchie Cole**. The concerts are sponsored by Universal Sounds of Beautiful People. Similarly, this year's Newport Jazz Festival will have a series on loft jazz, headed by **Leroy Jenkins, Sirone** and **Jerome Cooper**.

The **Universal Jazz Coalition** in New York is now headed by **Nobuko Cobi Narita**, with board members including **Marian McPartland, Dizzy Gillespie, Paul Ash, Ahmad Jamal** and **Jymie Merritt**.

**Humphrey Lyttelton**, noted British trumpet player, recently hosted a BBC film called "Music From Montreux." Performing are **Shakti, Clark Terry, Jimmy Witherspoon, Weather Report, Odetta, Stan Getz, Illinois Jacquet, Art Blakey** and others. The show is supposedly destined for airing on Public Broadcasting stations in the U.S.

**Lester Bowie** is fronting a new group in New York with **Black Arthur Blythe** on alto, **Don Pullen** on ivories, **Steven Neil** on bass and **Phil Wilson**, drums.

**Philadelphia's** usual summer concert series at **Robin Hood Dell East** is nailing down Monday nights for weekly jazz concerts. Due up this year are: **Ben-Lee Hooker, Koko Taylor, Blind ny Goodman (7/11); Lionel Hampton (7/18); Mercer Ellington (7/25); Lou Rawls (8/1); Maynard Ferguson (8/8); Count Basie (8/15); Dizzy Gillespie (8/15); Earl Hines/Billy Eckstine (8/22);** and others. Tickets go for as low as \$1.00 general ad-

mission, or more for reserved seating.

For those who care: **Little Richard**, prime rocker of the '50s, has again forsaken show biz to return to his former avocation of minister. Mr. Penniman has not announced what location he has chosen for his exuberant pulpity.

An electronic synthesizer workshop will be offered at Long Island's **Adelphi University** from July 11-15. **Don Muro**, chairman of the National Association Of Jazz Educators, will conduct the workshop.

*The Greatest*, the cinematic biography of **Muhammad Ali**, will strut two songs played and sung by **Breezin' George Benson**.

**Kongsberg Norway's** jazz festival will be held from June 29-July 3. Featured artists include **Jan Garbarek, the Ted Curson Septet, Ahmad Jamal** and **Michal Urbaniak/Urszula Dudziak**.

**Houston, Texas** will be the scene of an **Emancipation Day** concert on June 19. In celebration of the hundredth anniversary of blacks being declared free in the state of Texas, a nine hour concert will hold forth. Featured artists include such legendary bluesmen as **Eddie Cleanhead Vinson, Muddy Waters, John Lee Hooker, Koko Taylor, Blind John Davis, Gatemouth Brown, Lightnin' Hopkins** and a host of others. **Arnett Cobb** and the **Texas Southern University** aggregation will also perform. The gala event occurs at Houston's Miller Outdoor Theatre in Hermann Park.

## STORYVILLE ACTION

NEW YORK—Storyville became the place to be for big bands on a recent Monday night. The National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, New York Chapter, presented its members with two bands.

The University of Bridgeport Jazz Ensemble, Neil Slater, director, and the University of New Hampshire Jazz Band, David Seiler, director, each played a rewarding set. On Lou Marini's *Hip Pickles*, Bridgeport soloists included **Rik Alboni**, trumpet; **Fred Vogler**, alto and soprano sax; **Joe Locascio**, piano and clarinet. **Willie Maiden's A Little Minor Booze** featured **Paul Adami**, bass; **Greg Utzig**, guitar; **Dave Hramjack**, tenor; and **Fred Moriano**, trumpet.

The New Hampshire group's

selections were surprisingly more complex, with charts by **Rich Matteson, Joel Leach** and **Bill Holman**. Some soloists here were **Steve Chilean**, alto; **Brian Roland** and **Dave King**, guitar; **Ken Crowell**, soprano; and the sax choir on a reworking of **James Moody's Moody's Mood**.

Space permits listing of only a few of the outstanding soloists, of which there were so many. "It's gratifying to hear fine young talent still coming out of the schools across your country," a visiting Britisher said.

Check out a singer named **Lila Mori**. In addition to her duties with the New Hampshire band, she led the University's all-girl **Dixieland Jazz Band** through some standards that she told **db** "were taken off the old 78s."

Jazz NEWS

## MISSISSIPPI RIVER BREAKDOWN

ST. LOUIS—Although the entire schedule is not yet complete (there are at least two open dates), this year's Mississippi River Festival has more jazz performers than in any previous season. They include Roy Ayers Ubiquity and Stanley Turrentine on July 13; the Fred Waring Show on July 15; the Concord Jazz Festival on July 22, with The L.A. Four (Laurindo Almeida, Ray Brown, Shelly Manne and Bud Shank), Herb Ellis and Barney Kessel, Plas Johnson with Hank Jones and Ernestine Anderson; Jean-Luc Ponty, July 27; and George Benson, July 29. On

August 12, the big band sound will be represented by Ted Beneke and his orchestra, with Helen O'Connell and Bob Eberly.

So far, no hard rock acts have been booked. Boz Scaggs, the Sylvers, Arlo Guthrie and Pete Seeger, Kris Kristofferson and Jackson Browne have been booked, however. Most likely, some hard rockers will be brought in to increase the Festival revenue, since these events have traditionally paid the bills. The comedy corner will be filled by Bob Hope on July 8 and (get this!) Roy Clark performing with the St. Louis Symphony.

## NORTHSEA FEST '77

THE HAGUE, HOL. — An impressive list of jazz performers will be appearing at the Northsea Festival '77 in the Hague-Holland on July 15, 16, 17. The list includes Ella Fitzgerald, Dave Brubeck, Dizzy Gillespie plus Jon Faddis, Oscar Peterson, Count Basie Orchestra, Charles Mingus, John Lewis, Joe Pass, Joe Venuti, Cab Calloway, Wallace Davenport, Carmen McRae, Slide Hampton, Dexter Gordon, Anthony Braxton, Mike Mantler/Carla Bley, Archie Shepp, Max Roach, Gary Burton, Maynard Ferguson Band, Art Blakey, Horace Silver, Dutch Swing College and Paulinho da Costa.

The Paul Acket Agency (producer of the Festival) is still negotiating with Mel Tormé, Stanley Clarke, Toots Thielemans, Milt Jackson, Monty Alexander, Gato Barbieri, Charles Tolliver, Randy Weston and the Don Ellis Orchestra.

Chances are that Herbie Mann (with a 12 piece "New Generation Orchestra") and the Atlantic Super Stars (ASS) (with Klaus Doldinger, Sonny Fortune, David Newman and Ray Charles) will also be present during that magnificent event.

Interested American visitors to Europe should check the dates, and plan to be there in the "Congresgebouw."

## WOODY DOCTORFIED

BOSTON—Woody Herman received the honorary degree of Doctor of Music in commencement ceremonies at Berklee College of Music on May 14.

The award was conferred by Lawrence Berk, president and founder of the noted jazz institution. The presentation followed a commencement address by Wil-

lis Conover, currently chairman of the White House Record Library Commission.

The presentation climaxed a series of celebrations marking Woody's 40th anniversary as a bandleader. Previous recipients of Berklee's honorary doctorate include Duke Ellington, Arthur Fiedler and Mabel Mercer.

## Carter At Princeton

PRINCETON, N.J.—In his farewell appearance for the spring semester, Benny Carter recently played, arranged and conducted two jazz ensembles at Princeton University.

The "A" ensemble, conducted by Bud Maltin, played charts by Gerry Mulligan and Thad Jones before relinquishing the floor to Carter. A newly titled piece called *Souvenir* featured some interesting trumpet ensemble passages in the second chorus. But it was Benny's alto that really made the moment count. *Cottontail* was the Carter chart he used on the *Further Definitions* album, and it employed a full sax section. Here, the saxes again carried the ball, but were dragged back by a drummer whose time lagged slightly. It appeared to be a fight all the way, but the reeds made it home okay.

The "B" ensemble was conducted by Art Fogerty. Where the "A" drummer merely lost time, the "B" one never appeared to have it firmly in his grasp. But Carter prevailed with his *When Lights Are Low*. His alto soared to the rafters of Hamilton Hall, an historic monument with fine acoustic qualities. His coda on *I Can't Get Started* drew sustained applause. Pianist Jeff Pressloff was a highlight of the second half of the program.

12 □ down beat

## New Releases

Island has released another *ing Zone*, Roy Buchanan (prom-mammoth group of budget duced by Stanley Clarke); *Hear goodies on its subsidiary Antil-And Now*, Don Cherry (featuring les label. The impressive list in-surprising accompaniment from cludes *Eternal Now*, Don Cherry Lou Reed and Steve Hillage); (recorded in Sweden several *Percussion Music Of John Cage* years ago); *Music For Xaba, And Marcel Duchamp*, Donald Dyanl/Temiz/Feza (including Knaack; CSN, Crosby, Stills & some of the last recorded work Nash; and *Let There Be Rock*, by the late trumpettist Mongeza AC/DC.

Feza); *Discreet Music*, Brian Eno; *Voices And Instruments*, Capitol newies are *Music Is Jan Steele/John Cage*; *Funk, My Sanctuary*, Gary Bartz; *Sweet The Last Of The Great Earl Lucy*, Raul de Souza; *Thrilling-Hooker*, Earl Hooker; *Allen Fon-ton*, Percy Thrillington; and *tenot And The Country Cajuns*: *Secret Damage*, Strapp. *Chicago Urban Blues*, Detroit, Jr.; *Bryter Layter*, Nick Drake;

Assalam Aleikoum Africa—Pablo has initiated a series called "Pablo Live." First efforts include *Free Ride*, Dizzy Gillespie and Lalo Schifrin; *Afro-Blue Impressions*, a John Coltrane concert recorded in 1963; *Milt Jackson At The Kosei Nenkin*, Milt Jackson; and *J.A.T.P. In Tokyo*, a triple disc of the All-Stars at the Nichigeki Theatre in 1953. Regular Pablo recent waxings include *Conception*, Ray Pizzi; *The Giants*, Oscar Peterson, Joe Pass and Ray Brown; *Prime Time*, Count Basie; *Solo Flight*, Ray Bryant; *Things I Used To Do*, Joe Turner; and *The Main Man*, Jo Jones.

Don Schlitten's Xanadu label has released *Bish Bash*, Walter Bishop, Jr.; *America*, Al Cohn; *Dolo, Dolo Coker*; *Second Set*, Tal Farlow; and *True Blue*, the first in a two volume series featuring Dexter Gordon, Al Cohn, Blue Mitchell, Sam Noto, Sam Jones, Barry Harris and Louis Hayes.

Inner City has issued *Dark To Themselves*, Cecil Taylor; *Steam*, Archie Shepp; *The Children Of Africa*, Dollar Brand; and *Futures Passed*, David Friedman.

Atlantic adds include *Sweet Passion*, Aretha Franklin; *Load-*

GNP-Crescendo's Vintage series has reissued *Tenors West*, Jimmy Giuffre (11 tracks taped some 22 years ago); and *Frank Morgan*, a disc highlighting the alto saxophonist and dating from 1955, with accompaniment from Wardell Gray, Howard Roberts and Machito, among others.

Columbia's most recent discs include *Captain Fingers*, Lee Ritenour; *Love Notes*, Ramsey Lewis; and *Just Killer Joe*, Benny Golson.

## FINAL BAR

Julius Watkins, french horn player-composer, recently died in Short Hills, New Jersey. He was 55 years old.

Watkins was a major voice on his instrument almost from the time he first gained popularity. He left his native Detroit to play with Ernie Fields from 1943-46. He studied the horn from age nine and after returning to Detroit studied with Francis Hellstein of the Detroit Symphony. He moved to New York where he continued his work under Robert Schultze of the New York Philharmonic.

After three years at the Manhattan School of Music he joined Milt Buckner's band in 1949. He worked with Babs Gonzales, Kenny Clarke and did some night club and recording dates with the late Oscar Pettiford. As jazz french horn started to gain momentum with the advent of the "West Coast" sounds, he toured with Pete Rugolo in 1954. In 1956, he and tenor saxist Charlie Rouse formed Lesz Jazz Modes. The sounds they achieved were fresh, but they never strove to be experimental. The group split up in 1959.

Watkins taught his instrument and was a studio stalwart in almost any setting—orchestra, big band, rock, pop and Broadway musical. His presence was always a pleasure for the other horns because he knew so much and was always willing to part with some of his knowledge.

Watkins is survived by his wife, Harriette, his daughter, son, two stepchildren, father, mother, brother, two sisters and five grandchildren.

# JEFF BECK

## The Progression Of A True Progressive

by Larry Rohter

Jeff Beck sits in his New York hotel room, surrounded by car magazines and spare automobile parts, bobbing and weaving in his chair as a tape of Jan Hammer's *Magical Dog* booms from his cassette player.

"Just listen to that," he says excitedly, turning the volume up a bit more. "See how he waits an extra beat there before he comes in? The guy's bloody marvelous."

It is late in the spring of 1976 when an enthusiastic Jeff Beck says this, just as his collaboration with keyboard wizard Jan Hammer is about to enter a new phase. The two of them have already finished the final overdubbing sessions for *Wired*, and it's only a matter of days before they begin a summer-long tour together doing the series of outdoor stadium and indoor arena dates that have resulted in the current *Jeff Beck Live With The Jan Hammer Group*.

Beck is in a good mood. He's eager to play, and almost as eager to praise the musicians he will be working with. "Jan's the best," he says as the tape moves on to *Oh, Yeah?* and his head begins to nod in time. "He's the best Moog player there is."

Five years ago, the idea of Jeff Beck, English guitar flash, working with any synthesizer player, let alone a refugee Czech who had once backed Sarah Vaughan, would have been beyond the realm of possibility. As former lead guitarist for the Yardbirds, one of the most influential bands to come out of the mid-'60s British pop invasion, and later as leader of a group that included Rod Stewart, Ron Wood and Nicky Hopkins as members, Beck typified everything that was rock 'n' roll.

But the times have changed, and Beck, who is now 32, has changed with them. Starting with the release of his *Blow By Blow* album in 1975, he has embarked on a startlingly new musical direction, leaving behind the rock 'n' roll he had been raised on and experimenting at length with a more ambitious and challenging jazz-rock sound. While the other rock guitar heavies who came out of Britain in the '60s (Eric Clapton, Jimmy Page, Pete Townshend and Peter Green, to name a few) are either recycling the riffs that made them famous or have gotten out of music altogether, Beck has kept his ears and eyes open to new faces and new sounds.

"I knew his stuff from the Mahavishnu Orchestra," he says, "but it wasn't until Billy Cobham did the *Spectrum* album that Jan Hammer really got to me. And that Stanley



Clarke album Jan played on, that was magnificent. You see, Jan has a brilliant ear for melody, and that's what makes music. You can't have just rhythm alone.

"The rhythm thing is just second nature to Jan. He's mastered all those incredible scales. It's a great challenge to me because he's so brilliant. It makes me work a little harder."

This is a new and obviously more mature Jeff Beck talking. Back in the days of the Yardbirds, some ten years ago, he was, says one of the group's former road managers, "an incredible ego tripper. All he cared about was cars and himself." His tiffs with Rod Stewart were legendary, and the history of the second Jeff Beck Group and the Beck-Bogert-Appice power trio also was stormy.

"I used to buy all that stuff about how great I was and how great my guitar playing was," Beck admits, "but I don't anymore. Everyone goes through an ego trip, not just musicians. It's only natural."

Nowadays, though, he's much quicker to praise other musicians than himself. Among guitarists, he's particularly fond of Roy Buchanan, Les Paul and John McLaughlin—three very different stylists who appeal to him for very different reasons.

"Roy Buchanan," he says, "has a real positive attitude in his music, and a nice raunchy sound. When I saw him on television, on that Bill Graham special NET did back in 1971, right at a time when we were in the middle of an onslaught and barrage of horrible teeny bopper guitarists, it was amazing to me that here was this unknown guy playing some of the best blues guitar that had been played for a long time. It just seems that all the wrong people get the big slices of the cake"—which may be why Beck dedicated *'Cause We've Ended As Lovers*, which appeared on *Blow By Blow*, to Buchanan.

With Les Paul it's something altogether different. "There's no question about it," Beck says firmly. "Les Paul is the guv'nor of his own field. In any battle of guitarists, he's always been supreme in technique—that above all,

really." And of John McLaughlin, who springs from the same English r&b roots as Beck himself, he says: "I admire him tremendously. He knows exactly what he wants to do, and he goes out and executes it with the best players possible. I'd like to know where he picks 'em up, where he goes out and gets 'em."

The odd thing about all this is that while Beck is an admirer of McLaughlin, he was never too big on the original Mahavishnu Orchestra. "A lot of the Mahavishnu stuff was too way out for me," he says. "I don't mean way out in a musical sense, but just that it was a little bit confused. I didn't want to go that far; my mind couldn't handle it. There was so much brilliance there that it was hard to filter out. It was almost too intense."

But by the time *Blow By Blow* came out, Beck was acclimated enough to the Mahavishnu sound to take a band of his own out on tour with one of the final versions of the Orchestra. It was his first tour since the break up of the short-lived Beck-Bogert-Appice band, which Beck ruefully concedes is the low point of his career, and it was his first attempt to play so-called "jazz-rock."

"For Christ's sake," laughs Beck, "I wish somebody would make up a name for this kind of music, 'cause it ain't jazz and it ain't rock. It's got overtones of both, but it's really got no name of its own."

Looking back at that tour and at *Blow By Blow* now, Beck recalls mostly "what my head was going through. I was still fumbling around, looking for myself on that tour. I don't work that much on stage. I'm thinking constantly, but I do more thinking than playing. I practice nearly every day when I'm not on the road, but just barely an hour."

One of the problems of that tour—and one of the reasons he's so happy to be working with Hammer, and violinist Steven Kindler, bassist Fernando Saunders and drummer Tony Smith—was the band he put together in a very short time. "We had certain limitations with Bernard Purdie," he reports. "Although Purdie is a fantastic soul drummer, when it comes

**"The rhythm thing is just second nature to Jan. He's mastered all those incredible scales. It's a great challenge to me because he's so brilliant. It makes me work a little harder."**

to progressive funk. . . ."

Beck's voice trails off, and he fingers the turquoise cross given to him by Kindler. "We had a backbeat," he continues, after a long pause. "Nines and sevens and all that sort of stuff, and he soon got lost. But he was so forceful in his own way that we soon adapted to him. And once that little difference of opinion was settled, we were soon on our way. But we had to do it his way.

"Like everything else I've ever done," he sighs, "it was cooked up in some way. I never really had a chance to polish the group before we went on the road. We had six days of intense rehearsal and then took a day off before going back to see how much we remembered. We found that we'd forgotten half of it, but by then it was time to hit the road."

When that tour was over, Beck found himself with another problem: it was time to go into the studios with producer George Martin again, to do the *Wired* album. "I found I was tripping over myself a bit, because I hadn't had time to think about what I'd learned on the tour."

Rushing into things is alien to Beck's style. He prefers time to reflect on things, which has made him, in a sense, the Sonny Rollins of rock 'n' roll. On two occasions he's stopped performing altogether and withdrawn from the scene to just think things over and to play his instrument for himself, just as Rollins did.

## SELECTED BECK DISCOGRAPHY

LIVE WITH THE JAN HAMMER GROUP—Epic PE 34433

WIRED—Epic PE 33849

BLOW BY BLOW—Epic PE 33409

JEFF BECK GROUP—Epic KE 31331

BECK-OLA—Epic BN 26478

ROUGH AND READY—Epic KE 30973

TRUTH—Epic BN 26413

with the Yardbirds

OVER UNDER SIDEWAYS DOWN—Epic LN 24210

HAVING A RAVE UP—Epic LN 24177

The first time was in 1969, when the original Jeff Beck Group broke up after recording two widely-acclaimed albums, *Truth* and *Beck-ola*. They were supposed to have played at Woodstock, but the feelings of the group members toward each other were so acrimonious by that point that they went back to England instead. Soon afterwards, Beck had an automobile accident.

"That slowed me down quite a bit," he says. "I didn't have any interest at all in playing for at least three or four months. Then I had the underlying urge to play, but only when I was good and ready. You can't force yourself. If the feeling isn't good and strong, you can't really make it happen. What finally happened was that one day I got tired of wondering what I would play like if I started playing again, and so I got myself a drummer and a bass player."

The result was the second edition of the Jeff Beck Group, which debuted with the *Rough And Ready* album late in 1971. They did another album, and then broke up when Beck decided that he wanted to work in a power trio with the old Vanilla Fudge rhythm section, bassist Tim Bogert and drummer Carmine Appice. That group did only one album for the American market (although a live album recorded for CBS/Sony of Japan is available in some import shops) before Beck got fed up and once again went back to the 80-

acre farm he lives on in the English countryside.

"I just needed some time to wash old things away and conceive new things," he explains. During that time he didn't listen to much music—but then again, he never does.

"I don't like to listen to too many things," he says. "You can only be so positive. If somebody else comes along and gives you a bang in the side, just when you figure you've got something going, you're back to square one.

"I have a couple of friends and we play ping pong with music. I'll say 'You know that little bit on so-and-so's record,' and he'll say 'Oh well, you've got to hear this.' I really keep it to that level."

Even when he does listen, it's not usually for long periods of time. "I'll play a few records and then I've got to get out and do something. I like to be very active. Sometimes it means that the music doesn't get as much attention as it should, but in a way you get more refreshed. If you locked yourself away in an apartment and just did nothing but listen to music, it would be no good."

When he does listen to music, it's liable to be most anything. "I like just about every sort of music," he says. "See, I go through moods, and I have to select my program for the moods. I could just sit and listen to Monty Python albums for a whole evening and not hear a single piece of music. It just depends."

He'll admit, though, to a certain fondness for what might be called the "Nemperor" school of fusion music. "Yeah, all those guys, Hammer, Clarke, Walden, McLaughlin, they all come from the same family, and I just happen to be interested in that sort of music."

Besides Hammer and McLaughlin, Beck has also played, albeit only briefly, with bassist Stanley Clarke. That came about in large part because Beck was performing Clarke's *Power* during his summer 1975 tour, and "Stanley heard we were doing it on stage. One day when we were free and had a day off in New York, somebody said 'why don't we go out on Long Island and meet him.' That's what we did. We drove out to his house and just sat and talked about things.

"It was kind of embarrassing at first," Beck admits, "because there was no real buildup to it. But it worked, 'cause he rang me up shortly afterward and said why don't we get together and play something." The result was *Hello, Jeff*, which turned up on Clarke's second Nemperor solo album.

But once again, as in the case of John McLaughlin, Beck makes a distinction between Clarke and the group he plays in. "I'm not a great lover of Return To Forever," he says. "I can enjoy their concepts, but as regards listening to one of their albums time and time again, I don't get much from it. I guess that it's because I'm not so much into Chick. I have to sort of filter out the bits of his stuff that I like."

One keyboard player he does admire immensely, though, is Stevie Wonder. "He can write a tune, and he's got a great sense of melody," says the guitarist. "I love to hear things that sing. There's no point in making rotten noises and not going somewhere without a positive statement."

Beck also admires Wonder's vocal style. "If a singer like Stevie, or someone who could sing as good as Stevie, came along, I'd be

game to work with a vocalist, but that doesn't happen every day. I'm tired of voices. I've decided to drop vocalists because it's a good idea to have another instrumental voice instead. With *Blow By Blow*, the thing that hit people was that there was no vocalist. After playing backup lead guitar to Keith Relf and Rod Stewart and Bobby Tench, that's a relief."

Even though the recent live album features vocals by Hammer and drummer Tony Smith, who replaced Lenny White when he left Azteca to join Return To Forever, Beck says that he "hears the voice from instruments more now. You know, I listen to vocalists now, and I say 'What could I have ever heard in him?' I still like a straight vocalist, though. I like Aretha. I even like Barbra Streisand. Anything that's new and refreshing, I can take."

It was for precisely that reason that Beck turned to George Martin when it came time to record *Blow By Blow*. Martin, who was originally the producer for the Beatles, has a reputation for doing wonderful things with strings, and Beck decided that "I wanted to do a massive, sort of Hollywood thing with him, with a huge string ensemble. I just wanted to see what an electric guitar like mine could sound like within the framework of a large orchestra."

It didn't quite turn out as well as Beck had hoped. "There were a lot of really important things on that album that I would have liked to have had perfect. But overall, I suppose, George put the thing together in a much more listenable way. His string coloration was more than adequate, and he's a quite good engineer. In England there are very few people capable of tackling that sort of job. There are a whole lot of jive engineers around capable of taking money, but you won't get anything else for it."

The experiment with strings was not repeated on *Wired* simply because "it would have sounded almost automatically to the critic like I was deliberately repeating the past. There's no way I'm going to risk that." Instead, Beck used horns for the first time in his career—another experiment that appears to have been a one-time-only occurrence.

"I think that once you start playing with horns, at least someone like me, you're moving in the direction of a big band almost automatically. If you've got four guys playing a vamp or some sort of supporting chord, it immediately sounds like you've got an orchestra there. I can't stand anything on that scene, because James Brown's done all I want to hear of that."

What Beck does use a lot of on the *Jeff Beck With The Jan Hammer Group Live* album, which is produced and engineered by Jan Hammer, is the ring modulator. "It's just an unbelievable device," Beck claims. "Guitar people have used them before, but it's been like wah-wah pedals—with no subtlety at all."

