

SEPTEMBER 8, 1977

60c

the contemporary  
music magazine

# down beat®

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HANCOCK**

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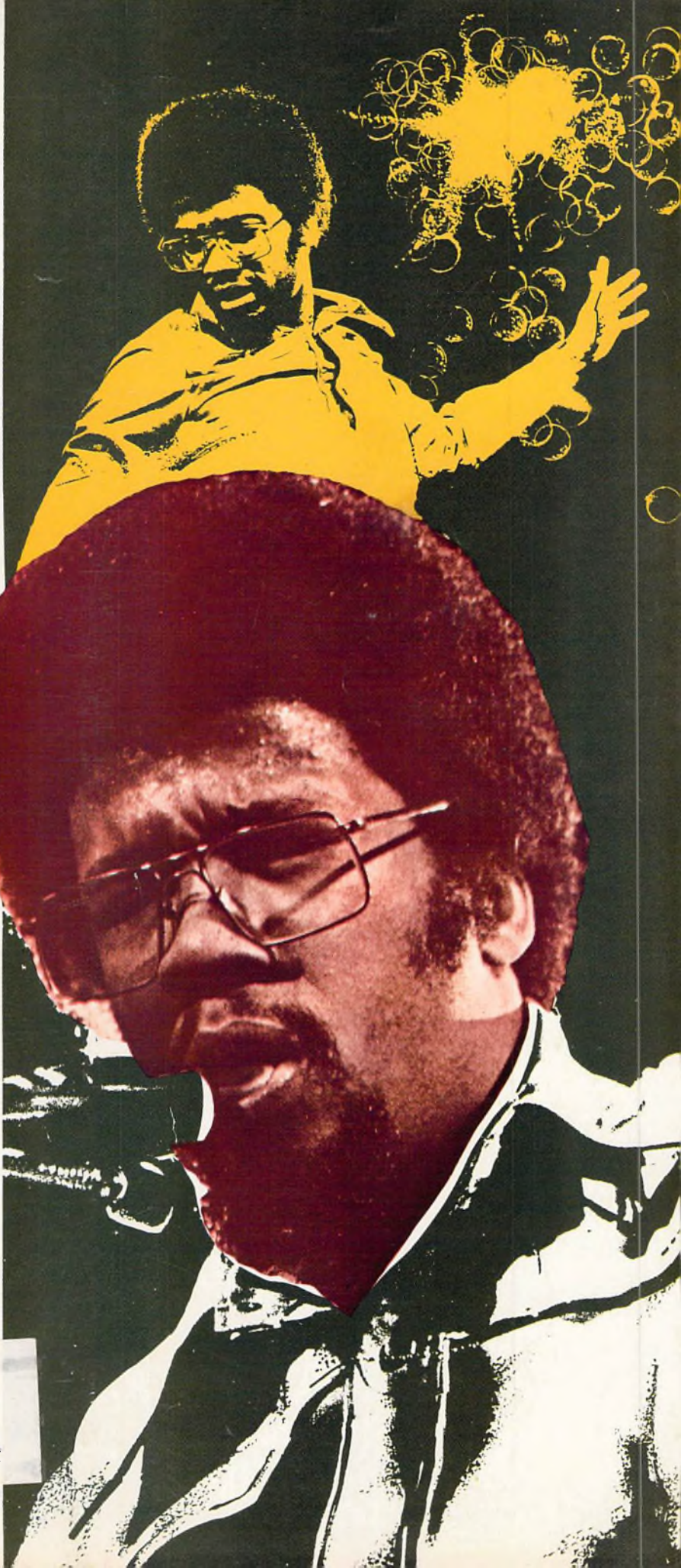
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editor Jack Maher	associate editor Marv Hohman	production manager Gloria Baldwin	circulation director Deborah Kelly
	assistant editor Tim Schneckloth		
publisher Charles Suber	education editor Dr. William Fowler	contributors: Chuck Berg, Leonard Feather, John Litweiler, Len Lyons, Howard Mandel, John McDonough, Herb Nolan, Robert Palmer, A. J. Smith, Lee Underwood.	

Address all correspondence to **Executive Office:** 222 W. Adams St., Chicago, Ill. 60606.  
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**Advertising Sales Offices:** East Coast: A. J. Smith, 224 Sullivan St., New York, N.Y. 10012  
Phone: (212) 679-5241

West Coast: Frank Garlock, 23780 Stage Coach Dr., Sonoma, Ca. 95370  
Phone: (209) 586-5405

**Record reviewers:** Jon Balleras, Chuck Berg, Larry Birnbaum, Mikal Gilmore, David Less, John Litweiler, Howard Mandel, John McDonough, Dan Morgenstern, Herb Nolan, James Pettigrew, Russell Shaw, Kenneth Terry, Neil Tesser, Pete Welding.

### Correspondents:

**Baltimore/Washington,** Fred Douglass. **Boston,** Fred Bouchard. **Buffalo,** John H. Hunt. **Cincinnati,** Jim Bennett. **Cleveland,** C. A. Colombi. **Denver,** Sven D. Wiberg. **Detroit,** Bob Archer. **Kansas City,** Carol Comer. **Los Angeles,** Gary Vercelli. **Miami/Ft. Lauderdale,** Don Goldie. **Minneapolis/St. Paul,** Bob Protzman. **Nashville,** Edward Carney. **New Orleans,** John Simon. **New York,** Arnold Jay Smith. **Northwest/St. Paul,** Bob Cozzetti. **Philadelphia,** David Hollenberg. **Pittsburgh,** D. Fabilli. **St. Louis,** Gregory J. Marshall. **San Francisco,** Michael Zipkin. **Southwest,** Bob Henschen. **Montreal,** Ron Sweetman. **Toronto,** Mark Miller. **Argentina,** Alisha Krynsky. **Australia,** Trevor Graham. **Central Europe,** Eric T. Vogel. **Denmark,** Birger Jorgensen. **Finland,** Marianne Backlen. **France,** Jean-Louis Genibre. **Germany,** Claus Schreiner. **Great Britain,** Brian Priestly. **Italy,** Ruggero Stiassi. **Japan,** Shoich Yui. **Netherlands,** Jaap Ludeke. **Norway,** Randi Hultin. **Poland,** Roman Waschko. **Sweden,** Lars Lystedt.

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# the first chorus

By Charles Suber

## education in jazz



**Pat La Barbera**  
(currently with  
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Berklee really got me into music: writing, playing, and just concentrating on music. The first six months I had more harmony than most cats get in four years.

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After my second year, my brothers, John and Joe, came to Berklee to see what I'd been raving about.

I still feel very close to the school and visit whenever I'm near Boston.

**John La Barbera**  
(arranger for Bill  
Watrous' *Wild Life  
Refuge and others*):



My experience in a state college was similar to Pat's. There was little that was practical, and compared to Berklee, everything seemed rudimentary.

My first impression of Berklee has remained: complete dedication to traditional values and exposure to all the contemporary idioms. My teachers opened me up to what arranging was all about. My trumpet teacher made me learn traditional trumpet repertory, and, for example, what precision means in playing a Broadway show.

I feel that Berklee gave me a musical background broad and deep enough to operate as a complete professional.



**Joe La Barbera**  
(currently with  
Chuck Mangione):

Berklee encouraged me to learn more about my instrument and more about music.

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I still go back to Berklee whenever I can. It's where I started.

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A university music librarian was in our office recently to tell us how difficult it is to keep copies of *down beat* in hand and intact.\* "They get used so much", she complimented. Well, this is another issue likely to become dogeared. There's much to use.

For example, you will find useful Herbie Hancock's defense and explanation of his current musical direction. In contrasting his road-to-funk with the recent V.S.O.P. road tour in which he and his colleagues Wayne Shorter, Tony Williams, Ron Carter, and Freddie Hubbard played mid-'60s vintage jazz, Hancock says: "... We jazz listeners tend, 90% of the time, to like clever, complex treatments of simple ideas. ... But it's even harder to create something, but without that complexity." And to those who worry about his sometimes machine fixation: "I hope I'm intelligent enough not to allow electronics to become more important than the music."

Like V.S.O.P., the members of the LA Four—Ray Brown, Shelly Manne, Laurindo Almeida, and Bud Shank—believe that to play their kind of mainstream jazz is important enough to warrant taking time out of their own separate and successful careers. Manne's advice to young players is capsulized in two heavy words: "Go play!"

Emil Richards, voted by NARAS as the most valuable percussion player for three consecutive years, has many wise words about studio playing, ethnic music (of which he is an avid student and practitioner), and the proper use of the new tuned percussion instruments.

Tips on technique come from two pianists new to the scene: Adam Makowicz, the 36-year old Polish reincarnation of Art Tatum; and John Wood, 26-year old west coast soloist. Makowicz advises jazz pianists to "practice technique and dexterity on an electric because your fingers can move more quickly. Then you move over to acoustic and you can translate from one to the other." John Wood advises musicians to develop the same mental and physical disciplines as an athlete. "You need rhythm and timing; you need the ability to respond instantly, without thinking, to whatever happens in front of you."

Bassist Frank Tusa also adheres to the athlete analogy: "like an athlete you have to intuitively balance all the different (skills).

Japanese guitarist Ryo Kawasaki, who took over John Abercrombie's spot in Gil Evans' '73 band, says he learned his basic concept of music from Elvin Jones. "The simple key of how to play good music is that melody and rhythm are the same thing."

And so on. There is more useful information in the articles on drummers Phillip Wilson and Jeff Porcaro, Hannibal the Trumpeter, Tony Dumas and his cutaway Blitz bass, and Caldera, the new Latin-fusion group.

There is also a lot to learn from two Caughts: the George Benson multi-media, multi-talented festival; and the premiere of George Crumb's *Star Child* by the N.Y. Philharmonic. And dig Art Farmer's Blindfold Test and his pacn to fellow fluegelhornist Clark Terry.

\*Many libraries compensate for the wear-and-tear of their *down beat* copies by maintaining a complete file on microfilm.

Next issue: Back to school and all that jazz with Maynard Ferguson—and others—on technique, the state of music education, and all such practical and useful things. **db**

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## Xanadian Bravo

Bravo to Chuck Berg for his extensive review of the recent release on Don Schlitten's Xanadu label (*Waxing On*, 6/16). Small record companies are rarely given sufficient exposure, and Berg's lengthy commentary will no doubt aid this fine record company.

More importantly, the exposure will aid the db readers, who too often these days are reading about, and listening to, the Mangiones, Becks, Coreas, etc. The public owes it to itself to check out some of those ten recent albums on Xanadu, eight of which received a rating of four-and-a-half stars or better.

Don Schlitten is presently producing the finest jazz albums around and he and his great musicians, including Barry Harris, Charles McPherson, Al Cohn, Sam Jones, Jimmy Raney and others, deserve far wider recognition.

Adam Nussenbaum Bronx, N.Y.

## Friendly Snowfall

Thanks for the Phoebe Snow interview in your June 16 issue.

Until I heard *Second Childhood*, I'd just about given up on singers. Maybe it was a *tour de force* album, as Phoebe said—but what a

relief from the tiresome crap the so-called "first ladies" have been peddling for so long!

Phoebe should not feel bad about displacing some of those ladies in the *Playboy* poll. As influences they obviously mean a lot to her, but as artists they grew stale years ago and perhaps now ought to be thinking about that little place in the country. That's not to discredit their talent, but merely to suggest that holding first place entails more than just standing in the same spot year after year.

I hope Phoebe never grows preoccupied with finding a musical identity to crawl into. She has too many interesting facets to let them get stifled by the kind of sameness that tin-ear listeners and tin-soul singers mistakenly call "style."

Louis Delpino Philadelphia, Pa.

## Pro With Con

Bob Henschen's very favorable review of *Return To Forever* in concert in Arizona (6/16) rekindled my anger over their recent appearance in Washington, D.C. at D.A.R. Constitution Hall. In direct contradistinction to their concert in Arizona ("the three-hour performance left few artistic stones unturned"), the group took 45 minutes to set up following a 30-minute set by Deniece Williams—whose appearance was not publicized until only a few days before the concert, when most tickets had been sold. Thereafter, they played *two*—that's right *two* 20 minute numbers and bid us farewell. Audience cheering was rewarded by a ten minute encore—and that was it!! That's what I call *no* "artistic stones" being turned. I've heard of inconsistencies on tour, but three hours of music in Arizona and less than one in

D.C. doesn't make it. If Chick and Stanley really want to be honest, why not simply delineate in which cities they'll *perform* as opposed to simply "appearing."

On the other hand, because of Tim Schneckloth's interesting interview with Matrix IX (6/2) we caught them with Dizzy at the first Annapolis Jazz Festival. Their two sets were brilliant displays of a variety of musical styles. They succeeded in opening new doors of orchestration and use of brass choirs. May they have continued success in the future!

David M. Namerow Glen Burnie, Md.

## Nascimento Applause

Milton Nascimento's album is the best record I've bought this year. I hope he is added to *Weather Report*. If so, the Weathermen in my opinion would be complete. Let's see what will happen when they release a two-album set.

Paul Robinson Orange, Tex.

## Ear Training Needed

In renewing my subscription for the fourth straight year, I thought I would include a note of appreciation. I have enjoyed your magazine since my junior high school days. Now I'm in college, hoping I'll be good enough to be reviewed in your pages some day.

Since my major is music, I really enjoy the articles by Dr. William Fowler. I would like to request that he do one article on ear training. It's very important to have an ear in music and he probably could provide myself and others with some guidelines for approaching ear training.

Gerald Ward Washington, Pa.



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## NEWPORT MOVES TO SARATOGA



ARNOLD JAY SMITH

George Wein in front of Grist Mill at Waterloo Village

NEW YORK—The Newport Jazz Festival at New York has seen its last days. The 1977 Festival marked the last time George Wein will bring his show into the Big Apple.

Wein recently announced that he will be moving his famous jazz festival to the Saratoga Arts Center in upstate Saratoga, New York, beginning with the 1978 season.

Wein, who was overwhelmed by the response to the 1977 affair on the part of the press and the public, made the announcement in the midst of the most successful NJF in New York's history. By his own reckoning, almost 90% of all available tickets were sold. "And still we only break even, or may make very little," Wein said.

There will still be a festival in New York in future years. Wein, who justifiably takes credit for bringing jazz back in major proportions to the city, plans to utilize the aged symbol of the Apple, and thus call the future fests Big Apple Jazz Festivals. The Festivals will remain a major event, running a full ten days. "New York saved the NJF as much as the NJF saved N.Y. jazz," Wein said. "But you can't do business when the best you can expect is to break even."

He blamed three factors—costs, curfew and acoustics. "It costs between \$850 and \$1000 if you go overtime at any of the halls in this city. That's too prohibitive for us." The sound has run from poor to middling with mikes going out at odd times.

The new NJF, to be called Newport Jazz Festival—Saratoga (if you say it a few times it may get to sound okay) will take place on the beautiful grounds that make up the Arts Center. The concerts will take place for four days during the first week in August and will run from noon to midnight. There will be a multiple stage setup much like Wein's festivals in Nice, France, and picnics such as those held at Waterloo Village in Stanhope, N.J. during the past two years.

The Saratoga Arts Center currently houses the summer homes of the New York City Ballet and the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Wein plans on getting sponsors for individual events at the Big Apple Jazz Festival, rather than a stipend from any one company to spend over so many concerts. "There will be more free things in the new festival, like the street fair we couldn't get money for this year," he said.

A source close to the Wein office confided to **db** that those sponsors have already been lined up and that the Big Apple Jazz Festival will run for more than one season. It will be held during the July 4 week, the traditional time of the NJF since its inception. It has been overlooked, but each year in Newport, R.I., while the NJF was housed there, there was a birthday salute to Louis Armstrong, whose birthdate has been given as July 4, 1900.

## FANTASY GRABS STAX

BERKELEY—Fantasy Records recently acquired the North American distribution rights to the Stax, Volt, Enterprise, Truth, Gospel Truth, We Produce, Hip, Portee and Respect labels. The aforementioned material includes recordings by such notables as Isaac Hayes, Booker T & the MG's, Eddie Floyd, Albert King, Little Milton, the Staple Singers, Carla Thomas, Johnnie Taylor and William Bell, among

others.

Fantasy also has plans to reactivate the Stax label by recruiting and signing new artists to the formerly-based Memphis outfit.

According to Fantasy pres Ralph Kaffel: "We tentatively plan to get our first Stax release out by August, and it will include unreleased material by Isaac Hayes, the Emotions, the Dramatics and Albert King."

## MARIPOSA CELEBRATION

TORONTO—One of North America's leading festivals of traditional music, the Mariposa Folk Festival, recently completed its 17th season (and eighth on Toronto's Centre Island). Some 22,000 people attended the daytime activities. Events were programmed simultaneously on six stages and workshops on various topics, from "Caribbean Developments" to "Québécois Fusions," were the order of the day.