He used the device himself on a song called *Sophie*, written by former Mahavishnu Orchestra drummer Narada Michael Walden, but first he heard it on John McLaughlin's *Visions Of The Emerald Beyond*. "It worked for John there because he knew how to use it. I know how to use it too, but I wouldn't play a speedy section of guitar lasting two minutes with it on all the way. I'll play a solo and use it for three or four notes. It takes the ear time to settle, to

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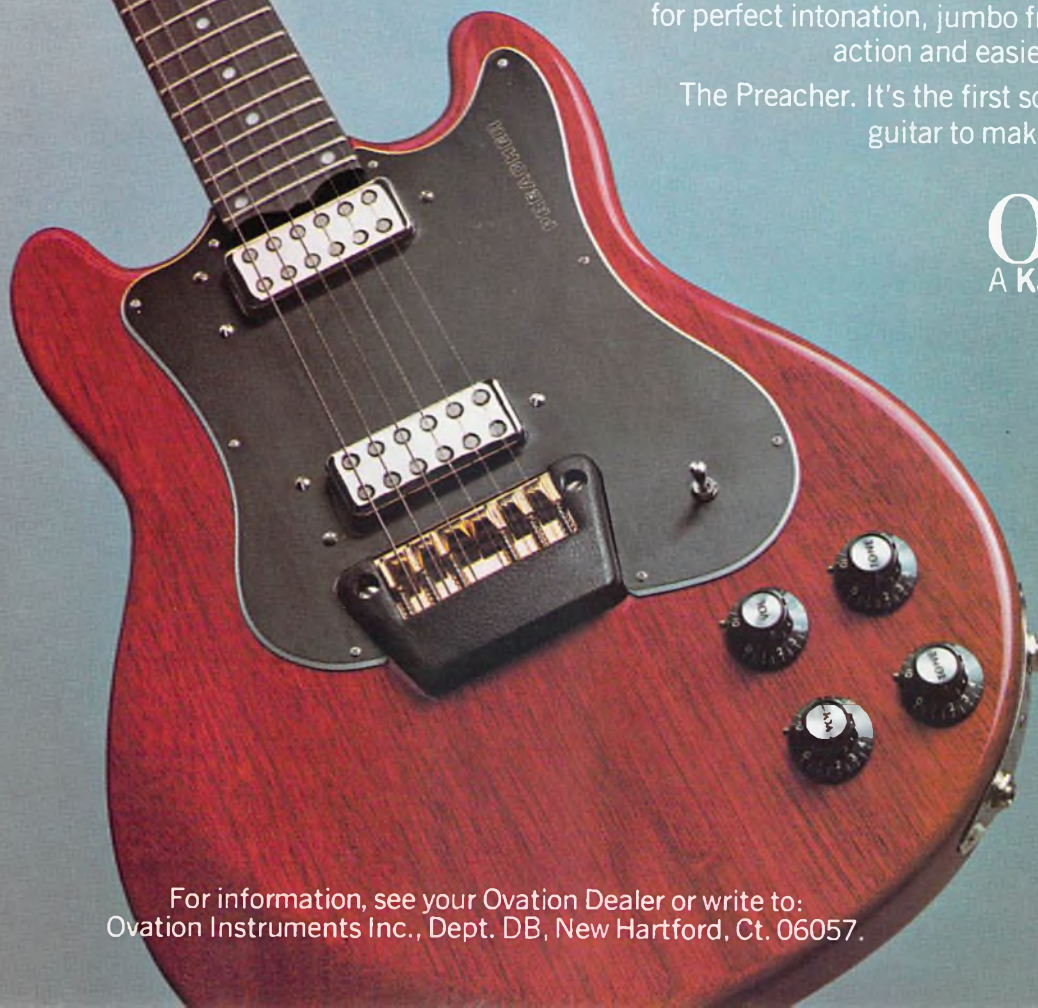
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**"New Orleans, I think, is the home of the drummers. Every time I think of New Orleans, I remember back and I can never remember seeing one drummer alone. There were always at least two of them together. . . . In New York . . . I guess I was so open I seemed strange. . . ."**

# ED BLACKWELL

## CRESCENT CITY THUMPER

by robert palmer

**L**ike Don Ellis, whose story was reported in *db* several issues back, Ed Blackwell would not be with us were it not for modern medicine. Ed has uremia, a chronic kidney malfunction which has claimed several lives in jazz, perhaps most tragically in the case of the brilliant young trumpeter Booker Little. Blackwell played drums in the celebrated band that featured Little, Richard Davis, Mal Waldron and its leader, Eric Dolphy, and recorded with them at the Five Spot. He was one of Ornette Coleman's original drummers and was perhaps the single most important musician who encouraged Coleman to continue developing his unorthodox music during the early 1950s, when almost nobody was willing to take it seriously. He toured Africa with Randy Weston's sextet, and has contributed to some of the most important recordings by Don Cherry.

Now Blackwell lives in Middletown, Connecticut, where he teaches private students as a member of the faculty at Wesleyan University. He has to be on a kidney machine three times a week, but aside from this stricture he is free to travel, and he has been heard in New York recently with both Don Cherry and a group led by pianist Anthony Davis. He should be heard more, for he is surely one of the most distinctive and influential percussionists of the past 20 years. He listens well and is flexible enough to adapt to the mercurial rhythmic changes of Coleman's music, but at the same time he invests everything he plays with a rollicking, jubilant swing. He is regarded by many younger drummers as a walking encyclopedia of rhythms because of his apparently bottomless bag of patterns from New Orleans, where he grew up, and from North and West Africa, where he lived for a time and toured. Important ethnic-jazz fusions such as Don Cherry's *Mu* and *Relativity Suite* and Archie Shepp's *The Magic of Ju Ju* might not have been possible without Blackwell's knowledgeable rhythmic sophistication.

This conversation took place in Blackwell's office at Wesleyan one wet autumn night. I was interested in his perspective on the early days with Ornette Coleman, the fabled Dolphy-Booker Little quintet, and so forth, but we found ourselves devoting much of the conversation to a subject which has never figured very significantly in Blackwell interviews: his New Orleans roots. Although he is known primarily as a contemporary innovator and master of melodic drumming, Blackwell is also,



and perhaps primarily, a Crescent City musician.

**Palmer:** Where in New Orleans did you grow up?

**Blackwell:** In the uptown section, the section called the Garden District, which was up above Canal Street. I started playing snare drum at Washington High School, and my first experience playing in a group was with the Johnson Brothers. You've probably heard of Plas Johnson, the saxophonist. This was Plas and Raymond Johnson, and it was the first time I played a set of drums. That must have been 1949, 1950. I stayed with them until 1951, when I left and went to California.

**Palmer:** Didn't you meet Ornette in New Orleans?

**Blackwell:** I met him once, but only as . . . introductory, you know. I was working with a group, he was passing through, and he came and sat in with me and introduced himself. He never really crossed my mind again until I saw him in 1953 in California, and then we got together and stayed together about two years playing. I left Los Angeles in '55 and went back to New Orleans, stayed five or six months and went back to California, stayed about three months and went back to New Orleans. That's when we formed this group in New Orleans, the American Jazz Quintet. It was Alvin Batiste, on clarinet, Nat Perrilliat on tenor, Ellis Marsalis on piano and Chuck Badie on bass, and we played around for quite a while. For awhile we were using Roy Montrell, the guitar player with Fats Domino. We recorded an album for Bumps Blackwell, but nothing ever came of it.

(Note: This group is a legend in New Orleans. Batiste, who teaches in Baton Rouge, is regarded by Ornette Coleman and other musicians as the finest clarinetist in contemporary jazz. Badie, Montrell and the late Nat Perrilliat were fixtures on the rhythm and blues recording scene in New Orleans during the middle and late 1950s. Marsalis is the city's monster jazz pianist, then as now, but national recognition has somehow eluded him.)

**Palmer:** Did you do much recording in New

Orleans?

**Blackwell:** I read in some places where I was supposed to have done some recordings with some people. I remember recording with Wallace Davenport. Then later in the 1950s, after I had been in California, Earl Palmer left New Orleans and they were looking around for drummers and I did some recording, down in Cosimo's studio. They'd just call me up to make a session, and sometimes I wouldn't even know what the people's names were.

**Palmer:** Well, I have an English reissue of *New Orleans R&B* (Volume Two, Flyright LP 4709) with a version of *Roll On* by Benny Spellman, and you're listed as the drummer.

**Blackwell:** Benny Spellman?

**Palmer:** Yeah, he had a hit for Allen Toussaint on Minit, *Fortune Teller*, and before that he sang bass with Huey "Piano" Smith and the Clowns. Anyway, this *Roll On* is from 1959, and the personnel they list is the Clowns on vocals, Lee Allen and Red Tyler on saxophones, Huey Smith on piano, Frank Fields on bass, and you. And it does sound like you. It's a lot looser than what you're used to hearing on those records, not to say less precise. It's more flowing and unpredictable, but it's right in the groove. Actually, it sounds a lot like the way you play with Ornette.

**Blackwell:** That may be true, it may be me.

**Palmer:** What about your supposedly having studied Afro-Cuban or African drumming in New Orleans? I read that in a couple of places, in A. B. Spellman's *Four Lives In The Bebop Business* and in an interview with Dr. John in *down beat*.

**Blackwell:** No, the only studying I did in New Orleans was with this friend of mine that got me in the high school band, Wilbur Hogan. He had played with Ray Charles and Lionel Hampton.

**Palmer:** I also wondered if there was any Latin music in New Orleans. I read in John Broven's book *Walking To New Orleans* that Charles Williams, the great studio drummer they had, used to play with some Latin musicians before he got into the studios.

**Blackwell:** Charles. . . . He really came up



with a new way of playing rhythm and blues, you know, that rock that people were coming to New Orleans to record. As far as inserting different beats with the bass drum, he really began doing that. He's the first drummer I heard doing it. But I don't remember any Latin scene, just blues, dixieland and then the jazz scene.

**Palmer:** What about the rhythms the Mardi Gras Indians play? Were those rhythms a big influence? I know from talking to people like Professor Longhair and Willie Tee that the Indians were very important in the black community. (Note: The Indians are black carnival societies in New Orleans.)

**Blackwell:** Oh yeah, now the rhythms they played with their tambourines, that was something else. Most of the Indians were congregated down below Canal, and down in that section is where Professor Longhair lived. And they were very heavy on that rhythmic thing. In fact, we used to go down to their practices where they would have their rehearsals.

**Palmer:** Right. You walk into one, with all that drumming and the cross-rhythms on tambourines, and it's like you've left the United States. You know, a lot of people think that the African rhythms which were played in Congo Square got transmitted down to modern times through the Indians.

**Blackwell:** Through the Indians, right. And the time they spend making their costumes, it's just phenomenal. My brother masked as an Indian one year, and the money he spent on his costume. . . . And you know, I don't think they even have one of those costumes in the museum down there. Which is fantastic, because they're a big part of New Orleans culture.

**Palmer:** Yeah, and it really comes out in the music. Professor Longhair's rhythms come directly from the Indians, and between him and the Indians themselves almost everybody down there who played rock and roll and rhythm and blues was influenced.

**Blackwell:** And you know, that particular part of New Orleans has been a big influence on the way I play. Because you can't help it when you grow up with those kinds of influences on you. They become a part of you whether you intend for them to or not. I used to be around so many of these different people that were parts of these different Indian tribes every Mardi Gras. One of my biggest wishes when I was growing up in New Orleans was to be able to mask as an Indian.

New Orleans, I think, is the home of the drummers. Every time I think of New Orleans, I remember back and I can never remember seeing one drummer alone. There were always at least two of them together. When I'd go into a club, there'd be two or three drummers sitting around in groups, and at the union hall they'd be hanging out five or six together. Now in New York, there's this rivalry between drummers. I met drummers there who would come around while I was playing and inquire about different things, and I guess I was so open I seemed strange to them, because most of the drummers in New York would never give any information out or tell you anything about what they were doing. That seems very strange to me, because when you are with someone else that's playing and you're exchanging ideas, it can do nothing but broaden your scope. So when I think back about New Orleans, I figure that was a big influence too, just the fact that drummers were always so free about exchanging ideas.

Take Paul Barbarin, for instance, the dixieland drummer. I remember right before Ornette called me to come to New York and play with him, I was working with Edward Frank on piano and Chuck Badie on bass in some club and Paul was working next door in the Dream Room. We would start our gig at six o'clock in the morning—they called it the early morning session—and Paul and them would just be finishing up before that, and I would go sit backstage and listen at him. It was very beautiful: I've always been inspired by him. Then he would come over after he got off and sit down and listen to us play, and *that* used to inspire me quite a bit. I enjoyed those older drummers, man, especially the street parade drummers. They were the ones that had the biggest influence on me.

**Palmer:** Let's talk about Ornette. I'm curious about how your music and Ornette's music developed before it was heard by the public.

**Blackwell:** Well, in 1953 Ornette came back to California from Fort Worth, and he was staying with Kenneth Battle, a tenor player. I was living on the same block, so I went down there to Kenneth's house, set up my drums, and we played, with Kenneth playing piano, I think. That's how I met Ornette. Then he decided to move out of Kenneth's and come up to my place, so we roomed in this apartment house together. I was working at a department store during the day, and I'd come home and we'd practice and go to jam sessions. Of course, when we walked into a joint everybody would walk off the stage, so we had to go up there and perform, just Ornette and me. We got used to doing it together, because the only time we could get a bass player to even rehearse with us was if we could guarantee him a gig.

We used to create a lot of enemies. In fact, they used to get pretty violent sometimes. I don't know why. Ornette was one of the most humble people you could meet, but people would just get this violent feeling about his music. Then, when we went back to California in 1963, everybody was digging Ornette.

**Palmer:** What was he playing like in 1953? I mean compared to how he played on those first records.

**Blackwell:** Oh, even freer, he was playing much freer in '53, I think. I don't know why. Maybe after he got to be so well known, he got to be more limited in how far he would go with his music. But in '53 he and I would play, and he'd play some wild music. He'd really go far out. I wish we had had a tape recorder. . . .

**Palmer:** Really. You mean that at that time he was really playing free, and as time went on he developed some of these ideas about modulations and characteristic phrases and so on?

**Blackwell:** Well, I believe he just began to evolve more into things that he wanted to do. Just like anybody else, they start out doing one thing and evolve as they go along. That's what happened to him. At one time, I remember, he played exactly like Bird.

**Palmer:** There's still a lot of that on *Paul Bley Live At The Hillcrest Club*, which is from 1958.

**Blackwell:** Right. Billy Higgins was on that; I was in New Orleans then.

**Palmer:** But even when you were with Ornette, I heard very strong echoes of that New Orleans parade drumming in your playing.

**Blackwell:** It's very difficult to get away from it. As a kid coming up, every Sunday there was a parade, and you know, you're marching along beside the music, and I was so intrigued with the parade drummers that . . . I

can listen to my playing now and still hear the different parade rhythms. It's not intentional, it's just there.

**Palmer:** I'm also interested in what happened to your playing after you toured West Africa with Randy Weston. Wasn't that in 1966?

**Blackwell:** That's right, and then I stayed a year with him in Morocco. We had a trio with Vishnu Wood on bass.

**Palmer:** See, I spent some time in Morocco as well as some time in New Orleans, and I think I hear a lot of Moroccan patterns also coming out in your playing at times. Maybe especially in some of your things with Don Cherry, like *Mu*, the ducts (on the Byg label and now, unfortunately, out of print).

**Blackwell:** Well, it's a big influence. There was one drummer who used to play for belly dancers in Rabat, and he had a very nasty temper. If he stayed on a job two weeks that would be the limit, because he would wind up hitting the proprietor in the mouth or something. But he was such a fantastic drummer that he had no trouble getting a gig. I used to hang around and talk to him quite a bit, and he was nice when he was off the stand. It's just that when he got on the stand, he didn't want anybody interfering with his concentration.

Then I met some G'naoua drummers in Tangier. (Note: The G'naoua are a religious brotherhood of black Moroccans which probably originated in the vicinity of Mali.) They would come by every Sunday, with drummers and these iron clappers. The drummers were always the elders, and the younger ones would be playing the clappers and dancing. In Erfoud we played at this big hotel and the G'naouas would come and play at celebrations in the town, and it was always the same thing—the elder ones would be playing the drums. I guess it was because they were more into the indigenous rhythms. It was the same in West Africa. Whenever we wanted to hear any kind of indigenous drumming we had to go into the bush, because the younger Africans were into Latin and rock and roll and conga drums. But the drumming rhythms interested me very much, and I used to try to somehow implement a lot of the rhythms I could remember into my playing.

**Palmer:** They seem to fit in with New Orleans music real well. Of course, it's the same tradition.


**Blackwell:** Exactly. In West Africa, quite a lot of places reminded me of New Orleans. You'd see these vendors, these women on the street selling those plantains and fish, and I thought I was back in New Orleans.

**Palmer:** When you play with someone like Cherry, who is so heavily into ethnic musics, does he give you specific patterns to play? Do you consciously use rhythm patterns that you've studied that are African rhythms? Or do you just fit into what's going on?

**Blackwell:** That's what it is, a process of feeling it as it goes along. Otherwise the patterns wouldn't fit in because the music keeps changing. Every time I play with Donald he's in another bag. He's always evolving with different rhythms, and you have to go with what is happening at the time.

**Palmer:** Do you have any comments on that quintet with Eric Dolphy, Booker Little, Mal Waldron and Richard Davis?

**Blackwell:** Oh man, that was one of my favorite groups ever, one of the most beautiful gigs I can remember playing. I'd been working with Ornette and we'd been at the Newport festival and Booker was with Max Roach.



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# PHOEBE SNOW

## *Stylistic Gymnast*

by len lyons

Unpredictably, and almost without warning, it happened to Phoebe Snow. An erstwhile guitarist, she had only been singing on and off at amateur nights for a couple of years at the urging of a good friend named Charlie Parker (not Bird). Phoebe was shy, decidedly unglamorous, and "mortified" by singing in front of an audience. She had an odd voice with a slow vibrato which often cracked into falsetto to reach high notes. Her original lyrics read like imagist poetry and she'd follow them with old chestnuts like *San Francisco Bay Blues*. To confuse matters more, her folksy approach on guitar was complemented in her first studio session by Teddy Wilson, Zoot Sims and a Mellotron player. Furthermore, it happened without the usual record company hype, trade paper publicity and promotional tours. Though she has since recorded two albums for Columbia, the essence of her strange alchemy is most evident on her first Shelter album, *Phoebe Snow*. It happened by word of mouth and continuous airplay. Phoebe Snow had a gold album.

The other surprises were not so pleasant. Her musical mentor and friend, Charlie Parker, was a suicide and never saw her success. (She wrote about him in *Poetry Man* and dedicated the first album to him.) Over the issue of session payments, Phoebe considered Shelter in breach of contract, refused to record for them, and signed with Columbia (May 1975) amidst a flurry of litigation. At the end of that year, her daughter was born with a medical condition that required brain surgery. With double-portions of joy and sorrow, she's had a lot to handle. It is with some sense of pride that she says, "Well, I'm sitting here, not unscathed. . . . But I'm not a nut."

Keeping the hysteria away, however, seems to be a major preoccupation. With no recording plans after her most recent album (*It Looks Like Snow*), she has moved back from Los Angeles to New Jersey. She needs time to herself and time for her daughter. What has kept her together in the meantime, she insists, is a faith in God: "I guess you'd call it a religious awakening from the nearly comatose state I was in for 22 years. I was completely enmeshed in the physical and material plane."

Musically, the singular Phoebe Snow has become a variable, a question mark even to herself. She's evolved into a confident performer who can be intimate, funny, and even a ham on stage. Her repertoire, though, wades boldly into every one of the current genres without deeply immersing itself in anything. She can put the songs across; but who is Phoebe Snow? Her musical identity has become another question she needs time to answer.

"When it comes to art, there's no good or bad," Phoebe declared, explaining why record reviews make her nervous. Most of her own reviews have been favorable, but she dislikes them in principle. "What I dislike is the idea

of someone being appointed judge of somebody else's music or what it's worth."

**Lyons:** But don't you think it's possible to evaluate a performance?

**Snow:** As a musician, I can distinguish between people who are adept at their art and those who are just starting out. But you cannot have a critique of sincerity. There may be someone who puts all their blood and guts into their music and believes it's good. It's their contribution. Then someone comes along and says, "That sucks." How are they



going to feel? Bang! Somebody just killed me. There's got to be a better way.

The height of absurdity in all this is the awards idea, the polls. Who's the best? I won something last year, and I'll tell you about it because it'll be interesting for **down beat**. There was a *Playboy* magazine poll (January '76), and I placed in both the pop and r&b categories. But I came in first in the jazz poll—ahead of Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Cleo Laine, Roberta Flack. . . .

**Lyons:** And Betty Carter wasn't even listed?

**Snow:** God, that's probably true . . . no, she

was number 28 or something. Now isn't that absurd? I dabble in jazz, okay, but I'm not the consummate jazz singer. It's not even what I'm known for. I wanted to call up Ella Fitzgerald and apologize—in case she takes these things seriously. I didn't vote, Ella. It's not my fault. I apologize.

**Lyons:** Speaking of Ella, on *It Looks Like Snow* you do *Teach Me Tonight*, which is much more from her vintage than yours. What prompted you to reach back to a Sammy Cahn standard?

**Snow:** Speaking of Sammy Cahn, there was this *Newsweek* article where they reached people for quotes about me. Sammy Cahn went on and on; he turned out to be a fan—you know, quote-unquote fan. I was already doing *Teach Me Tonight* and I got so excited, I was going to call him up and have this great conversation. Then someone told me he died. See, I had heard Dinah Washington's version of the song long before. I figured if I had any nerve at all I'd attack that song because I thought her version was definitive. The way she goes: "I bet you're wondering how I switched that key my love. . . ." You've never heard that? You've got to find a copy. You'll love it. It's wonderful. After hearing that, I wanted to cover it. First of all, it's dirty, really filthy. Second, it made a great blues ballad, almost r&b. It just had all the elements I like to hear in a song I'm going to cover.

**Lyons:** Which are?

**Snow:** It's funky, and the lyrics are shrewd.

**Lyons:** Your new album has such a varied repertoire. *Don't Let Me Down* is rock 'n roll. *Shakey Ground* is r&b. *Teach Me Tonight* is a ballad. What's going on?

**Snow:** It comes down to experimentation. I'm very new at this game, and I don't really know what my musical persona is at all.

**Lyons:** But you've been singing for a long time.

**Snow:** Not really. Just five years. I was a guitarist, and I didn't start to sing professionally until three or four years ago. Before that I was doing amateur nights. I was shy to the point of being mortified just to have to look at people. I had the worst case of stage fright I've ever seen. Being known as a singer is still new to me. Three years is not such a very long time. The success of the first album only happened two years ago. The other two records were put out with great haste and with a lot of litigation, plus some personal borderline-tragedies. Musically, I haven't had enough time to devote to who or what I am. I don't have a musical identity. That's where the variety comes from. I guess I like variety, too. If I can do different types of songs, why not do them?

**Lyons:** Which are the most important songs to you?

**Snow:** The blues and the jazz. I guess. They're the most challenging. Last night in the concert I scatted the Teddy Wilson solo on *Harpo's Blues*. Waylon (Pickert, keyboard-

ist) learned the solo note for note, and one day in rehearsal I found out I could scat it. I had never scatted in front of an audience before. I was terrified.

**Lyons:** It worked, though. You sounded like Annie Ross.

**Snow:** Oh, wow! I should only sound like Annie Ross. My God! Did you ever hear her *Come Home* with Lambert, Hendricks & Ross? I wanted to do that tune, but I have a hang-up about covering a song that someone has done the version of. I marvel at the fact that Joni Mitchell and Bette Midler did *Twisted*. I would never have been able to do that.

**Lyons:** I wanted to ask you about *Harpo's Blues* last night. Why did you dedicate it to David Rubinson?

**Snow:** You know he produced my last album, right? Well, he's always dropped little hints that I should try to scat. I've always been adverse to it because I never thought I could pull it off. I just wanted to show him I had followed his suggestion. *It Looks Like Snow* is probably the most produced album I've done, as a matter of fact.

**Lyons:** Was that Rubinson's influence?

**Snow:** No, I explained what I wanted. The idea was there; it was translated into David Rubinson's production.

**Lyons:** Let's switch to the subject of your voice. Did you develop your vibrato consciously?

**Snow:** I think I did, because I can sing without any at all. But now, if I'm singing without paying any attention, that vibrato would come out. It's become part of my voice. The concept

**"People aren't ready for a change, you know. They want to go with a surefire winner and I think they thought the first album was that. When I started to change, they said, 'Aha! She's copping out.'"**

is something I heard and wanted to adopt. It started by listening to other singers who had that slow vibrato, like Neil Young or Joni Mitchell. It's not the same, but similar. I think Joni Mitchell was a big influence.

Then I started listening to jazz sax soloists of the '40s. Have you ever listened to Lester Young or Johnny Hodges? They have it. They play sax like it was a voice. See, I wasn't aware of Lester Young until I was turned onto him by Bruce Lundvall (president of CBS Records). He asked me, "Have you heard this man? Because that's what you sound like." I said, "That's impossible. I never even heard him. How could I sound like him?" I took the record home, and it was amazing. There's a two-record set on Verve called *Pres, Teddy, And Oscar*. It's got an oil painting of Lester Young's face on the cover. All I can say is that it sounds like I've been listening to him for years. Especially on my song *No Regrets*. It sounds like I copped all his licks, but I had never heard him. Then I listened to Benny Carter and Johnny Hodges. I've been told that I sound like a jazz sax from that era, and it did influence me later because it's got that slow vibrato.

**Lyons:** You've always had jazz-oriented players in the horn sections.

**Snow:** Yes, that's the lifeblood. On my first record, when Zoot Sims came in—he was in a bad mood—I whispered to the producer, "Make him stay." The more I heard him play, the better I sang.

**Lyons:** You have a yodeling skip in your voice. Where did you get that from?

**Snow:** Maria Muldaur is another person I used to listen to a lot. She's known for her yodel, and I was a giant fan of hers. I think she's so unique. I tried doing what she did. Joni Mitchell has a little bit of that yodel, too. It was also a matter of wondering how I could get to a high note without belting it out. When I started, I was a quiet, timid singer—believe it or not!—and I wanted to know how I could get up there real quick and not shout. Like I didn't want to upset anybody. So I did this thing where my voice cracks. I remember once I tried to sing a really high note, and I got stuck up there. I couldn't get the crack-thing to go down. You know, "Help! What am I going to do now? Squeak, squeak!"

**Lyons:** Did you have any formal voice-training?

**Snow:** I took about three months altogether. I was smoking too much dope and starting to get laryngitis. By the way, I have to say that you cannot sing and do drugs. It's got to wear down your throat. Anyway, I went to this coach who gave me breathing exercises and vocal exercises where you make these horrible sounds and noises and stretch your throat this way and that. After a while I just felt better, so I stopped. And I stopped smoking.

Anything authoritarian freaks me out. You know, school, teachers, anything that reminds me of being taught. I couldn't handle singing lessons. But he did help me, and I would really recommend it, just to strengthen your chops. There's nothing wrong with taking lessons.

I also wanted to see what a singing lesson was like. All I could imagine was someone do-

ing scales: la-la-la-la, like that. Everyone was raving about this David Sorin Collyer in New York. I think Bette Midler turned me onto him, but a lot of people were studying with him at the time (*Midler, Paul Simon, Liza Minnelli*). I guess I was curious.

**Lyons:** Did breathing give you any special problems?

**Snow:** No, not really. Breathing is probably the most important thing for controlling the voice. I did learn a lot from Collyer in that area and I took some stuff away in my head. I still do breathing exercises before I go on stage, little things I devised myself.

**Lyons:** Like what?

**Snow:** I can't tell you. I'm embarrassed. They're very stupid, and they might not work for anyone else. Someday I'll patent them and make a million dollars. Right now, it's the stupidest thing you've ever heard of. I'll tell you later but you can't print it. People think I'm weird when I do them.

**Lyons:** Now that you're in the music business, have you studied any theory? Last I heard or read, you couldn't read notation.

**Snow:** I don't know much music theory at all. It's tough doing charts that way, too, because you have to depend on everyone around you. I'm getting more curious again, because it doesn't feel very good to know you're not instrumental to putting the music together. I took piano lessons in school but I had such terrible teachers that I developed a mental block against sight reading. Every time I'd see one of those teachers for a weekly lesson, I'd play my stuff from remembering where their

hands had been on the keyboard. It was no easy trick.

**Lyons:** It would have been easier to read the music.

**Snow:** Right, but I had a terrible block against reading. I had great relative pitch, so I could get away with learning things by ear. It was a bad mistake.