The festival's performers, reflecting an intentional "no star" policy, were chosen this year to represent the four major influences on North American music—Anglo, Afro, French and Spanish—and included several musicians of more than passing interest to the jazz and blues fan.

Perennial Mariposa guests David Amram (accompanied by percussionist Ray Mantilla and guitarist Mantwila Nyomo) and Taj Mahal each brought their various instruments and musical bags. The blues were also represented by John Hammond, harpist Peg Leg Sam, Lonnie Pitchford (the only festival performer with an electric guitar!), Dan Womack, and most intriguingly by the Rising Star Fife and Drum Band from Mississippi which played such standards as *Sittin' On Top Of The World* and *My Babe* to the sole accompaniment of martial drumming. And few, no matter their musical inclinations, could fail to be impressed by the virtuoso *violoneux* from Montreal, Ti-Jean Carignan.

## Arista Pays Up

NEW YORK—In a move unique in the record industry, Arista and Savoy Records will be paying royalties for two "live" recordings not originally recorded under the royalty system, *Bird At The Roost* by Charlie Parker and *Pres Lives!* by Lester Young, which have recently been released as part of the continuing series of classic jazz on Savoy. In another first, besides royalties being paid to the estates of both of the recordings' leaders, Arista/Savoy has done extensive research to discover the identities of the sidemen on the two sessions, and those identified will be receiving scale payments at today's rate.

"When we decided to begin the reissue series, we also decided to pay royalties on all of the recordings, even though many were not recorded on a

royalty basis," said Bob Porter, the producer of the Savoy label.

Porter noted that the decision to pay sidemen on the Parker and Young recordings came about because of three factors: (1) the albums were not taken from actual studio recordings; (2) the contributions by the supportive musicians are prominent on both albums; (3) the sidemen received no compensation whatsoever when the recordings were originally released.

"Research involving the personnel on all of the label's reissues for royalty payment is an ongoing concern," he continued, "even after a record is released. And the first established by Arista/Savoy in payments for the originally non-royalty based Parker and Young 'live' recordings are part of the label's continual commitment to both the music and the musicians. . . ."

## Women Songwriters Feted

NEW YORK—The Songwriters Hall Of Fame, at One Times Square in the Apple, recently honored its women colleagues. In a reception to which as many female composers and lyricists as could be found were invited, board member Sammy Cahn introduced as many as he had time for.

Appearing were Bea Walker (*Hey, Jealous Lover*); Kay Swift (*Can't We Be Friends*); Gloria Parker (*Supercalifajalistickepealodocious*); Doris Tauber (*Them There Eyes*); Mary Rodgers (*Once Upon A Mat-*

*tress*); Nancy Ford & Gretchen Cryer (*Last Sweet Days Of Isaac*); Eve Merriam (*The Club*); Helen Deutsch (*Hi-Lili, Hi-Lo*); Naura Hayden (who recently recorded an album of woman songwriters' songs); Bonnie Snow (composer of a one woman show); Doris Fisher (*Put The Blame On Mame*); Ruth Lowe (*I'll Never Smile Again*); Evelyn Danzig (*Scarlet Ribbons*); and Mae Boren Axton (*Heartbreak Hotel*).

Other invitees included composer Charles Strouse, Andrea McCardle, star of *Annie*, Steve Allen and radio star Jim Lowe.



Some Berkeley, California dudes beat the heat in swinging style

## Thad Becomes Doctor

WAYNE, N.J.—Trumpeter/cornetist/fluegelhorn player/composer/conductor/arranger Thad Jones is now Dr. Thad Jones. An out-of-breath description is what that is. Thad Jones, co-leader of the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Orchestra, was awarded an honorary Doctor of Human Letters from William Patterson College here.

Jones, who has been an instructor at the institution for some years, was recently cited as a composer musician (both as a member of the faculty and an

outstanding member of the jazz community), a teacher and a jazz composer, who has consistently brought fine music to the school and the world and who has brought musicians to perform in a teaching and an entertainment capacity to the students of the college.

The presentation was well-received by the faculty and student body of William Patterson College, since Thad is a popular figure. The jazz community should be proud that one of its members has been so honored.

## MICHAL AND URSZULA JOIN RACQUETEERS



Michal, Urszula and the latest Fusion lineup

NEW YORK—Michal Urbaniak and Urszula Dudziak have recently become avid devotees of tennis, so much so that they all but schedule their recording and touring activities around their lawn hijinks.

It all began when Urszula's close friend, World Cup Tennis Doubles champ Wojtek Fibak, gave Ms. Dudziak a racquet as a gift. From then on, the passion quickly enveloped the pair.

In between their ball-batting soirees, Michal and Urszula have found time to swing through a European tour, with a live performance recorded at the An-

tibes Jazz Festival.

Urszula's new disc for Arista, entitled *Midnight Rain*, has recently been released and features such standards as *Lover, Misty and Night In Tunisia*. Sidemen on the set include Steve Gadd, Harold Williams, Ray Mantilla, Dom Um Romao and trumpeter Leszek Swierszcz.

The latest version of Michal's Fusion group is as following: Tony Bunn, bass guitar; Kenny Kirkland, keyboards; and Lurrenda Featherstone, drums (plus Michal and Urszula, of course.)

Further sporting accomplishments will be reported.

## COALITION SHAKES MUSEUM

NEW YORK—A series of after-noon jazz concerts was held over the Fourth of July weekend at the Jazz Museum here. The eight concerts were presented under the auspices of the Universal Jazz Coalition.

The series was kicked off July 1 by Harold Ousley's jam session group, which included Cecil Payne, Joe Carroll and others. Ousley's performance was preceded by a jam session led by Herb Storfer, musical director of the jazz museum.

Another concert on July 1 was directed by Bill Hardman, who did two sets before an SRO audience. Hardman's group consisted of himself on trumpet, Junior Cook, sax; Mickey Tucker, piano; Chin Suzuki, bass; and Billy Higgins, drums.

Two unique concerts highlighted July 2. The first featured vocalist Don Jay, lately of Jimmy Owens' group. Jay sang songs ranging from *Black Woman Field Holler* to *Come Sunday* and *Pieces Of Dreams*. He was accompanied by Harold Mabern, Jr. on piano, Stafford James on bass and Warren Smith on drums.

The second presentation featured the Pepsi Bethel Authentic Jazz Dance Theatre Company. They performed colorful renditions of authentic jazz dances from different eras. Harold Mabern, Jr. tied the eras together with music.

Sunday's early concert presented Bob Cunningham's "Musical Safari in Living Color." Cunningham's trio (with Payton Crossley and Dave Barron) performed with poetess Oyenike Osiapem and dances by Bernadine Jennings and Phillip Bond.

Sunday's second concert consisted of a masterful performance by Billy Harper's sextet, which played for nearly three hours before an overflowing crowd. Harper's sextet included Everett Hollins, trumpet; Mickey Tucker, piano; Greg Amaker, bass; Malcolm Pinson, drums; and Ted Dunbar, guitar.

July 4 saw two explorations in electronic music. The Electro-Acoustical Music Consort (featuring Youseff Yancy, Byard Lancaster and Sedia Yancy) was first. Youseff Yancy began by discussing his music in relation to the evolution of jazz and present-day trends in classical and electronic music. He then performed three compositions.

A second new music concert featured Turning Point (Tom Pierson and Ben Aranov, keyboards; Lou Marini, reeds; George Mraz, bass; Rick Cohen, percussion). Pierson wrote the charts for the group, which gave a superb performance before a once-again packed house.

The Universal Jazz Coalition presented the concerts as a part of their continuing program of publicizing jazz in New York.

## Tappan Zee Celebration



Bob James and Chris Parker at party

NEW YORK—At a special party, Columbia records recently announced the formation of Tappan Zee Records, the new company to be headed by producer-pianist Bob James. Bruce Lundvall, CBS Records president, also announced that the company will be distributed by CBS.

The gathering was at Michael's Pub, with the "house" band consisting of Jay McShann, piano; Buddy Tate and Paul Quinichette, tenor saxes; Mill

Hinton, bass; and Jackie Williams, drums. The group played three Kansas City-oriented sets.

Guest group Stuff played rhythm behind James' piano and electric piano, while Dexter Gordon and Dave Sanborn sat in. Stuff is comprised of Cornell Dupree, Eric Gale, Richard Tee, Chris Parker and Steve Gadd. Gadd and Tee were absent for the entire evening and while bassist Gordon Edwards' plane circled for a landing, Hinton filled in.

## Slide Returns To Apple

NEW YORK—Trombonist Slide Hampton, mainstay of one of Maynard Ferguson's early and best bands, recently returned to his home city and vowed to stay, "definitely." Hampton, who has been living in Europe for some time, has formed a trombone choir consisting of Janice Robinson, Kiane Zawadi and Doug Purviance on trombones, Steve Neal, bass, Joe Bonner, piano and Idris Muhammad, drums. Their first appearance was at the Village Vanguard, where Hampton announced that he wants to stay here.

The left-handed bone player brought all new, fresh charts to the club, which were predominantly bebop in origin. The choir handled each tune extremely well and the applause was enthusiastic. As one would imagine, the place was filled with musicians, mostly trombone-case-carrying. The front line was joined by Steve Turre for the final set. The ensemble

passages were the most impressive. The sound Slide obtained was big band, tight and friendly. The behind-the-soloist riffing was another high point. In the Charlie Parker opuses, notably *Au Privave*, *Little Willie Leaps* and *Donna Lee*, the thematic lines were rewritten for the trombones, much like Supersax did for saxophones.

There were many originals in his new bag, such as *Nakie* (named for Hampton's grandson), with its light Latin touch, and *The Way*, which featured some comic slide passages behind the soloists and sounded for all the world like *Giant Steps*.

*Darn That Dream* had a novel twist to it. The song itself was one ensemble all the way, with featured solos being taken care of in coda fashion, a cappella and tempo-less.

Hampton is expected to take the choir on a tour of the United States sometime in the upcoming future.

## Kloss Joins Miles

PITTSBURGH—Alto sax whiz Eric Kloss has hooked up with pianist Barry Miles for his first tour of Europe. Kloss and Miles are playing a series of duet concerts in Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands and Denmark.

The duo has also signed up with George Gruntz to appear at the Berlin Jazz Festival, November 5. This will be their first major jazz festival appearance. Kloss and Miles have released one album, *Together*, on Muse.

## FINAL BAR



Goddard Lieberson, circa 1955

Goddard Lieberson, head of Columbia Records during its rise to dominance in the industry, recently died of cancer at his home in New York City. He was 66.

The history of Columbia Records can be traced through Lieberson's career with the company. He was vice president under Edward Wallenstein when Columbia introduced the long play record, following its development by Peter Goldmark in the CBS labs. It was Goddard's quick action that converted the existing Columbia product into LPs from shellac 78s. He fought the good battle and won out against RCA's 45 rpm extended plays, eventually creating today's standard of LP albums and 45 singles. That, in turn, led to the expansion in phonograph sales by which Columbia substantially profited.

Under Lieberson, Columbia prospered and became the number one record company in the world, surpassing RCA in the early '60s. One of the factors that allowed for this was the introduction of mail order records. The Columbia Record Club at one time accounted for about half of all sales by the company.

It was also Goddard Lieberson who took a big chance on a Broadway play and parlayed it into the largest selling original cast album ever. The show was *My Fair Lady*; the investment was \$400,000 and sales have yet to be finally calculated because the album and its successors are still selling into the multimillions. Columbia led the way for others to get into the original cast market. When prices began to soar, Columbia dropped out.

Lieberson was a serious composer and pianist. He was born in England and grew up in the U.S. where he attended the Eastman School of Music. He composed numerous pieces but concluded there was no living to be made from them. He joined Columbia as a studio director and moved to the Masterworks division, being named executive vice-president in 1949. Several years later he was named to the presidency of the CBS-Columbia group, but he stopped long enough to people the Columbia stable with the greatest array of jazz talent in the history of music, the most prominent being Miles Davis. Others he produced included Leonard Bernstein, Bruno Walter, Igor Stravinsky, Barbra Streisand, Andy Williams and his last original cast, *Chorus Line*. To show his diversity, Lieberson also produced the documentary series by Edward R. Murrow, *I Can Hear It Now*, and a number of packages that included records and books collectively called the CBS Legacy Collection.

After his retirement in 1975, Lieberson remained active, appearing on a tribute to friend and associate John Hammond in a two-part *Soundstage-PBS* television show. He recently completed a special musical program that aired on July 4 (CBS network) entitled *They Said It With Music: Yankee Doodle To Ragtime*.

He is survived by his wife, the former ballerina Vera Zorina, and two sons.

## potpourri

A new shopping mall in L.A. called **Arco Plaza** recently promoted their opening by staging several free jazz jams with **Marshall Royal, Red Callender, Jimmy Jones, Doc Severinsen, Mundell Lowe** and others. The unique aspect of these jams, however, was that management rented a bevy of musical instruments and invited the public to join in and blow ... even if they hadn't played a note in their life!

**Charles Mingus** and **Stanley Clarke** have set up a studio date for this fall, planning to cut an album together.

July saw the concert debut of **Teddy Edwards'** "Blue Saxophone" at Ebell Theatre in Los Angeles. In the pits were **Ray Brown, Benny Powell, Blue Mitchell, Victor Feldman, Bobby Bryant** and conductor **Jimmy Jones**.

The **Monterey Jazz Festival** has announced the winners of this year's **Seventh Annual California High School Jazz Band Competition**. **Reseda High School**, under **Len Gagliardi's** direction, walked off with best band honors, and the **Berkeley High Jazz Combo** won their division for the third straight time. All-star selections were: **Scott Klein, Larry Koonse, Bill Beaver, Murray Low** and **Cary Avery** (rhythm); **Steve Mortenson, Scott Kyle, Phil Agretellis, Mario Sternad** and **Duane Grubert** (trombones); **Mike Plumleigh, Buddy Gordon, Herbert Sneed, Jacinto Diego** and **Jenny**

**Stoik** (trumpets); and **Ted Nach, Dan Wilensky, Dalton Hagler, Ray Clement** and **Keith Squyres** (saxophones). They'll perform on Sunday afternoon, September 18, at the Monterey Jazz Fest.

**Betty Carter**, who has a new LP due out, is planning to reissue all of her out of print records.

**Buck Clayton's** tour for the United States Information has ended, following stopovers in cities such as Cairo, Khartoum, Athens and Lisbon. Accompanying Clayton on the tour were **Bull Moose Jackson, Dave Burns, John Phillips** and **Jackie Williams**.

Watch for an upcoming **Columbia Stan Getz** waxing made in conjunction with arranger **Eddie Sauter**.

Rumors abound that the future of **A&M's Horizon** remains in question. One possibility has the parent company dissolving the Horizon label and harboring the Horizon artists under the larger company roster.

**Billy Cobham** has ended months of label hunting and decided to return to his former **Columbia** environs.

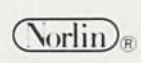
**Leon Thomas** recently pacted a deal with **Bareback Records**, with a fresh recording due this autumn.

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# HERBIE HANCOCK

## Revamping The Past, Creating The Future

by conrad silvert

*Herbie has a great linear harmonic sense, in that his phrases are elongated in a very beautiful way—they not only come out of something, they automatically lead back into something else. His ideas are continually moving, undulating, and leading him into other areas which I enjoy, and there aren't too many pianists who stimulate me like that.*

—Oscar Peterson, January 1977.

*I like everything that Herbie does.*

—Miles Davis, October 1975.

No jazz pianist has ever received a wider popular audience than Herbert Jeffrey Hancock, and, by extension, few pianists have ever been as influential on a younger generation of musicians. Herbie, of course, made his "cross-over" breakthrough with the album *Head Hunters* in 1973, with a new funk band—bassist Paul Jackson, reed specialist Bennie Maupin, percussionist Bill Summers and drummer Michael Clark—that remained a unit for more than three years and set a high standard for the application of complex jazz improvisation to a highly danceable rhythm bottom.