**Lyons:** How did you learn guitar?

**Snow:** By chords and tablature, which is something like note reading. Pretty soon, I wouldn't do the tablature, either. I'd just watch my teacher's fingers. I had a very patient teacher, named Eric Schwanberg. He played and I went home and memorized.

**Lyons:** Where did the jazz affinity come from?

**Snow:** My father was a jazz buff. He had the Dukes Of Dixieland in hi-fi. He'd play it over and over. To me, it was seductive music. My mother would make him take the album off, and when they left the room, I'd put it on. This was at six years old. I always dug jazz. My father played me Django Reinhardt, Sidney Bechet and Benny Goodman when I was about nine years old. *Benny Goodman At Carnegie Hall*. We heard that one about ten times a day.

**Lyons:** Do you listen to current jazz—any of the newer talents?

**Snow:** I heard Chick Corea's *My Spanish Heart* on the radio today, and it just blew me out. But basically, I'm a bebopper. Charlie Parker—that's where I am now. Herbie Hancock opened a show for me in Chicago, and it couldn't have worked. It was just a weird double bill. They were blasting away, and I came on with a very subdued thing by comparison. I don't think it was successful.

**Lyons:** I noticed you used a String Ensemble playing the countermelody on *Faith Is Blind*. What's your feeling about electronic keyboards with voice?

**Snow:** It's actually an underlying little trademark of mine. On the first Shelter album we used a Mellotron to create the string section effect. It was associated with *Poetry Man* more than anything. You heard Bob James playing Mellotron behind the Zoot Sims solo. The Mellotron is a really weird, ethereal, outer space kind of thing. It gives me a movie dream-sequence feeling which I'm a sucker for. I was the one who suggested we use a Mellotron for the first album.

**Lyons:** There's another vocal characteristic you have that interests me. On the riffs you sing to lead into a melody note with lyrics, even on a ballad, they're very staccato. Or when you break up a syllable. Usually, singers do that stuff in a very fluid, legato way.

**Snow:** Yeah, we're getting down to the bare essentials. Critics used to call that "melisma." Like, melismatic, breaking something down into parts, like a syllable. It's all part of mimicking notes on a musical instrument. You can bend them, play a scale like one long continuous note, or play them broken up and choppy. Johnny Hodges was a master of the smooth sound. He plays a scale like one note, fluid. My style is clipped. When people first heard me do it, like my parents and friends, they said it sounded like I had the hiccoughs. Like I was stuttering or burping. They thought it was terrible. It just came, though. I didn't think about it much. I'm not doing it that much anymore, just on songs associated with the first album and on *No Regrets*.

**Lyons:** So you're shedding that sound?

**Snow:** I think so. I think it might have been a faltering way of approaching what Ella and

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## Chronicle Of A Starsailor

by lee underwood

**T**he last time I saw Tim Buckley he was dead. He lay in his coffin at the Wilshire Funeral Home in Santa Monica wearing the black silk shirt his wife had made for him, his arms crossed over his chest. He held a single yellow orchid between his thumb and the first two slightly gnarled fingers of his left hand.

*("Hell, no, I can't barre a guitar chord! How do you expect me to play a barre-chord with these cripples, dummy?" He held up the once-broken fingers and tweedled them, grinning like a pixie, Groucho-Marxing his bushy eyebrows. "Price you pay when you're short, but insist on playing high school quarterback anyway so you can get the A-Number One—I mean primo—shot at the cheerleaders. Heeeyey, baby," he clowned in his punchiest Bell Gardens/Anaheim streetrat accent. "Wanna hit the parking lot at half-time and sniff a little amyl nitrite?")*

Coroner's Report, Dr. Joseph H. Choi: Timothy Charles Buckley III died on June 29, 1975, at 9:42 p.m. from acute heroin/morphine and ethanol intoxication due to inhalation and ingestion of overdose.

The unctuous Mexican undertaker tapped me on the shoulder. "They're ready for you now," he whispered. I peeked between the curtains—musicians, Tim's old friends from high school, old friends from the early days in New York, weeping once-upon-a-time ex-loverladies, newcomer musicians and friends from the deathnumb present, some 200 of them in all. They sat in rows and waited. Tim's wife, Judy; her blond-haired son, Taylor; Tim's mother, Elaine; and Tim's sister, Katey, sat on straight-back chairs in a special row in front.

"Okay, y'babies!" I battlecried to myself. "Time for the dream-sequence!" echoing Tim's swishy way of chortling the old Judy Garland movie line just before we parted the curtains at Carnegie Hall, Philharmonic Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall in London, and all the other concert halls and clubs and grubby barroom stages we tramped together from the beginning in 1966 at the Night Owl in New York, just before returning to L.A. to record the first album.

I set my papers on the podium. The room settled into silence. I walked over to the coffin and took a final look at Timmy.

He had been scrunched down a little too far. His skin looked pale, pink and waxey; his whiskers had already begun to grow through the makeup.

*("I know, I know," I told him silently. "No, I won't bore you. Of course I'll keep the humor. Yes, yes, yes—style, style, style. Ratta-ratta-ratta, Warden. Don't worry . . . Just don't snore on me, f'Chrise sake. . . . Fed the legend to the end, didn't you. Dirty trick, though. Maybe decadence*

*wasn't so chic after all. . . . Look at what De Golden Throat done got us into now. . . . Maybe you were right, live hard, die young and pretty and all that. Gone to The Big Gig In The Sky now, huh? 28 years old. Jesus. . . . What the hell, you always said it, anyway: old singers never die, they just go to Vegas. Schmuck . . . Now you're up there hustling Saint Peter for the trumpet section. Oh, well. . . . At least you won't go bald. Let's get it on.")*

I turned and walked back to the podium and adjusted the mike. "For those of you who don't know me, my name is Lee Underwood. I toured with Tim and played lead guitar on seven of his nine albums. In all the years I played with him, I never got bored on stage.

"I watched him grow from a Bambi-eyed littleboy poet prattling about paper hearts and Valentines, into a hurricane-haired rock and roller, into a madman/genius improvisational vocalist who blew *all* the pups away, and finally into a lowdown, roadhouse, sex-thumping stomper who injected steam and blood and juice into an r&b music nobody cared about.

"From 1966 when I met him, and gave him my music and my knowledge and my loyalty, right up until this very end, he was my best friend. Just as you, I loved him, too. . . ."

**T**im was born on Valentine's Day in Washington, D.C. in 1947. He spent the first ten years of his life in Amsterdam, New York, before moving to Southern California, first to Bell Gardens, then to Anaheim.

"I was only about 12 years old, and I had probably five or six notes to my voice. I heard a recording of a trumpet player playing things way up there. So I tried to reach those notes. Little Richard got them. It was like a falsetto scream. I'd ride my bicycle around the neighborhood screaming at the buses until I couldn't go any higher.

"Then one day I heard the opposite end, the baritone sax, waaaay . . . dooown . . . there. I said, 'There's gotta be a way to do that.'

"So I practiced, and I screamed, and I practiced some more, until I finally ended up with my five-to-five-and-a-half octave range." (From an unpublished interview with Frankie Nemko.)

As a boy, he loved Johnny Cash, Hank Williams and Hank Thompson. He also loved the occasional Nat King Cole, Johnny Mathis or Miles Davis albums his mother used to play. But country is what he lived.

By the time he graduated from high school, he and his poet friend Larry Beckett had written some 20 songs together, which they took to Herb Cohen, who signed Tim with Elektra.

Tim was 18 when he signed, 19 when he recorded *Tim Buckley*.

Tim liked the melodic and harmonic flow of *Valentine Melody*, *Song Of The Magician* and *Song Slowly Song*, but for the most part, he later regarded this first effort as just that: a first effort, naive, stiff, quaky and innocent. It was, however, a ticket into the marketplace. There, because he played an acoustic guitar and strummed, they called him a "folk" singer, a misnomer from which he never freed himself.

In 1966 he rehearsed a great deal, working out specific harmonies, specific lines and specific beginnings and endings. The songs were "objects," which were usually repeated note-for-note in performance.

The record went nowhere, but Tim was not daunted in the least. He struck out on his own.



strumming his 12-string, playing solo concerts at small clubs and colleges on the East Coast. And, too, he plunged himself into the big-city brightlights, sleazy streets, backrooms, bedrooms and barrooms of concrete glass and steel urban America.

This was the mid-'60s, when the Jefferson Airplane had soared from the earth, when the Grateful Dead was wailing out the full-tilt boogie to acid-sloshed, rosy-checked, beany-eyed baby-boom children who had discovered Nirvana in a pill, love in a vision, and community, harmony, personal freedom and social cohesion in two tokes of red-earth grass.

Nature was in, cities were out; touching was in, guilts were out; drugs were in, booze was out. And music, as we know, greased the mad-cap whirrings of it all, inciting the passions and infusing the revolutionary hopes and dreams of an entire generation.



Tim explored it all. When he cut *Goodbye And Hello* in L.A. in June of 1967, his point of view and musical style perfectly matched the searing energy and idealism of the times. *Goodbye And Hello* became (and remained) Tim's biggest hit.

The mothering young women justifiably swooned over the sad-eyed poetic melodies and words of *Morning Glory* ("I lit my purest candle . . ."), *Once I Was A Soldier* and *Phantasmagoria In Two* ("If a fiddler played you a song, my love. . ."). The political protestors embraced him for *No Man Can Find The War* and the massive anti-establishment poem, *Goodbye And Hello* (lyrics of both by Beckett). Buckley was in.

*Goodbye And Hello* was significant beyond its popularity. Tim had begun writing his own lyrics with a personal commitment and vulnerability he had never shown before—*Pleasant Street*, a darkly powerful song about the illusory and destructive nature of drugs (which, ironically, he continued singing until the end); *Once I Was*, a stunningly poignant song of love lost; the melodic *Phantasmagoria*, his first non-rhyming composition; and the bombastic *I Never Asked To Be Your Mountain* (to his Pisces ex-wife, Mary), in which he for the first time incorporated asymmetrical rhythms and began to awe his listeners not only with the round, seductive natural tonal qualities of his voice, but with the already astonishing technical dexterity with which he was beginning to use it.

Five of the ten songs were his own in their entirety. On the other five, he wrote the music to Beckett's lyrics. Buckley was an uneducat-

### **He held notes longer and stronger than anyone else in pop had ever done; he explored a wide, comparatively bizarre range of vocal sounds, which in pop context were revolutionary. . . . He also bombed.**

ed, lower-middle-class street dude who knew nothing about the formal and academic aspects of chords, voicings, harmonies, melodic structures, etc. He never took a voice lesson, nor, as mentioned above, could he place his left index finger flat across the guitar board and make a barre-chord. When you listen to what he did musically to the complex mass of Beckett's often ponderously "literary" lyrics of the song-poem *Goodbye And Hello* (uncredited arrangement by Joshua Rifkin), you immediately perceive the natural brilliance of this then-budding boy/man singer and composer.

After *Goodbye And Hello*, Buckley began moving away from the "literary" world of Beckett and ever-more into the personal world he was developing on his own (although Beckett often contributed later on).

He began to shun politics and social movements. ("Christ—either the government slaughters you with Vietnam, or the hippies drown you with love and Patchouli oil.") He resented being set up as a rock 'n' roll savior, insisting that people should learn how to do their own living instead of propping musicians up as "easy gods" who did the living for them.

While *Goodbye And Hello* had placed him solidly in the center of the rock movement of the times, he refused to remain there, to turn that style into a goldmine gimmick, and to capitalize on it until the locked-in lode ran out. Change, evolution and commitment to his own abilities were his watchwords. He had come to regard the blues-oriented rock of the day as white thievery, emotional sham and

high-decibel masturbation. He became an outlaw roving the very underground culture that embraced him.

He also began his war with the business world. Once in Buffalo, we went to a television studio where they asked him to lip-sync the words to *Pleasant Street*. "You believe this turkey? He wants to play the record and have me pretend to sing. T'hell with 'em." He walked out.

As he later told Anne Marie Micklo in one of his best interviews, "You see, it's like weird. America is a business. And if you have to be an American, no matter what you do, you are supposed to first of all be a businessman.

"So any show that I go on, they ask me, 'Well, you make albums, so you must make them for money.' And I got to go through the whole thing, gotta tell them, 'Man, you are the same people who, when Monet or Modigliani were starving for 40 years and finally sold a painting, you said they sold out.'

"I said, 'Like, man, what have you got to worry about? You got all the money you want, all the fine suits—why do you have to pull me down to where you are, man? Because you can't do what I'm doing?' I said, 'Why do you have to make me the way you are—'cause I'm not, see?'

"I live in a hundred dollar a month house in Venice, California, and I don't need anything. You could take all the money away from me, and I could make it anyway. I did it before, and I can do it again. All I'm doing is paying for airplanes. . . ." (*Changes*, Vol. 1, No. 7, 1969.)

Tim was an intellectual vacuum-cleaner. He

inhaled personalities, he inhaled ideas, he inhaled knowledge. In Thomas Mann's phrase, he was truly "one on whom nothing is lost." Because of this exceptional ability, which enabled him to quickly acquire and utilize whatever knowledge he needed at any given time, he demanded the people around him to be constant inputs for his voracious intellectual and creative appetites. Those who ran out of informational fuel became useless to him. He dropped them quickly, often cruelly.

After completing *Goodbye And Hello*, he turned to me: "Jazz. The rockers think it's cocktail music. Christ. They put a perfect prettyboy up there, spray him all over with glitter-paint and makeup, plug his guitar into Hoover Dam, tell him to Play De Blooes Man, and think they got Reality. Play me some music."

We listened to Miles Davis' *Kind Of Blue*, Bill Evans' *Nirvana*, *Intermodulation* (with guitarist Jim Hall) and *Town Hall*. We also listened extensively to Thelonious Monk, Charlie Mingus, Gerry Mulligan, Gabor Szabo, Roland Kirk, Ornette Coleman, Milt Jackson. . . .

*Happy/Sad*, recorded in 1968, was the resultant album, with David Friedman on vibes, John Miller on acoustic bass, Carter Collins on congas and myself on guitar. This time, all of the lyrics and music were Tim's.

The influences abound—*Strange Feelin'*, for example, is directly after Miles' *All Blues*. At the same time, Tim's compositional abilities had grown immensely. The ballad *Love From Room 109* in itself consists of five movements; the sea-effects were recorded live; the melo-

dies are some of the finest he ever composed. It was not a revolutionary album, but it was definitely a significant step in Tim's personal evolution.

He was learning how to select words not only for their content, but for their round, harsh or voluptuous sounds. He searched for content and sensuality.

(*At dinner tables, he tinkled with his fork on every glass, plate and bowl; at garage sales or junk shops, he "played" old pipes, glassware, fixtures, anything that rang, chimed or crackled. "My business is sound," he said. "If you use it right, it's all music."*)

*Buzzin' Fly*, one of the most popular *Happy/Sad* songs, remained in his repertoire until the end, as did the earthy *Gypsy Woman*. Because the rhythms never jelled, the dynamics were poor, the performances were constricted and the piece was too long, *Gypsy Woman* failed on the record. However, it remained an indispensable vehicle in live performances for Buckley's increasingly more extended vocal extravaganzas. The beautiful ballad, *Dream Letter*, was specifically for his son, Jeffrey Scott, by his first wife, Mary.

*Tim Buckley, Goodbye And Hello and Happy/Sad*—these first three albums were the ones that the majority of Buckley fans embrace to this day as their own.

After these records, life became increasingly more difficult for Tim. His sales dropped; his dwindling audiences demanded the old material and resented the new. To them, Buckley's new "vocal gymnastics," as the critics called them, were not dazzling at all—they were jarring, upsetting, demanding.

At concerts Tim began to freely improvise at exhausting length. We no longer rehearsed. We followed Tim wherever he took it. When he brought new material to the stage, he simply presented it. We found our own way as quickly and as well as we could.

("I don't want it to be a thing. A thing is dead. I want it alive, I want it present, I want it always growing and changing. Just be you. Stay close to your instincts. That'll make it fine.")

He felt strongly about instincts. As he told Anne Marie Micklo, "That's why animals are so great, because they're just pure instinct. And when you really get into them, you see that birds are even better than animals, because they have nothing. They're not even like a cat or a dog—they just fly."

*Goodbye And Hello* ended Buckley's apprenticeship as a writer. Because he did not wish to repeat himself, writing no longer came easily. But even as he worked at being fresh and original, an unanticipated problem arose.

"The way Jac (Holzman of Elektra Records) had set it up," he told *Zig Zag 44* (Vol. 5, No. 4), "you were supposed to move on artistically, but the way the business is, you're not. You're supposed to repeat what you did before, so there's a dichotomy there.

"It's a problem, and I don't think there's anybody you can talk to who doesn't face it. People like a certain type of thing at a certain time. It's very hard to progress."

Having done his "folk" thing, his "rock" thing, and his "jazz" thing, he now wanted to delve into vocal areas that were virtually uncharted. "An artist has a responsibility to know what has gone down and what is going down in his field," he said, "not to copy, but to learn and be aware. Only that way can he strengthen his own perception and ability."

We visited a record store and selected albums by Luciano Berio, Xenakis, John

Cage, Ilhan Mimaroglu, Stockhausen, Subotnick, etc. I researched them. The next day I said, "You've got to hear this singer. Cathy Berberian. She sings two Berio pieces—*Thema (Omaggio A Joyce)* and *Vsage*."

"She clucks, gurgles, sighs, yowls, sputters, screams, cries, weeps, wails—you don't know it yet, but in her you've got the musical friend you've been looking for."

He did not care very much for the electronic music itself—"just doesn't touch my heart. I guess"—but he loved Berberian. After hearing her sing, he no longer doubted himself. He regarded the title cut of *Lorca*, recorded in 1969 to be his debut as an identity, as a unique singer, as an original force.

He held notes longer and stronger than anyone else in pop had ever done; he explored a wide, comparatively bizarre range of vocal sounds, which in pop contexts were revolutionary, having composed *Lorca* in 5/4, he began his odyssey into odd-time signatures, which at that time and in that context was unheard of. In the second cut on side one, *Anonymous Proposition*, he composed and sang one of the most voluptuous and demanding personal ballads any singer had ever recorded.

He also bombed.

By any standards, the record was far from perfect. The songs were too long (*Lorca* alone was 9:53, *Proposition* was 7:43). The tunes on the second side, two of which are lyrically strong and musically intimate, were nevertheless basically fillers (although for an encore at Carnegie Hall he stood on stage alone, no band, no guitar, and sang *I Had A Talk With My Woman* a capella).

Most of the critics regarded the body of the music as being morbid "weird," and decidedly uncommercial. And the fans didn't like the album any more than they had liked the live performances leading up to it.

"Why don't you play *Buzzin' Fly!*?" cried one dismayed early Buckley fan at a concert on Philadelphia. "Why don't I play horseshit," Buckley angrily retorted. The critics called the music self-indulgent noise. Elektra dropped him.

At the insistence of his business people, Tim grudgingly dipped back into his past, pulled out eight previously unrecorded songs, including *Blue Melody* and *Cafe* (which he performed until the end), and released the LP *Blue Afternoon*.

The performances were perfunctory. Tim's heart was not in them, and it showed. As critic Debbie Burr observed, "Buckley never has been known for singing jubilant, bouncy tunes. But *Blue Afternoon* is ridiculous. It's not even good sulking music."

Tim liked much of the material, but having to attempt to record a so-called "commercial" LP at this time (late 1969) only interrupted the creative flow he had begun with *Lorca*.

With the imperfect beginnings of *Lorca* and the interruptions of *Blue Afternoon* behind him, Tim now threw himself with a passion into his magnum opus, *Starsailor*, which he also officially produced.

"When you stand Miles Davis, Eric Dolphy or Roland Kirk up against rock," he said to Sam Bradley, "rock comes out sounding like a complete pre-fabrication."

"The reason I like Miles and those others is because their music comes out of the communication between the men playing it. Everything is so over-rehearsed in rock, that when somebody hits a wrong note, they don't

know what to do with it.

"I'll never forget listening to Roland Kirk play a wrong note, hear it, and within a split second integrate that note into the total sound and take it someplace else."

"Then it's not a mistake, really... it's life. I refer to it as 'spiritual' music, because playing music like that takes faith and trust in yourself and the people you're playing with." (From an unpublished interview with Sam Bradley.)

With *Starsailor*, he knew he stood on tremulous commercial grounds. As he later told Bill Henderson, however, "Sometimes you're writing, and you know you're just *not* going to fit in. But you do it because it's your heart and your soul, and you gotta say it. It's the foremost thing in your mind. ... It's hard to play the kind of music that musicians like to play and that the audiences like to hear, too." (*Sounds*, March 8, 1974.)

With the exception of *Moulin Rouge* and *Song To The Siren*, two poetic little gems melodically, harmonically and lyrically reminiscent of his earlier work, *Starsailor* was a pop monster of odd time signatures (*Come Here, Woman*—5/4; *Healing Festival*—10/4; *Jungle Fire*—5/4); bizarrely dissonant criss-crossing shrieks, wails and moans; surrealistic overdubbing (the title cut is Buckley singing 16 tracks with himself); freely improvised instrumental madness (trumpet, saxophone, pipe organ, tympani drums, etc.); and virtually unparalleled ecstasies and sensuality in the lyrics: "Gently you tease me/And turn away/Unlike the young ones/Your movements

## COMPLETE BUCKLEY DISCOGRAPHY

TIM BUCKLEY—Elektra EKS 74004  
GOODBYE AND HELLO—Elektra EKS 74028  
HAPPY/SAD—Elektra EKS 74045  
LORCA—Elektra EKS 74074  
BLUE AFTERNOON—Straight STS 1060  
STARSAILOR—Straight WS 1881  
GREETINGS FROM L.A.—Warner Brothers BS 2631  
SEFRONIA—Warner Brothers MS 2157  
LOOK AT THE FOOL—Warner Brothers DS 2201

you savor/Like a tango, ... Give me drunken lands/Where you don't feel pain/Let me smell your thighs/Let me drink down a little rain/While we drift and float/Out beyond the seas/We're with the tide/Into a coil of peace." (*Come Here, Woman*,<sup>9</sup> Third Story Music, 1970).

"I was as close to Coltrane as anyone has ever come," Buckley later said in Warners and DiscReet bios. "I even started singing in foreign languages—Swahili, for instance—just because it sounded better. An instrumentalist can be understood doing just about anything, but people are really geared for hearing only words come out of the mouth. ... The most shocking thing I've ever seen people come up against—besides a performer taking off his clothes—is dealing with someone who doesn't sing words. I get off on great-sounding words. If I had my way, words wouldn't mean a thing. It shocked hell out of the people. It was refreshing."

It wasn't Swahili, but it sounded like it. And it may have been "refreshing" to Tim and those few fans who liked it, but it was also an economic disaster.

True, some of the critics perceived and appreciated the music from Buckley's point of view. Michael Bourne gave *Starsailor* a five-star review in *Down Beat*, saying, "... he has proven himself a consummate vocal technician."

Rich Mangelsdorff praised Buckley's willingness to "burst the bounds of even phrasing, strict rhyme and taken-for-granted arrangements." He went on to say, "Buckley employs his voice in instrumental fashion, getting sometimes into contemporary dramatic or operatic atonality and fragmentation, sometimes bending and twisting his notes, changing pitch and timbre abruptly, sometimes getting into non-verbal wails and trills. ..." (*Kaleidoscope*, Jan. 8-15, 1971.)

Even *Creem*, the often viciously scathing rock journal, perceived and empathized with what Buckley had done. "Yet another album by the elliptically rousing Tim Buckley—who I steadfastly maintain is one of the most underrated and misunderstood musicians ever to develop out of the deadend of rock and roll into the free-form fusion of rock and jazz coupled with his already original sound. ... *Starsailor* is yet another lyric-stung, waterfall-rushing-into-the-night's-combing-of-the-stars-manifestation of Buckley's thresholding work in the rock/jazz medium. A tricky stance to take, and one with probably doubtful financial success ... but for those who care about what a genius can do with lyrics, a 12-string guitar and a windmilling voice, Tim Buckley is to be investigated." (*Creem*, December, 1970.)

The vast majority of critics and fans, however, detested the new sound. In reviewing live performances of this period, critics almost unanimously said: "Buckley offered a set which was agonizing in its rampant dissonance, and deadly dull in its self-indulgent repetitiveness." (Michael Sherman, *L.A. Times*, April 2, 1970.)

"Concluding the evening with an eerie trip into vocal distortion, Tim Buckley seemed oblivious to the audience in relating mostly to the mike or his electric 12-string. ..." (Robin Loggie, *Billboard*, Nov. 28, 1970.)

Writer William Tusher contemptuously categorized Buckley as a "folk" singer, then said, "Buckley's delivery is more than acceptable—it less than spectacular—until he succumbs, as he does early and often, to his addiction to affecting change of pace with a high-pitched tremolo that comes off like a Siamese cat in pre-dawn heat." (*Hollywood Reporter*, April 2, 1970.)

Immediately prior to recording *Starsailor*, Buckley married his chic and extraordinarily provocative fantasy woman, Judy, whom he renamed "Madam Wu."

Together, they moved to Tim's new dream-house in Laguna Beach. There Tim worked on *Starsailor*, while Judy professionally designed clothes. They regularly walked on the beach in the sunsets; they listened to Olivier Messiaen (especially *Quartet For The End of Time*), Satie, Penderecki and other notable classicists, many of them introduced to Tim by John Balkin, the bassist and friend who had become one of Tim's closest companions and foremost educators from the earlier days immediately preceding *Lorca*.

When *Starsailor* came out and proved to be a terrifying failure, Tim became furious, then profoundly depressed.

His business people took away all control. He could not produce his own records anymore. He could not get booked. For awhile, he booked himself ("under the table") and played obscure clubs like In The Alley in the mountains north of San Diego. Then that too was gone.

He could not record his group (Balkin on

# IRA SULLIVAN

## Sentinel Of The Wellspring

by arnold jay smith

**"We have to get back to our musical community. Music is a wellspring, a source of life. No matter where you are it is eternally replenishing itself."**

Ira Sullivan is at the piano in a Unitarian Church somewhere near Miami, Florida. On the stage with him are what appear to be college students. There are two electric guitarists, a string bassist, a drummer, a percussionist. Lurking in the wings are saxophonists and hangers-around. Sullivan, on the baby grand, is musing on riffs. No discernible melody comes forth. Occasionally he'll pick up his trumpet and play some interjections, but mostly it's piano.

The piece seems to have no structure. Sullivan might have something in mind as far as goals are concerned but at this point he is repeating a three-note phrase that he seems to have discovered in his meanderings. "This," he seems to say with his fingers, "this is my melody. I'll take it from here and see how far it will go."

The church is used as a modern dance classroom immediately before Ira's Monday night gigs begin. Seated along the sides are leotard-clad types of all ages and sizes. The music begins to move them and the musical energy is converted to kinetic energy. The dancers begin to move about the floor while the theme of the music develops.

Some are swaying to the languid non-rhythm. Others are putting their own rhythmic patterns to it—with jerky movements here or sudden fast-stepping in place there.