The *Headhunters* band was also the site for Herbie's full-scale exploration of electronic keyboards; previously he had helped introduce the Rhodes piano into jazz with the Miles Davis quintet in the '60s and had begun to dabble with synthesizers with his avant garde sextet in the early '70s, but the past four years have really seen Herbie accumulate a boggling variety of instruments and attachments, both in the recording studio (with producer David Rubinson) and on the stage. During this same period Herbie's acoustic piano playing was largely restricted to occasional guest spots on albums by Wayne Shorter, Bennie Maupin, Jaco Pastorius *et al.*

Most of Herbie's recently acquired fans know little of his prolific work during the '60s, not only with Miles, but as a leader and sideman for countless Blue Note record dates, as he played with virtually every major jazzman of the day (including Donald Byrd, Dexter Gordon, Freddie Hubbard, Sonny Rollins, Lee Morgan, Joe Henderson, Bobby Hutcherson and many others) in the process developing an immediately recognizable right-hand soloing style and some of the hippest accom-

16 □ downbeat



KAZ ISURUTA

New look with V.S.O.P. Quintet: (l. to r.) Hubbard, Williams, Shorter, Hancock, Carter.

panying chords the music has known. And, on his albums *Empyrean Isles*, *Maiden Voyage* and *Speak Like A Child*, Herbie was composing brilliant extensions of elements taken from Miles, Gil Evans and Duke Ellington.

With his turn-of-the-'70s sextet, Herbie led a loose but intensely creative crucible for new voicings, rhythm patterns and free-form arrangements; this band, still one of the most undervalued in recent times, made two fine albums (*Mwandishi* and *Crossings*) but its greatest heights were reached on the stages of small clubs across the country. Economic considerations eventually forced the sextet's dissolution, and then Herbie collaborated with his manager David Rubinson to produce *Head Hunters*. The rest is history.

Recently, many of Herbie's older fans, and it seems nearly all the "critics" have grown impatient with Herbie's reluctance to play on the acoustic piano; in particular they've become irritated with the increasingly simple funk on his albums: *Head Hunters* and *Thrust* balanced the funk groove with quite a bit of heady improvisation, but Herbie's last studio effort, *Secrets*, did little that Herbie hadn't already done before, and better. (Too little notice was paid, however, to the brilliant orchestrations on Herbie's soundtrack to *Death Wish*—film scoring seems to be the perfect arena for his talents).

Whether in reaction to the public clamor, because of some inner desire, or as a function of the grand cycles of the cosmos, Herbie this year persuaded his former partners in the Miles Davis quintet—with Freddie Hubbard taking Miles' place—to temporarily suspend leadership of their own bands in order to reunite for a coast-to-coast presentation of the music they played at the 1976 Newport Festival in New York. Called the "V.S.O.P." band (after a certain type of aged cognac) or "The Quintet," Herbie, Wayne Shorter, Tony Williams, Ron Carter and Hubbard are, at this writing, winding up a wildly received series of 25 concerts in nearly as many days. Two live albums, one for the United States and one for Japan, are being recorded in California, and Herbie, Ron and Tony are recording two studio trio albums planned at this time for Japan release only. And, for this intensive jazz activity, Herbie is playing only the acoustic

grand and Rhodes electric pianos, the same two instruments he played ten years ago with Miles.

The afternoon before they were to depart for Minnesota on the first leg of the tour, I had the opportunity to watch the "Quintet" rehearse at a small Hollywood studio. All five musicians were obviously savoring the occasion to play, as a unit, the music that was so much a part of their early careers, and music which is as vital today as it was during its inception. But they were also a little piqued by critics who have insisted on drawing boundary lines between the jazz they played in the '60s and the music they're making today. Ron Carter, who was (punctilious as usual) the first to arrive at the rehearsal, summed up the band's attitude when he said, "It might be a change for some of the guys in the band to play this music again, from a physical standpoint, but not from an emotional or mental point of view. The forms may date back ten years, but that doesn't mean the music isn't contemporary."

That conclusion was borne out by watching the band run through a set: so much was happening musically, it was difficult to wax nostalgic, or think of the music as "old" in any way. But it was hard not to imagine this band as perhaps the ultimate, more sophisticated expression of bebop, modified as it was by nearly every development since Bird, Diz, Monk, Clarke, Powell, Roach and so on.

Shortly before the rehearsal, Herbie talked at his home about his career, but especially the years with Miles and the musicians whom he was about to join on the road.

"The differences between what Miles had been playing before the quintet crystallized [in 1964] and what we played was incredible. Like, Tony was introducing rhythms I had never even heard. I think what made the band unique was the interplay of the rhythm section, the way the ball passed around... and at the same time Miles and Wayne floated on top of this ever-evolving rhythm section sound. And just the way Tony mixed up the roles of different parts of the drums—the focus might be on the snare drum, or another time on the bass drum, or it might be totally the cymbals without any other parts of the drum.

"And my playing of the electric piano, later

**"Getting into the synthesizers was a natural evolution for me, not only because I'm fascinated with the possibilities of creating new sounds and colors, but because I have a streak in me that loves electronics. . . ."**

## SELECTED HANCOCK DISCOGRAPHY

### with Miles Davis

SEVEN STEPS TO HEAVEN—Columbia PC-8851  
 MY FUNNY VALENTINE—Columbia PC-9106  
 FOUR & MORE—Columbia PC-9253  
 IN EUROPE—Columbia PC-8983  
 MILES SMILES—Columbia PC-9401  
 SORCERER—Columbia PC-9532  
 E.S.P.—Columbia PC-9150  
 NEFERTITI—Columbia KCS-9594  
 MILES IN THE SKY—Columbia PC-9628  
 FILLES DE KILIMANJARO—Columbia PC-9750  
 IN A SILENT WAY—Columbia PC-9875  
 LIVE-EVIL—Columbia CG-30954  
 BIG FUN—Columbia PG-32866  
 WATER BABIES—Columbia PC-34396

### as a leader

TAKIN' OFF—Blue Note 84109  
 EMPYREAN ISLES—Blue Note 84175  
 MAIDEN VOYAGE—Blue Note 84195  
 SPEAK LIKE A CHILD—Blue Note 84279  
 FAT ALBERT ROTUNDA—Warner Brothers BS-1834  
 MWANDISHI—Warner Brothers BS-1898  
 CROSSINGS—Warner Brothers BS-2617  
 HEAD HUNTERS—Columbia KC-32731  
 THRUST—Columbia PC-32965  
 MAN-CHILD—Columbia PC-33812  
 DEATH WISH—Columbia PC-33199  
 V.S.O.P.—Columbia PG-34688

### with Donald Byrd

FREE FORM—Blue Note 84118  
 A NEW PERSPECTIVE—Blue Note 84124

### with Freddie Hubbard

HUB-TONES—Blue Note 84115  
 RED CLAY—CTI 6001

### with Ron Carter

UPTOWN CONVERSATION—Embryo SD-521

### with Wayne Shorter

THE ALL-SEEING EYE—Blue Note 4219  
 ADAM'S APPLE—Blue Note 4232  
 SCHIZOPHRENIA—Blue Note 84297  
 NATIVE DANCER—Columbia PC 33418

### with Tony Williams

LIFE TIME—Blue Note 84180  
 SPRING—Blue Note 84216

### with Kenny Dorham

UNA MAS—Blue Note 84127

### with Sonny Rollins

NOW'S THE TIME—RCA LSP-2927

### with Lee Morgan

SEARCH FOR THE NEW LAND—Blue Note 84169

### with Bobby Hutcherson

HAPPENINGS—Blue Note 84231  
 COMPONENTS—Blue Note 84213

### with Wes Montgomery

A DAY IN THE LIFE—A&M SP-3001

### with Grant Green

FEELIN' THE SPIRIT—Blue Note 84132

### with George Benson

BLUE BENSON—Polydor 6084  
 WHITE RABBIT—CTI 6015

### with Joe Henderson

POWER TO THE PEOPLE—Milestone 9024

### with Miroslav Vitous

INFINITE SEARCH—Embryo SD-524

### with Aírto Moreíra

IDENTITY—Arista 4068

### with the Pointer Sisters

THAT'S A PLENTY—Blue Thumb 6009

### with Joe Farrell

MOON GERMS—CTI 6023

### with Norman Connors

LOVE FROM THE SUN—Buddah 5142

### with Jaco Pastorius

JACO PASTORIUS—Epic PE-33949

### with Bennie Maupin

THE JEWEL IN THE LOTUS—ECM 1043 ST



**Herbie Hancock, backstage at Juan Les Pins, France, July 1976.**

on [Miles introduced Herbie to it in the studio for the recording of *Miles In The Sky*], gave the music plenty of bottom, and when the individual band members became aware of the Rhodes, their writing began to change as a result, and in a subtle way the rhythms began to change. On albums like *Filles De Kilimanjaro*, there was an element of funk present, but not in an overt way. The changes were subtle."

The innovations that were occurring with Miles were to a large extent carried over to Herbie's sextet ("The foundation of that band was really the empathy and sensitivity of the musicians capturing the moment, which was why, for instance, a composition like *Ostinato* could be completely different not only from night to night, but from set to set."), but it wasn't until the Headhunters band was in high gear that Herbie began to fully integrate the synthesizers into his music and play them in a way very different from his piano playing.

"Getting into the synthesizers," he says, "was a natural evolution for me, not only because I'm fascinated with the possibilities of creating new sounds and colors, but because I have a streak in me that loves electronics, which is a carryover from when I wanted to be an engineer [he studied engineering at Grinnell College in Iowa]. I love gadgets and I love buttons, and they help me not only to make notes and harmonies and rhythms, but to be able to create, from scratch, the very sound that's gonna produce these notes."

The following interview was done as Herbie was preparing to leave Detroit for his next concert in Buffalo, New York.

**Silvert:** You told me that Tony Williams was the first one to introduce you to synthesizers.

**Hancock:** Actually, Donald Byrd did; he was checking it out too for the first time—contemporary classical music and *musique concrete*. Donald got a record by Edgar Varese, in '61 or '62. I'm not sure if it was synthesizer music, but it was one of that nature. But the first time it really came up was with Tony when we were with Miles, in '63. I remember something we heard by Karlheinz

Stockhausen. I really took that one—I felt it. And I was listening to John Cage and all that through Tony.

**Silvert:** But you didn't pursue that much for several years.

**Hancock:** It wasn't available. The kind of equipment that Stockhausen used was not the Micro or Mini-Moogs of today. He used things that no individual could afford, from some laboratory. Big huge synthesizers, because they didn't have microcircuitry in that era, they didn't have chips.

**Silvert:** Then there's the story about the electric piano, and *Miles In The Sky*, and all of that, and then you left Miles, and then you played the electric piano with your sextet. And then, on *Head Hunters*—was that the first time you had synthesizers on your own record?

**Hancock:** No, that was the first time I played the synthesizer on my own record. The first record with synthesizers was *Crossings*.

**Silvert:** Right, and Patrick Gleeson played it.

**Hancock:** Yeah, David Rubinson, my manager, turned me on to Patrick and he played with my band.

**Silvert:** Can you run down the order in which you've accumulated your collection of electronic instruments?

**Hancock:** The first was the Rhodes, and then the Clavinet, and then an ARP Pro Soloist, and I think the ARP Odyssey was next, the Odyssey and the ARP 2600 at the same time. In 1973. I had a Pro Soloist with the sextet, but I can't remember if I played it with them onstage. I fooled around with synthesizers awhile by myself first. I got an Oberheim four-voice synthesizer, then I got a Micro-Moog. And then I have a Syn-Key synthesizer—it works with punchcards. You put them in and the punch is the patches. Then, after the Syn-Key, I got four *more* voices on the Oberheim, and the computer programmer, making it an eight-voice programmable synthesizer.

**Silvert:** Expanding the limitations of the equipment.

**Hancock:** Yeah, and costing more than twice the price of the original (laughs). Wait a minute, I think I got the Yamaha Electric Grand before I added the other four voices to the Oberheim. The Oberheim has 16 programs, but it's still an eight-voice. And now I'm in the process of getting a Polymoog. It should be home when I get back from the V.S.O.P. tour. And also, I got a Yamaha four-voice synthesizer. Oh! I forgot about the String Ensemble. It's not a real synthesizer, but I think I got that the same time as the Odyssey, in '73.

**Silvert:** Now you're playing an acoustic piano in front of audiences to an extent you haven't reached in many years. What is this doing to your overall musical concepts, what percentage of your time are you going to devote to electronics?

**Hancock:** Practicing the acoustic piano will help me with all the keyboards. And I've started practicing on solo synthesizer work.

**Silvert:** On the Oberheim Polyphonic?

**Hancock:** No, an improvised solo is terrible on that (laughs). That's good for new colors. I used to use the Odyssey for soloing, but I've



# THE LA FOUR

## *journeymen united*

by len lyons

As jazz broadens in appeal and in the styles it can absorb, commercialism in the music becomes a more central issue. Has jazz improved its communication skills, as its top-selling artists claim, or has it stooped to conquer? Such storms of controversy have blown right over the heads of the LA Four. This veterans-only group (Ray Brown, bass; Shelly Manne, drums; Laurindo Almeida, guitar; and Bud Shank, alto sax, flute) earns an enviable living going their separate ways. Financially, the band is a luxury item for its members and they play what they please.

Their only gripe, after two years of working together, is the public's lack of awareness of their records, *The LA Four Scores* and *The LA Four*, both on the Concord Jazz label. "Concord is a straight up and down jazz label," Brown explains, "which means no electronics or crossover music. I find that media people are largely unaware of it." Brown says this with obvious resentment. For him it implies that "you people in the music media should do some soul-searching. Why don't people know about Concord Jazz? Why is non-commercial jazz being neglected in the press?"

Concord Jazz, in fact, is a small company (32 albums released to date) owned by Carl E. Jefferson, an automobile dealer from Concord, California. Most of their artists are out of the mainstream, like the LA Four: Herb Ellis, Joe Venuti, Louie Bellson and Hank Jones are a few. "If we didn't have people like Norman Granz and Carl Jefferson," Brown continues, "who in the world would tell us: play whatever you want and don't think about the public?"

Shelly Manne was equally enthusiastic about the young label. "Historically, the reason jazz musicians have always recorded with smaller companies like Concord, Contemporary Records or Blue Note (now part of United Artists Records) was because the guy that ran the company was the guy you did business with. He was the guy who loved the music and recorded it because he loved it. He had an artistic interest in the music as well as a money interest." Manne is more inclined to attribute the LA Four's low profile to the unwillingness of distributors and record store managers to display their jazz wares more prominently.

Before one of the group's infrequent concerts, Ray Brown and Shelly Manne discussed the LA Four, and their experiences as LA studio players and music educators.

**Lyons:** What was the original impetus for the LA Four?

**Brown:** When I first came to California, Laurindo and I worked together as just bass and guitar. Then we expanded to a trio, using Chuck Flores on drums. Laurindo suggested that we add Bud, and the quartet played at Shelly's club, the Manne Hole. Shelly sat in for a couple of tunes, and later, when Chuck left the group, we asked Shelly to join. I guess the group has been in existence for two and a half years.

**Manne:** It's not a group like the MJQ was a group, surviving on its own club dates and concerts. We're all doing other things and we work when opportunities arise.

**Lyons:** Would you like to see things expand for the group?

**Brown:** We're all over 50 years old, and we've all spent plenty of time on the road. We work 30 or 40 days of the year, tops, and everyone is very comfortable with that.

**Lyons:** What's the musical premise of the LA Four?

**Brown:** Each individual in this group has his own very strong roots, so the first year and a half was spent amalgamating what we had. It's only been during the last six months that we have started to evolve a definite style.

**Manne:** The four players in this group are very sensitive musicians, and basically we build around the sensitivity of Laurindo's guitar because he doesn't use any amplifier or electronics. Although he plays Brazilian music expertly, he's essentially a classically oriented guitarist. Bud's a sensitive player, too, and we don't really set down any style except to let something happen naturally from our abilities to play our instruments and play them together. We just want to play good

ever could as just a jazz musician.

**Lyons:** But we've crossed over ourselves from aesthetics to commercialism. What do you think crossover is worth artistically?

**Brown:** All these guys we're talking about are fine jazz musicians. They're smart enough to take what they can do with jazz and figure out what they can do with the public as well. We're not involved in that because we don't have to be. By the way, when I say 'we don't have to be,' I mean we're talking about four studio musicians.

**Manne:** I hate that term.

**Brown:** Well, how much time do you work out of the studio?

**Manne:** But what is a studio musician today?

**Brown:** In our case it's a guy who makes over \$50,000 a year in the studio and isn't affected by having to go out on the road and play. That guy can pick what he wants to do when he plays. He doesn't have to play crossover or anything else.

**Manne:** Ray, I'm not disagreeing with that, but the label "studio musician" was probably more valid years ago than it is today. It still disturbs me when people say, "He's not a dedicated jazz musician anymore—he's a



DAVID REDFERN



VERYL OAKLAND

music, nice music. That's the main premise of the band.

**Lyons:** As veterans, what do you think of some of the newer styles that are getting a lot of attention in the press? Crossover, for example.

**Brown:** You yourself said it's been getting a lot of attention in the press, and I think that's one of the reasons for the crossover. We'll probably never get into it. We'd have no reason to since we've all existed very well without it.