Some are dancing alone, moving about the floor slowly, or prancing from end to end in leaps and turns. Still others are dancing together, either touching or following each other's movements.

At a pause in the music, the flock surrounds this Southern guru, bombarding him with questions, greetings, praises, not allowing me to get so much as an introduction in. I decided to check out what makes this man so magnetic and asked some sitters-around.

"It seems that when he gets up there with the other musicians, who are not really professional, something happens; a spell is cast. They all perform artistically and together. I don't think they have been together on any formal basis, but they sound like it. It doesn't necessarily sound like the pickup band it may be. It's because of him," says one lady devotee.

Another woman, a student at the University of Miami studying for her Masters in music, tells of her trip south from Alabama to live and study near Ira. She's a talented reed player playing alto with the group tonight.

"I come out here on Monday nights and sit in with Ira. He's one of those kinds of people who see the good in what you are doing rather than nit-picking about the bad. That's so incredible for beginning improvisors because it

28 □ down beat



ARNOLD JAY SMITH

gives you some confidence in what you're doing.

"I'm more of a writer than a performer, so coming here for these sessions gives me new insight into what I can write. You never know what's going to happen next. You can be playing a free thing one minute and then some obscure tune that no one has ever heard of the next. We learn fast, I'll tell you."

At 45 Ira Sullivan was "rediscovered" by John Snyder of Horizon/A&M Records. Originally his career was centered in Chicago during the '40s and '50s and he was an important part of the bebop scene until he moved to Florida in the early '60s. He was one of those "what ever happened to..." figures, all but given up for dead, or worse, working for the Post Office.

What is it that makes Sullivan keep the

hours he does? He plays the church gigs Mondays and Fridays until early morn, then raps with his tribe until dawn. He plays at clubs downtown most other nights. Why Miami? Why doesn't he tour for a bit? The album on Horizon has brought him, once again, the fame he deserves. But he doesn't choose to enhance that fame.

Sullivan can play every instrument he touches. He is most at home on the trumpet, but he plays all reeds, keys and percussion like a master. When I finally caught up with Ira, we began discussing his young proteges.

**Sullivan:** Boy, I like what they did with me. They were with friends and they know it. We've been doing this Monday night thing for three years. It used to be that Monday was for the University of Miami musicians and Friday was for what I loosely refer to as the grand old men of jazz. But now, these kids have so much confidence that they are coming down and sitting in with the pros. [His "grand old men" are some of the people that appear on his LP: Joe Diorio, guitar; Tony Costellano, piano; and Steve Bagby, drums.]

**Smith:** What are you doing? Are there goals?

**Sullivan:** That's what I'm asking you. What do you think I'm doing? You heard me at the church and now you will hear me at the club, two completely different settings. You should be able to tell me what I am doing.

It's looking for creativity to be seen and felt and for people to realize it as such. If you can realize it from this one night, then you can realize it in a commercial setting tomorrow night. It's the essence of music. . . .

**Smith:** Why the church?

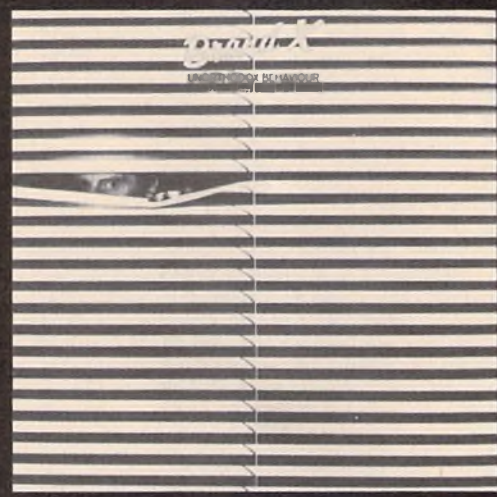
**Sullivan:** When I first came to the church it was called the First Unitarian Church (Congregational). I said, "Wow, baby, I can relate to this, too." I attend all churches in my heart. There are times in my life when I belong to just one. I can now understand why people devote themselves to a church. We devote ourselves to these Monday nights. Young, creative minds. No personality conflicts, no egos, nobody vying for positions on the stage, no one saying that he or she wants a solo before the other, no feeling jealous that theirs is not the only horn in the band. None of that.

I am trying to get away from the "it sounds like" syndrome. Up to this point we all say "it sounds like" or "he or she sounds like" so and so. It's always catalogs. I don't think of myself as Miles Davis and yet we're brothers. We grew up together musically. There's a jazz community that we are all kin to. You should talk to my musicians.

**Smith:** Your young ones?

**Sullivan:** "Young ones." What's young? Are you young until you're 15? They've lowered the libation laws in this state. What's young? As I was saying to Duffy Jackson—you know, Chubby's drumming son—you can't be a 21 or 22-year-old "young" drummer. You can be 14 or 15 maybe. Even then, if the playing is so mature, how can you be considered young?

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# RECORD REVIEWS

Ratings are:

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

## SHAKTI WITH JOHN McLAUGHLIN

A HANDFUL OF BEAUTY—Columbia PC 34372: *La Danse Du Bonheur*; *Lady L*; *India*; *Kriti*; *Isis*; *Two Sisters*.

Personnel: McLaughlin, acoustic guitar; L. Shankar, violin; Zakir Hussain, tabla; T. H. Vikku Ghatam, claypot.

\*\*\*\*\*

It's one of those things that is so hard to describe—a setting, a mood, a scenario. Hokey as it may sound, this music takes you away into a land of imagination, of bartered energies and climatic euphoria.

Face it, McLaughlin is all but spent on the electric guitar. Indeed after two or three original Mahavishnu Orchestra albums, he began to use the same bent-string, repetitive devices which eventually led to boredom and cliché. Fortunately though, he's put down his hammerdrill, and once again has formed a totally acoustic aggregation, one which seems attuned to his highly individualistic plane of ethereal consciousness.

One by one, the works flow with breathtaking continuity. *Danse* starts off whimsically, with some Indian scat-singing (yes, there is such a thing) by Vikku and Hussain, which eventually yields to some madcap violin-guitar solo trading and parallel lines from L. Shankar and McLaughlin.

Shankar, who should receive more individual acclaim than he has, carries the weight on two other compositions, the sad, dirge-like *Lady L* and the duet, *Two Sisters*. His tones remind one of a cross-pollination between a gypsy violinist, with long, protracted high notes, and a down-to earth Leroy Jenkins, with excesses muted for the greater good.

Overall, the sound and mixture is quite tight, never too busy, and quite comprehensible. Nowhere do we see those indulgent rides to nowhere and the oft-pointless jamming that marked the first Shakti LP. Even silence is used as a tool: the subtle pauses on the marathon *Isis* create an eerie, hanging effect. Even the percussion enhances; the many duels between tabla and claypot are quite intricate. Yet for all their multi-beat complexity, the beats of Hussain and Vikku serve to energetically underscore the propulsion of the lead players. —shaw

## WARNE MARSH

ALL MUSIC—Nessa Records N-7: *I Have A Good One For You*; *Background Music*; *On Purpose*; 317 *East* 32nd; *Lunarcy*; *Easy Living*; *Subconscious-Lee*.  
Personnel: Marsh, tenor sax; Lou Levy, piano; Fred Atwood, bass; Jake Hanna, drums.

\*\*\*\*\*

Time was when this tenorist was looked upon by some as a rather bloodless player, a 30 □ down beat

kind of dedicated musical scientist. But Marsh's high energy section work with Supersax and his recent small group releases have underscored the inadequacy of the old critical mythology concerning this player. The Warne Marsh contained in *All Music* is simply one of the most warmed-up and wound-up players imaginable.

Marsh is formidable. This is true not only of his stylistic depth, spanning Young and Hawkins to Parker and beyond, but also of his almost absolute command of tension and release and melodic development. On *Background Music*, Marsh's phrases seem set in perpetual motion. Once conceived, they develop in an intuitive, freely associative way, carried along by the momentum of their own inner logic. Additionally, Warne has developed a heightened control of saxophone tone; there are all sorts of interesting colorations to listen to here. *On Purpose*, a slow blues, has timbres ranging from a breathy, almost Desmond-esque alto sound to a gutsy, full-bodied middle register effect. These constantly shifting colors are augmented by an occasional squeak, presumably intentional, for emphasis.

Marsh's sidemen have worked with him in Supersax and also gigged with him as a small group, and the level of interplay and empathy in this rhythm section is high. Levy, a neo-bop pianist, tosses off incredibly percussive long lines. Some especially happy moments occur on *Have A Good One* when Marsh and Levy recreate those fascinating contrapuntal mazes into which Marsh, Tristano and Konitz once ventured. And on tunes like *Lunarcy* and 317 *East* the rhythm section sets up constant patterns of crosstalking, riffs, prods and bursts of encouragement and applause—some exciting accompaniment for a truly exciting soloist. —balleras

## JEFF BECK WITH THE JAN HAMMER GROUP

JEFF BECK WITH THE JAN HAMMER GROUP LIVE—Epic PE 34433: *Freeway Jam*; *Earth (Still Our Only Home)*; *She's A Woman*; *Full Moon Boogie*; *Darkness/Earth In Search Of A Sun*; *Scatterbrain*; *Blue Wind*.

Personnel: Beck, guitar and special effects; Jan Hammer, keyboards, timbales and vocal (track 2); Tony Smith, drums, vocal (track 4); Fernando Saunders, bass, rhythm guitar (track 3), vocals; Steve Kindler, violin, string synthesizer, rhythm guitar.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Jeff Beck-Jan Hammer tour provided last year's sole *cause celebre* of fusion music, a field more notable for regression and stagnation than anything else. Here was Jeff Beck, the legendary enfant terrible of metallic blues and rock, locking horns with musicians of commensurate—if not overlying—caliber for the first time since his Yardbirds tenure. He held his own admirably, but not without having to fence lines with Jan Hammer's boundless keyboards and Stephen Kindler's resilient violin. By the end of the steamy show, not a dry brow or palm could be found anywhere in the house.

Unfortunately, that show has failed to translate to vinyl. Unless one can afford the luxury of a dynamic expander, *Live* sounds as hot as biamplified cheese, or fondue at best. The slicing guitars and coiling synthesizers have been leveled by an insensitive mix (for which Hammer must take credit), and Stephen Kindler and bassist Fernando Saunders have been all but eliminated from the program. If that weren't enough, the whole first side taxis but never ascends, weighted by miscast vocals

("Full moon boogie, you know what it means, girl/tomorrow the sky will wear your jeans"), splintered exchanges, and ingratiating performance ploys (like Beck's voice bag) that simply have no place on an album, live or no.

The second side more tellingly illustrates this band's protean range. *Darkness/Earth In Search Of A Sun* opens with an arcing burst of synthesizer sound, intergalactic fireballs racing against a backdrop of soft splayed strings. Beck coasts in majestically on a swelling sustain, not to do battle, but to woo and engage his visitor in a chatoyant aural bandy. But it is *Blue Wind* and its invocation of Beck's boogie base that most alluringly protrudes here. Instead of using the piece's simplistic rock motif as a foundation for some serious and confrontive improvisation, like the original version on *Wired*, Jeff surrenders to the primal spirit, surging into the crashing theme from the Yardbirds *Train Kept A-Rollin'*. His terse, carbonated solo is toxic enough to enervate the lot of vernal Beck imitators.

As much as anybody else, Jeff Beck embodies the modern guitar, although *Beck/Hammer Live* is hardly eloquent evidence. It's as a souvenir, not a remembrance. —gilmore

## SONNY ROLLINS

THE WAY I FEEL—Milestone M-9074: *Island Lady*; *Asfrantion Woogie*; *Love Reborn*; *Happy Feet*; *Shout It Out*; *The Way I Feel About You*; *Charm Baby*.

Personnel: Rollins, tenor sax; Patrice Rushen, electric and acoustic piano, Clavinet, synthesizer; Lee Ritenour, guitar; Alex Blake, bass, electric bass; Charles Meeks, electric bass; Billy Cobham, drums; Bill Summers, conga drums, percussion; horn section.

\*\*\* 1/2

No matter how one chooses to evaluate Sonny Rollins' new album there will be disagreement. Rollins remains one of the few surviving important contributors to the tenor saxophone, and as a result is expected—at least by a segment of his public—to retain some sort of "purity" as he wings his way toward some dramatic new statement on his instrument. He's a musician who, for better or worse, must cope with the distinction of being called legendary.

His recent records such as *Nucleus*, which is similar in concept and feeling to this new recording, have both pleased and annoyed his fans. There is the segment of his audience that would rather see him improvising at great length in front of an acoustic trio instead of flirting with funk and electronics. Indeed, these are days (some 20 years after *Jazz Colossus* and *Way Out West* became the prime influence on a whole generation of young musicians) when people will walk out on a Rollins performance because they don't like his drift toward commerciality. Walkouts are a minority, but it does happen. If you don't hear what you want to hear, you can always put on the old records.

The question is what do people want from Sonny Rollins? He says he is perfectly happy with what he is playing, and the music reflects that; he seems to be pleasing a large audience, so that should suffice as far as Rollins the musician is concerned. Whether he is pleased with the way he is being produced and packaged is another question. Which all brings us to *The Way I Feel*.

One is tempted to give this record a split rating, a high mark for Rollins' play—his sound and his incredible musical and melodic presence—and a low score for the production.

First the production. The most disconcerting aspect is Wade Marcus' fairly routine, traced horn arrangements. They sound like somebody put them in as an afterthought. In fact, some tracks are so undermixed that it sounds like the horn section was locked in a closet. The contribution of Rushen, Cobham, Ritenour, et al is competent but hardly inspired considering their considerable talents. The total sound behind Rollins has no special identity, and it should have.

As for Sonny, he is performing a brand of jazz-funk-fusion better than just about every other saxophonist around; his tone is gritty and gutsy, like a Bruce Springsteen vocal, and his melodic and rhythmic ideas on *Island Lady*, *Happy Feel*, *Charm Baby* and *Asfrantation Woogie* are captivating. These are the kinds of tunes that play games in your head long after the needle has left the record. The music is bright, filled with good humor, and it sounds like Sonny feels good. —nolan

## RAN BLAKE

**BREAKTHRU**—IAI (Improving Artists Inc.) 373842: *Breakthru: You Stepped Out Of A Dream; If Dreams Come True; No Good Man; All The Things You Are; Wish I Could Talk To You Baby; Grey December; Spinning Wheel; Sophisticated Lady; Manhattan Memories (Bird Blues); Bebopper; Drop Me Off In Harlem; All About Ronnie; What Are You Doing The Rest Of Your Life; Parker's Mood; Tea For Two.*

Personnel: Blake, piano.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

A genuinely original pianist is someone to cherish, and Blake's choice to record only at widely separated intervals is certainly our loss. If he recorded regularly we'd know whether to consider this a statement of his musical purposes ca. the present or just a special mood. Those seeking the programmatic content of his earlier LPs—the thunder of his Birmingham piece, the thick irony of *Chicago*, the ominous cast of *Three Seeds*—may find this collection reserved. True, Ran still casts his performances in miniature, and his method remains eccentric. Superb as his earlier works are, the listener often feels that the emotional content is predetermined (that is not necessarily a criticism, either). Here, the reflection, the amusement, the occasional hurting quality, the self-dramatizations seem more consistently internalized.

Bob Blumenthal, the Boston critic, believes Monk's *I Should Care* is the model for Blake's style. It's the sort of overstatement that leads to accurate understanding, for though Blake's interest in Monk's rhythmic character is minor, Monk's dynamics and, often surprisingly, Monk's harmonizations are more evidenced here than before. Most certainly the Earl Hines element of Blake's personality has acquired an almost dominant role here, as evidenced in, say, *No Good Man*, *All The Things*, and the ostensible stride piano sequences. Yet Blake does not accept Hines whole: the great man's frequent exuberance and mercurial character does not fit the miniaturist.

*Wish I Could* is the longest track, and after a beginning that turns r&b into chamber gentility—a typical Blake touch—a ruminative ballad ensues, the overall pleasing cast of his lines only twice dissolving into the pained yearning that Blake can state so eloquently. Interestingly, *All The Things* develops in similar fashion. Self-aware dissonance is certainly a crucial feature of this music, for though left and right hands play independently, frequent dissonances in one mediate the consonance of the other. The most obvi-



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ous example is the very odd stride of *Tea For Two*, but the good cheer implicit in this method is sobered by Blake's measured refusal to cast off Youman's theme or to conclude with the conventional *forte*—a glimpse of Blake irony is the result. And by the second strain of *Lady Blake's* right hand is harmonizing in Monk fashion, with a decided Monk treble attack at the bridge; in fact, the work is much like Monk interpreting Duke.

Blake's dynamic measurement is singular, and his touch in single-note lines distinctively ringing. *Ronnie* is a remarkable work, with impressionist *p* chords answering those *f* melody lines and only the whisper of decoration in *pp* treble chords. Blake's discourse is muted twice with stop-start movement and quieting lines. The remarkable *You Stepped* emphasizes the *p* and *f* contrast with quiet lines behind the hard single notes of the theme, and if quiet chords conclude the first 16 measures, the bridge ends in a dissonance. By the end hard chords have replaced the hard single notes, and the chorus ends in incomplete fashion. The work is deliberately dream-like, and is the best example of Blake's method of letting a song's theme support the work's main line—what, to others, would be accompaniment and decoration.

Only *Spinning Wheel* is a wholly weak track, and the beauties elsewhere are many. For example, there's the very Jazz Messengerish title piece, and three choruses of *Bird Blues* that present a curiously un-hop, un-blues feeling with their substitute chords. *Parkers Mood* includes the briefest of Parker paraphrases in its quiet way, and *I love the final oliord of Grey*, with the strong tones that fan out immediately after. These are fully costumed and staged performances. Despite Blake's frequent smile, the thoughtful and even aggressive qualities are preeminent.

Is Ran Blake one of today's best pianists? Only his disinterest in recording a large body of work prevents a yes-no answer. —litweiler

### LOUIS BELLSON

LOUIS BELLSON & SEVEN—Concord Jazz CJ 25; *Now And Then, Here's That Rainy Day, My Old Flame, It Might As Well Be Spring, Body And Soul, Tru Blu, Roto Blues, Starship Concord, Dig.*

Personnel: Blue Mitchell, trumpet; Pete Christlieb, tenor sax; Dick Nash, trombone; Ross Tompkins, piano; Grant Geissman, guitar; John Williams, bass; Bellson, drums.

\* \* \* \*

The solo nucleus of Louis Bellson's big band (as heard on Pablo 2310-755) opens up here in a lucid and energetic blowing session that swings hard and often and is powered by some of the leader's finest recorded work. His drums have been beautifully captured by engineer Phil Edwards, who apparently knows the difference between miking a rock drummer and a jazz drummer. But more important, Bellson is called upon to do only that which he does best—keep a front line of horns and a rhythm section solidly in a 4/4 groove, and do it with grace and a lilting panache. His not-too-long solo on *Now And Then* is a succulent piece of pure musicianship.

The horns move like clockwork around the immense center of gravity Bellson and bassist Williams establish. Christlieb is an aggressive tenor who moves with determined confidence. Mitchell is a fine lead and solo voice—not strongly individualistic or innovative but usually interesting and exciting. Nash's trombone is crisp and clean.

*Now And Then* and Miles Davis' *Dig* (a trip

through *Sweet Georgia Brown* changes) are the best cuts, not only for the agility and drive of the horns, but for the marvelously sympathetic support from the leader's hands. There is also a relaxing ballad medley. *Roto Blues* becomes bogged down in some aimless and somewhat self-indulgent percussion noodling. And *Starship* with its 7/4 time lacks the delicate precision of the group's best work. —mcdonough

### JOE FARRELL

SONG OF THE WIND—CTI 6067; *Follow Your Heart; Collage For Polly; Circle In The Square; Molten Glass; Alter Ego; Song Of The Wind; Motion.*

Personnel: Farrell, soprano and tenor sax, flute, oboe; Chick Corea, piano; Dave Holland, bass; Jack DeJohnette, drums; John McLaughlin, guitar.

\* \* \* \*

Divining the rationale behind CTI's nearly simultaneous deletion and reissue of this early "jazz-rock" masterpiece is a confusing chore indeed, unless one assumes somebody merely wanted to change the cover art or, more likely, pass it off as new Farrell product, as they attempted with the lamentable Benson/Farrell collaboration. Yes, it does state in little white letters on the rear jacket "previously released," but that's not really fair play. No matter, if you've never heard this gem or your original copy has worn thin from countless playings—like mine—then add it to your "must hear" list.

Joe Farrell had earned a much-deserved reputation as a prodigious session sax man when either he or Creed Taylor—in the summer of 1970—hit on the notion to record an album with what was, at the time, the core of Miles Davis' recording group. If Farrell's name wouldn't sell, somebody accurately assumed, then Miles-by-proxy would. (Maybe I'm being too harsh. Maybe these cats just wanted to play with Farrell. Certainly he was no stranger to them.) Whatever the reasoning, the results were spectacular. Although, for all intents and purposes, McLaughlin plays on only one track (his own *Follow Your Heart*), his modulating blues-progression writing style—complete with his prototypical choppy rhythmic sensibilities—set the tenor for this excursion, and leaves one wondering why he hasn't written more for horns. With Joe's soaring, fluttering discursions and DeJohnette's steady 6/8 rhythm, the performance is reminiscent of the *Giant Steps* Coltrane era. Farrell's *Circle In The Square* and *Molten Glass* continue the modal improvisation slant in a soft hop setting, with Corea copping some flawless Bud Powell fills.

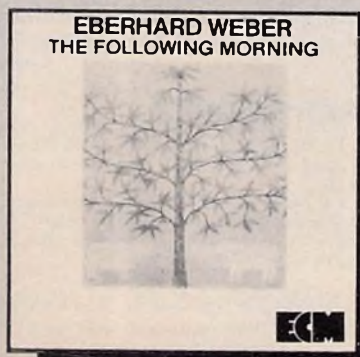
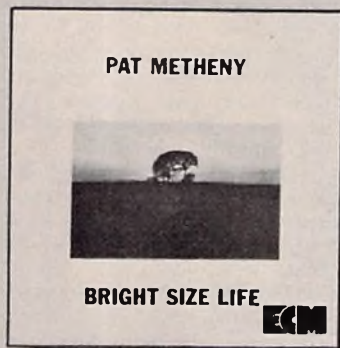
Oddly, but prophetically, the standout pieces here are two Corea compositions: *Song Of The Wind*, a powerfully evocative performance with Chick outlining the progression and mood while Farrell etches an exotic yet subdued soprano line, as memorable as Shorter's best, and *Motion*, a frenetic Cecil Taylor-meets-the-rock-age attempt, engraved in dense, crashing chords and dissonant interludes on the piano while Farrell, DeJohnette and a scratchy, screeching McLaughlin joyfully collide at every turn.

*Song Of The Wind* epitomizes a brave, transitional period in jazz, when Coltrane's shadow was still powerful enough to make aspiring musicians quake, and electricity was a curious but new and friendly partner, rather than the common and predominant factor it has lately become. Coltrane is long gone; electronics are here to stay, but where the hell is Joe Farrell? The distance traversed between

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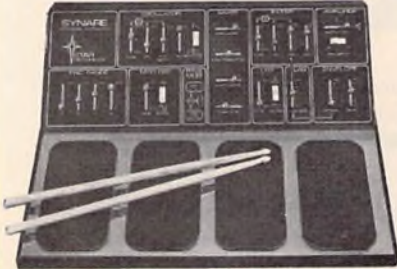
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*Song Of The Wind* and *Canned Funk* is akin to the difference between the original *King Kong* and its recent commercial recreation, a metamorphosis from vision to parody. —gilmore

### LIONEL HAMPTON

**THE COMPLETE LIONEL HAMPTON:** 1937-1941—RCA AXM6-5536: *My Last Affair*; *Jivin' The Vibes*; *The Mood That I'm In*; *Hampton Stomp*; *Buzzin' Around With The Bee*; *Whoa Babe*; *Stompology*; *Sunny Side Of The Street*; *Rhythm Rhythm*; *China Stomp*; *I Know That You Know*; *I'm Confessin'*; *Drum Stomp*; *Piano Stomp*; *I Surrender Dear*; *Object Of My Affection*; *Judy*; *Baby Won't You Please Come Home*; *Everybody Loves My Baby*; *After You've Gone*; *I Just Couldn't Take It Baby*; *You're My Ideal*; *The Sun Will Shine Tonight*; *Ring Dem Bells*; *Don't Be That Way*; *I'm In The Mood For Swing*; *Shoe Shiner's Drag*; *Any Time At All*; *Muskrat Rumble*; *Down Home Jump*; *Rock Hill Special*; *Fiddle Diddle*; *I Can Give You Love*; *High Society*; *Don't Mean A Thing*; *Johnny Get Your Horn And Blow It*; *Sweethearts On Parade*; *Shufflin' At The Hollywood* (two versions); *Denison Swing*; *Wizzin' The Wizz*; *If It's Good*; *Stand By*; *Ain'tcha Comin' Home*; *Memories Of You*; *The Jumpin' Jive*; *12th Street Rag*; *When Lights Are Low* (two versions); *One Sweet Letter From You*; *Hot Mallets*; *Early Session Hop*; *I'm On My Way From You*; *Haven't Named It Yet*; *Heebie Jeebies* (two versions); *Munson Street Breakdown*; *Found A New Baby*; *I Can't Get Started*; *Four Or Five Times*; *Gin For Christmas*; *Dinah* (two versions) *My Buddy*; *Singin' The Blues*; *Shades Of Jade*; *Til Tom Special*; *Flying Home*; *Save It Pretty Mama*; *Tempo And Swing*; *House Of Morgan*; *I'd Be Lost Without You*; *Central Avenue Breakdown*; *Jack The Bellboy*; *Jivin' With Jarvis*; *Blue*; *Ghost Of A Chance*; *Just For Laughs*; *Martin On Every Block*; *Dough-Ray-Me*; *Pig Foot Sonata*; *Charlie Was A Sailor*; *Lost Love*; *I Nearly Lost My Mind*; *Altitude*; *Fiddle Dee Dee*; *Bingo Jo*; *Open House*; *Smart Aleck*; *Bouncing At The Beacon*; *Give Me Some Skin*; *Now That You're Mine*; *Chasin' With Chase*; *Three Quartet Boogie*.

Personnel: see below.

\*\*\*\*\*

Between February of 1937 and April of 1941, Lionel Hampton led 23 sessions for Victor embracing virtually every major figure of the Swing Era with the exception of established band leaders. Only Lester Young and Buck Clayton seem to be missing from the roll call of giants heard here: Charlie Christian, Benny Carter, Coleman Hawkins (in his first record gig after his return from Europe in '39), Johnny Hodges, Ben Webster, Jo Jones, Gene Krupa—you name them.

The body of work that accumulated over that four year period stands alongside the Armstrong Okch's, the Goodman Sextets, the Wilson/Holidays and the Parker Dials and Savoy's. It was not as innovative, to be sure. But it was a series of performances whose total worth somehow managed to exceed the sum of its brilliant parts.