**Manne:** There are definitely good things that have come out of it, like Weather Report, Chick Corea's group, John McLaughlin's or Miles'. But one of the guiding factors for these people crossing over in the first place was to reach a wider audience and earn a lot more money. It's worked. Herbie Hancock records for Columbia and sells more records than he

studio musician." Now years ago there was a group of musicians who were just good craftsmen. They could perform in the studio with good tone and in a way that was pleasing to the conductor. But it's only been recently that jazz musicians have been allowed to go into the studio and become so-called studio musicians. You can get a band at Universal studios made up of Ray Brown, Shelly Manne, Pete Jolly, Mike Wolford on piano, or Joe Sample, Freddie Hubbard, if he's in town, J. J. Johnson, Bill Watrous. Now you can't call these guys studio musicians in the old sense. I'd have to object to that label because the heart and soul of my playing is still in the jazz idiom. That's the thing I care most about and the thing that got me to the point where I could become a studio musician.

**Lyons:** Why do you think the studios have opened up to jazz musicians?

**Brown:** Because for a while motion pictures became dependent on records. They were leaning on the records for themes that would promote the picture and make them more money on record sales at the same time. The studios began looking for more modern composers, like Quincy Jones, who was doing eight or ten pictures a year for a while. Now these composers required the kind of musician we're talking about because they could not only play what was written, they could inter-

**"It's not a group like the MJQ was a group, surviving on its own club dates and concerts. We're all doing other things and we work when the opportunities arise."**

pret it. The musicians are more flexible now, too. They can read better.

**Manne:** The doors were opened by the studio directors who have become jazz fans and recognized the ability of jazz players to interpret all types of music. They used to complain that the studios were closed to black musicians. Then composers like Quincy Jones, Benny Golson and Oliver Nelson came along and they brought in the musicians they knew could play their music. The line is no more. The studios are open to anyone who can produce in them.

**Lyons:** Do you think some of the musicians' flexibility has been a consequence of more music education in the jazz field?

**Manne:** Yes, in the sense that the people coming up have the ability to play in a section and follow the conductor, both of which are very important.

**Lyons:** What do you think the clinics are contributing to jazz education?

**Manne:** Well, we both do a lot of clinics. I've noticed that if you put title "jazz" on a

Jazz is hanging out, traveling on a bus with other musicians. That's all part of jazz. That's why so much good jazz came out of Kansas City, Chicago and New York when 52nd Street was alive. There was a social thing happening which was just as important as learning to read the notes.

**Brown:** I can add to that—this is what the average clinic is like: The musician goes to the college around noon, and there's a class that lasts one hour with 50 to 100 kids in it. Then

you break for a half hour before you do a 90 minute concert. Well, how much can anybody show 100 kids in one hour, or even one day?

**Manne:** I told kids at my last clinic that they have to listen to what's been played before by listening to records. Everything that's happening now comes from what was happening years ago I asked, "How many kids know Sonny Rollins?" In 100 kids not one raised his hand. How many kids know Roy Eldridge? Not one hand. If you mention Chick Corea or Joe Zawinul, then they know who you're talking about because we're getting into crossover.

**Brown:** And I imagine you guys in the music press have something to do with that. You ought to do a little soul-searching. Why don't kids know who Sonny Rollins is?

**Lyons:** I don't know for sure. We did a long feature on him a few months ago, and I've seen him covered in the press—newspapers and so on. I'll bet he gets better press coverage than airplay.

**Manne:** But why? Because he's not into crossover or hitting the Top 40 pop market.

that they bring jazz musicians in to draw people. What they should do in the schools is bring them in for a week or keep them in residence for a month. There are guys in every city who can play and can work with the kids, and they aren't even working. How about them? Here's another problem: Down at North Texas State the trumpet players can read everything in sight. Best brass section in the world. But the rhythm section is lousy—terrible.

**Manne:** Right. It's the same everywhere.

**Brown:** I was teaching at the UCLA extension for a year. The classical teacher there is a friend of mine. He's not a hell of a good jazz bassist, and I'm not a hell of a great classical player, but we can both do each other's gigs. We work on a lot of movies together. We wanted to put both of our programs together so anyone who came through would know everything we both do. Then he could cover all the bases.

**Lyons:** All the basses?

**Brown:** Right, he could play anything. We approached the board about it. . . . No way! There's another source of the problem. Attitudes.

**Manne:** I taught at California State College at Northridge and started the introduction to jazz course that's still going on there. When I first showed up, there were about 300 kids in the class. Their first question was, "What books do you want us to buy?" I told them not to buy any books. Instead, we're going to try to find out what the ingredient is that makes a



**Laurindo Almeida:** Concert guitarist from Brazil and composer of movie and TV scores.

**Ray Brown:** Bassist with the Oscar Peterson Trio for 15 years (until '66). Has since played as guest artist on countless albums, published instructional books on bass playing, and managed other artists.

**Shelly Manne:** Once a big band drummer with Stan Kenton and Woody Herman, later recorded with Cannonball Adderley, Barney Kessel, Coleman Hawkins. Owned and operated the club Shelly's Manne Hole for 12 years (until '74).

**Bud Shank:** Alto sax and flute with Kenton, Shorty Rogers, Chet Baker and Gerry Mulligan, but mostly film and studio work.

clinic, you're immediately giving yourself a major problem. You can always teach kids how to play an instrument technically or how to read, but you can't teach anyone how to play jazz. The best advice I could give them, which I wrote up on the blackboard, was "Go play." I can't play a hot lick for them and expect they'll understand where that came from or how many years of playing it took to come up with it.

North Texas State has a great jazz education program, but it's the material they use and the hip charts and writers they get that makes it great. They'll turn out good musicians and a few great jazz musicians because of the material they've worked on. By contrast, a lot of the material played in the clinics is antiquated. Anyway, playing jazz has to come from within. Jazz isn't just music. Jazz is a social music. It's an environmental upbringing.

It's a vicious circle for jazz musicians. You know, we used to wait months for a three minute 78 rpm solo by our favorite jazz musician. Now with the reissues, you can hear everything anybody ever recorded. There's a wealth of history out there, but kids still don't know what jazz is. If you listen to KBCA in Los Angeles, which is supposedly a jazz station, you'll hear r&b, rock, pop, and maybe a few jazz records. But they call it all jazz. Naturally, young people aren't sure what jazz is. This stuff turns their heads around.

I ask kids at clinics why they want to be jazz musicians. To make money, some of them tell me. Forget it. That's not the reason I got into jazz. I got into it because when I heard the music, I said "This is it!" Why do people write or paint or dance? Not for the money. It satisfies a creative desire within you.

**Brown:** Getting back to the clinics, I find

jazz musician. I had everyone in the class chip in three dollars to bring in jazz musicians instead of buying books. Every week we had a different group playing, and the kids would ask them, "Why do you play like that? What made you become a jazz musician? Why do you play for \$20 a night?" At the end of the class their term paper was 500 words or less on what jazz means to them. For their term papers I got statues, poems, paintings, short stories. I got a jazz response, a creative response. I felt the class was a success because that is what jazz means. More jazz clinics should be run that way.

**Lyons:** What is your assessment of the avant garde acoustic style of playing? It seems closer to what all of you are involved in.

**Brown:** Musicians didn't give it that name (avant garde). They don't label music. They just play it. If a guy meets some other guy

# FRANK TUSA

## TRIPLE THREAT BASSMAN

by chuck berg

**F**rank Tusa is one of the most versatile young bassists on the New York scene. Best known for his productive collaborations with Dave Liebman, Richie Beirach, Jeff Williams and Badal Roy in Lookout Farm, Frank has also been active as a free-lancer with such diverse artists as Barry Miles, Booker Erwin, Paul Bley, Don Cherry, Freddie Hubbard, Lee Konitz, Eric Kloss, Robin Kenyatta, Harold Mabern and most recently, Art Blakey.

Since the mutually agreed upon termination of Lookout Farm late last year, Frank has been busy on a number of fronts. He is, along with pianist Richie Beirach and drummer Eliot Zigmund, a member of the fine acoustic trio, Eon. He has also been working with tabla player Badal Roy in performances combining Indian and jazz idioms.

In addition, Tusa has been an active clinician in public school and college workshop sessions. He is also at work on several book-length projects. And now with the release of *Father Time* for the new Inner City label, Tusa seems destined to emerge as a triple-threat leader/player/composer.

Born in New York City on April 1, 1947, Frank speaks of his experiences and beliefs with precision and warmth. Our conversation took place in Tusa's 21st Street apartment amidst a congenial clutter of basses, books, records and scores.

**Berg:** Frank, how did you get involved in music?

**Tusa:** I was exposed to music throughout my childhood. My grandfather was a violinist and composer who had come from Italy in the early 1900s. Everyone in my family played something. My father played mandolin. My uncles played guitar. Someone else played piano. So I was constantly exposed to music. I had played guitar for about two years. But when I was ten, I decided that I wanted to play bass. I was just very turned on to the instrument, the beauty of its sound, its size.

When I went to Francis Lewis High School in Queens, which was one of the few high schools in New York that had a very good music department, I started studying with the head of the music department, Milton Fink, who was a bass player. He taught a very fine string course as well. He also turned me on to an excellent classical teacher, Homer Mensch, who was playing with the New York Philharmonic at the time. He had worked under Toscanini and was quite well known. He's now teaching at Juilliard. So Homer was actually my main teacher in the sense of developing technique and really studying the bass. I studied with him for about four and a half years. When I was in high school I also went to the Brooklyn Academy of Music to study theory and composition.

I was very lucky because I got lots of feedback at home. I had a tremendous amount of musical communication with my father. He might not have liked everything I was into, but

he really understood music. So while I was in high school I was mainly studying the classical repertory and technique. I was also starting to dip into jazz but wasn't yet totally involved in it. After graduating from high school, I decided that college was not right for me because I wanted to learn how to master the bass. I was also more involved in jazz and couldn't really find a school that had a good course of study in jazz bass. So I began my own program of study.

I listened to records of all the bass players, people like Ray Brown, Jimmy Garrison, Paul Chambers, Oscar Pettiford, and in particular, Scott La Faro. When I listened to Scotty, I was just totally turned around.

**Berg:** So Scotty was your primary influence?

**Tusa:** It was really a combination of Scotty and Gary Peacock.

**Berg:** Can you specify what aspects of their playing most influenced you?

**Tusa:** Scotty, mainly for how he extended the role of the bass. He took the functional four-beats-to-a-measure approach and developed the bass as a counter-melodic instrument. I was also impressed with Scotty's ability to play bebop changes, his soloistic concept, and his technical command of the instrument.

To me Gary was a further extension of Scotty. They both came up through bebop. I remember Gary saying that he always wanted to cry like Bird, but on the bass. So he really connected the bass up to what Bird had done.



I was particularly turned on to his free playing and how he used the bass as a sound source. He could, of course, play all the changes. But yet if you just said "play," he had a whole concept. So I was very turned on to Gary's sound and his ability to freely interact.

**Berg:** When did you first start listening to jazz?

**Tusa:** Well, when I was 13 I was really into Ray Brown, who was with Oscar Peterson. I loved the trio. Ray I especially loved for his swing. I was amazed that three guys could sound like a big band. So I was really into playing that style and studying the music, you know, trying to learn the tunes and changes.

I was also listening to other people. Each bass player had something that attracted me. Paul Chambers, for example, was just incredible with Miles. He was a great group player. He had great command over the bow, played beautiful pizzicato and had a great feel for time.

At various points in my development I've studied different bass players. Other players too—people like Coltrane and Bill Evans. Paul Bley was especially important and really one of my idols. Later on I played and recorded with him. We did an album in 1970 called *The Paul Bley Synthesizer Show* with Bobby Moses on drums. I worked with him for almost a year and learned a tremendous amount. It was a good experience.

**Berg:** What happened in the period between your graduation from high school and the gig with Bley?

**Tusa:** I was getting a lot of work experience playing around New York City. It was a combination of clubs, weddings and some jazz gigs. I was just trying to make a living and study. Then I went on the road with a show called *Half A Sixpence*. It was a traveling Broadway show with a bus and truck. I guess that lasted for about seven and a half months. Then I got my letter from Uncle Sam and found myself in the army.

I was very lucky in the service because once you're drafted, you know, they can put you wherever they want to put you. At first I was assigned to the infantry because I didn't have any college. I kept pleading with them, you know, "I'm a musician, I'm a musician!" So I kept auditioning wherever I was and kept scoring 99½ on all the tests. Finally I got transferred to a band. They wanted me to play fluegelhorn and gave me 90 days to learn how. So every morning I'd just sit there for several hours and practice away. I finally got it down. Aside from that, I had a lot of time to play jazz. So I was doing quite a bit of playing, performing, studying and a lot of listening.

When I came back to New York and found a place to stay in the city, I really began to study. That's when I started playing with Paul. At the same time I was involved in a trio called Open Sky with Dave Liebman and Bob Moses.

**Berg:** So that's where you first met up with Dave.

**Tusa:** Right. That was the inception of a relationship that still exists. Unfortunately we weren't able to get a company to record us. The music was not "commercial." So we decided to do it ourselves with Gene Perla. Two albums came out of that—*Open Sky* and *Spirit in the Sky*. Meanwhile, we did many concerts around town—a lot of free things and whatever jobs we could find.

At about the same time I was involved in Free Life Communication, a non-profit orga-

# RALPH MacDONALD

## Banging His Way To The Bank

by russell shaw

Call him a rhythmic renaissance man. Equally at home administering the affairs of his publishing company as he is with the infinite complexities of rhythms the world over, Ralph MacDonald is that rare combination of the creative and the practical, the efficient and flexible, the specific and versatile.

Son of a famous Trinidadian calypso band-leader named Macbeth The Great, MacDonald "remembers the sounds of music from earliest childhood." Ultimately, his home environment exposed him to the type of musical heavies whose favor could do wonders for the career of an original and talented artist. He encountered people like Harry Belafonte, for one, under whose tutelage Ralph developed into a percussionist with a worldwide frame of reference.

During Ralph's tenure with the Belafonte organization, MacDonald began to acquire employment as a rather busy studio sideman. His specialty was, of course, percussion; and the scope of varying vinyl sporting a MacDonald conga was staggering: everything from Eric Gale platters to the pop of James Taylor and Carly Simon.

Recently, Ralph took some time out from his role as a busy studio freelancer to release an album entitled *Sound Of A Drum*. His solo career, bolstered by the many publishing and business interests he has acquired, has done well to improve Ralph's economic standing. Other musical tangents crop up: rather consistent involvement in the oft-misunderstood world of commercial jingle recording is one of the many little-known hats this extraordinary rhythm machine wears.

Thirty-three years of constant exposure to the music business, and to the intricacies of his own craft have combined to produce a player full of sharply pointed precepts and opinions: credos of interest to the musical observer and participant.

**Shaw:** You were exposed to percussion at a very early age. Was it a process of musical osmosis, or was it a constant learning situation where your father would sit you down and teach you chops?

**MacDonald:** From three or four years old I would go around and play drums in the house, just like some kids would pick up an erector set. There were drums everywhere. Of course I was learning—but I had no conscious knowledge of what I had acquired until I was almost 15. I just absorbed it.

**Shaw:** How does a young percussion player like yourself hook up with a Harry Belafonte?

**MacDonald:** When I was younger, I never thought of playing the drums for money. Some guys I knew, though, were playing with Harry Belafonte, and I got in the habit of trailing along. One day, one of the drummers didn't show up, and since they knew I had an aptitude for it, they gave me an audition and hired me right there.



**Shaw:** What did working with Belafonte do for your chops?

**MacDonald:** Broadened them a lot. At the time, which was in the late '60s, Harry was doing a lot of ethnic music—Mexican songs, 9/8 Greek stuff, African tunes, Israeli songs. As percussionist, playing conga, I obviously had to adapt. I feel I got versatile enough to create a need in the music. At the time, most percussion players only played xylophone and mallet stuff. They played bongos but only as a side instrument. Also, there was very little improvisation. When I went from Belafonte to studio work, I couldn't read charts very well, so I depended on my ears.

**Shaw:** How do you feel your approach in the studio varies from other percussionists'?

**MacDonald:** I try to approach and think of all rhythmic instruments for their melodic qualities. The difference between me and other percussion players is that I play a lot of melody on percussion. I'm coming from an angle that percussion is an instrument just as important as a Fender bass or a guitar. I think people are starting to be hip to that philosophy—the general trend has been lately to mix drums "higher" and more prominently than before.

**Shaw:** On your studio work, you cover a good deal of ground. Will you mentally approach a James Taylor session differently than a Gladys Night one?

**MacDonald:** I worked with Gladys when she was on Motown. Basically, all I had to do then was to come in and play the conga part. But let me tell you about *Mockingbird*, which I did with Carly and James. They were gonna can it; the basic track was flawed—way out of meter and focus. Some people think by calling me in they can fix up music that was already wrong. No way I could do that. . . .

**Shaw:** What do you think about disciplinarian producers as opposed to those that give you freedom?

**MacDonald:** If a cat wants a percussion player to hit four beats for eight measures, then they won't call me. No one's gonna pay me triple time for three bars of shakers. People are gonna let me play what I want. At the same time, though, you have to satisfy people. I perform a service. The only way I've maintained my session contacts is by people being happy and telling somebody else.

**Shaw:** Do you have any pet structural theories that you take along with you into the studio?

**MacDonald:** Some cats bring all their gear into the place, and are determined to play everything in their kit. I'll do it only when necessary. Also, many percussionists like to hit all four beats. Not necessarily me; if I can say all I want on the first beat, I'll do so.

**Shaw:** Since you improvise so much, what things in a song give you your cues about how you will fit in?

**MacDonald:** I have to put the form of the song in my mind. I listen for the intro—how long, and if there is one. What the feeling of the chorus or verses is like—does it have an interlude? I also listen for the words.

**Shaw:** Can you give us a typical example of how you've specifically faced this problem?

**MacDonald:** Sure. I was called in by Roberta Flack to play on *Feel Like Making Love*. Obviously it is a love song, as opposed to funk or something like that. I first heard the tune with only bass, drums and piano. Eventually, I put five percussion parts on it. What made me do it? Because the verse said one thing, the chorus another. You keep adding. The builder only sees the outside of the structure but the architect knows what the house is gonna look like. I think my background as a songwriter—being familiar with song structures—gives me an advantage here.

**Shaw:** How do you approach an instrumental date when you don't have those lyrical cues?

**MacDonald:** Oh, you know, the tempos, chord changes and structure. You can instigate certain feelings into the music.

**Shaw:** You are also involved in studio work with commercial jingles. How do you approach this?

**MacDonald:** It is another market entirely. You are talking about making music which is supposed to play a role in determining what people buy. There could be a multi-million ad campaign hinging on your session. Plus, you only have a few seconds to play; before long, the announcer comes in and the music is turned way low. Basically, I'm influenced by the type of product. I might play differently for dog food than for an airline selling flights to Hawaii. Overall, though, you have to realize that the music is not an end in itself; it is just usually to attract people's attention. To a lot of people it is a putdown, but it helps pay the bills.

**Shaw:** You hardly solo. Why?

**MacDonald:** I never have liked just sitting

# SPOTLIGHT GAZETTE

## PHILLIP WILSON

by clifford jay safane

His hands fly across the surface of the drum, creating sound patterns that reflect his own inner music as well as what he hears going on around him. There are whirlwinds of sound followed by surprising bursts of silence. Rhythms are smooth, then jagged. Patterns come and go with endless variations. And the music goes on and on.

"The drum is the first instrument," says percussionist/composer Phillip Wilson. "Without it, you lose all the context." Wilson points to the drum's great communicative powers and how it can project all types of feelings. "When it's good, it brings you out of your seat."

Yet, for all its importance, Wilson believes that the drum has been "pushed down" because people are afraid of rhythm and feeling. Wilson also strongly disagrees with the belief that the drum can only play rhythm and strict time. For him, "time is a universal thing," and doesn't have to be metronomic. "People have a natural rhythm which unfortunately has been pulled out of them." He further explains that human acts such as breathing and walking are rhythmic without necessarily occurring at an even pace. We must understand our bodies and accept that our feelings are natural. It is when we forget our human qualities that we fail to relate to life around us, ourselves, and music.

Although Wilson plays strict time when the context calls for it, he is primarily involved in probing the still-untapped resources of his instrument in the tradition began by Jo Jones in the 1930s and continued by such percussionists as Max Roach, Philly Joe Jones and Elvin Jones. He focuses on exploring feelings and textures—"textures of thought, what you say, the way people talk." Wilson is also a painter: he deals in portraying the physical characteristics of what he is seeing, and tries to carry this sensitivity to texture over to his music.

Wilson's creations dance to an inner pulse. His is a very natural approach. He is able to communicate with his audience because he relates the physical and emotional with music. Wilson explores every inch of his drum set, and some of the results may be foreign to our ears. He may play the underside of a cymbal or the side of a drum, often juxtaposed with a more conventional approach. All his music, however, is played with consummate taste and skill.

22 □ down beat

Wilson was born and raised in St. Louis. As a child, he was interested in music and "always wanted to play." Although he was "playing the drum all the time," he studied other instruments, such as the trumpet and violin, because he "wanted to learn other things." However, the drum has always remained his first love.

Wilson's childhood friends included saxophonist Oliver Lake and trumpeter Lester Bowie, who has been one of the percussionist's most important musical collaborators. Another early acquaintance was saxophonist Julius Hemphill, who had moved to St. Louis from his native Texas. Wilson and Hemphill became musical collaborators in the late 1960s and recorded two albums together in 1971—*'Coon Bid'nness* and *Dogon A.D.* (both on Arista)—under Hemphill's leadership.

In 1960, Wilson went to New York with organist Sam Lazar. Although his playing took him out of the city for extended periods, the percussionist enjoyed his time in New York. When he returned to St. Louis in 1962, Wilson formed the New Jazz Quintet (1962-1963) which included Bowie and Lake. He feels that this was "the best group in St. Louis at the time." The band played straight-ahead bop, although Wilson recalls that "they



JACKI LOCHS

were playing their own kind of thing with free influences. Musicians thought we were crazy because of the new sounds, but the people still liked it."

One of Wilson's most memorable musical experiences was his playing with saxophonist John Coltrane's quartet for a week in St. Louis in 1962. Wilson had first heard Trane play in Cleveland in 1961, and "was blown away." Playing with the saxophonist was a "fantastic experience because the music, the feeling and the man were so warm."

Wilson—along with Bowie and Lake—went back on the road and played with various funk bands. He and Bowie then headed for Chi-

cago, where the two became involved with the AACM. Wilson and Bowie joined forces with reedman and flutist Roscoe Mitchell, and "everyone put much into the music." When Malachi Favors joined the group, the Art Ensemble of Chicago was born. Although the percussionist had been into exploring textures before he joined the group, it was with the Ensemble that he "got into it even more."

Eventually, Wilson decided that it was "time for a change," and joined the Paul Butterfield Blues Band. This was not your typical blues band; Butterfield was an experimenter who played everything from basic Chicago blues to jazz-rock. Wilson enjoyed the opportunity to play in many different musical contexts and his sensitive and dynamic playing greatly contributed to the band's success. The group played some of Wilson's compositions, his piece *Love March* appearing on the *Woodstock* album (Cotillion).

Wilson left Butterfield in 1972 and formed the short-lived band Full Moon with guitarist Buzzy Feiten. That same year, he played with Anthony Braxton at the reedman's legendary Town Hall concert.

Wilson spent 1975 and 1976 in Memphis where he did work for Stax Records, composing songs for such groups as the Bar Kays and playing with Little Milton and Albert King. Last year he returned to New York, where he is currently working with many of the better younger exploratory musicians including saxophonists David Murray and Anthony Braxton, trumpeter Leo Smith, and pianist/composer John Fischer's group Interface, as well as leading his own groups. He has made two recordings under Murray's leadership—*Endangered Species* (Adelphi) and *Flowers For Albert* (India Navigation)—and a forthcoming album with saxophonist Frank Lowe.

When looking back on his musical activities, Wilson reflects on the positive nature of his eclecticism. "It's about all kinds of music. It's about all kinds of people. It's about all kinds of circumstances." He isn't a musical purist and specific styles per se don't interest him. He "has ideas about all kinds of music" and likes to explore different feelings and contexts because "it makes you well-rounded in your music."

As for the future, Wilson is preparing to release his first album as a leader—*Children*—featuring trumpeter Olu Dara and bassist Sironé. He also wants to continue exploring different sounds, wanting "to create something new out of the old." He believes that while "people love music, they are tired of the same old things."

Wilson worries about contemporary jazz

losing its vulnerability. "When you get a lot of recognition, people start noticing themselves and lose sight of why they are making music." It is important for him to always keep music, not fame, in the forefront.

Wilson is glad to be in New York, where he feels "the music comes together. People come here to make it happen." **db**

## ADAM MAKOWICZ

by arnold jay smith

**B**oth Barney Josephson, currently owner of the Cookery, a restaurant with music, and John Hammond, impresario extraordinaire, have had their share of "discoveries." Josephson owned Cafe Society with its concomitant burgeoning talent, and the Hammond scouting mystique has worked its wiles on the American public from Count Basie to Bruce Springsteen. Together they make an unbeatable combination, and in presenting Adam Makowicz (pronounced Ma-ko-vich) they have served the public well.

Makowicz was touted as the "best since Tatum." He was also the victim of the resultant backlash from those who think there should never be another Tatum. In any case, the Polish pianist has all but taken New York as his own during his two-month stay at the Cookery. He was also chosen as the fourth member of a quartet of pianists playing the Newport Jazz Festival-N.Y. ('77) in an Erroll Garner tribute at Carnegie Hall. (The other three were Earl "Fatha" Hines, George Shearing and Teddy Wilson.)

"I was very pleased and honored to be part of the Festival," Makowicz said. "It was an honor to play Carnegie Hall. I had heard so much about it when I was a child." His was a classical background with only the radio for jazz company. He heard most of his jazz from Willis Conover's Voice of America broadcasts. "It wasn't so easy getting records in the '50s as it is now," Adam said. "Now they are more readily available and we can listen to the great jazz stars at will. In past years all we had was radio. I heard big bands first, then I started to hear pianists in my head. Art Tatum was a great influence upon me, but so was Erroll Garner."

Makowicz hastened to add that he never had the intention to copy anyone and he is sorry if any critic has felt that was the case. While it is true that his flowing right hand is reminiscent of Tatum's, his left sometimes leaves something to be desired. There is a definite bass missing. But when he breaks into a sudden stride passage, or opens his arms to the full keyboard length, the Tatum influence is mingled with some Waller and unquestionable Garner in a hammering left hand.

The 36-year-old musician played in his native Poland with Urszula Dudziak before she and her husband Michal Urbaniak emigrated to the States.

"In Poland I play the Fender (Rhodes) piano and acoustic as well. But here I do not have the opportunity to practice on acoustic so I use Fender." The Fender belongs to Urbaniak and the practice takes "all day. Not really all day. I play only a small part of the day, but I think about the music for the rest of the day. I constantly compose in my head."

Hammond has recorded Makowicz for Columbia as a solo artist. The album will contain some original works as well as the standards



he has played at the Cookery. "I didn't think the American public was ready for my original works. I brought along many of them but did not get to play them too often. At concerts they are more readily acceptable, but in the Cookery I like to entertain the people with familiar things."

Hammond took Adam to San Francisco where he appeared before the American Book Publishers Association Convention which was presenting John's new book. John was asked to bring someone he thought was representative of the best in jazz today; he brought Adam.

Adam's first teacher was his mother when he was nine, and at eleven he studied in schools in Rybnik and Katowice and later Krakow. His credits in Poland include playing with trumpeter Tomasz Stanko. "We played together for a long time. I wasn't ready to come to America. It's very hard to play here due to the union restrictions." (American musicians get preference and it is difficult to get a work permit here.) "To make it in New York is even more difficult."

Aiding in the translation was Jan Byrcek of the International Jazz Federation. It was Byrcek who suggested to **db** that European music is lagging when it comes to jazz. They have improvisational music, but it isn't jazz. "We have folk music, Gypsy music and the like, but jazz is now coming into his own," Byrcek stated. "When it does surface it is very definitely European. It is different than in America where you have the roots. We have to develop from what we got second hand."

"We did not have Coltrane or Parker. We had to get it from you," Makowicz added. "We develop jazz from classical music. Americans develop directly."

Although Adam's practice has been on electric piano almost exclusively, he says it doesn't matter to him. "The action is a little firmer on acoustic, but the electric is very good for technique. You can practice technique and dexterity on electric because your fingers can move more quickly. Then you move over to acoustic and you can translate from one to the other. In Warsaw I practice on acoustic because it is my inspiration to compose. Electric is good for the fingers; acoustic sounds inspire my compositions."

Glancing at the pianist at work, one notices a very unrelaxed man. His face is taut and his breaths come like those of a hornman doing circular breathing exercises. His forehead is slightly wrinkled and he does not play easily.

"I am very nervous about coming here to America and especially New York," Adam explains. "I want to play well. I will be better next time because I hope to get a following here."

Next time may not be for awhile. He is due back in the studio for another Columbia session, this time with a rhythm section. The first LP will be out in September, and Adam will be here for the album's release. Future plans are hazy at this time.

"It's very difficult to find a job here in New York City, the center of jazz activity. It's a long wait before one finds a place to play. I have no feeling about what I have done this time. It is difficult to determine. We'll see the next time."

He doesn't really know what he has done. While we were at a table at the Cookery, a number of people came over to him to thank him for the Carnegie Hall concert or for the few moments here this night. One man called him "Donald Lambert reincarnate." That same man then sat down and proceeded to explain to us who Donald Lambert was. "He was an obscure figure who recorded four sides for Victor/Bluebird in the '40s. He probably never left New Jersey. You are just like him only warmer. He was an unbelievable machine."

I turned to Adam and said that he had indeed left an impression. He finally smiled and shrugged his shoulders, still not giving any indication that he understood what had just transpired. **db**

## RYO KAWASAKI

by david kastin

**B**ack in 1973, only a few weeks after Ryo Kawasaki came to the United States to see if he could make it here as a jazz guitarist, he arrived home from shopping and found band-leader Gil Evans standing in front of his door. Ryo's memory of the meeting is still tinged with a sense of wonder—and understandably so. "I came home and there was Gil Evans, and he said, 'I got a gig for you!'"

It seemed that Ryo had gotten his big break. But before he could take over John Abercrombie's recently vacated guitar chair in Evans' band, Ryo ran into a tangle of red tape over his "green card" (the certificate of permanent residency). It is a story that is amusing only in retrospect. Ryo had little reason to suspect that this necessary certification would be rejected since he certainly had a good job lined up. His application was refused. The musician's union, perhaps confusing Ryo with a TV or tape recorder, figured that Gil should "Buy American." They said that there were enough domestic guitar players around without it being necessary for Gil to import one. But Evans insisted, explaining to the narrow-minded bureaucrats that Ryo wasn't some package of tubes and circuits stamped "Made in Japan," nor was he a key factor in the international balance of trade. "Gil told them that he wanted me," Ryo remembers gratefully, "and that he needed someone who understands his music." Evans filled out all the required forms, and with the help of a good lawyer, things were straightened out so Ryo could get down to the business for which he'd come to America—making music.

Ryo Kawasaki was born in Tokyo in 1947, and aside from singing in the school chorus, he hadn't any musical training, nor, aside from a few popular tunes like Brubeck's *Take Five*, had he even heard any jazz. But while he was in high school, a friend took him to one of the jazz coffee houses that had sprung up in Tokyo. "The first record I heard was Kenny

Burrell's *Midnight Blue*. That really turned me on. Then for Christmas, my mother bought me one of those nylon string guitars. I bought some songbooks of standard jazz tunes and learned the chords." He remains completely self-taught, both in music theory and on the guitar.

In college, where he was a physics major with plans to teach science, Ryo played with school bands in some small clubs. After graduation, he decided that he dug Miles and Wes Montgomery more than he did torques and vectors and he began to play professionally. When he was 23, he cut a kind of pop album for a Japanese record company and began doing studio work. "I did three of four years every day from morning till night," he



DAVID KASTIN

recalls with a shudder. "It did develop my reading ability and my playing of different kinds of guitar. I had to do everything." At the same time Ryo was working with his own band, trying to play as much jazz as possible. "After a while I got to the point where I couldn't do it [the studio work] any more, because it's really bad for your heart. I just couldn't take it any more musically."

It was seeing the intense involvement and communication of the American musicians who had begun to visit Japan that inspired Ryo to come to the United States in 1973 to seek his musical fortune. He arrived with a strong background in a traditional jazz style, but he has expanded his range tremendously and he continues to experiment. Along with the fusion which has taken place between jazz and rock (which Ryo certainly expresses in his music) has been a cross-fertilization of Eastern and Western forms. So it shouldn't be any surprise that Ryo's playing also expresses a debt to his oriental roots. "Before, I was looking too forward," he reflects. "I was too much into the electronics, the free sound and the spacey sound. I got to the point where I felt maybe I should look back." In addition to adding certain Japanese effects to his sound (he's been experimenting with an acoustic guitar he modified with six drone strings that approximate the quarter tones of Japanese music), he is also studying Indian ragas and Western classical music.