This is an essential collection for anyone seeking to develop a basic appreciation of pre-bop jazz. Nothing else offers quite the same balance—solo variety and small group intimacy and freedom on the one hand and arranged ensemble shapes in the manner of a full band on the other. If you're worried that a complete collection such as this will give you so much of a good thing as to turn it into a bore, forget it. The shifting of tempos and the constantly changing parade of musicians keep the ear ever on the alert. The character and personality of the performances change from session to session.

More than a few soloists whose reputations have deep roots in more specialized soils posted fluke masterpieces under Hampton's ad hoc leadership. The most striking example is Johnny Hodges. One of the two or three greatest records of his career was not only in a non-Ellington ensemble but playing a non-Ellington song. His *Sunny Side Of The Street* with

Hampton was a landmark. Chu Berry's greatest single record, to my ears, was always *Sweethearts On Parade*, a surging wave of sound that swings from the first note. *When Lights Are Low* is that rarest of all jazz birds, an ensemble masterpiece that unifies Charlie Christian, Dizzy Gillespie, Coleman Hawkins, Chu Berry, Benny Carter and Ben Webster. As a composer, Benny Carter rose to his greatest heights here. Ziggy Elman, who was heard with Goodman, Dorsey and his own band, outdid himself completely on *Gin For Christmas*. And so on down the line.

In the first session Hampton drew heavily on his colleagues from the Goodman band, including the entire sax section. But most of the personnels are curious mixtures. Mezz Mezzrow, John Kirby and Cozy Cole meet Cootie Williams and Lawrence Brown in one session. The result is Hamptonian though, via his vibes, his voice and his creative control. He picked from Hines, Kirby, Goodman, Duke, Calloway, Teddy Wilson or whomever happened to be freelancing. The consistency of the performances is remarkably high. Even the duds are redeemed by, if nothing else, a Hampton solo. Mostly the leader plays his high card—the vibes. *Ain'tcha Comin' Home* simmers like a low blue flame. The forays into piano and drums are occasional enough to be welcome. Hampton is an excellent drummer when he's not twirling his sticks about under a strobe light.

*Tempo And Swing*, recorded early in 1940 and named after Hamp's two pet dogs, marks the end of the star-studded horn lineups. The character of the music now changes suddenly, but not for the worse by any means. Hamp did two sessions with the Nat Cole Trio (Cole's first records), and they are outstanding—certainly the most intimate save for *Bellboy* and *Central Avenue* which are vehicles for the leader's drums and piano. Helen Forrest is welcome on two ballads.

By the time we come to the last of the six LPs in the set, however, the music becomes very spotty. The nucleus of Hampton's big band is now forming, but as yet there is no clear direction of key soloist. The vacuum left by the demise of the all-star pickup format is filled unsatisfactorily by an assortment of routine and objectional vocalists. Thus does the great series of Hampton Victors end not with a roar but with a whimper.

Completeness has its price, but here it is relegated to merely one LP. Because of the chronological organization of the music, the poorest sides are conveniently segregated at the back of the box. They hardly overshadow the enormous riches that make this one of the most important reissues of the year.

Hampton's brief introduction sets the tone: "Believe me," he writes. "We had a ball." Stanley Dance has written an excellent book of notes that puts it all in perspective.

—mcdonough

### GARY BARTZ

**JU JU MAN**—Catalyst 7610: *Ju Ju Man*; *My Funny Valentine*; *Straight Street*; *Pisces Daddy Blue*; *Chelsea Bridge*.

Personnel: Bartz, alto and soprano sax, clarinet, synthesizer, vocal; Charles Mims, piano; Curtis Robertson, electric and acoustic bass; Howard King, drums; Syrecta, vocal (track 2).

\*\*\*\*\*

During the past couple of years Gary Bartz has been fooling around with some concept productions with leanings toward commercial funk. They achieved only moderate success



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and succeeded in diluting Bartz' strong, distinctly identifiable voice. With the exception of his work on other people's recordings—notably McCoy Tyner and Jackie McLean—his own efforts did little to enhance his developing reputation as one of the strongest, most distinctive young players around.

With *Ju Ju Man* Bartz peels away the extraneous and lets his playing loose to roam. It's all Bartz, backed by a superb rhythm section that offers up a mixed bag. There's his reworking of *Ju Ju Man*—with Gary's quirky vocal stating the theme and his hard tone alto growling through this tribute to John Coltrane, offset by sensitive accompaniment to Syreeta's soulful rendition of *Valentine*. On Coltrane's *Straight Street* and the bluesy *Pisces Blue*, Bartz plays with a controlled intensity and a hard tone that's assuredly his own.

There is a facet of Gary's playing that regularly produces musical quotes, as if to intentionally remind you of his roots—Charlie Parker, African folk forms, blues and Coltrane—a kind of ongoing examination of his musical history and influences.

The rhythm section is exceptional throughout: King is a young, compulsive, fiery percussionist who's been working with Bartz for some four years and has matured nicely. Mims is a versatile pianist who can lock into a cooking groove and work it for all it's worth, while Robertson provides a solid cohesive bottom that stays close to Bartz' driving saxophone.

*Ju Ju Man* has nothing to do with gimmicks, it's simply straightahead Gary Bartz. —nolan

## GARY BURTON

TURN OF THE CENTURY—Atlantic SD 2-321: *Vibrafinger; Moonchild/In Your Quiet Place; Fortune Smiles; Grow Your Own; Here's That Rainy Day; Daphne; Coquette; Throb; Turn Of The Century; Some Echoes; Henniger Flats; Las Vegas Tango; Hand Bags And Glad Rags; Chega de Saudade (No More Blues); I Never Loved A Man (The Way I Love You)*.

Personnel: Burton, vibes, electric vibes; Sam Brown, Jerry Hahn, Eric Gale, guitar; Stephane Grappelli, Richard Green, violin; Keith Jarrett, soprano sax; Burton, Jarrett, Richard Tee, keyboards; Steve Swallow, Chuck Rainey, bass; Bill Lavorgna, Bernard Purdie, Bill Goodwin, percussion.

★ ★ ★ ★

The incipient stages of today's fusion movement first appeared during the late '60s and early '70s. Marked by stormy confrontations between commercial and artistic considerations, musicians were simultaneously presented with the promise of larger markets and expanded musical vocabularies. By now, it seems apparent that the possibilities of fusion music have mostly deteriorated into financially motivated formulaic clichés. The aesthetic potentials of the eclecticism inherent in the fusion approach should not, however, be forgotten.

One of the first barometers indicating the validity of casting a wider musical net was the work of vibist Gary Burton. Attempting various overlays of elements drawn from jazz, rock, blues and country, Burton offered a set of possibilities that still warrant exploration. His efforts in this direction were documented by Atlantic during a period spanning 1969-1972 which saw the production of five outstanding albums—*Throb* (1531), *Good Vibes* (1560), *Gary Burton & Keith Jarrett* (1577), *Paris Encounter* (with Stephane Grappelli; 1597), and *Alone At Last* (1598). Now, the highlights of Burton's Atlantic tenure are available in this new double-pocket set.

Among the more interesting jazz/rock blends is *Throb*. The sinewy lines of Burton's vibes, Green's violin and Hahn's guitar, while providing a pulse for dancing, transcend that

basic pop music function to create a shimmering, mysterious soundscape. For *Grow Your Own*, the mood shifts to a more relaxed open air ambiance due to the adept synthesis of approximately equal portions of jazz, country and funk; included are a provocative Burton/Jarrett dialogue and Sam Brown's incisive guitar work. *Vibrafinger*, a restricting monochordal funk vamp, challenges the soloists to rise above its static frame.

There are also several cuts from Burton's collaboration with Grappelli. Here, the violinist's exotic gypsy overtones and traditional material such as *Here's That Rainy Day* and *Coquette* help forge a fusion of a different order. In addition, there are several tracks featuring solo and overdubbed Burton performances. Of these, the vibist's sparkling up-tempo reading of Jobim's infectious *Chega de Saudade* stands as an eloquent essay on the subject of lyrical swing.

In spite of some repetitiveness, Burton and his colleagues consistently take the high road by attempting to chart the musical potentials presented by different stylistic configurations. Their successes, as well as their failures, deserve study, especially by musicians who have played themselves into the narrow confines of the disco idiom. For those players not focused on big bucks and super-stardom, fusion represents a legitimate means of regenerating the creative spirit. —berg

## ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL

THE WHEEL—Capitol ST-11620: *The Wheel*; *I Wonder*; *Am I High?*; *A Dollar Short And A Day Late*; *My Baby Thinks She's A Train*; *Ragtime Annie*; *When Love Goes Wrong*; *Somebody Stole His Body*; *Let's Face Up*; *I Can't Handle It Now*; *Red Stick*.

Personnel: Ray Benson, guitar, vocals; Chris O'Connell, guitar and vocals; Leroy Preston, guitar, vocals; Lucky Oceans, pedal steel guitar; Floyd Domino, piano; Tony Garnier, upright bass; Danny Levin, fiddle and mandolin; Bill Mabry, fiddle; Link Davis, Jr., alto and tenor sax, cajun accordion, vocals; Patrick (Taco) Ryan, alto and tenor sax, clarinet; Chris York, drums; Leon Rausch, vocals (track 8).

\*\*\*

When Asleep at the Wheel—an 11 piece “progressive country” aggregation—click, they're as hot as contemporary country or antecedent jazz gets. The country-swing instrumental *The Wheel* opens with a bass line that would make Jimmy Blanton proud and a blues horn harmony that could bend the ears off of Basie's band. The saxophones trade Lester Young lessons, then merge into a Gil Evans-inflected mating. The same fervor applies to Chris O'Connell's vocal tracks (*I Wonder*, *When Love Goes Wrong* and *Let's Face Up*), where her entrancing, pinched-blue twang spurs the band to its full, inspiring supportive powers.

*Am I High?* wheels in the same shuffle groove as *I Wonder*, but the singer (Ray Benson?) squats on the material, a hippie-dippie dope ode that has little going for it in the first place. With the sole exception of O'Connell, none of Asleep's other vocalists display any resiliency or even modest concentration. As the band plods through the honky-tonk *A Dollar Short And A Day Late*, the jarring rockabilly *My Baby Thinks She's A Train* and the country-gospel send-up *Somebody Stole His Body*, the arrangements become progressively stiff and self-conscious. The band weaves a selectively fetching patchwork of country traditions, but the affected vocal mannerisms, emotional conjecturing and disparate styles simply fail to congeal.

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nomer. Given the idiom's resistance to innovation and dissent, a country pursuit translates as a country retreat. Like any historical retreat, it can broaden one's perspective invaluable, but when it's little more than an artful historical paraphrase—like *The Wheel*—it misses its emotional footing by a country mile. —gilmore

## GAP MANGIONE

GAP MANGIONE—A&M SP-4621: *Theme From Picnic; Scarborough Fair/Canticle; The Sound Of Silence; Mrs. Robinson; Laughter In The Rain; Little Lady; Little Man; Hill Where The Lord Hides; Legacy; I Won't Last A Day Without You.*

Personnel: Mangione, Rhodes electric piano, acoustic piano, Hammond organ, ARP synthesizer; Tony Levin, electric bass, stick; Steve Gadd, drums, percussion; Rubens Bassini, percussion.

1/2

I've heard hotter stuff than this in elevators. Not to say this album is bland, but it makes Andre Kostelanetz sound like Sun Ra. The material is pabulum to begin with—the worst of Paul Simon, Neil Sedaka and Paul Williams—and then, believe it or not, Gap and company proceed to water it down! Kinda makes you wonder if his handle doesn't refer to the space between his ears.

The date is billed as a "re-union of sorts" for Mangione, Levin and Gadd, original members of Gap's original trio. Whoever wrote the liner has nerve enough to cite "clear evidence of the chemistry among the three"—yeah, if DuPont had that kind of chemistry, women would be walking around in cement pantyhose.

Well, obviously this was intended as music for people who are not into music. If you need a birthday present for your elderly maiden aunt who thinks that these new-fangled rock groups like the Carpenters are too "way out," you might try it. On second thought, forget it—her canary might croak. —birnbaum

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## WAXING ON . . .

The ongoing battle between art and commerce is one that has compromised the efforts of countless artists. In Hollywood, for example, stories of producers forcing themselves on master directors such as Stroheim, Sternberg and Welles are legion. Similar tales abound in the record industry. (In fairness, it must be said that many "artists" have initiated their own decline in the quest for greater fame and fortune.) So, when a new company arrives on the scene dedicated to the highest musical standards, it is an event well worth cheering about. Such an occasion is the appearance of Don Schlitten's Xanadu label.

Schlitten initiated Xanadu in 1975 with a twofold goal: documenting the work of genuine contemporary masters and making available classic takes from previous generations. New material appears as part of the Silver series; reissued or previously unreleased performances make up the Gold series. As producer, Schlitten's policy is straightforward: "I will produce any valid jazz music as long as it is honest and it swings."

Equally direct is Schlitten's actual production method. Take an outstanding soloist, provide a superb rhythm section, select challeng-

ing material, hire a first-rate engineer, and let the tape roll. It seems so simple until you stack the Xanadu projects against the over-produced product oozing out of the corporate-run vinyl factories. The result of Schlitten's faith in the artist's integrity is an ever-expanding catalogue of real music that, while breathtakingly refreshing today, promises to achieve landmark status tomorrow.

The ten most recent Xanadu releases include a Gold series reissue (a 1959 J. R. Monterose opus previously on Jaro) and nine Silver sessions recorded in 1975 and 1976. Among the Silver series are fruitful efforts from veterans Sam Noto, Sam Jones, Barry Harris, Jimmy Raney, Sam Most and Teddy Edwards, plus energetic outings by comparative newcomers like Mickey Tucker, Charles McPherson and Ronnie Cuber. In each, Schlitten has caught the vibrant spark of spontaneous interaction between musicians of unquestioned taste and integrity. In addition, the albums are enriched with fine liner notes from such able commentators as Ira Gitler, Mark Gardner, Doug Ramsey, Tom Piazza, Shoich Yui (Secretary to the Hot Club of Japan) and Schlitten. Each jacket is also graced with a revealing photographic study of the artist by Schlitten.

The Monterose set from 1959, aptly titled *Straight Ahead*, should bring fresh attention to the imaginatively robust tenorist who for the last ten years has made his home in Belgium. Born in Detroit (January 19, 1927), J. R. first gained prominence in the mid-'50s as a member of the Buddy Rich and Claude Thornhill bands. From there, he gigged and recorded with Teddy Charles, George Wallington,

Charles Mingus, Kenny Dorham, Kenny Burrell and Ralph Sharron. A muscular, big-toned stylist thoroughly grounded in the tenets of bop, Monterose successfully distilled the influences of Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young, Charlie Parker, Sonny Rollins and John Coltrane into his own unique approach.

The five Monterose originals are diversified vehicles that perfectly display the tenorist's considerable emotional and technical breadth. The title track, based on the changes of *Get Happy*, is an up-tempo burner that frames J. R.'s exuberant vitality. *Chafic*, a jaunty jazz waltz, evokes gracefully understated charcoal-limned lines. *Green Street Scene* (a bouncy blues), *You Know That* (a harmonically challenging Latinatone romp) and *Short Bridge* (a tough sinewy tune) bring out similarly apropos expressions. The Matt Dennis standard, *Violets For Your Furs*, gets J. R.'s beautiful ballad treatment while Benny Golson's *I Remember Clifford* draws out the tenorist's unabashed lyricism. Supporting Monterose in this outstanding set is the empathic team of pianist Tommy Flanagan, bassist Jimmy Garrison and drummer Pete LaRoca.

Trumpeter Sam Noto is a veteran who only recently debuted as a leader (*Entrance!*—Xanadu 103). Born in Buffalo, Noto first came to the fore in the '50s and '60s as a lead man and high note specialist in the bands of Stan Kenton, Louie Bellson and Count Basie. After leading a quintet with tenorist Joe Romano during the mid-'60s, Noto moved to Las Vegas in 1969 for a six year stint as a show band player. The frustrations of life in the pits combined with the success of his collabora-

tion with fellow trumpeter Red Rodney (*Superbop*—Muse 5046), led him to Toronto's jazz scene in 1975 where he has emerged as an accomplished soloist in the tradition of Clifford Brown.

For *Act One*, Noto's trumpet is reunited with Romano's tenor and the nonpareil rhythmic tandem of pianist Barry Harris, bassist Sam Jones and drummer Billy Higgins. The material includes a quintet of Noto originals. The first of these, the title track, builds upon the changes of *Well You Needn't* and a bubbling Latin-inflected pulse. *Aries* (Sam's and Joe's sign) is a brisk modal exploration with Noto and Romano reflecting the *Kind Of Blue* heritage of Miles Davis and John Coltrane. Also impressive is *Wavelength*, Noto's percolating recasting of *You Stepped Out Of A Dream*. A medley of ballads showcases the romantic lyricism of Harris (*I Should Care*), Romano (*What Is There To Say*) and Noto (*You Are Too Beautiful*). My only complaint about this fine energetic set, and a minor one at that, is that Harris's piano is slightly under-recorded.

*Triplicity* sets forth the tripartite talents of Mickey Tucker as pianist, organist and composer. Born in Durham, North Carolina, Tucker's training and experience includes the classics, gospel, rock and jazz, plus a diverse resume that embraces stints with Damita Jo, comedian Timmie Rogers, Little Anthony and the Imperials, James Moody, Thad Jones/Mel Lewis, Frank Foster, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Eric Kloss, Sonny Fortune, Willis Jackson and Eddie Jefferson. Emerging from this melange of associations is an astonishingly fresh and mature voice which is destined to

# Great Hands.

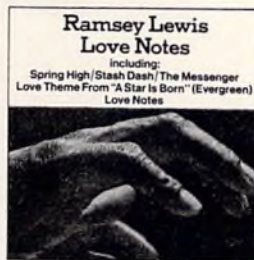
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become increasingly influential.

Except for one solo, side one consists of Tucker's acoustic piano, Gene Perla's acoustic bass and Eddie Gladden's drums playing the keyboardist's compositions. Opening with *Happy*, Tucker immediately establishes his incredible technique with surging single-note runs and percussive chordal blocks. In his solo *Blues For Khalid Yasin* (dedicated to Mickey's close friend Larry Young), Tucker's dazzling harmonic sensibility is impressively united with an idiomatic eclecticism embracing everything from ragtime to Cecil Taylorish flurries. *Malapaga* effectively combines a Latinate backdrop, Tucker's bluesy earthiness and Perla's perky pickings. *Strange Blues* is an off-centered homage to one of the great traditions handled with zesty panache.

Side two, opening with a bright reading of John Coltrane's *Giant Steps*, finds Tucker on Hammond organ along with guitarist Jimmy Ponder and, again, drummer Gladden. Skating through Trane's complex harmonic markers, Tucker laces together a series of pungent lines that form a sonic structure of daring dimensions. With *Suite For Eddie* (Gladden, that is), Tucker provides a frame that comfortably allows a wide range of stylistic expressions by

all three players. In the process, Tucker demonstrates his kaleidoscopic musical persona and a set of new directions for the electric organ which just might revitalize that instrument's currently moribund condition.

Sam Jones, whose bass playing needs no introduction, provides an excellent brief in *Cello Again* for an instrument whose role in jazz has been minimal. After hearing Oscar Pettiford's pioneer work in the early '50s, Jones recalls: "I flipped and immediately went out and got myself a cello which happened to be going cheaply. That was around 1951/52. I studied Oscar's approach to the cello in great detail and heard him use it very often with his wonderful big band and on recordings from those years." Jones recorded several albums on cello in the early '60s but put it aside until Schlitten suggested bringing it out again.

Jones' use of this maverick stringed instrument is exemplary. Backed by pianist Barry Harris, bassist David Williams and drummer Billy Higgins, plus altoist Charles McPherson on three tracks, Sam plucks and bows his way through a diverse set with aplomb. Especially noteworthy is Jones' *In Walked Ray* (for Ray Brown), a mid-tempo cooker featuring a jaun-

ty cello/bass/alto unison line and Sam's flawless pizzicato improvisations. In contrast, Billy Higgins' *Angel In The Night* spotlights Jones' graceful arco work. Throughout, Jones' energetic assertions are supported by his impressive technique and mature musicality.

The albums by Barry Harris, Charles McPherson and Jimmy Raney constitute a *Live In Tokyo* trilogy (recorded in 1976) in what is the first of a projected series of Silver Session Tours. Harris, one of the most highly regarded pianists on the New York scene, is a born and bred Detroitier. After establishing a solid reputation at home, he ventured forth with Cannonball Adderley in 1960, and eventually settled in New York. In addition to his own groups, he has enjoyed productive associations with Yusef Lateef, Coleman Hawkins, Charles McPherson, Carmell Jones, Lee Morgan, Hank Mobley and Dexter Gordon. A much sought-after accompanist, his lean bop-oriented solo style derives from the inspiration of Charlie Parker and Bud Powell.

For Harris' *Live In Tokyo* session, the pianist is matched with bassist Sam Jones and drummer Leroy Williams. His sparkling right hand boppisms are fully displayed in two Powell lines (*Dance Of The Infidels* and *Un Poco Loco*) and in his own *A Soft Spot*. Pace changers include a Latinesque *I'll Remember April* and a warm reflective appreciation to the Japanese entitled *Fukai Aijo* (*Deep Love*). Also impressive is a crackling up-tempo reworking of *Tea For Two* in which Harris generates increasingly higher voltages of pianistic energy.

Altoist Charles McPherson, though born in Joplin, Missouri, moved to Detroit at the age of nine. When he started gigging at 17, it was with Barry Harris, an association that has continued up to the present. Coming to prominence with Charles Mingus and Harris, McPherson has led a variety of groups and lectured about jazz on the college circuit. While many critics cite Charlie Parker as his main influence, it seems that McPherson's ethereal tone and long-lined phrasing derive in part from Lee Konitz. Influences aside, McPherson is an accomplished and individual stylist whose flowing lyricism communicates a poignant warmth.

For McPherson's *Live In Tokyo*, the altoist is joined by the trio of Harris, Jones and Williams. Two McPherson originals, *Tokyo Blue* and *Orient Express*, are blues in C which evoke rather routine outings. *East Of The Sun* elicits a more provocative response from the altoist. On *Desafinado*, McPherson's most interesting work occurs over the concluding vamp where judiciously inserted harmonics and a quote from *Have You Ever Seen A Dream Walking* enliven the proceedings. McPherson convincingly sings *Those Foolish Things* and forcefully leans into a sizzling *Bouncing With Bud*—these are the altoist's best tracks.

The third in the *Live In Tokyo* trilogy belongs to Jimmy Raney, one of the undisputed giants of the guitar. Born in Louisville, Kentucky, Raney's impressive credentials span three decades and include tours of duty with Woody Herman, Al Haig, Buddy DeFranco, Artie Shaw, Terry Gibbs, Stan Getz, Red Norvo, Jimmy Lyon, plus various groups under his own leadership. In all these ventures, Raney's consistently high level of playing has been highlighted by his slightly burnished mellow tone, total technical command, long fluid lines and a mastery of the nuances of melody, harmony and rhythm.

# HI-FLY KARIN KROG ARCHIE SHEPP



**Personell:**

Karin Krog (vcl), Archie Shepp (ts), Charles Greenlee (tb),  
Jon Balke (p), Arild Andersen (b), Beaver Harris (dm),  
Cameron Brown (b), added on STEAM.  
Krog/Shepp only on SOLITUDE.  
Recorded: Arne Bendiksen Studio, Oslo, June 23 1976.  
Engineer: Bjørn Lillehagen.  
Producer: Karin Krog, Frode Holm

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With the inspired support of bassist Sam Jones and drummer Leroy Williams, Raney adds new dimensions to a classic set of standards. His fleet, fluid solo on *How About You*, for example, could serve as a text on mainstream melodic invention. His solo sketch of *Stella By Starlight* is a perfect demonstration of the art of combining melody and chords. The brisk *Anthropology* includes effortless shifts among dramatic patterns forged from diatonic, chromatic and widely spaced intervals. The performances are virtually flawless and fully explain Schlitten's enthusiastic (if somewhat hyperbolic) endorsement of Raney as the world's greatest jazz guitarist.

The evolution of jazz flute begins in the '30s when Wayman Carver played the instrument with Chick Webb's *Little Chicks*. The modern era of jazz flute goes back to the mid-'50s when Sam Most's agile work inspired a wave of activity that has yet to crest. Among the testimonials to Sam's pivotal role by contemporary stalwarts such as James Moody, Yusuf Lateef, Hubert Laws, Joe Farrell, Paul Horn and Herbie Mann, none is more illuminating than that of Rahsaan Roland Kirk: "Sam Most, by listening to different messages and respecting different musicians, was among the few of us who were not afraid to bring voice personality to the flute. This means that he was not afraid to hum in the flute. . . . In my opinion he is a gentleman, and a flutist who possesses beautiful technique and imagination."

That technique and imagination referred to by Kirk is abundantly present in *Mostly Flute*. Ably backed by guitarist Tal Farlow, pianist Duke Jordan, bassist Sam Jones and drummer Billy Higgins, Most demonstrates anew the ability and daring that previously launched a thousand flutes. Among the many highlights are the quintet reading of Sam's jaunty bossa nova *Rio Romance*, a Most-Farlow duo version of Johnny Green's *Body And Soul*, and a trio rendition of Duke Ellington's *Solitude*. Also outstanding are Sam's mellow clarinet forays on his own *Bus Ride* and the standard *Poor Butterfly*.

Tenorist Teddy Edwards hails from Jackson, Mississippi, and is a veteran of gigs with Hank Jones, Howard McGhee, Benny Carter, Gerald Wilson, Max Roach/Clifford Brown, Leroy Vinnegar, Shelly Manne and Benny Goodman. He has also led numerous groups and freelanced extensively in his home town of Los Angeles. With a robust fuzz-edged sound and a fluidly melodic approach, Edwards is among those carrying on the big tone tenor tradition of Coleman Hawkins, Chu Berry and Ben Webster.

The tenorist's efforts in *The Inimitable Teddy Edwards* are given complementary support by pianist Duke Jordan (another veteran of the '40s bebop scene), bassist Larry Ridley and drummer Freddie Waits. The combine is perfect and the players mesh gears for a smooth journey through the set's provocatively varied terrain. Edwards' muscular virtuosity gives a crisp edge to the dazzling *That Old Black Magic* and a surging blues. Teddy's *One On One*. His impassioned pleas emotionalize *Mean To Me* while the warm glow of his sub-tone tenor makes *Imagination* a sensual feast. Edwards' tour de force is the floating unaccompanied frame he creates around an eloquent *Stella By Starlight*.

Brooklyn-born Ronnie Cuber is in the forefront of a new generation of baritonists. Switching from tenor to bari in 1959 to gain a

seat in Marshall Brown's Newport Band, Cuber patterned his style on that of the hard-edged Pepper Adams. His diverse playing experiences include valuable tours of duty with Maynard Ferguson, Lionel Hampton, Woody Herman, Kai Winding, George Benson, King Curtis, Eddie Palmieri and Bobby Paunetto.

With his gutsy cutting sound, Cuber thunders down each track of *Cuber Libre* like a steam locomotive at full throttle. In Coleman Hawkins' *Riffide* (based on the changes of *Lady Be Good*), for example, he hurtles along on the full fire delivered by pianist Barry Harris, bassist Sam Jones and drummer Albert "Tootie" Heath. Cuber's range extends to other idioms. On *Samba D'Orfeo* the baritonist effectively applies his boppish manner to the more pliable rhythmic pulse of the bossa nova, while with Erroll Garner's *Misty* he brings forth a convincing ballad style peppered with growls and varied guttural inflections. Along with Nick Brignola (Ted Curson's bari man) and Bruce Johnstone (formerly with New York Mary and Maynard Ferguson), Cuber is helping push the bari into new frontiers.

In sum, the ten albums reviewed here fully realize producer Don Schlitten's goal of bringing to the market "valid jazz music" that is honest and swings. The Xanadu series, Silver and Gold, offer us outstanding talents playing with passion and integrity. Consequently, the music while bringing satisfaction today, also promises satisfaction for countless tomorrows. Bravo, Xanadu! —berg

J. R. Monterose, *Straight Ahead* (Xanadu 126): \*\*\*\*\*

Sam Noto, *Act One* (Xanadu 127): \*\*\*\*\*<sup>1/2</sup>  
Mickey Tucker, *Triplicity* (Xanadu 128):

\*\*\*\*\*  
Sam Jones, *Cello Again* (Xanadu 129):

\*\*\*\*\*  
Barry Harris, *Live In Tokyo* (Xanadu 130):

\*\*\*\*\*  
Charles McPherson, *Live In Tokyo* (Xanadu 131): \*\*\*\*\*<sup>1/2</sup>

Jimmy Raney, *Live In Tokyo* (Xanadu 132):

\*\*\*\*\*  
Sam Most, *Mostly Flute* (Xanadu 133):

\*\*\*\*\*<sup>1/2</sup>  
Teddy Edwards, *The Inimitable Teddy Edwards* (Xanadu 134): \*\*\*\*\*

Ronnie Cuber, *Cuber Libre* (Xanadu 135):

\*\*\*\*\*<sup>1/2</sup>

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# BLINDFOLD TEST



## Gerry Niewood

by Leonard Feather

Last year Gerry Niewood left Chuck Mangione and organized his own group, thereby ending an association that had begun when he and Chuck, both Rochester born, met at the Eastman School of Music.

Born April 6, 1943, Niewood earned a B.S. in Industrial Relations from the University of Buffalo in 1965, but the following year he switched careers.

Gerry studied saxophone and flute extensively before paying some big band dues with Buddy Rich and Louie Bellson. He came to national prominence as an outgrowth of the Mangione concert with the Rochester Philharmonic, which became a PBS TV special and a best selling album. Niewood was featured in *Hill Where The Lord Hides*, the best known composition to emerge from the album.

Now recording for A & M's Horizon, Gerry's group includes Dave Samuels on vibes, Mike Richmond on bass and Ron Davis on drums. This was the multi-instrumentalist-composer's first blindfold test. He was given no information about the records played.

**1. JACKIE MCLEAN.** *Where Is Love?* (from *A Ghetto Lullaby*, Inner City). McLean, alto sax; Kenny Drew, piano; Niels Pedersen, bass; Alex Riel, drums.

Well, I guess about the best I can do on that one is two stars. It didn't really seem to do too much from the beginning to end—it didn't really build to anything. It's a nice melody. I know the song, it's *Where Is Love?*

The alto player was very bebop influenced and played some nice lines. One of the things I found offensive about it was his pitch. I tend to be very critical of pitch because of my Eastman training, and I think it's very important that you get in tune, because it sets up the vibrations for the whole piece, for the whole group. But I did like his conception, his lines, and his melodies were nice.

The rhythm section didn't do too much to help him, although the piano player was a good accompanist. I think there could have been a little more vitality in the drums and bass. I liked the piano solo. I think the alto player was Jackie McLean, but I'm not sure.

**2. DAVID SCHNITTER.** *Donna Lee* (from *Invitation*, Muse). Schnitter, tenor sax; Mickey Tucker, piano; James Leary, bass; Ed Marshall, drums.

I liked that arrangement; it's nice. Good tenor sound. I liked the way the piano player comped behind the solos, and he took a nice solo. The drummer had a nice, intense energy that he added to the performance, but I can't really say that I can identify anyone. I thought for a second it was Horace Silver on piano, but I'm really not sure.

The tenor player sounded like several people, so I'm not really sure. Could it have been Johnny Griffin?

**3. DAVID LIEBMAN.** *Sweet Hand Roy* (from *Sweet Hands*, Horizon). Liebman, alto flute,

tenor sax, co-composer; John Abercrombie, acoustic guitar; Badal Roy, tabla, ektar, vocal, co-composer.

I have no idea who that was at all, but I enjoyed it. This is eclectic music combining the elements of Indian music, and in the two saxophone sounds there was a rhythm and blues roots coming through. I really enjoyed the ensemble work of the string player. It might have been guitar and flute together—the intricate lines they were playing together were very well performed.

Generally speaking, I liked the mood of it and the musicianship was good. It didn't really seem to go anywhere, though. It didn't increase in intensity or decrease in intensity as it progressed. It just kind of stayed on the same level. So from that point of view, compositionally, there could have been some improvements made in it. But generally speaking, I'd say it was good. Three stars, or three and a half, or something like that.

**4. RAHSAAN ROLAND KIRK.** *Lyriconon* (from *Kirkatran*, Warner Bros.) Kirk, Lyricon, composer; Billy Butler, guitar.

It was *The Shadow Of Your Smile*, right? There was no melody. I don't actually remember anybody playing a melody; it just started immediately into the improvisation.

I like that feeling with rhythm guitar. I always enjoyed that. I can't actually say who the personnel are. The solo instrument I thought was organ for a while, but then I knew it didn't have the organ depth. It's an electronic instrument. Maybe a keyboard instrument. An electronically produced sound anyway.

I didn't like it tremendously. One and a half or two stars at best. There wasn't a lot of excitement generated or really a tremendous amount of anything to draw you into the music. The sound of the instrument doesn't really appeal to me.

Feather: Have you played any electronic instruments yourself?

**Niewood:** No, not really. I've used a Selmer Varitone, but that was a while ago and I used it just on the flute. That was very early in the stage of development of electronic stuff. I've been tempted to try the Lyricon.

**Feather:** Would you be surprised if I told you this was a Lyricon?

**Niewood:** Yes, because it didn't sound like what I've heard the Lyricon used for.

**5. ART PEPPER.** *Rose Room* (from *The Early Show*, Xanadu). Pepper, clarinet; Hampton Hawes, piano; Joe Mondragon, bass; Larry Bunker, drums. Recorded 1952.

I liked that. It sounded like a live recording in a nightclub. Was it Buddy De Franco on clarinet? It sounded like it was recorded in the early '50s by the quality of the sound and the feeling of the rhythm section, just the approach. It was *Rose Room*, right?

**Feather:** Yes. Do you play much clarinet?

**Niewood:** Not jazz clarinet. I'll read a part . . . I play it more as a double than I do . . . it wasn't my first instrument. The saxophone was my first instrument.

**Feather:** Is Buddy De Franco one of your preferred clarinetists?

**Niewood:** Well, yes; I've always enjoyed what I've heard of him. I liked Benny Goodman also.

The piano player, although I can't say who he was, played well. I wouldn't be able to say anything about who the drummer is, but his playing was nice—nice brush technique, nice swing. You couldn't hear the bass too well, but you could just kind of sense its presence. I would rate it definitely three to four stars.

I think for something to be five stars it really has to be something like Sonny Rollins' rendition of *Body And Soul*—something really great. John Coltrane playing something like . . . oh, that's going to be hard. I shouldn't have set myself up for that! Something like *Giant Steps*, in terms of its longevity. It's definitely something that could be studied for years and years to come as a classic.

**6. DONALD BYRD.** *Onward 'Til Morning* (from *Caricatures*, Blue Note). Byrd, trumpet and lead vocal; Larry Mizell, composer; Gary Bartz, alto.

Well, there were certain things that I liked about that. I liked the rhythm section, the feeling of a lot of people grooving together. As far as the composition, I don't think there's anything too memorable about it. The alto player had a nice sound; the trumpet player had a nice sound. Could the alto player have been Sonny Fortune?

The sound was generally good. There were places where there were things that sounded like splices in the way it was put together, which tends to make me think that it wasn't all done live but maybe overdubbed. Generally speaking it was about two stars, I would say.

**7. HUBERT LAWS.** *Midnight At The Oasis* (from *The Chicago Theme*, CTI). Laws, flute; David Nichtern, composer; George Benson, guitar; Bob James, arranger, piano; Doug Bascomb, bass; Steve Gadd, drums.

This was *Saturday Night At The Oasis* with Hubert Laws on flute. I'm not sure who the guitar player was. It could have been George Benson. It sounded good, though. I really liked it. Good rhythm section. It held together well from beginning to end, with good transitions that took you into the solo spaces. It just generally had a nice feeling which kept you involved. I'd say it was on a very high level.

I'd give it at least a four, or four and a half. Maybe even five, but to give it five . . . that's a measure of greatness which I'm not sure is really there. But it's very, very good.

I really think that Hubert Laws has raised the level of performance on the flute to a new peak, and he really expresses himself through the instrument, which is very difficult. Being a budding flutist myself, I know the difficulty of the instrument and I really respect his prowess and expression. **db**

# Profile

HAL GALPER by arnold jay smith

Hal Galper, at 39, has spent time in the company of mainstream as well as avant garde musicians. He has dealt with a variety of keyboards ranging from uprights to grands, clavinetts to full keyboard electrics. He has been a professional since 1959 when he was with Herb Pomeroy's "Band in Boston," and he did the duo scene in N.Y. with Lee Konitz in 1975. His sideman gigs have been numerous, and now Hal has tried his hand as a leader and he likes it. The current group includes Randy and Mike Brecker, Wayne Dockery and Billy Hart.

"It all started when my brother, who was a waiter at some place in Great Barrington, Mass., stole a George Shearing album with Chuck Wayne on it and brought it home," Galper began. "It didn't even have a cover. Now the last thing I thought I'd ever be was a piano player, although I played when I was a kid, like everybody else. It wasn't until the last year of high school that I decided I wanted to play. For years I would go down to the Stables (a club in Boston) and listen to Herb Pomeroy rehearse. I studied bongos with the janitor, you know."

An unlucky break turned into an advantage of sorts. Hal had lost an eye in a childhood accident. Massachusetts has a law that allows handicapped students to choose any school they wish, and Galper chose Berklee.

"I did three years there. That was the first time I ever got good marks in anything. I quit because I was a performance major and we were getting into higher Schillinger and string writing and that was taking time away from my playing."

He gigged around Boston for awhile in the early '60s playing with Sam Rivers, Pomeroy and others. But...

"I was playing free piano which wasn't very well received in Boston. I went to France and Germany because I got tired of cats walking off the bandstand holding their heads. People are more ready to accept that stuff now, but I'm not playing that way anymore.

"I was talking to Billy Hart and we decided that if we ever formed a group, we would play what we wanted to. Billy and I had a hard time getting to that because we had been trained out of it, in a sense, after all those years of playing what we felt would get us accepted more. Survival dictated that we play every possible way. I want Billy to play open drums and I want to play open piano. Most guys aren't strong enough to tolerate that kind of a situation.

"But I digress. I went with Chet Baker when he came through Boston. I wrote his first album, *The Most Important Jazz Album Of 1964-65*. He fired us! There's more to it than just that. When I first joined the band he had Jymie Merritt and Charlie Rice as a rhythm section. Very bebop, laid-back-groove rhythm section. While Chet was away (he stopped playing for five years prior to this) on-top-of-the-beat playing had come into fashion. I couldn't play dotted-eighth-sixteenth so I convinced him to let me get a young, hot rhythm section. I got Steve Ellington and Mike Fleming. We were kicking ass, let me tell you. The front line couldn't handle it.

"It was a great experience working with Chet. I learned about dramatics, how to induce drama into my playing, how to play just short of giving them all—you know, leave them gasping for more."

Then came two years of starving in the Apple, and an unhealthy Galper went back to his New England home. Things got a bit brighter.

"I felt my ability to make a living had improved. That's not to say that it's good, just that my ability had improved. My experience with Cannonball Adderley helped me tremendously. I was his next-to-last piano player. (Mike Wolf was the last.) I was

with Cannon from 1973-5, and let me tell you, I swear I was a farmer until the gig with him. I didn't know what working was. They worked too much. It was unhealthy.



KIRSTEN DWOSKIN

"I learned so much from Cannonball that I'm still absorbing it. It will probably last the rest of my life. I'm still applying the things I learned about music, life, psychology, society, business, everything. Not once in two years did he ever tell me how to play. That's the first time I ever ran into that. The only time we ever discussed it was at a rehearsal or off the gig. One night we had a big discussion about what to do when we get lost, or when someone else in the band gets lost. There are about ten variables about whether you know that you're lost to begin with, or is the other guy lost, or does he know he's lost, etc. I called him one morning and he laid a whole thing down on the subject and didn't remember it the next day. It could have been a textbook on the subject.

"It took me a year with them to get my strength and my confidence up. Roy McCurdy was the pulse of that group. He made maybe two mistakes in the two years I was with them. That was great because when we got lost we could always go to Roy. It was a marvelous experience for endurance because if I didn't get my strength up, Roy would have kicked me all over the bandstand. I had to match his strength, and by the end of the first year I was up to that. I've got to believe that rhythm section was the best Cannon ever had. Walter Booker knows more about the beat than any bass player I ever worked with. He knows more about the tops, bottoms, middles, styles of playing the beat, controlling it, a master.

"I learned about identity, the dangers of the road and its unhealthfulness. It's a totally perverse way of life; isolation becomes dangerous when coupled with fatigue. They are the two basic ingredients used in mind control. You can lose a sense of self when you don't have something to concentrate on. You've got to account for 20 hours every day. You're only on stage for four. My advice

is stick to the music. Other things dissipate your energies and you aren't able to play what you're supposed to.

"Cannon's was a high-energy band, so three sets with them and you were wrung out. You didn't have time to even go sightseeing. After awhile you were so exhausted that you sought other things and the whole world became disoriented. All your securities are gone—your home, your wife, nothing matters in your mind."

After the road Hal realized that he couldn't live without that kind of musical experience, but he was also unwilling to deal with it in that situation.

"I needed the high energy, the high level of rapport, the group confidence. But I didn't need the road to go along with it. I didn't want the money that came with one-night New York gigs where everybody played by rote and went home separately. I knew I had to start a band in order to survive musically and develop my own musical identity, which I hadn't truly done up to that point. Except for recordings I never had the chance to play my own music."

Galper's recorded product runs to three albums under his own name on Mainstream and numerous others with the Adderleys, Baker, Randy Brecker, Rivers, Bobby Hutcherson, Pete Yellin and Konitz. In all he has composed and recorded 35 compositions. A new album was recorded last fall for Steeple Chase. He wanted live experience, developing a cohesive unit not merely for recording purposes, but for developmental insight.

"I can compose and play in any style, but the point is to find where I am in all of that. My idea was to bring a young band up, train them myself. I made a demo tape which failed. My next step was to get a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts for three 'concerts' using high level musicians so that I could give myself a chance to see where my music was."

On the added strength of recommendations from Konitz and Phil Woods, he got the grant. It took a year and a half to figure out what he wanted, how to make it work and how to carry it beyond the three mini-concerts. It has paid off. The personnel changed as one showcase club closed before his gig came off and other people became available.

"I don't know why I waited 20 years to have my own band. I originally wanted the cats I finally got, but I figured they weren't available. Randy and Mike were on my own recordings, but I figured they were busy with their own band and they wouldn't have time for me. There's something else I learned: go to the people you want first no matter what you think their situation is. I felt that because it was a new band it would be hard to keep the same personnel together. That's one of the realities of getting work."

But it has worked. Sweet Basil, a New York club specializing in "new" sounds, or groups that are not usually heard together, put them in for two months of Sundays at the end of 1976. The outcome was that the group became so cohesive that it was impossible to plug in modular sidemen. Jack Kleinsinger's "Highlights In Jazz" hired them. The SteepleChase date was an important stepping stone to the group's credibility. Most important of all was Galper's maturation process.

"I get the chance to play acoustic piano. I never played acoustic with Cannonball. If anything waters out your identity no matter who you are, it's the electric piano."

His goals of a year and a half ago have been reached. Steady work with high level, high quality, high energy music. "I'd like to do some more concerts, and, hopefully, record the band on a steady basis. It's another level we shoot for here: record contract, build an audience and take them with us. I'd like to offer the band enough to get a 100% commitment from them."

Galper is eyeing a working band that "will make musical history." As of this writing he feels they are still working out their cliches. Hal concluded by saying that it doesn't really start happening until you're totally bored with the music. "When you get to that point, it means you have played all your cliches, everything you know, all your rote stuff, and you've run out of ideas. That's when the real, honest music starts."

# BARBARA CARROLL

by michael rozek

Barbara Carroll seems a worldly-wise, gracious, self-effacing person first, and a pianist second. So it figures that she's not hot in pursuit of fame, or even trying to sell a lot of records. "I'm delighted to sell any," she says, "and I'm extremely lucky to be with a major label (Blue Note). The kind of music I play could never compete with rock in number of records sold. I'm just grateful jazz fans are as loyal as they are." Many such fans probably remember Carroll's "first career," which ran from the late '40s to the late '50s. She made a number of trio LPs for a number of labels and then, due to domestic considerations, she "slowly stopped going on the road in the early '60s. Plus then the rock thing started, and jazz became not such a hot commodity; there weren't so many places to play, and the major record companies were not taking any chances with jazz records. So I really didn't work for quite some time. If you weren't playing electric piano or synthesizer, you were really out of it. But a lot of us waited for it to come back, and when it did, we were all ready. Right now, acoustic jazz is certainly in a healthier state than it has been."

Born in Worcester, Massachusetts, Carroll studied piano from an early age, and remembers "it was fun for me to improvise, much to the dismay of some of my teachers, who felt that everything should be according to a written sheet. My father at least had a great appreciation of music; he was a trumpeter who played weddings in the area. He was delighted when I began playing, because I had two older sisters who'd had the benefits of all



kinds of music lessons but never really took to them very much. I studied classical piano from about age eight to about age 15. And I'm glad, because now I love to play classical music. And then when I was in high school, I began playing with three and four piece groups, mostly for weddings again. I was the only female, naturally, but it worked out very well. And I was the only one who went on to become a professional musician. By the time I reached high school, I was listening to jazz, particularly Art Tatum, Benny Goodman, Nat Cole and Earl Hines. And I knew that was the direction I wanted to go. It never occurred to me—I was young and perhaps rather stupid—that as a female it might be more difficult for me."

Eventually, Carroll went off to Boston, to study at the New England Conservatory of Music. "My parents didn't send me with their money, only with their blessing, because things were very tough with us financially. When I was in high school, I

worked dates so I could go. Then, when I got to school, I was also working every night at a club in Boston, and after a while I decided that I'd have to do either one or the other. In the club there was a house band, a larger organization, and then there was the four-five piece rhumba band, which I was part of. We played for dancing, primarily rumbas and sambas. I finally chose playing in the club instead of school, but I didn't play rumbas for very long.

"Next I played in Philadelphia for a while, and then I fulfilled my idea of heaven—I came to New York and joined 802. I only knew one musician in town, a pianist from Boston, and he helped me a little. If someone called him for a job on Saturday night, and he was already booked, he'd say, 'Well, I can't make it, but I know a pianist who can.' And he would never mention 'he' or 'she' specifically, he'd only say, 'Bobby Carroll can make it,' you see. Then comes 8:00 Saturday night and I would arrive at the location, go up to the bandstand; the leader would look at me, say 'Who are you?' and I'd say 'I'm the pianist for the evening.' And he'd faint dead away from the shock, because girl musicians were not looked upon too kindly. Everybody thought if you were a girl, you couldn't play, you know. But it being past the starting hour, he had no alternative but to let me play.

"My jobs varied. . . . It wasn't all swell jazz playing, but it was great experience. . . . and the ideal playing situation came up very shortly thereafter, because I got a job leading a trio on 52nd Street with Chuck Wayne, and Clyde Lombardi on bass. This was in 1949-50, at the very tail end of the 52nd Street era. I was lucky to get in there just before the whole thing collapsed. And my first job was at the Down Beat opposite Dizzy Gillespie's big band. He had John Lewis, Ray Brown, all sorts of fantastic musicians. It was really something for a little girl from Worcester, Massachusetts. Chuck and Clyde were much better known than I was, but we'd all been unemployed, and so we got on very well working together. The club needed a scale

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# HOLTON

group, and certainly I was more than willing. And as a woman, I was treated as sort of a novelty.

"Before the trio broke up, Chuck left to go with Woody Herman, and Charlie Byrd worked with me for a little while, which was also a marvelous arrangement. And then I went to work solo at a place called Georgie Auld's Tin Pan Alley on 49th Street. Great, small little back room, and everybody used to come in, to sit in or just listen. . . . It was an extremely healthy era, musically, because New York was a little different than now; people hung out more and there was more late-night activity because of the lack of tension around the city, I suppose. People were more relaxed about being out all night. . . . And then business got to be so good, Georgie said, 'Well, if you want to get a rhythm section, you can.' I'll tell you, happiness is having a great rhythm section. . . . Then I went a step up—a step east—into the Embers which had just started. It was the single most successful and most emulated music room in the country because of the format, decor, ambience. . . . I think it's a fish restaurant now. . . . I was using bass and drums by this time; the bassist was a young man I eventually married, a marvelous bass player named Joe Shulman who died three years after.

"The first time we were there, we worked opposite Art Tatum, which, as it's been said, was like playing opposite God. He was very sweet and very helpful to me. He didn't give me technical advice, but he realized it was a trauma playing opposite him, and he was very encouraging. . . . I worked at the Embers many weeks, with many different drummers. Sometimes we'd go on the road, to the London House, Baker's; there was more work in clubs than concerts at that particular time. And I made two LPs for Atlantic, one of which was subsequently reissued with Mary Lou Williams on one side and me on the other, under the title *Ladies In Jazz*.

"Then I began recording for RCA, about five or six LPs. And I was also in a Broadway show by Rodgers and Hammerstein for a year, called *Me And Juliet*. The show was about backstage life in a theater, and I took the part of a rehearsal pianist. I think it was typecasting—I had a few little lines to say. But it was quite an experience, getting to know Rodgers and Hammerstein. They were very rigid about how their music should be interpreted. But we also played a couple of things where we stretched out, for the dancers, and Mr. Rodgers was a great appreciator of that. He was marvelous to us. He admitted that his knowledge of jazz was rather rudimentary, so he was captivated by what we were doing. Being in the theater, even in that limited way, was a kick, because we used to play a performance and then go to work at the Embers until three a.m. Those days were terrific."

Carroll worked steadily throughout the '50s, and then remarried in 1960, giving birth to a daughter

in 1962. "I wanted to play even while I was domesticating," she asserts, "and I did a few dates in 1967 and 1968, but I generally felt there wasn't any place to play. And I didn't want to go on the road, and nothing really happened. Or maybe, in the summer of 1972, I just got my head together and made it happen . . . because I opened Michael's Pub with a three-week gig, after an agent talked to a few people. And I ended up staying five months. Then I played the Rainbow Grill, and the Carlyle, and the Ritz-Carlton in Chicago . . . things just started picking up."

In late 1976, Carroll was planning more club dates (plus a few concerts), and looking forward to cutting her second Blue Note release. I asked her how commercial she planned to make it. "On the first album for Blue Note (*Barbara Carroll*)," she explained, "I play the Rhodes on one track—and only very sparingly. But don't misunderstand; I don't feel anything negative about electric piano. I just haven't found a way, up to this point, for it to enhance what I'm doing . . . I mean, I have an RMI at home, and it's a nice toy . . . but, you know, I might even use a string synthesizer on my next record."

However, the pianist has made one concession to the modern era, by serving as accompanist on a few tracks of a recent Rita Coolidge album. "My husband, Bert Block, manages Kris Kristofferson, and in 1974, Bert and I and my daughter went along on Kris' tour of Australia, New Zealand and Japan. Before the first concert Kris came to me and said, 'Hey, I want you to play on the show.' The idea of working with his rhythm section was really incongruous. But Kris wanted me to do something with Rita, because she and I had been going over some standards she was very interested in learning. I was reluctant, I really just wanted to be along on tour for the ride, but I finally agreed to try it at one concert. So the way he arranged it, Rita and I opened the second half of the show. We just did blues, and *For The Good Times*, and a few standards she knew all the lyrics to. Eventually, back in the States, we did an album of tracks together, like *Am I Blue?*, a couple of which are released on one of her albums. It was a big departure for her, and the tunes got a lot of airplay. But she can handle standards very well . . . before the album, we did a lot of domestic concerts together.

"My playing has changed since the early days," reflects Carroll. "When I was beginning to play, I was very influenced by Nat Cole. His style was melodic, without being overly cluttered up with a lot of notes, and it was swinging. Today, I admire Keith Jarrett for his concept, technique, feeling . . . his pianistic approach, especially in his free form solo playing." Out of a discussion of her other favorites, I pressed her for a view of her own style, but she held to saying, "I run the gamut from A to B." And, more feelingly, "I don't think what I do is going to come across unless I believe it." db

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## RETURN TO FOREVER Gammage Auditorium Tempe, Arizona

**Personnel:** Chick Corea, acoustic piano, Rhodes piano, mini-Moog, clavinet, Moog 15, Polymoog, ARP Odyssey; Stanley Clarke, upright, electric and piccolo bass, vocals; Gayle Moran, organ, Polymoog, acoustic piano, vocals; Joe Farrell, soprano and tenor sax, flute, piccolo; John Thomas, trumpet; James Tinsley, trumpet and flugelhorn; Jim Pugh, trombone; Harold Garrett, trombone, baritone horn; Gerry Brown, drums.

The highly-organized, almost glossy professionalism of this new Return To Forever cre-

ates the initial aura of, dare one say it, "pizazz." It's a sprawling, immaculately rehearsed aggregation, complete with grand pianos and drums on ten-foot risers, two impressive keyboard cockpits and a squeaky-clean brass section that would put MF's horns in awe. But if *Musiemagic's* blatant emphasis on Communication Music threatens to over-commercialize at any moment, the revamped RTF dispelled any such fears in concert. This was a big production all right, but the scope of material covered during the three-hour performance left few artistic stones unturned.

Auspiciously, Stanley Clarke's bowed acoustic bass solos both opened and closed

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the proceedings. *The Endless Night* began acoustic, elongated to 25 minutes, and eventually evolved through diverse rock and jazz changes via careful keyboard layerings, crisp brass unifications, vocal duets by Clarke and Gayle Moran, and nasty soprano licks from Joe Farrell. Farrell, who has returned to forever for the first time since *Light As A Feather*, proved to be the surprise inside RTF's cupcake. His saxophone romps, plus Corea's large group arranging, give the group its remarkable range and multi-dimensionality.