After his stint with Gil Evans (which included work on Gil's album of arrangements of Jimi Hendrix songs), Ryo has been a sideman for some excellent musicians, including Joe Lee Wilson, Chico Hamilton and (for the last year and a half) for one of the great modern drummers, Elvin Jones. Ryo quickly acknowledges how much he's learned from these associations. Elvin especially has been a powerful inspiration. "It's been a pleasure for me to be working with Elvin because he's such

a great musician. He has a really beautiful musical mind. It's helped me a lot. The simple key of how to play good music is that melody and rhythm are the same thing. I learned that playing with Elvin. His drumming is like melody."

Ryo speaks in a heavily accented English, but he's articulate and has strong opinions about his instrument and about music. A sample follows.

*On Jimi Hendrix:* "What he did with his feelings and with the electronics was very innovative. Now it's common, so it seems like he wasn't necessary. He tried a lot of things and it gave people the confidence to try new things too."

*On Django Reinhardt:* "He's still my favorite. Django had such a style and taste. I can smell something from his playing."

*On rock guitarists:* "I don't like their time, feeling. Eric Clapton and the English style don't swing for me. I can't take it if the music is not swinging. Swinging comes from the heartbeat."

*On jazz clubs and owners:* "I've been working a lot of clubs in the States, but club owners (there are some exceptions) don't have respect for the musician. Someday the musician has to stop and say, 'I don't play even if I'm hungry. I don't play unless he respects my music!' There's so much wrong with the whole system. I guess you can't blame just one part, just club owners. In a way I understand too, I understand everyone has to live, but. . . ."

Ryo's opinions are reinforced by a personal idealism that finds its expression in more than just his words, no matter how honest they are, or how articulately they are spoken. On his first album for an American label under his own name (*Juice*-RCA) all but one of the tunes were original compositions in Ryo's spacey jazz-rock groove, and his arrangements were tight and interesting. But, considering the temptation open to a young musician with his own album on which to show off his playing in this age of virtuosi, Ryo's restraint was remarkable—especially as it was such a conscious act. "I didn't want to just feature the guitar," he explains. "I mean I can always play a lot with Elvin live. I wanted to just get down the tunes and a sound. You have to be sure what you want to play. I want to make a record that I can listen to anytime and I can enjoy it too. If I'm not *sure* what I want to play, I just can't enjoy it." Now that he has developed some ideas that he is anxious to express, he feels that he can feature his own playing with the confidence that his ideas are worth the indulgence.

Ryo's other recorded efforts in America have been as a sideman for Chico Hamilton, Joe Lee Wilson and Gil Evans among others. He's also played with Elvin on the drummer's two most recent albums. Ryo has recorded two albums of his own for the Japanese label, East Wind. His recent release, *Eight Mile Road*, on which he played, wrote all the tunes, picked the musicians, arranged and produced, is doing quite well in Japan. "It won some award," he says vaguely, "best recording or something."

Speculating on what he'd like to do in the future, Ryo mentions getting another American album recorded (after he finds a new label), and putting together a band of his own for a possible Japanese tour. Then his idealism surfaces again—"I'd like to do only certain clubs," he says. "Mostly I'd like to do concerts and recording. Because I don't want

to work for people who don't respect me." Then, catching a glimpse of his wife and five-month-old daughter, he adds (tempering idealism with the realities of life) a big "If possible!"

"I would also want to pay reasonable money to my sidemen to support *their* families," he continues. "Because I know a lot of leaders taking advantage of their sidemen. There's too many ugly things, but the music doesn't have to be that way. 'If possible,'" he reminds himself, "everything is, 'if possible.'"

db

## HANNIBAL

by brett j. primack

He's an exciting player to watch. Hannibal's movements correspond to the intensity of his playing—when he's building to a climax, his trumpet moves in rapid vertical movements. But when Hannibal's blowing *The Saints*, he stands erect, marching in place. During a recent performance with his group, the Sunrise Orchestra, Hannibal played everything from *Hello, Dolly* to *Naima*.

His remarkable sound reflects his equally remarkable life. Take, for example, his name, Hannibal. During a gig at the Blue Coronet in Brooklyn with Roy Haynes' Hip Ensemble, the trumpeter, the tall Texan named Marvin Peterson, noticed a turbaned stranger examining him from a street window overlooking the club. After six nights of this madness, the trumpeter stepped outside to speak with the figure robed in white.

The stranger told the trumpeter that he'd been watching him for some time and that his name didn't fit. He told Marvin how a name should reflect the strengths of the individual it represents and that "Marvin Peterson" did not accurately represent the careful balance of power and tranquility found in the trumpeter. Marvin agreed, having never felt very much for his given name. The stranger gave him another, Hannibal.

As time passed, Marvin Peterson felt a cer-



VERLY OAKLAND

tain closeness to the name. He studied and discovered links between the general and the trumpeter. They're both warriors—one on the battlefield, the other on the bandstand. And they share a fondness for elephants. Consequently, Marvin Peterson became Hannibal.

His roots lie in Smithville, Texas. Born November 11, 1948, his first musical influence was his mother, a self-taught pianist. Hannibal started on the drums but had to switch.

"My mother told me I'd have to change in-

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struments because the drums made too much noise when I practiced. I had a big Civil War drum and big drumsticks. Oh man, when you beat them, you could hear it all over the projects. So I went back to school and saw these pretty horns lying on the table. I saw this trumpet. My band director said he thought I'd make a good trumpet player so he let me play the cornet. I started playing the cornet and I really liked it, man. The sound, the fury, the insanity, the beauty of it. The strength of it, the excitement."

During a run in with amnesia, Hannibal discovered just how important music was to him. While in the land of forgetfulness, the only thing that reached Hannibal was the music of Trane. It brought him back to reality.

Shortly thereafter, at the age of 14, Hannibal led his first band, the Soul Masters, backing such visiting acts as Etta James and T-Bone Walker. And with the Soul Masters, he first encountered the drug menace.

"We had this singer, man, he was incredible. I don't know anyone who sings like he does. . . . I mean, I'm 14 years old and I'm going to get the singer in the alley. He's up against the garbage cans nodding, foaming at the mouth. . . ."

"I want the music I play, I want my entire being to be so completely against that, that it's amazing. Everything I do, I want to be anti that. I want it to be clear as to where I stand in regard to anything that brings about a state of human waste."

After three years at North Texas State, Hannibal came to New York. His first job was an East Coast tour with Rahsaan Roland Kirk, then work with Roy Haynes and Pharoah Sanders. Speaking of his days with Pharoah, he says, "I had some great moments with that band. At one point, he really had, undoubtedly, the most exciting, the most creative band. Some times we'd play three and a half hours straight and people wouldn't move when we finished, they couldn't move."

Hannibal also has high praise for Gil Evans. "That's one of the few big bands I would play in. Many times people would ask me to play in a band because of my range but when I got in Gil's band, he told me I could play any part I wanted to. When I play high, it's for a reason, it's not sensationalism or some fancy two-bit spur. With Gil, I was able to play! I love to read music when it has emotion, strong emotion. He's a very kind man. It was very valuable big band experience."

In 1974, Hannibal recorded and released his debut album as a leader, *Children Of The Fire*. In addition to developing his sense of the business, the album represents his first attempt at formulating the sounds that have always been a part of him—the sounds of nature, fondly remembered from the early days on his grandfather's farm.

"All of those sounds and smells are still in me. I like the river sounds. Sometimes you have to listen very quietly to hear anything. That's when I really like it. And one of the best feelings in the world is to have mud squish up between your toes. And smell that rain after it's rained a nice spring rain. And that grass. Smell that grass. Ohhh man. So nice."

After the release of *Children Of The Fire*, on his own Sunrise label, Hannibal formed the Sunrise Orchestra. An essential part of the Sunrise Orchestra's sound is cellist Diedre Murray. After years of searching for that right sound, Hannibal practically tripped over her.

"I always had a sound inside me, sometimes I could hear it, sometimes I couldn't. I never knew what instrument it was. At first, I thought about getting an animal to be in the band. I thought about an eagle, but how can you get an eagle to travel and play whenever you want it to play? No way. Then, one day, I was home and this sister was passing by. I stopped her and asked for her number. It was so natural the way it happened. Then I called her and the minute I heard her play I knew that was it. Now mind you, I've heard hundreds, thousands of cellists, but the way she plays, the way she has developed the sound of the cello, it's amazing. And I have the fortune of experiencing, finding out what the sound is at this age, this particular physical stage of my life. Some people never find that. I have so many blessings, so much to be thankful for."

In addition to Diedre Murray on the cello and Hannibal on trumpet and koto, the Sunrise Orchestra consists of Steve Neil on bass, Kalid on piano and Don Moye on drums. Moye was recruited in typical Hannibal style.

" . . . I was sleeping, I was in a dead sleep one day when something told me to get up and go down to this studio downtown. I said, 'What?' I tried to go back to sleep but something said get up. I got up and went down there, I didn't know what the hell I was doing, I just acted on impulse. I went in there, half asleep, and I heard this drummer playing. I said, 'Damn, that's the cat!' Right after, we spoke and he said 'Yeah!' I went home and went back to sleep. But when I got home, I wrote his name in my journal. Man, he has that sound, that quality I hear in the music I write, just like Diedre. . . ."

Listening to Hannibal, one can't help wondering what the trumpeter feels when he plays. "So many different things come to mind. But I think most of all, most often, I get the feeling of being immortal. I get the feeling that there's nothing but change. There's nothing but motion. And as a result, I see fear as being the most carnal, the most ridiculous thing. Words become very meaningless, words like death, because in relationship to motion, death is something that's only feared by ignorant people. I get that feeling most often and I try to convey that many times when I play—there's nothing to be afraid of. But there's no feeling like walking out on the stage and seeing those people there, all that energy before you and knowing that you can do two things: You can develop a relationship or you can destroy a potential friendship. In other words, you have the ability to affect these people when you play."

This summer, as Hannibal and the Sunrise Orchestra tour Europe, MPS-BASF will release an album recorded live at last year's Berlin Jazz Festival. Hannibal believes this album will begin to give his band the exposure necessary to get his music to the people. Bothered by labels, Hannibal won't classify his music.

"I learned to play all kinds of music. When I was in high school, I played Bach's *Seven Inventions For Trumpet*. I like that. I like Ravel and people like that who have more horizontal and parallel movement. But sometimes I'll play a country and western tune or a gospel song, sometimes I'll play with nothing in mind, I'll just breathe through the instrument. As a result, I don't consider myself any certain kind of musician. I love to play any kind of music, Irish folk songs, any damn thing, if it has meaning, if it has momentum." **db**

## JOHN WOOD

by lee underwood

When you listen to the poignant melodies, the impressionistic harmonies, and the shimmering, almost translucent lyricism of *Until Goodbye* (Los Angeles Records, LAPR-1002), you will not be surprised that solo pianist John Wood, 26, lists Bill Evans, Gary Burton and early Tim Buckley among his major influences.

In the same breath, however, he also includes Joe Frazier, Muhammad Ali and Willie Mays. "To me," said Wood in his converted recording studio apartment in Holmby Hills, California, just outside of Bel Air, "the jazz mind and the mind of a great athlete are very much the same. You need incredible discipline and commitment; you need rhythm and timing; you need the ability to respond instantly, without thinking, to whatever happens immediately in front of you."

"During the last seven years, I've been watching Joe Frazier fight-films. To me, Joe Frazier among prize fighters is comparable to Elvin Jones or Art Blakey among jazz drummers. He has a fire and an ability to apply pressure non-stop that has proved to be insurmountable to his opponents for 95% of his career. He is incredibly aggressive and persistent. Indestructible."

"I sense a strong common denominator between those experiences in music and those experiences in watching Joe Frazier fight. It makes me want to try to get that same feeling of forward motion and indomibility. It makes me want to go to the piano and sit down and 'smoke,' you know?"

The pervading dreaminess, intimacy and sensuality of *Until Goodbye*, and those yet-to-be-recorded Frazier-derived qualities of "forward motion and indomibility" have crisscrossed in John Wood's soul ever since he gave up his high school dream of becoming a professional baseball pitcher and began playing the piano at the age of 15.

"Once I discovered the piano," he said, "I never stepped into the batter's box again. The transition from the unquestioned path I was going to take, to the musical path I have taken since, was made quickly, painlessly and inexorably. I now apply the principles of athletics to the music I create."

"I was a sophomore when I started playing, and it was the '60s, a tumultuous, emotional period in American history. While others were listening to Bob Dylan and the Beatles, however, I was listening to people like Bill Evans, Tim Buckley, Gary Burton, Joe Henderson, Dexter Gordon and Art Blakey. I had their pictures all over my walls, because they were my heroes."

"I tried to go into the studio and record with friends, but they were not steeped in jazz the way I was. In order to make music that was really saying something I had to do it myself. From childhood's hour on, my language has been the language of jazz."

Wood's childhood hour began in Nashville, Tennessee, on November 1, 1950. When John was six, his father moved to Los Angeles and founded Dot Records (and now owns Ranwood Records).

Although John has been studying and playing by himself or with friends for 11 years, *Until Goodbye* is his first commercial release. Except for *Cole Porter*, which he co-wrote



GREGG HYMAN

with his piano teacher Ernie Hughes in 1969, all of the tunes are improvised on acoustic piano. On side two, bassist Tony Dumas joins him. And, except for some tasty bell-like electric piano embellishments on the song *Tim Buckley*, the entire album is done acoustically.

"I came to the piano about the same time I started listening to Bill Evans," he said. "And I'm not giving up anything by playing out of my Bill Evans influence.

"I stay inside harmonically, because I'm trying to get at something more tonal, something prettier than dissonance or atonality. That's just the way I play. That's my preference. My major concern is in being melodic, in trying to sing my own way. What I play is what I hear.

"Bill Evans and Tim Buckley have been my shining stars of inspiration through all the years. Listening to Bill Evans, for example, has resolved all questions that might arise regarding acoustic and electric instruments. I no longer fear being called 'conservative,' because Bill plays just exactly like he did in 1967.

"His particular method of evolution has not been to change external elements. Instead, he evolves totally within the context of his own music.

"He doesn't really want to touch a synthesizer, and what little electric piano he plays is purely an auxiliary thing.

"You don't have to bring a new sound or a wall of amplifiers into your group. What you do have to do is bring a new nuance to a voicing you've been playing every night for 10 or 20 years.

"Like Bill Evans, (the late) Tim Buckley was always able to conjure up a very special kind of tender introspection in his early albums, a special kind of intimacy that was close to a whisper, full of promise and strength.

"Strength does not have to be blatant or aggressive or dissonant. Strength can emerge from even the softest ballad. When you listen to Tim sing *Love From Room 109*, or Bill Evans play *Danny Boy*, man, that's powerful!

"Tim's greatest strength and greatest power was in his restraint. Both Tim and Bill could take it down so quiet that the clock on the wall seemed to stop ticking."

Wood considers the "fusion" music of the '70s to be "a virtuosity trip—just how fast you can play. The kind of music I am striving to play is not going to sound at all like Al Di Meola, Return To Forever or Weather Report. I hope to extend the forms of straight-ahead solo piano or piano trio/quartet jazz.

"Stylistically, I'm not doing anything significantly different from what has gone down before. I'm just participating in and extending

a long, deep heritage of American jazz.

"Basically, I keep going back to people like Art Blakey, John Coltrane, Horace Silver, Joe Henderson. Gary Burton and Bill Evans. And with Chick Corea, I'm still 'binging' on *Now He Sings, Now He Sobs*, because that is the way I want to play. I inevitably sacrifice new-music listening time by spending so much time listening to records made in years gone by. But that is just kind of where I'm at, you know?"

John has only recently begun to perform publicly. "I'm going at this like a boxer," he said. "If I can play only one gig a month that's good and that works, then that's groovy. I'm slow, I guess, and lazy and stubborn, but in a special kind of way I'm waiting, working, planning.

"I don't have a group right now, so I listen to records, watch athletics on film here at home, and I read. I go to the piano everyday, and I play, not a specified number of hours, but out of my feeling for doing it. Right now, I'm getting back into playing four or five hours a day, because I want to be playing my very best when I do go out.