*The Musician* was dedicated by Corea to "All the musicians on planet Earth, and other planets too," but his original lyrics were less than cosmic. Frankly, RTF's renewed vocal emphasis is smooth but auxiliary, and Moran's fragile perfections don't necessarily mesh with the improvisational surroundings or Clarke's throaty harmonics. Still, *The Musician* and other tunes were more than salvaged by extraordinary ensemble interplay, here soaring on trades between Chick's ARP and Joe's soprano.

Clarke's *Hello Again* glowed with Tinsley's warm flugel introduction, plus Farrell's flute colorings and Jim Pugh's mellow bone solo. Corea's acoustic salsa phrase cued the horns at appropriate junctures, and Tinsley's muted trumpet slid nicely into *So Long Mickey Mouse*. Three-way trading from Corea to Clarke to Farrell took this blowing segment into contrasting directions. Chick's farcical synthesizer play banged into hard-rocking electric bass (augmented by Gerry Brown's revving skins) and then cooled into the jazzier leanings of Joe's soprano. The interplay proved excitingly musical, with Joe visibly pleased by Chick's ongoing cleverness and responding with sheer virtuosity—unlike the chase scenes of past, guitar-oriented RTFs, where the oft-predictable trading episodes relied more heavily on pure speed and volume.

After intermission, mysterious keyboard spaciness prefaced *Musicmagic*, soon transformed by quick horn blurts, moody organ from Moran, and more vocals. Corea's electric piano and Brown's polyrhythmic pace led into Clarke's phenomenal bass solo . . . as fast and liquid as most electric guitar flurries. Brown took a brief solo after Stanley's buildup, then



brass accentuations and a soprano blast took it out. Like most tunes from the LP, this cut stretched to a lengthy 23 minutes with plenty of solo room

Next came a series of personal spots for the principals. Moran's three songs emphasized her ethereal, "trained" voice and a bit of classically-inspired piano. Her delicate, idealistic warblings, probably inspired by constant proximity to Sri Chinmoy or Scientology, moved some boogie freak in the crowd to scream "get down!" at the top of his lungs. Moran's subsequent rendering of *Come Rain, Come Shine* proved particularly limp, non-bluesy, and even off-key . . . but not bad enough to deserve such abuse from a ruder-than-usual Arizona audience (someone even yelled "WHERE'S AL?" during a Corea piano spot).

Farrell's tenor was featured next on Corea's *Serenade*, starting as a duo with Chick, growing with Brown's brushwork, and culminating in a high-speed, hard-blowing finale. *Moorish Warrior And Spanish Princess* was Clarke's acoustic showcase, with a tremendous, ten minute solo covering dark-hued bowings as well as exhausting, machine-gun pluckings in the upper register.

Chick took the acoustic spotlight with his brilliant introduction to *Spanish Fantasy*, later sizzling on ARP as the suite unravelled. Corea's increased use of acoustic deserves lavish praise, of course, but his handling of electronics has matured too. Gone are the mono-programmed curlicues that formerly affected his note-bending synthesizer phrases. He now wails with gutty imagination, or creates spaces and colors not born of ostentation. *Spanish Fantasy* metamorphosed boldly, drew further attention to Chick's horn charts, and settled to a beautiful, acoustic close.

During the standing ovation, two ten gallon hats were thrown onstage and the leaders wore them into the wings. But Corea and Clarke were soon back out, western headgear still in place, to perform the first encore . . . a duo improvisation on acoustic piano and bass. As Clarke kept time on metronomic high notes, Corea explored some tasty melodic ideas, alluded to a couple of standards, and shifted the focus back to Stanley's swinging



jazz groove. Both of them were beaming with delight as the crowd asked for more. RTF re-appeared for another go at the big band funk of *Musimagic*, something of an anti-climax perhaps, but a satisfying addendum to a marvelously varied evening. —bob henschen

## THAD JONES- MEL LEWIS QUARTET

### Blues Alley Washington, D.C.

**Personnel:** Jones, cornet, fluegelhorn; Harold Danko, piano; Chip Jackson, bass; Lewis, drums.

Thad Jones and Mel Lewis, aside from maintaining the finest big band in jazz, also are currently leading one of the most interesting small groups I've heard in a while. During their week at the recently revitalized Blues Alley, their approach was quite casual—Jones called a familiar standard or jazz tune and off they went—but there was nothing routine about the results.

Take Thad. I can think of few jazz musicians who can match him these days for consistently creative improvising. His lines—played mostly on a newly-acquired vintage King cornet—varied from Monk-like sparseness to complex Gillespian flurries, and they had compositional logic that jazz improvisation should always have but too often doesn't. Plus, Thad inspired a sense of fun in his cohorts. Ellington's *In A Mellotone*, for example, was a frequent vehicle for the group's deadpan humor, with Thad at one point hitting high, isolated, staccato quarter notes and Danko strumming the piano strings four-to-the-bar, à la rhythm guitarist Freddie Green. Understand, they weren't mocking the tune; rather, they hit upon a novel, musical way to interpret it.

Co-leader Lewis gave a welcome reminder of what a splendid small-group drummer he is. As always, his dynamics ranged from a whisper to a roar, and he *listened*. With the quartet, though, Mel exhibited what was heretofore a relatively cloistered aspect of his talent—his ability as a soloist. His outings were explorations of the numerous coloristic possibilities of the drums, and they were coherent "melodic" statements as well. I can recall only Max Roach and Joe Chambers displaying comparable finesse as drum soloists.

Given the extraordinary capabilities of their bosses, the two sidemen had to be exceptional in order to keep up, and they were and did. In the past five years, Danko has become one of our most remarkable pianists, possessing the commanding presence and versatility of a Jaki Byard. Moreover, he is an alert and sympathetic accompanist; his lightning-fast responses to Thad in particular were models of intelligent comping.

Jackson, subbing for Rufus Reid, is young and very promising. Whether articulating single-note lines, double stops or strums, he played with impressive clarity and lyricism. And his ears, like those of his compatriots, were wide open. Watch out for him.

One of the most interesting things about the foursome was their concern for color and texture. Almost every conceivable sub-unit of the group was heard at one time or another—solo piano, solo bass, solo drums, piano and bass,

cornet and piano, cornet and bass, cornet and drums, bass and drums, and, of course, the rhythm section. As a result, the quartet when it played as a unit sounded that much more fresh and powerful.

So for all their seeming informality, the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis quartet is performing highly original "conventional" jazz. Let's hope that they continue to work in this context—there's a lot to be learned from them. —bill kirchner

## JIMMY OWENS

### Town Hall New York City

**Personnel:** Owens, trumpet, fluegelhorn; Leslie Braithwaite, piano; Chris White, bass; Brian Brake, drums; Don Jay, vocals; the Collective Black Artists Ensemble (Jon Faddis, Cecil Bridgewater, Virgil Jones, Sinclair Acey, trumpets; Al Patterson, Janice Robinson, Kiame Zawadi, Steve Turre, trombones; Alex Foster, Leroy Barton, Jr., Doug Harris, Ernie Wilkins, James Ware, saxophones); Billy Cobham, guest drummer.

The Collective Black Artists have consistently presented fine concerts featuring artists with a multiplicity of talents. This night dedicated to and starring trumpeter Jimmy Owens was no exception. In fact, the performances outshone many in recent memory.

Owens came loaded with lead sheets of his own tunes and charts of Thelonious Monk compositions and traditional blues. Don Jay handled the vocal chores on the blues while the well-rehearsed CBAE read and improvised around him.

Cobham's presence was due to a year's hiatus he is taking from touring with his own group. Not quite surrounded by his usual complement of traps, Cobham was in rare form. He played jazz drums—trap drums with no frills, no electronics. His cymbals rang with an intensity and meaning not often encountered during his recent association with George Duke.

Owens' *Lo-Slo-Bluze* was the highlight of the first half of the program with solo spots by Cecil Bridgewater, Janice Robinson and the always breathtaking Ernie Wilkins. *Complicity*, an ambitious suite by Owens, was in three parts, each separated by an abstract solo (most notably one by Chris White, who never ceases to amaze with his tactile approach to the acoustic instrument). The sections were delineated by a definitive rhythm change laid down by Brian Brake, Owens' regular drummer. The third movement was actually a recapitulation of the opening statement—only the rhythm was altered.

*Drums* was a virtuosic display of percussive superiority. Cobham threw the book at us—flim-flams, cuts, punctuations, triplets, single-stroke rolls, tight rolls. And the ensemble seemed to get energy from him—the more he power-played, the more they turned it on. Kiame Zawadi and Alex Foster each had their say, but in the end it was Cobham. He was forcing the brass stabs of Owens' chart to virtually burst from the proscenium, syncopating between beats, pressure-rolling behind a particular ensemble passage. It was like watching fireworks.

It is to CBA's credit that they allow the artist full sway in programming material. When a concert is as successful as this one was, it is a deep bow in the direction of the artist's good taste. —arnold jay smith



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Then I heard him at the Jazz Gallery and he came over to me and said, "Hey man, we got to get together sometime and play because I like the way you play." I figured that was one of the main compliments I could get.

When they got the gig at the Five Spot, I was living on Tenth Street between First Avenue and Second, on the top floor, and I had no telephone. And he sent this chick up there with a telegram to tell me to come to the rehearsal. Then the last night of the gig we made the recording; we recorded all night. (*The Great Concert Of Eric Dolphy*, Prestige P-34002.) We had a ball. In fact, after the gig Eric had a royalty check that he decided to cash and split up among the group. he was so happy. Man, Eric and Booker were such beautiful musicians. They seemed to be so honest in what they were doing. I mean, they didn't employ any gimmicks or anything; they just went straight ahead with whatever they had coming out of them. The music sounded so lovely, so humble.

Palmer: That word "humble" keeps cropping up. If you can just lay it aside for a minute, what do you think your effect was on Ornette's playing? A lot of people have felt that it was really considerable.

Blackwell: I think the biggest effect that I had on him was that I was the most consistent drummer he'd played with. I guess that gets to be a pretty big part because I was with him early on when his music was evolving and I guess he got used to the way I played. Of course, Ornette's had quite a lot of influence on my playing. I had been used to playing with groups in New Orleans that were always playing like eight bars of this or that, but when I got to playing with Ornette there was no way of anticipating how the music would be going. I had to listen very closely to what he was going to do, and probably my biggest influence on him was the fact that he got used to listening to me too.

You know, one thing about Ornette is that any time, any day, Ornette is ready to play. I could call him up right now and tell him I'm coming over and the first thing he'd do when I got there is to pull out his horn, and then he'd set up the drums. He's always full of music.

Palmer: Just to get back to your roots for a minute. African music survived in New Orleans, in Congo Square, much longer than it did anywhere else in North America. Do you think that might help account for the many, many drummers who have come out of New Orleans, from Zutty Singleton to you to James Black, Idris Muhammad, David Lee, Zig Modeliste of the Meters. . . .

Blackwell: Exactly. Because the influence went on and on, and as it was passed down each drummer would take the history and use it and broaden it some kind of way. I think that led to the fact that you can always tell if a drummer's been in New Orleans.

Palmer: Is there any advice you'd like to pass on to younger drummers?

Blackwell: Well, to me music's always been . . . I started out playing rhythm and blues, but as you go along, as you evolve into different types of music and play with different groups of people, you begin to realize that music is just music. It's all what you put into it, whether you enjoy it or not. You can make it lug or you can make it work. That's the way I've always looked at it. I've always enjoyed playing, just playing.

get accustomed to it. You'll be playing some phrase, and all of a sudden the noise hits you, even though you actually haven't played any other notes."

In view of the fact that he is sometimes credited with being the first rock guitarist to make extensive use of feedback and that he also uses a voice bag on the reggaeish live version of *She's A Woman*, Beck seems to be very interested in the new technology—though with some exceptions. "I get a little cynical about that subject," he cautions. "I mean, phase shifters and a slap echo and all that are alright. Everything can be great, if you use them right.

"I won't use fuzz, though. I hate it, always have. That was something that was fun when you first had them about two or three decades ago," he laughs, "but it wore off quick."

There's one other thing he's cynical about: heavy metal music, which is essentially a simplified and over-amplified version of the music he played a dozen years ago as a member of the Yardbirds. "It makes me sick in a way," he says, "and yet I'm no longer involved in that scene, so I just don't worry too much about it. But if I hear it on the radio, it annoys me a bit. I find it hard to swallow, knowing that millions are being made out of it. It's a little bit hurtful, but it gives them a bit of work. I mean, it's got them doing music rather than plastering a wall or something."

As for his own early recordings with the Yardbirds, "I laugh at them. Of course, I can also laugh at something I played last week. I suppose that compared to everything else from then, it's not so terrible. By that token, it's still held up.

"That was a time when the Chess sound was my main thing. The Chess drum sound and those raunchy blues things. We even recorded a bit at Chess Studios in Chicago, and in Memphis too.

"Actually, we did a couple of sessions at Sun with Sam Phillips, and got six things, all things we'd recorded before. We simply had to do it because we were there and he was there. I think there were four things that eventually were released, and one of them was a hit. I was new to the scene then, so just hearing it was great. That great fat bass drum thundering through the radio. And it was recorded in the original place with the original amps and everything. Ahh, those old Fender amps."

Chances are that Jeff Beck will never work in a grouping of that sort again. "I don't think you can do that sort of thing any more. The thing in the late '60s was that if you formed a group, you were brothers and in love and would stick together until the end, and all that insecurity bit. But now I've been so long on my own that I couldn't conceive of a permanent thing with anybody.

"Jazz isn't like that, anyway. People don't start throwing rotten tomatoes because John Smith, who's well known for playing the saxophone, has suddenly got someone else on drums. That's how it is with my sort of music. It's not like Led Zeppelin, where if Robert Plant wasn't there singing, and some other guy was, they'd go 'Aw . . . ' I've progressed beyond that stage, and I'm thankful of it."

And what about the possibility of another sudden retirement? "I don't think I'll do it again soon," he says. "Only time can make what I'm doing turn into what I want it to be."

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## SULLIVAN

continued from page 28

Duffy's one of those "young" men who came through that whole rock era and can play time with anybody. There's a whole generation of drummers who lost touch with that—how to generate that pulse.

**Smith:** One of your musicians pointed out to me that you encourage your musicians to the point that they feel they can play to your level. Is that intentional?

**Sullivan:** That's the way we all grew up. All the dedicated musicians—Costellano, Diorio—they were people who were not afraid to go out with their betters and peers and sit in. If we had that competition at the church it would be disorganized and we'd get nowhere. They are really respectful. I have to hold back all of these young horn players that keep coming out of the woodwork.

We have the essence of a working group now: two guitarists, two percussionists, bass and piano. We can add horns when we please. It's a very tenuous thing, that musical delicacy that we've reached now, playing these Monday nights. Tonight we were lucky enough to have a piano player besides me who was able to play clusters. We don't usually need such a player. The two guitar concept is enough. [Some of the musicians who were playing with the Ira Sullivan Monday night church group were: Peter Einhorn, Simon Salz, Peter Harris, guitar; David Marsh, drums; John Yarling, percussion; Al Hospers, Jr., bass; John Alexander, Juliene Purefoy, reeds.]

We want freedom of expression. We were trying to get that flow. Everybody solos but there are no soloists. In other words, nobody sits around waiting their turn. Now the piano player plays; now we take fours with the drummer; then the theme and out. Everybody's playing at all times and everybody solos. And there's a structure as well. You don't have to caution these people against anything. If you do, it takes the joy out of it. Praise and play.

**Smith:** Do you want something better either for your group or your music?

**Sullivan:** I can come up with 5000 musicians' names I know and love. A lot of them are like you. They know I'm alive, but they don't know where.

**Smith:** So. Where's it going to take you?

**Sullivan:** How many names you got? That's a lot of people.

**Smith:** I'm not talking about names. I'm talking about your talent.

**Sullivan:** I'm not even talking about the fans and the young musicians coming up.

**Smith:** Go on. "musicians who..."

**Sullivan:** Phil Woods has got this young guitar player with him now who you should hear.

**Smith:** Harry Leahy. Yes, I know who he is. I've heard him play.

**Sullivan:** Heck. I give him five for being out there with Phil.

**Smith:** So do I and I've said it in print, but that doesn't mean he is up to it.

**Sullivan:** How many times could people have come up to me and told me I could have made a better choice?

**Smith:** Perhaps they should have. How did we get on this topic?

**Sullivan:** Who cares. Let's run with it.

**Smith:** Okay. I'll tell you. Your drummer tonight needs some better time.

**Sullivan:** Just as long as you spell his name right.

**Smith:** But it's different with your people. I know they'll learn that from you, especially

your drummer. But why shouldn't there be criticism so long as it's not destructive?

**Sullivan:** We are all involved in what's going on. We are our own critics and we're never destructive. Even, maybe especially, the audience that is involved with us. It's one thing to criticize the entire atmosphere and the performer within it. It's quite another to work on a personality. Where are these personalities coming from? Some of those kids are studying law or physics or science, and music is a sideline, maybe a serious one, but not the main one for a living. You watch those kids when they are in their 30s and see how many are businessmen or psychotherapists. I remember Denny Zeitlin when he was just a piano player. I never knew he was pre-med. Now he's got two brilliant careers.

Look at Mark Colby [multi-reed man with Maynard Ferguson who, along with another Ferguson reedman, Bobby Militello, was joining Ira at the Airliner the following night.] He went through high school and the University of Miami, got married, had a child. All the while he was playing the shows at Miami Beach, went home, studied, went to class, worked part-time in a music store, and so on in that circle.

You can't knock the kids too much. This school and others like it are knocking out the musicians that our future depends on. They are all so clean-cut, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed and ready to go to work. They come down (to the church) with no detours. Mark could have been anything he wanted, he had that kind of mind.

**Smith:** What makes Monday nights at the church so special other than the young musicians that fall by?

**Sullivan:** The others. All of the cats that don't play Monday nights. Or maybe because it's the best night in the week—the night they really play because they don't have their regular gigs and they can blow on Mondays. It makes me and the groups feel that they, too, are blowing on that night because they don't get the chance all week long either.

**Smith:** Again, would you like to do other things in other places? Do a tour? Promote a record? Swing on a star?

**Sullivan:** Why now? Why suddenly me now? So I've made a record and people know I'm alive.

**Smith:** As I said to Phil Woods when he asked the same question, "When you're hot, you're hot." I'll go further with you. Hasn't Horizon offered you a tour to promote the record?

**Sullivan:** Yes, as a matter of fact, they did. But I didn't think it was worth it. It wasn't exactly what I wanted. I think they should have recorded the Bakers Dozen, a band down here.

**Smith:** You haven't answered my question and you've been doing that all morning. Why won't you leave Miami? Is it a security thing?

**Sullivan:** They offered me a package. I didn't like it so I didn't go for it. I can't understand anybody with money scrimping and saving because I'm also scrimping and saving. I must say that the company is great and so is John Snyder. They know that jazz is in a different direction, but their hearts are big.

**Smith:** You sound like you are sighing. "That's the way it is."

**Sullivan:** Oh, no, no. That's not the way it is. I'm saying that it solves the unemployment problem. Keeps them off the street. The boys on the album are getting other gigs. Maybe we

can form our own company. I'm not resigned.

**Smith:** Then why aren't you out there making it from the same audiences who are paying Peter Frampton, or whoever?

**Sullivan:** I don't live in that kind of world. That's for them. It's all notes anyhow.

**Smith:** Resigned again.

**Sullivan:** What about raising a family in today's world? Is that important anymore? Is going on the road difficult? Well, a musician's life is one long road trip.

**Smith:** I assume you have tried it and weighed the circumstances so that you have made the decision that you like it where you are.

**Sullivan:** We have to get back to our musical community. Music is a wellspring, a source of life. No matter where you are it is eternally replenishing itself. Nobody stops to say, "Hey, isn't it beautiful." It's always "run." Let's stop and look at it for awhile. I've got plenty to do and I can still take the time to listen to what's happening and I don't mean on recordings. I never listen to music in my home. I bought a car once because it had a great radio. Ironically, the radio broke down and the car is still running. Strange, but true.

No, I've never done the road, either. What's so good about it? I want to do Arthur Fiedler and the Boston Pops, or a classical string section. I've seen all the jazz clubs. . . .

**Smith:** But what about the adulation of the fans, a different audience? You could learn.

**Sullivan:** You mean to leave where I'm at to go out and find where I'm at?

**Smith:** Yeah. And maybe it's right here in Florida. But at least you had the opportunity to try and find that out.

**Sullivan:** I'll think about it. **db**

## SNOW

continued from page 22

Sarah do. I didn't think I could do what they did, so I did my little awkward version of it. My shy version. Maybe it was part of a lack of confidence and not a style at all. Part of my insecurity. It's all changing, though.

People aren't ready for a change, you know. They want to go with a surefire winner and I think they thought the first album was that. When I started to change, they said, "Aha! She's copping out."

**Lyons:** Who's "they?"

**Snow:** Who knows? Maybe critics. It's all very obscure. You know the second album, *Second Childhood*? Well, on that one I do all that stylistic stuff too, only it's exaggerated—a very exaggerated version of what I did on the first album. It was blown out of proportion and turned out to be a series of gimmicks. Technique flaunting. It was like I'd said, "Now that I know what my style is, I'm just going to do a big blowout with it and every song will be so stylized, you'll just never forget me."

**Lyons:** Do you think the variety and searching of *It Looks Like Snow* is a reaction to the exaggeration of the second album?

**Snow:** Definitely. I wanted to feel like I could do something else. I didn't want to be labeled. It was time for a change. Plus I've had all these personal problems in the last year, a lot of it over my daughter's brain surgery. She's okay, that's the wonder of it all. Of course, the crisis may not be over. I don't know why these things happen to people. Anyway, until this album, I hadn't put any energy into my music at all, and I'm just coming

out of whatever happens to you after a family tragedy. I'm in a waiting period, a holding pattern. My attention span is sometimes pretty fragmented, but I'm coherent. In fact, I'm very egotistical about being sane after all that's happened. But you can only expend so much energy without walking around like a shell. I think that last year even my energy reserves were depleted.

**Lyons:** How are you dealing with the tragedy? Has anything helped?

**Snow:** At the time a tragedy is happening to you, you can't know how to deal with it. There's no way out, but it's forgiven. I'm a very spiritual person, but when this happened, I wouldn't say I lost my faith in God, but I doubted my faith. When I talked to God, all my spiritual discipline, all the discipline I'd been trying to acquire, went right out the window. Instead of saying, "Thank you for this experience. I've learned a lot. I'm strengthened," I said, "Why did you do this to me, God?" It was totally wrong.

I don't want to bore you with my religious philosophy. But you know anger is a wasted emotion. It's an energy drain. If you run around screaming and crying all day long, you're going to be exhausted. Have you ever seen Kirlian (aura) photography of any angry person? The light is just shooting out of them. That's body energy. You're giving off your life force. If you get angry at God, which is part of all of us, it's very self-destructive. I do believe in karmic obstacles and reincarnation and the cyclical theory of life. If I didn't, I'd be a nut by now.

**Lyons:** Where does this spiritual commitment come from?

**Snow:** I had a spiritual awakening about four years ago, maybe because of the death of a close friend (*Charlie Parker, a contemporary*

*from New Jersey*). I stumbled into some stuff that really opened amazing doors for me. There was one big book that affected me profoundly, called *Seth Speaks*, by Jane Roberts. That was the biggie. All I can say is, read it. It's interesting. It changed my whole life.

**Lyons:** Did it stop you from being shy on stage?

**Snow:** Oh, I have fun up there now. The last problem I had was on the Jackson Browne tour in '75. I had terrible trouble relating to the audience. It was like being a duck in a shooting gallery—that's how I used to describe the feeling. It was embarrassing, like standing in Times Square naked. You're up there 45 minutes and you have to do something, anything, and people better like it or they'll make fun of you, laugh at you. Now I say, "C'mon. I'll take you all on with one hand tied behind my back." I've had some great exchanges with hecklers, too. I'm a terrible ham. I don't know what made me change. What made me turn to God? There's a phrase in *Seth Speaks*: "All action is change."

**Lyons:** So the song *Faith Is Blind* is really about religious belief?

**Snow:** Yes, and I just used the lovers' situation as an analogy. The verse is, "I'm coming home on Monday/Don't bother asking where I've been/You stepped out yourself last Sunday/Leaving me by myself." It sounds like a lovers' quarrel, but it's a little talk with God. That was one of my four a.m. anguished songs. I was angry, so I was saying, "How could you do this to me, God?" But at the same time, I was saying, "I'm not going to give up on you, God. I'm not going to give up on my spiritual beliefs. They've carried me through before. You can count on me." My faith is blind, even though, like the song says, "My crumbling temple needs sweet repair." **db**

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He came back with three rock albums: *Greetings From L.A.* (produced by Jerry Goldstein), *Sefronia* (produced by Denny Randell), and *Look At The Fool* (which Tim wanted to be entitled *Tijuana Moon*; produced by Joe Falsaia, who also arranged and played lead guitar).

He did it "their way," but it didn't work, primarily because he despised the conventional r&b/rock format, the cliches, the thin, canned arrangements and the necessity of re-cording other peoples' songs (exception: Fred Neil's *Dolphins*, which Tim dearly loved and regularly performed live).

He hated enduring the pitifully pedestrian, inadequate and unfulfilling context with which he had to surround himself, especially on those few excellent songs that were deep and true and honest and often achingly impassioned, notably *Sweet Surrender*, *Because Of You*, *Look At The Fool* and *Who Could Deny You*.

Although he despised the limitations of the format, he did love the earthy rhythms and the spirit of the "monkey-rub, belly-to-belly, walkin' like a skinned cat, talk in tongues, smell the way you walk, listen to those walls a-talkin' that voodoo song." Pure sex—nasty, raw and elegant, all in one.

Ironically, his voice never sounded fuller, more varied, or more technically controlled and emotionally capable than during these last three years. The context was an empty sham to him; but as an improvisational vocalist in live performance, he had become a master.

During this final period, and especially during the last year, he lived a life of what I think of as "controlled schizophrenia," figuratively speaking.

He was nice to his loyal, well-meaning musicians; he was nice to his producers; he was nice to his managerial and record company people (until he had contracts with neither); he was nice to the press. He was nice to everybody who counted.

But he hated himself for it. His sense of isolation became excruciating. "So what is there to say?" he wrote in a "story letter" to me, postmarked Sept. 13, 1974, less than a year before his death. "You are what you are, you know what you know, and there are no words for loneliness, black, bitter, aching loneliness, that gnaws the roots of silence in the night. . .

"There has been life enough, and power,

grandeur, joy enough, and there has also been beauty enough, and, God knows, there has been squalor and filth and misery and madness and despair enough; murder and cruelty and hate enough, and loneliness enough to fill your bowels with the substance of gray horror, and to crust your lips with its hard and acrid taste of desolation . . .