"My progress will be a gradual fade-up, slow, but very steady. Whatever recognition I get will be built on something solid and human, not something that was created and supplied for economic reasons. The only thing you can hope to achieve in music is just being yourself. If you can do that, then you've done it all." **db**

## JEFF PORCARO

by ron cohen

The bespectacled young drummer taps his hi-hat as the band skips gently into a new tune. Soon both his hands are fluttering between the hi-hat and the snare. He bares his teeth smiling, almost. Quickly, like magic, his hand is hovering over the bell of his ride cymbal as he drops his stick upon it. The music is growing louder. The hi-hat is driven by his foot now, up and down very fast. His arms are churning around the drum set, filling gaps in



the music with thundering rolls. A guitar screams, another follows. The energy of the music and the musicians continues to rise. The drummer is pushing the music even harder, he jumps from his seat as he reaches for his cymbals. One crashes, then another and another, then two cymbals and he's standing; he looks as if he is going crazy.

The drummer is Jeff Porcaro (pronounced poor-car-o) who besides owning one of the most frequently misspelled and mispronounced names in the music business, also

owns a very impressive list of credits. At the age of 23 he is already an experienced and very successful studio musician. Over the last four years he has recorded with artists such as Walter Becker and Donald Fagen of Steely Dan, Boz Scaggs, Seals and Crofts, Barbra Streisand, Jackson Browne, and most recently with Daryl Hall and John Oates. Jeff has played some jazz with Hampton Hawes and the Larry Carlton/Robben Ford band of which he says, "I get nervous, but it's a challenge."

Perhaps a bigger challenge is the toll Jeff's body takes because of his explosive playing. "The one drag is the pain, the physical pain that I go through. I used to get all these cramps, and the last two years I've been waking up and my knuckles have been real stiff. Doctors say it is traumatic arthritis, self-induced. I love playing live gigs but sometimes what I put out, my bones, the structure of my body can't take it." When it was mentioned that he looks as if he might collapse during some drum solos, Jeff shrugged, then laughed, "That's always a good ending."

Luckily for Jeff, success as a studio drummer makes it possible for him to regulate his playing. Nowadays he can pick and choose who he works for and whether or not he plays live. But Jeff recalls his first session as "being a drag. They weren't big albums, they were people's first albums. It was like a three hour session, four tunes maybe, the charts out there, everything laid out, there wasn't too much imagination involved. Still it takes talent to play those types of sessions. Sessions that I may do now, and a lot of people do... all the people you work for are loose and nobody's worried about when the break is. I've been on a session where the string players, when it's time for the break, in the middle of a take, all of a sudden the strings are gone. I can't believe it."

If Jeff sounds annoyed, it is only because of his enthusiasm for playing. He started at a very early age. His father, Joe, a studio percussionist and a noted teacher, got him going. "My dad was doing the Hartford Symphony and all of us, my other two brothers Mike and Steve, were taking lessons from him at the same time. We would go down with him on the weekends to the drum shop and he would find some free time from his regular students and give us lessons." Beyond taking lessons, Jeff was teaching himself and copying those studio player techniques exactly as he heard them on record. At the same time, he was copying contemporary pop groups. "It was just a combination of copying all of these cats' techniques. And then, of course, what would happen was that we would have a high school band. When our band went out I would apply beats and figures and things that I learned from the records, and eventually... I thought it was good."

It wasn't long before Jeff recorded his first album, right around the time of his seventeenth birthday. Soon after came a job with Sonny and Cher, then Seals and Crofts, then Steely Dan.

"Steely Dan was my favorite group even before I knew who they were. I thought they were a bunch of bikers from up north (California). They looked so mean and bad on the inside jacket of their album, *Can't Buy A Thrill*. But I thought they were it... harmonically, the lyrics, man. Becker and Fagen blow my mind. And still to this day, they are it, they are what should be happening now."

Jeff's respect for Steely Dan does not stop

him from listening to other kinds of music. "I like listening to everything, because as far as sessions go, you are called upon to imitate certain things and I think it's a groove if you can imitate those and be authentic."

Working on a daily basis in the studios, Jeff speaks frankly about them. "Some (studios) drive me up the wall. I would never walk in some again, I don't care who it was for. I just don't like feeling uncomfortable. When it comes to playing, I find the best results when it's loose, when it's relaxed and everybody is laughing and having a good time." Jeff feels the sound is the most important consideration. "The playing of the music, showing up on time, blue carpeting and all that is nice, but the sounds gotta be there. There are dates where the playing has been phenomenal, yet you go back and listen to it (the recording) and it just doesn't sound good."

Recently, Jeff and arranger/composer David Paich (who co-wrote much of Boz Scaggs' triple platinum *Silk Degrees*) have been in the process of forming a band of their own. Jeff enjoys the studio role but says of the new band that "I get to be more creative . . . and get back to the old sound of a group . . . a good old rock 'n' roll band . . . with an identity. What kind of identity? What type of music—music that will give you a stiff neck." **db**

## CALDERA

by lee underwood

Caldera's blend of intricate Latin rhythms, virtuoso jazz improvisations and electrified rock 'n' roll energy is a direct reflection and extension of the colorfully varied international backgrounds of its six members.

George Strunz, the group's guitarist and primary organizer, was born in Costa Rica in 1944. Because his father was in the State Department, Foreign Service, young George was raised in Colombia (South America), Canada, Arizona and Spain. He began playing guitar at 13, was a professional flamenco guitarist at 17, and became enamored of the electric possibilities of the instrument at 20. He founded Caldera in 1976.

Eduardo ("Eddie") del Barrio was born in Argentina in 1937. Both of his parents were professional classical pianists. Eduardo began playing piano at the age of five. "All of my early works were influenced by Shostakovich, Stravinsky and Bartok," he said. "Classical music was my first love. But when I began playing the piano professionally back in the '50s, I realized that I could not work without knowing what was happening in jazz and pop. Now that I have been working in jazz, I have numerous influences—Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock, Joe Zawinul, and many others."

Saxophonist Steve Tavaglione, one of Caldera's original members, also grew up with music from the time he was born (Riverside, California, 1950). His father was an opera singer, his mother a classical pianist. His uncle, a jazz saxophone player, gave him a clarinet when he was 10. His early influences were Duke Ellington, Jimmie Lunceford and Benny Goodman, "but after discovering hop, my ears began to open much wider. Today I am a record addict who enjoys everybody from John Coltrane to Cannonball Adderley, Weather Report, Hans Werner Henze, Edgard Varese, Eberhard Weber and Jan Garbarek, who is my favorite saxophone player."

28 □ down beat

Born and raised in northern Brazil, percussionist Mike Azevedo, 27, received his first bongo when he was six. By the time he arrived in the United States in 1968, he had become an accomplished percussionist (and bassist). After playing with various Latin, soul and rock groups, he finally landed a job with the Paul Winter Consort. By the time he joined Caldera as one of its original members, he had also performed with Gato Barbieri, the Rolling Stones, Flora Purim and Airto.

Born in Miami, bassist Dean Cortez, 19, later lived in Puerto Rico. He has played with Willie Bobo, the Burbank Symphony Orchestra, the Manhattans and the Drifters. Drummer Carlos Vega, 20, was born in Cuba, raised in southern California, and has played with John Klemmer, Willie Bobo and Mark/Almond.

George Strunz's lightning fast flamenco rhythms and McLaughlin-style jazz/rock horizontal lines, Eduardo del Barrio's classically-oriented compositions and Corea-influenced piano runs, and Steve Tavaglione's virtuosic Shorter/Adderley/Garbarek saxophone sojourns all fuse together over Azevedo's Brazilian percussion, Vega's Cuban drumming and Cortez's Latin/funk bass lines.

It is no wonder that the cover of Caldera's first album, *Caldera* (Capitol ST-11571), produced by Wayne Henderson, is an illustration symbolically depicting South America's geographical "elbow" snuggling cozily into the "nook" of Africa.

Their second album, *Sky Islands*, produced by Larry Dunn, George Strunz and Eduardo del Barrio, features several Latin jazz/rock pieces, three very short overdrubbed "self-duets" (by Strunz, Barrio and Azevedo), and three compositions utilizing the lushly voiced South American string arrangements of Eduardo's brother, Jorge del Barrio.

Much as McLaughlin's original Mahavishnu Orchestra, Return To Forever, Santana, Weather Report and Al DiMeola, Caldera brings its own degree of adventure, virtuosity and international awareness to its original brand of '70s fusion music.

According to pianist del Barrio, "George is the force behind the whole band. He is the one who pushes it and makes it happen. When he originally called me, however, I was involved with another Latin band. Because I composed 90% of their music, I did not want to leave."

"But the third day George called me, I had happened to buy the *J Ching*. The first thing I asked the book was, 'Should I join George?' I threw the coins, and they came up with Hexagram 50, 'The Caldron,' which in Spanish is 'Caldera,' and it said I should go through with it. We all liked the idea of using the name Caldera, and using the fiftieth symbol on the back of the first album."

"The fiftieth symbol represents all of the cultures coming together and creating new ideas—the caldron—which is the idea behind what we are doing," saxophonist Tavaglione says.

Leader Strunz says, "We have a Latin rhythmic foundation, but we are really Pan-American because of our widely varied backgrounds—Argentina, Brazil, Spain, America, etc. We also used trombonist Raul de Souza on the first album, and, recently, we just added Hector Andrade to our regular group: he adds his Cuban style of percussion playing to Mike's Brazilian style."

"Beyond playing acoustically, we are using electric devices to create new electric sounds," Tavaglione says, "not only on the

guitar and keyboards, but on my horns as well, because electronic sounds have not been explored on the saxophones as much as on guitar or piano.

"Also, our tunes are set up for a lot of improvisation. We're a blowing group, with a lot of interplay and raw improvisation between soloists, especially live."

Strunz eagerly asserts the group's emphasis on guitar. "Some of our main influences include John McLaughlin—the genius of the guitar—and Jimi Hendrix, Sabicas and Paco de Lucia. There may indeed be similarities between what we are doing and what some of the other fusion groups are doing, Al DiMeola, for example. But he heads his own unit, and his energy is the focus for the whole thing. With us it is a group endeavor. We are not oriented toward just a guitar or just a saxophone. It's a group interplay.

"Once the medium is established—in this case electric fusion music—the subtlety is in the differentiation within the medium. This type of music is new, and it is going to get bigger and bigger."

"It doesn't make sense when people say fusion groups sound the same," Steve believes. "If you go back to the jazz of the '50s, for example, you always had an acoustic bass player who walked. You had a drummer who played the basic jazz 'ride' on his cymbals. You had a piano player who 'comped.' And you had a horn or two that played bebop lines. You could say they all sounded the same, but obviously they did not."

Del Barrio points out another aspect of Caldera's music. "We do many things that many people are not hip to. On our second album, for example, *Sky Islands*, which will be released soon, we start *Carnavalito* exactly—*exactly*—as it is played by Indians in Argentina. We mix those rhythms with the rhythms of Brazil and Cuba and modernize everything else, using electric instruments. Most people here are just not aware of those rhythms. They think only of bossa nova. Bossa nova is completely outdated. We do *not* play bossa nova."

"People are very hung up labeling things. We just try to make music that feels good to us and sounds good. We never discuss style, or what-is-this or what-is-that. You either like it or you don't. The rest is nonsense. Like Stravinsky, we are not hung up with the words about the music. Is this modern music? Is this jazz? We just play what we like, and that's it."

"Nor do we just stick with riffs. *Guanacaste*, for example, is structured ABCD. It is not at all a tune. There are several parts to it. *Carnavalito* is the same thing."

Strunz says, "Some people want to hear a tune such as *'Round Midnight*, with two or more chord changes per measure. But this is 1977, which orientates more toward modality with changes than toward a strict series of changes with the melody traversing over them."

"However, a lot of our tunes do have changes, especially in the bridges. In the middle section of *Pegasus* on *Sky Islands*, for instance. There are many changes, with a melody going through them. It's a short section used as an event that leads to another modal climate, where you establish a solo or a new rhythmic figure."

"You see, on our first album, *Caldera*, we were only a month old as a group, and we were just getting acquainted," Tavaglione explains. "We had no extensive studio work as a group, so we had to follow the suggestions of the engineer and producer. We didn't know how to be creative on the technical side."



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★★★★ excellent, ★★★ very good,  
★★ good, ★ fair, ★ poor

## THE 360 DEGREE MUSIC EXPERIENCE

IN: SANITY—Black Saint BSR 0006/7: *Tradewinds; In: Sanity Suite* (Part I—*Skull Job—Confine Of Mine; Dr. Urrutia; Sane Major; Bye Centennial March; Separation Tag; Part II—TM's Top—Introduction; Flute Melody; Ensemble; Separation Tag; Part III—Complete Operation—Drum Transition; Francis' Riff; Bluiett-Azar; Sunil-Cecil; Cecil; Francis' Riff; Azar-Bluiett; Burrell; Francis' Riff; Separation Tag; Open; Full, Deep And Mellow; Sahara.*

Personnel: Keith Marks, flute; Francis Haynes, steel drums; Hamiet Bluiett, baritone sax, clarinet, flute; Azar Lawrence, tenor sax; Titos Sompá, conga; Sunil Garg, sitar; Cecil McBee, acoustic bass; Dave Burrell, acoustic piano, organ, celeste; Beaver Harris, drums; Steel Ensemble (Haynes, soprano; Roger Sardinha, soprano; Coleridge Barbour, alto; Alston Jack, tenor; Michael Sorzano, tenor; Steve Sardinha, bass; Lawrence McCarthy, iron) on *Sahara* only.

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This invigorating two disc set is built upon empathic interactions among musicians whose mutual respect and shared musical vision are obvious. Fusing together elements from the Afro-American, Caribbean and Indian traditions, the 360 Degree Music Experience projects a joyful ebullience and spirituality brimming with affirmations of life.

The ensemble was founded in 1968 by leader Beaver Harris, whose percussive push has powered such stalwarts as Sonny Rollins, Thelonious Monk and Joe Henderson. Musical direction is provided by pianist Dave Burrell, best known for his collaborations with Archie Shepp. The group, however, is a cooperative venture, a fact given proof by the virtually equal contributions made by all hands.

*Tradewinds* is Burrell's sultry homage to Hawaii (he majored in music at the University of Hawaii in the late '50s). All is serene with rhythmic equatorial breezes wafting through the expansive space of the lyrical flute/bari doubled line. Tranquility is then shattered by the entrance of Lawrence's primordial tenor typhoon.

Harris' *In: Sanity Suite* is an absorbing three part, 30 minute musical allusion to the creative process and to such paradoxical antinomies as sanity/insanity, order/anarchy and written/spontaneous composition. In the course of the dialectic series of fragmentations and recombinations, the group freely moves among powerful ensembles, virtuosic solos and strong collective improvisations. High points include the ironic *Bye Centennial March*, Burrell's lovely celeste work (*Introduction*), Harris' mellow skin and woody resonances (*Drum Transition*), Haynes' steel drumming (*Francis' Riff*), McBee's buzzing bass (*Cecil*), saxophonic fireworks (*Bluiett-Azar*), Keith Marks' fluent articulations (*Flute Melody*), seething ad libitum ensembles (*Francis' Riff*), and the downward cascading motif

30 □ down beat

which concludes each of the three sections (*Separation Tag*).

*Open* is a 21 minute spontaneous composition dedicated to Jimmy Garrison. Essayed by the trio of Bluiett, Burrell and Harris during the last phases of the illness which eventually claimed the renowned bassist's life, the performance is a tribute to Garrison's intensity and indomitable spirit. The result is an awesome torrent of Niagara-like energy. Bluiett's bari issues forth everything from subterranean quakes to howling harmonics. Burrell thrashes and crashes with Tayloresque abandon. Harris turns and churns with ineluctable insistence. Given the free format, the varied currents generated by each musician flow with an amazing coherence thereby giving the performance an unusual degree of substance and structure.

Bluiett's *Full, Deep And Mellow* is a vibrantly warm ballad in which the ensemble demonstrates its ability to handle elastic tempo fluctuations. After the head, Bluiett travels through the tune's harmonic markers with an ease that encompasses both inside and outside perspectives. Francis Haynes' calypso-inflected *Sahara* combines the Steel Ensemble (seven steel drummers) and the 360 Degree Music Experience in a carnivalesque celebration of good times and spirited camaraderie. —berg

## BOB MARLEY & THE WAILERS

EXODUS—Island ILPS 9498: *Natural Mystic; So Much Things To Say; Guiltiness; The Heathen; Exodus; Jamming; Waiting In Vain; Turn Your Lights Down Low; Three Little Birds; One Love/People Get Ready.*

Personnel: Marley, vocals, rhythm guitar and percussion; Aston "Familyman" Barrett, bass, guitar and percussion; Carlton Barrett, drums and percussion; Tyrone Downie, keyboards, percussion and backing vocals; Alvin "Seeco" Patterson, percussion; Julian (Junior) Murvin, lead guitar; Rita Marley, Marcia Griffiths & Judy Mowatt (The I Threes), backing vocals.