" . . . and we are lying there, blind atoms in our cellar-depths, gray voiceless atoms in the manswamp desolation of the earth, and our fame is lost, our names forgotten, our powers are wasting from us like mined earth, while we lie here at evening and the river flows . . . and dark time is feeding like a vulture on our entrails, and we know that we are lost, and cannot stir. . ."

In his effort to come back, he had made effective and constructive strides in controlling the alcohol and drugs. He ate well, he took vitamins, he exercised. Before going on the road, and during the extensive periods of rehearsals, and while touring, he remained completely straight. There were binges in between, but, next to the sustained extravagances of the two years following *Starsailor*, his life had become comparatively healthy.

On the weekend of June 28, 1975, he returned from a road-gig in Dallas. As was his custom after final performances, he got drunk, this time starting in the afternoon. Instead of returning home immediately, he went to the house of a close, long-time friend, where he sniffed some heroin.

Buckley's system had been clean. The combined dosage of alcohol and heroin proved to be too much for him.

Thinking that he was only drunk and obnoxious—on many previous occasions Buckley had ingested considerably more alcohol and drugs than this—the friend took him home. As his friend discussed the situation with Judy, Tim lay on the living room floor, his head resting on a pillow.

When his friend knelt down to ask him if he were all right, Tim almost inaudibly whispered his last words. "Bye, bye, baby," he said.

Tim died, in debt, owning only his guitar and his amp, and he was cremated.

Memory is a wicked lover, foxy and disloyal, always a treacherous temptress. There are perhaps those who will disagree with my perspective; perhaps there are others who will recognize the events, the insights, and/or the interpretations that have been omitted either by choice, necessity or ignorance.

Much remains to be done—people talked to, interviews and reviews collected, stray tapes gathered, etc. With your help, perhaps it can be accomplished. (The writer's mailing address is 1512 Harvard #4, Santa Monica, Cal., 90404.)

Tim Buckley held hands with the world for awhile. He gave in fire and fury and perverse humor the totality of his life's experience, which was vast far beyond his mere 28 years. He courageously stood on the arena-stages of our barrooms and auditoriums, ultimately alone, singing from within his own flames like a demon possessed. He had a beauty of spirit, a beauty of song and a beauty of personage that re-etched the face of the lives of all who knew him, and of all who ever truly heard him sing. He burned with a very special flame, one of a kind. No doubt about that. Bye, bye, baby. . .

## EmArcy Reissue Series— Back To The Vaults

by tim schneckloth

One of the more gratifying results of the recent reissue phenomenon has been a heightened sense of altruism and artistic responsibility among record companies. There seems to be a healthy feeling of competition between the various labels' reissue series—an intense striving for quality in packaging, programming, annotation and marketing. Perhaps "competition" is the wrong word, since the various series tend to complement the others and feed off each other's momentum. As Mercury Records executive Charles Fach puts it: "If, for instance, somebody buys a Verve package and has a good taste from it, he might buy our package and maybe a Savoy too."

Fach is referring to Mercury's EmarcY reissue series, a highly commendable retrospective documentation of the label's involvement with jazz. "Mercury's jazz activity probably goes back to 1947," Fach says. "They really got into it in the early '50s with Bobby Shad, who did many of the recordings we're issuing now."

Mercury does indeed have a wealth of material from that period in its vaults, much of which was originally released on their subsidiary EmarcY label. The first EmarcY reissue release in the fall of 1976 included long unavailable or hard-to-find sides by Dinah Washington, Gene Ammons and Cannonball Adderley; as well as valuable West Coast performances by Maynard Ferguson and Buddy Rich. Of particular interest is the reissue of many of the classic Clifford Brown-Max Roach recordings.

The impetus behind the EmarcY series seems to be one of corporate pride and altruism toward the jazz fan/consumer. "We'd been on the verge of doing it for a couple of years," Fach states. "Then there was the Verve thing. Our sister company, Polydor, sort of spurred us into it."

"I think that the other companies doing this have set up sort of a pattern and a style that's good for all the companies. The dealers will devote space to it; they'll set aside separate bins for reissues. And a sort of price category has been established for the two-record sets so it's not considered an oddball item. Dealers hate to carry something that has a strange price because it throws their whole system out of its natural order. But if a half dozen companies do something like this, it does set a norm."

Part of this norm is the block release with continuity in packaging, a method that Fach considers a necessity. "It gets back to the economics. We've found—and I guess the other companies have too—that you can't go out and sell one or two at a time. You have your production costs, artwork costs, advertising costs. If you put out six or eight at one time, you can spread your cost over more items."

The financial considerations, however, are not of primary importance to Fach. The possi-

bilities of profit or loss have little to do with the motives behind the reissue program.

"Financially it may be a loss thing, but we feel the music should be available to the consumer. We're selling at a fair price with nice packaging. I think we will make money off it, but that's not our reason for going into it."

"No record company likes to see some of their greatest artists in a cut-out situation—unavailable to the public. In this reissue state, I think they'll stay in our catalog forever and ever."

Robin McBride is head of a&r for Mercury Records and a long-standing jazz fan. When the EmarcY project was put in his lap, he accepted it as a labor of love.

"As a teenage record collector," he recalls. "I got very thirsty for information. I can remember hoping, for instance, that George Avakian would produce the next Louis Armstrong session because I wanted to read Avakian's notes. Well, we've gotten some of the very best writers to create the context of these packages. So, in a sense, I'm fulfilling my own ancient dream in putting them together."

McBride's approach involves getting active participation from experts in the field as well as, whenever possible, the original artists. As he puts it, "I'm trying to avoid the image of the idiot a&r man sitting in some tower, flipping a coin to decide what sides should go in." So McBride has enlisted people like Dan Morgenstern, Don DeMicheal and Chris Albertson, among others, as active co-workers through most stages of each project.

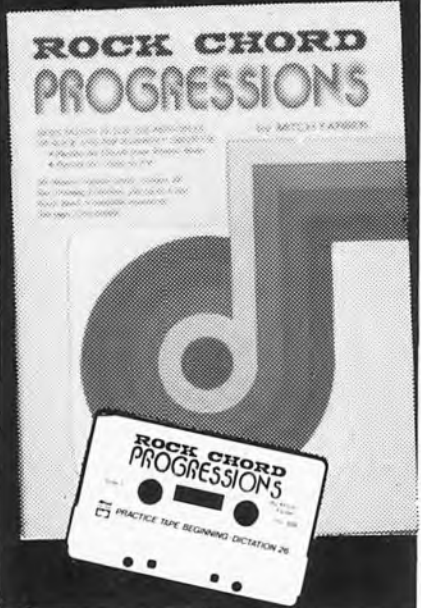
The programming and selection of sides is a knotty problem, and McBride has been trying to avoid a scattergun sampling of sides from all over the individual artist's career. "The idea is to create a story for each package," he says. "We're trying to do something different. There's no uniform way these packages are put together but each one has something special about it—a forgotten tune, an unreleased track. We're relating recordings—one session to the other—in a way that hasn't been done before. We've tried to develop a certain amount of continuity or cohesiveness within each package so that it's not just a random collection of sides."

The mechanics of compiling a reissue series involve long hours and hard work. McBride had to become a combination of archivist, researcher, critic and private investigator. "We combed our artist files, looking for every name we could recognize and some we had been told about. We have well over 50 artists of stature that have recorded for us. We developed a research file on each artist and we finally selected prime artists for each release and began selecting material."

"In the first release, the annotator in every instance had a very strong hand in developing the concept of the album. We sent them the basic written research material and we started to develop some alternative concepts together, based on what we could read. Then I started sending them copies of masters. Even when the concept seemed well defined, we sent them the equivalent of five albums of masters from which we gleaned the material."

This method seems to have led to quite interesting album concepts. "We've made a conscious effort to avoid just slapping two albums together. One exception is the Oscar Peterson package from the first release. It covers three recording session situations during a period in the late '60s when the Peterson trio changed personnel. The course of this transition took

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**HOW TO** deal with a fresh idea

by Dr. William L. Fowler

Only when the idea of sounding two notes together had occurred to someone could harmony develop. Only when the idea of sounding different melodic lines together had occurred to someone else could counterpoint ensue. Only when the idea of mounting more than one string on an instrument had occurred to still someone else could modern harps, guitars and pianos eventually exist—musical growth has always stemmed from fresh ideas.

Throughout the history of music a continual parade of composers and performers has marched to sounds of different drummers. And the increasing tempo of that march in present-day America proves that musical innovation lives, that still more ideas lie ready for discovery and subsequent development.

Since any musical idea best reaches its fruition through some development process, the following demonstration of idea-development might prove valuable to those seeking idioms outside tradition.

**Foreword:**

To avoid erraticism and to aid consistency, every tonal idiom needs some guide-lines, some rules of tonal behavior. Since too many rules can stifle creativity, this demonstration will minimize them.

**The Idea:**

Stress chromatic tensions between a melodic line and its harmonic accompaniment (Such a dispute between two important musical factions could well express something like today's unsettled human relations).

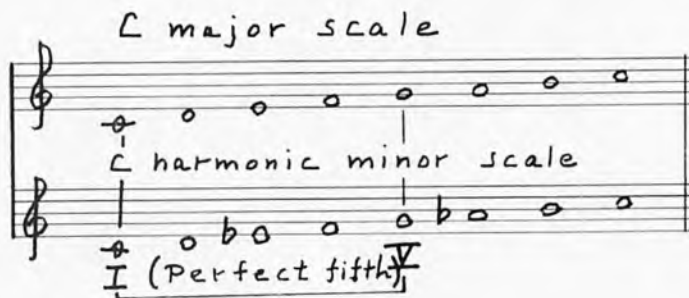
**The Materials:**

One consecutive-letter-name scale is to be used for melody. Another such scale, built on the same tonic note, is to be used for harmony and will contain scale degrees chromatically altered from those in the melodic scale. If a melodic scale degree is D flat, for example, its harmonic scale equivalent will become D natural. Because there are seven different letter names but only 12 actually different chromatic pitches, the two scales can contain only five chromatically-opposed versions of letter names: two notes of one scale will automatically coincide with two notes of the other:

I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	
C	D <sup>b</sup>	D	E <sup>b</sup>	E	F	G <sup>b</sup>	G A <sup>b</sup> A B <sup>b</sup> B (C major scale)
C	D <sup>b</sup>	D	E <sup>b</sup>	E	F	G <sup>b</sup>	G A <sup>b</sup> A B <sup>b</sup> B (D <sup>b</sup> major scale)
VII	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	

To assure that both scales contain the same tonic feeling, the pairs of coinciding notes should be a perfect fifth apart. The lower pair can then sound tonic because the upper pair will occupy the tonal position of the dominant, just as it does in parallel major and minor keys:

C major scale



C harmonic minor scale

I (Perfect fifth) V

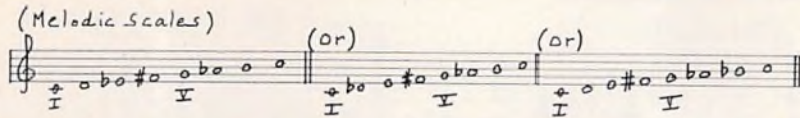
An easy way to set up the opposing chromatic degrees between the two scales is to designate C as the mutual tonic note and G as the mutual dominant, thereby allowing D and D<sup>b</sup>, E and E<sup>b</sup>, F and F<sup>#</sup>, A and A<sup>b</sup>, and B and B<sup>b</sup> to represent the five pairs of chromatic opposites:



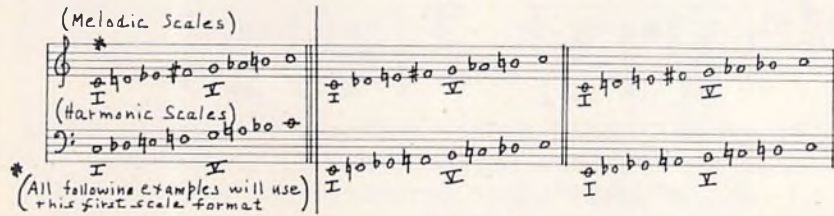
(Tonic) (Dominant)

I II III IV V VI VII

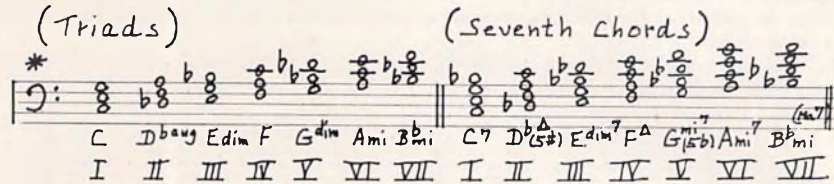
The melodic scale should be defined first. It will contain C and G as prescribed tonic and dominant notes, plus either of the chromatic opposites on each remaining scale degree:



When the melodic scale notes have been chosen, the makeup of the harmonic scale becomes automatic: it will include C and G as its prescribed tonic and dominant, plus the chromatic opposite of each remaining letter name in the melodic scale:

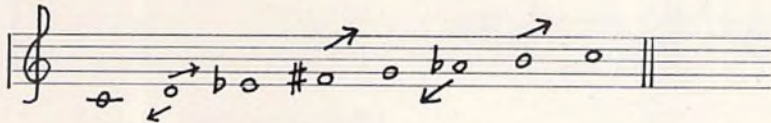


The harmonic structure of the accompaniment materials can now be erected by building chords on each degree of the harmonic scale:

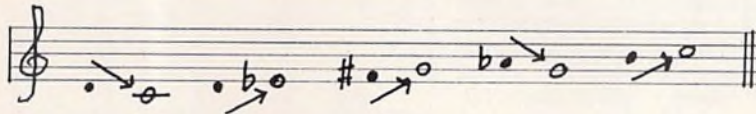


### Usage of The Materials:

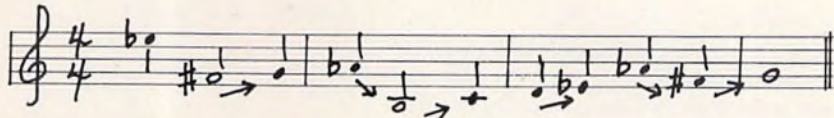
The musical properties of the melodic scale should be evaluated. Certain notes will display inherent directional tendencies:



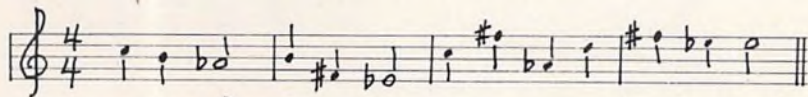
Others will seem to be goals for those tendencies:



When an active note moves in the direction of its inherent tendency, the melodic motion will seem normal:



When an active note moves in the direction opposite to its tendency, the melodic motion will seem contradictory:

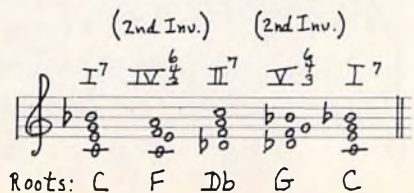


The presence of some particular chord can negate or reverse the directional tendencies or goal properties of melodic notes:



The possible progressions of the chords built from the harmonic scale should be evaluated.

Root motion is most interesting when the root of a chord was not contained as a component in the preceding chord:



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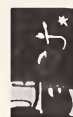


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All possible pairs of chords should be tested for their mutual harmonic interest, those deemed dubious then being discarded:

(Triads)  $\text{II I} \parallel \text{III I} \parallel \text{IV I} \parallel \text{etc.} \parallel$   
 $\text{II III} \parallel \text{II IV} \parallel \text{II V} \parallel \text{etc.} \parallel$   
 $\text{III II} \parallel \text{IV II} \parallel \text{V II} \parallel \text{etc.} \parallel$

(Sevenths) (Mixed triads and sevenths)  
 $\text{I}^7 \text{ II}^{\frac{7}{2}} \text{ I}^7 \text{ III}^{\frac{7}{2}} \text{ etc.} \parallel \text{I} \text{ II}^7 \text{ I} \text{ III}^{\frac{7}{2}} \text{ etc.} \parallel$

(Progress in this manner from every triad to every other triad in the harmonic scale, from every seventh to every other seventh, from every triad to seventh and from every seventh to every triad.)

**Compositional Procedures:**

Either the melody or the chord progression accompaniment may be composed first, the other then being added.

If active letter-names contained in a chord do not appear in the melody while that chord is sounding, relative smoothness between melody and harmony will be achieved:

(Biting melody note)

If the same letter name appears in both chord and melody simultaneously and the melodic version is the higher chromatic inflection (sharp above natural or natural above flat), relative roughness may occur:

(Blues effect)

If the same letter name appears in both chord and harmony simultaneously and the melodic version is the lower chromatic inflection (natural above sharp or flat above natural), a blues effect sometimes will sound:

A piano excerpt in this particular idiom follows:

$\text{♩} = 72$



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**Rick's Cafe Americain**: Red Norvo (6/7-25); call 943-9200 for information.  
**Ratso's**: Name jazz and contemporary music nightly; call 935-1505 for details.  
**Ivanhoe Theatre**: Name jazz and contemporary music regularly; call 348-4060.  
**Wise Fools Pub**: Roger Pemberton Big Band (Mon.); blues regularly; call 929-1510.  
**Colette's**: John Campbell Trio (Tues.).  
**Orphan's**: Ears (Tues.).  
**Amazingrace** (Evanston): Jazz or folk music regularly; call 328-2489.  
**Inn Lounge**: Jam session (Sun.).  
**Backroom**: Jazz weekends; Judy Roberts, Eldee Young Trio often.

## MIAMI

**Airliner Motel** (Joe Rico's Room): Billy Marcus Quartet (house band); dates to be announced for Joe Pass, Dexter Gordon, Stan Getz, Bill Evans, Zoot Sims.  
**700 Club**: (Coral Gables): Herbie Block, pianist.  
**Travelers' Motel**: Curtis Fuller/Pete Menger Quintet (Mon.-Sat.); Lee Scott (Sun.).  
**Checkmate Lounge** (South Miami): Name policy; dates to be announced for Gap Mangione, Monty Alexander, New Wave, Chuck Mangione, Joe Williams.  
**Le Jardin**: Carmen Lundy Quintet.  
**Monte Trainer's Seafood Restaurant**: Don Goldie Sextet (Sun.).  
**Village Inn**: Mike Gillis Group (weekends).  
**Calder Race Track** (North Miami): Don Goldie Jazz Trust (Sat.).  
**Place For Steak** (Miami Beach) Three Penny Opera plus Koffee Quintet (Tues.-Sat.); Bertie Wallace and the Coops (Sun. and Mon.).

## SAN DIEGO

**Stadium**: Kool Jazz Festival (6/10).  
**Port Royale**: Joe Marillo Quartet (Mon.); Bill Coleman/Pat Kelly Trio (Tues.); Butch Lacy (Wed.); Mike Wofford Trio (Thurs.-Sat.).  
**Crossroads**: Jasmin (Thurs.-Sat.).  
**Dick's At The Beach**: Gary Music Co. (Tues.).  
**Chuck's Steak House** (La Jolla): Zzaj.  
**KSDS** (88.3 FM): All jazz radio.  
**Safety**: Jazz jam (Sun.).  
**Sports Arena**: Led Zeppelin (6/19).  
**Albatross**: Nova.  
**KPBS** (89.5 FM): Ron Galon's Jazz Spectrum (Sat. night).  
**Jose Murphy's**: Joe Marillo (Sun. aft.); David Bradley (Tues.-Sat.).  
**Lamont Hotel**: Norm Scutti Trio (Fri.).  
**Public House** (La Jolla): Fantasy (regs.); Marillo (Sun.).  
**UCSD**: Jacques Brel (6/6).

## MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL

**The Whole Coffeehouse** (University of Minnesota): Occasional jazz; Gerry Niewood (5/27-28).  
**Orchestra Hall**: Benny Goodman Sextet

(5/27-28).  
**Orpheum Theatre**: Return To Forever (6/1).  
**Zelda's** (Minneapolis): Local jazz Tues.-Sat.; call 339-3200 for details.  
**New Riverside Cafe**: (Minneapolis): Local jazz Thursdays; call 333-9924 for information.  
**Bronco Bar** (Chenhassen): Occasional name jazz; call 474-9880.  
**Registry Hotel** (Bloomington): Local jazz Sun. 4-7; Jerry Mayeron Big Band Sun. nights; call 854-2244.  
**The Haberdashery** (St. Paul): Irv Williams Quartet (Fri.-Sat.); call 222-7855 for information.  
**Florito's Drinking Emporium** (St. Paul): The Mouldy Figs (Tues.-Sat.); call 222-3331.  
**Garcia's**: Latin jazz (Fri.-Sat.); call 222-3506.  
**Bucky's Restaurant And Lounge** (St. Paul): Local jazz Sundays; call 488-0213.

## KANSAS CITY

**Eddy's South**: Sylvia Bell (Wed.-Fri., 5:15-8:15 PM); Greg Meise Trio (Mon.-Sat. 8:30-12:30 PM).  
**Concerts-In-The-Park**: Art Farmer (6/5); Charles Mingus (6/12).  
**Mr. Putsch's**: Pete Eye Trio (Sat.-2:30-5:30 PM); Sammy Tucker/Kat Gutherie (Tues.-Sat., 8:30-12:30 PM).  
**Top Of The Crown**: Steve Denny Trio (Mon.-Sat. 9-1:15).  
**Mario's (Plaza)**: Carol Comer (Fri. and Sat., 9-1).  
**Pandora's Box**: Dry Jack w/Bill Hemmans (Thurs.-Sat.); Sat. afternoon session, 4-7.  
**Rockwood** (Independence): Mike Ning Duo (Tues.-Sat.).  
**Plaza III**: Blend w/Leslie Kendall (Mon.-Sat.).  
**Alameda Plaza Roof**: Frank Smith Trio (Mon.-Sat.).  
**Mark IV**: United Jazz Quartet w/Ben Kynard (Fri. and Sat.).  
**Signboard** (Crown Center): John Lyman Quartet (Fri. and Mon. 4:30-7:30).  
**Jeremiah Tuttles**: Pete Eye Trio (Mon.-Sat. 8:30-12:30).  
**VII Arches**: Meeker/Harris Duo (Tues.-Sat.).

## PHOENIX

**Mesa Community College**: Summer Jazz Workshop with Don Rader, Tom and Bruce Fowler, Ladd McIntosh, Lanny Morgan, George Souza, Dan Haerie, Don Bothwell, Grant Wolf (6/12-17); concert (6/17).  
**Joshua's Hatchcover**: Charles Lewis Quintet (Sun.-Mon.).  
**Celebrity Theatre**: Weather Report (5/27).  
**Macayo** (Central): Dave Cook's New Vanguard Organ Trio (Mon.-Sat.).  
**Boojum Tree**: Cal Tjader (6/6-11); Gap Mangione (7/11-16).  
**Beachcomber Lounge**: New Moon Quartet (Fri.-Sat.).  
**Music Hall**: Big John's Music Hall Madmen, dixieland (Tues.-Sun.).  
**Century Sky Room**: Panaceo (Fri.-Sat.).  
**Civic Plaza**: Atlanta Rhythm Section (5/20); George Carlin (5/25); Manhattan Transfer (6/4).  
**Sun Devil Disco Lounge**: Joel Robin Trio (Fri., 5-9 p.m.).  
**Tucson Doubletree**: Mercer Ellington (6/24-25).  
**Crazy Ed's**: Crazy Ed's Dixieland Band (Tues.-Sat.).  
**A.S.U.**: Led Zeppelin (7/20).  
**Coliseum**: Bad Company (5/15).  
**No Name Saloon**: Hans Olson (Wed.).  
**Dooley's**: Gato Barbieri (5/24); John Mayall (6/15); jazz night (Sunday).

## BUFFALO

**Terrace Room** (Stattler Hilton): Dexter Gordon (6/26).  
**Trallamadore Cafe**: Live jazz Wed.-Sun.; Jeremy Wall (Wed.); Spyro Gyra (Thurs.); Big Joe Turner (5/27-29).  
**Anchor Bar**: Johnny Gibson Trio (Fri.-Sun.).

**Eduardo's** (Bailey Ave.): Maynard Ferguson (5/18); coming in June McCoy Tyner, Horace Silver; call 834-2120 for details.  
**The Odyssey**: Spyro Gyra (Sat.).  
**The Jazz Club**: James Clark Quartet (Fri. and Sat.).  
**Masthead**: Jam sessions (Tues. 10 PM-2 AM).  
**Mr. Tanedbry's**: Jon Weiss Trio w/Susan Slack (Sun. 10 PM-2 AM).  
**Central Park Grill**: Jam session Mon. w/Carl Cedar, James Clark, Duffly Fornes (10 PM-2 AM).  
**Vieni Su**: Jam session Tues. and Wed.; Horizon (Fri. and Sat.).  
**Mulligan's** (Allen St.): Jam sessions with Dick Griffio Quartet (Wed.).  
**Mulligan's** (Hertel): Jerry Eastman Trio (Fri. and Sat. 7-9 PM).  
**Stattler Hilton Downtown Room**: Big name jazz Tues.-Sun.; Dizzy Gillespie (5/31-6/12); Spider Martin (6/14-6/26); live broadcasts on WBFO-FM and WEBR.

## PERSPECTIVE

Continued from page 57

place in two albums which have now been put together."

According to McBride, the EmArcy series has been blessed with a dearth of technical problems. "Basically the masters were in pretty good shape. Some of the older material from the '40s had never been transferred to tape. But we have a rather excellent file of disc masters and we have a top-flight lab in New York that does the transfers." In keeping with this attention to technical quality, McBride has avoided the phony mono-reprocessed-for-stereo like the plague. "Even when we've had reprocessed stereo sides readily available, we've gone back to look for the original mono," he states.

Some of those old sides are extremely hard to track down, however. "In a couple of instances, I've had to depend on collectors to supply old pressings. And on some tunes, I've had to rely on sheer accident. For Dinah Washington, for instance, we uncovered an unreleased track—her version of *If I Had You*—and there's absolutely no reason why it was unreleased. It's a marvelous performance. This kind of series creates a thirst for that kind of material."

Lately, McBride has been going more and more to artists for guidance, possibly on the theory that their judgment is at least as valid as anyone else's. "I'm looking for fresh approaches. In the Helen Merrill package, for instance, I used three primary sources—Helen, myself and Marian McPartland.

"But it all takes an extraordinary amount of time. For instance, I'm now dealing with a problem. I think I've found a block of 50 unreleased masters by Sarah Vaughan and I'm checking different resource materials that are available to me. By the same token, we can locate none of those masters. So, at this moment, I'm trying to reach Quincy (Jones), because he did the sessions, to find out what the circumstances were. Is there a tape in Stockholm that I can find that will give us the masters that we own? Or were they carelessly thrown out, or were they just bad, or whatever. Eventually, I'll find an answer to that."

But in spite of the difficulties and hard work involved, Mercury's employees seem to regard the EmArcy reissue program as an enjoyable and educational task. As McBride concludes, "I've been relearning a lot of things doing this. I was a jazz collector when a lot of this was being recorded. God knows, I've been involved with rock music for so long. . . . It's mindblowing how much I've forgotten!" **db**



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