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In last year's *Rastaman Vibration*—the most popular reggae album Stateside to date—Bob Marley elected to run a modified musical course and take a step back from any overt revolutionary Rastafarian stance. While that made for mature and alluring (if somewhat aloof) music, it raised the hackles of countless critics who preferred to see Marley rise or fall waving a Rastafarian flag. Apparently the gunmen who tried to murder him and his wife in Jamaica last year preferred to see him fall with no flag at all.

Perhaps Marley is less resourceful or articulate than many of us originally perceived, or maybe the record business, as I suspect, has a way of diluting fervor. In any case, *Exodus* is a confused, irresolute effort, although no different than the bulk of recent emasculated reggae releases (with the notable exception of Peter Tosh's *Equal Rights*). Marley, however, professes that the thrust in his instance is one of spiritual growth: the inscrutable mystic who is in—but not of—the world. To those who demand the fire this time, *Exodus* will prove disappointing; to those enticed by Marley's reggae *cum* r&b conjurations, it will likely suffice. But it's hard to imagine anyone finding it vital. *Exodus* possesses more of an air than any distinct theme, moves with the finality more of a gesture than a blow.

The first side is a mini-religiopolitical epic, opening with the embrace of possible mystical liberation (*Natural Mystic* and *So Much Things To Say*), proceeding through the obli-

gatory pedantic moral denunciations (*Guiltiness* and *The Heathen*), and culminating in the reverie—or prophecy?—of a still distant migratory deliverance (*Exodus*). Marley brandishes a patient temperament throughout the cycle, a sage evaluation that refuses to surrender to notions of vengeance or activism. Plainly, this is not a call to battle but a celebration of the righteous spirit's ability to overcome. The question, though, is does the spirit truly set you free? Are visions—be they induced by ganja or God—enough to tolerate or obscure squalor and oppression? If Marley knows the answer, he hasn't disclosed it this time.

Oddly, the second side, comprised of conventional love songs, sets better, allowing one to focus on Marley's increasing vocal and musical command. His ability as an r&b singer is potently effective. He can scat with exotic urbanity or soar with inventive inflection, betraying an uncompromising romantic affinity. *Waiting In Vain*, with its haunting major seventh chords and a jazzy guitar break, is the album's sole bonafide classic, a beauty worthy of Smokey Robinson's finest moments gone past.

Should Marley resolve his thematic ambivalence and reassert his clarity of vision, then, coupled with his striking musical growth, he will once more prove awesome indeed. But if, as he claims, his is a mystical direction, we can only hope for the best (and that we haven't already seen that best). At least he wears his guise well. Like real mystics, he is sly and obscure and increasingly content to communicate on some private, veiled level.

—gilmore

## JOHN COLTRANE

THE OTHER VILLAGE VANGUARD TAPES—Impulse AS 9325: *Chasin' The Trane; Spiritual; Untitled Original; India; Greenleeves; Spiritual (another version).*

Personnel: Coltrane, soprano and tenor sax; Eric Dolphy, alto sax, bass clarinet; McCoy Tyner, piano; Elvin Jones, drums; Reggie Workman, Jimmy Garrison, bass (tracks 3, 4); Garvin Bushell, oboe, contrabassoon; Ahmed Abdul-Malik, oud (track 4).

\*\*\*\*\*

These recordings, stemming from a four day period in November of 1961, further document a period that is well represented on posthumous Coltrane recordings: *Impressions* and the first *Village Vanguard Tapes* come immediately to mind. This album can stand up there with the best of them.

Much of the musical sparks here result from the union of Coltrane with Eric Dolphy. Although subsequent individual recordings later revealed Dolphy to be more frantic than most of 'Trane's work, they performed well together, fronting the legendary Tyner-Jones-Garrison group. Here their playing is represented on several tracks, highlighted by a breakneck, torrid series of bartered soli on *Taking The 'Trane*, and a harsh yet powerful interchange during *Untitled Original* which fortunately is kept within the bounds of tonality via Jimmy Garrison's pulsating stops on bass.

At this point, Coltrane was also discovering the bases of his so-called meditative sound, one which would harbinger his basic approaches until his death. Two prima facie evidences of the coming transformation are provided here in the contrasting versions of *Spiritual* and the musically ecumenical *India*.

It's hard to tell that the two renditions of *Spiritual* actually are those of the same song. The first version, featuring Trane on a dreamy, sur-

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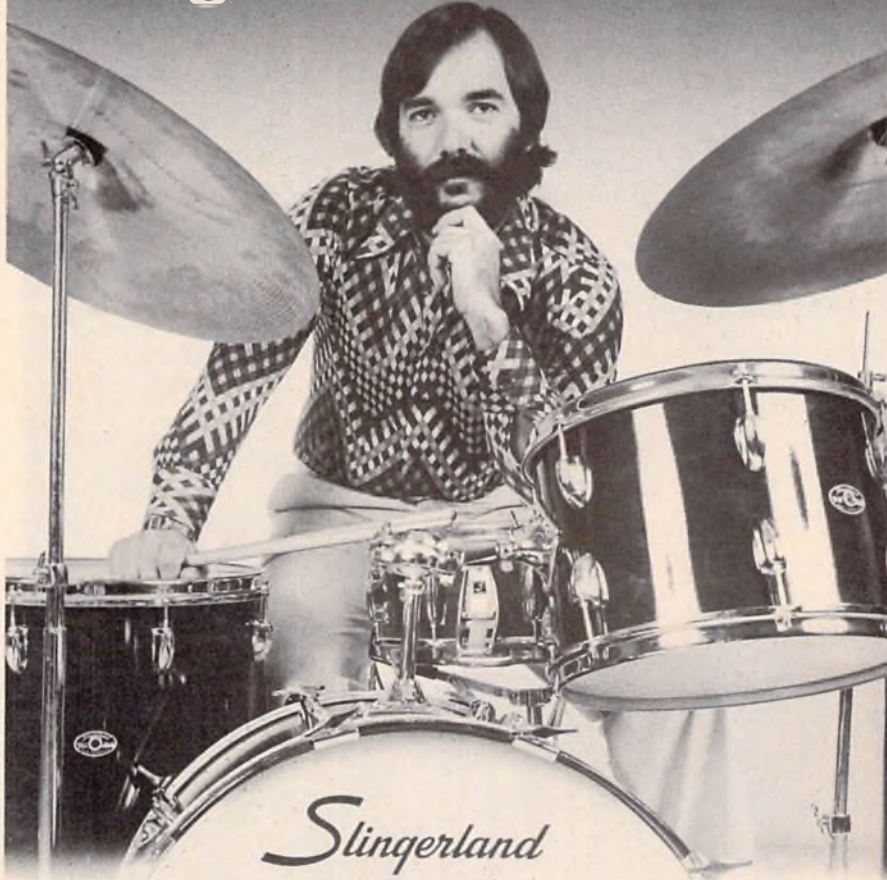
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real soprano, is preferred in these quarters: it has uncommon strength due to its majesty; the specter of soprano against sparse accompaniment can, with the right production (Esmond Edwards), speak from the mount. In contrast, the second and longer version is more of a laboratory for Jones drum rolls, with the use of tenor interjecting a note of raunch at strategic places. —shaw

## GARLAND JEFFREYS

**GHOST WRITER**—A&M SP 4629: *Rough And Ready; I May Not Be Your Kind; New York Skyline; Cool Down Boy; Ghost Writer; Lift Me Up; Why-O; Wild In The Streets; 35 Millimeter Dreams; Spanish Town.*

Personnel: Jeffreys, lead and harmony vocals, acoustic guitar (tracks 1, 3, 8, 10); Alan Freedman, electric guitar; Steve Gadd, drums (except track 8); Anthony Jackson, bass (except track 8); Don Grolnick, Clavinet (tracks 1, 2, 5), electric piano (tracks 3, 4, 7), organ (track 10); David Spinozza, fuzz, slide guitars, harmony (track 1), acoustic guitar and string arrangement (track 3), guitar solos (tracks 5, 6, 8), electric guitar and piano (track 9), string and horn arrangements (track 10); Hugh McCracken, lead guitar (tracks 2, 4, 6, 7), classical guitar (track 10); Michael Brecker, tenor sax solo (track 2); Rubens Bassini, percussion (track 3); Al Cohn, tenor sax solo (track 3); Leon Pendarvis, Clavinet (track 4); James Taylor, duet and bass vocal harmonies (track 4); Johnny Ace, bass (track 8); John Boudreaux, drums (track 8); Randy Brecker, trumpet (track 8); Dr. John, Clavinet (track 8); Rick Marotta, drums (track 8); Phil Messina, trombone (track 8); David Sanborn, soprano sax (track 8); Sugar Bear, electric guitar (track 8); David Peel and Friends, background vocals (track 8); Danny Cohn and Burt Collins, trumpet (track 10); David Lasley, Lynne Pitney, Arnold McCuller, background harmonies (tracks 2-4).

\*\*\*\*\*

At last, an artist and an album has come along which will stand right alongside the great rock LPs of the latter '60s, the *Astral Weeks*, the *Let It Bleed*'s, *Nashville Skyline*'s, and a few select more. Perhaps it's a strange way to put it, but Jeffrey's new outing is just too damn good to have come out in 1977. The net result is a stunning contrast to the rest of the feverish hackneyism which has befallen almost all of the rock field in the last few years.

A tall order, admitted, but there is a cornucopia of goods here to back it up. The greatness inherent in *Ghost Writer* lies in the fact that it is one of those rare collections wherein the lyricism perfectly matches the musical arrangements and performances in maturity, power and subtlety. There is an absolute dearth of lags, overlaps, clichés and one-sided dominance. It's like this: Randy Newman's verses invariably clobber the accompaniment into nothing, and the inverse is too often true with technically supercharged groups like Hot Tuna and Ry Cooder's various aggregations. Here, compelling lyrics meet shattering instrumentation in a perfect dovetail at every turn.

With such a fearsome array of topnotch players involved, the odds against everything working and not turning into a sterile, anarchic melee (as so many rock "epics" have done)—are nearly immeasurable. But work it does, and on each track the assembled pickers and singers sound as tight and hungry as the best seven-nighter bar band in the country. Each pass enhances and every solo seemingly tries to outdo the last. All of this mates with Jeffreys' vocals, which range from the frustrated, at times frighteningly angry, to the tender and lovely. The metered cards that he hands out show him to be a master of irony, using it at some points like a sledgehammer, at others like forceps. His statements sometimes bludgeon as in *Cool Down Boy*, and are full of triple entendre elsewhere, as best demonstrated on the LPs peak, *Spanish Town*.

# Guitar Player

The arrangements, kingpinned by Latin flavors, are the absolute antithesis of the "OK-boys-let's-get-into-a-reggae-thing" syndrome which is so much in vogue. When the time comes for an urban shuffle like *New York Skyline*, Gadd, Jackson & Co. move their soles. It's difficult to pick a standout soloist (certainly a misnomer in most rock albums) because there are so many involved, and they all make the sparks fly, not so much with improvisation, but with pinpoint accuracy that doesn't compromise emotion.

Sadly, this album seems doomed to near obscurity because there's not an "ow . . . yow—thump/boom" or a power chord to be found. But, then again, this happens too often with classic works. Whether Garland is merely an elixir for the effete or a savior for the entire idiom remains impossible to say at this point.

Regardless, we should expect an awful lot more from Jeffreys in the future. —pettigrew

## MARLENA SHAW

**SWEET BEGINNINGS**—Columbia PC 34458: *Pictures And Memories; Yu-Ma; Go Away Little Boy; The Writing's On The Wall; Walk Softly; Sweet Beginnings; Look At Me, Look At You (We're Flying); No Deposit, No Return; Johnny; I Think I'll Tell Him.*

Personnel: Shaw, vocals; Bert de Coteaux, producer, arranger, conductor, keyboards; Jerry Peters, keyboards; Davis Shields, James Jamison, bass; James Gadsen, drums; Greg Poree, Jay Graydon, guitars; Bob Zimmitti, percussion; Eddie "Conga" Brown, congas; Maxine Willard Waters, Julian Tillman Waters, Alex Brown, Dee Ervin, background vocals; H.B. Barnum, horn arrangement (track 4).

★ ★ ★

Marlena Shaw seems to be standing feet aspread, one limb firmly planted in MOR. By now her malleable voice and talent for elegant phraseology should have crystallized into some stylistic certainty, but she has yet to either break big on the charts or the airwaves, to establish a progressive, simple, straightahead jazz identity. With eight LPs to her credit, Marlena should be stopping traffic, but fast ideas spin by and she latches onto nary a one on record. Perhaps she's tougher live.

Bert de Coteaux has provided Shaw, in her first attempt for Columbia, with a Cadillac convoy of settings—lush, rhythmically heavy, expensive studio extras that consume more fuel than the lightweight material really requires. As her range is not extraordinary, Marlena's sense of drama is rather wistful.

Since her diction is clear, one might hope for memorable lyrics. *Yu-Ma* is memorable—a nicely paced humorous monologue, acted, not sung. It leads into *Go Away*, which features her sauciest singing. *Writing's* a spunky song; on *Flying*, Marlena is less stiff, lighter, tender. Throughout she's neither fragile nor funky, yet brings a hint of believability to hard messages like *Tell Him*.

It's as though Marlena's being steered towards the broadest possible exposure, and every route is a slick, false start. On her last Blue Note release, *Just A Matter Of Time*, she accompanied herself on piano in an adaptation of the gospel tune *No Hiding Place*. That swung nicely. What does she want to hide for? Let's have more of this singer out front, and make sure that she has something to work with. —mandel

## NOEL POINTER

**PHANTAZIA**—Blue Note BN-LA 736: *Phantazia; Night Song; Living For The City; Rainstorm; Wayfaring Stranger; Mirabella; Fiddler On The Roof.*

Personnel: Pointer, electric and acoustic violins; Dave Grusin, Rhodes piano and synthesizers; John Tropea, electric guitar (tracks 1 and 7); Will Lee, electric bass (tracks 1, 4, 7); Steve Gadd, drums;



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The *Guitar Player* project is different in that the material is all newly recorded especially for the occasion under optimum studio sound conditions, and using a broad spectrum of styles and idioms. The cooperation of ABC, Dobie, Epic, Pablo and Prestige Records was invaluable in making possible the realization of this venture.

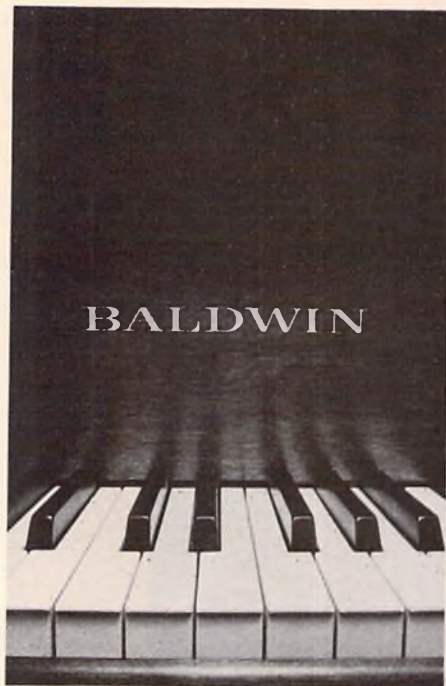
Every artist heard on these four sides is a musician for whom I have long had the greatest respect. Working with them in the studios, I was impressed more than ever before with their extraordinary musicianship, their individuality and their eagerness to contribute to what they all believe to be an undertaking of special significance.

Sonny Burke, as Executive Producer, added his enthusiasm and cooperation. He was invaluable in insuring the album's technical perfection. Jim Crockett worked with us far beyond the call of duty, screening material, taking photographs and even helping with the actual securing of artists. I am sure that without his assistance, this album would have been far less successful, perhaps could not have been completed at all. — Leonard Feather

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Ralph McDonald, percussion; Ian Underwood, synthesizer (tracks 1 and 7); Earl Klugh, acoustic guitar (tracks 2, 3, 6); Francisco Centeno, electric bass (tracks 2, 3, 6); Dave Valentin, flute (track 4).

\*\*\*

The young and black Noel Pointer is a classically trained violinist who apparently possesses affinity for a wide spectrum of disciplines and idioms, from Debussy to Bird, from Motown to Mahavishnu. His debut effort is a cautious affair, pleasantly commercial and bound more by a polished technique than any obsessive style. As such, it is nourishing fare for today's increasingly eclectic-minded market, a comfortable pastiche of multifarious talents distilled into a single clean approach.

Perhaps the best term to describe Pointer's technique is "flawless." Even when playing the funkier of riffs, his touch is so pure and exact that it sounds closer to Paganini than rock or jazz. In the non-disco items, that can be quite fulfilling. Earl Klugh's lovely *Night Song*, sporting a romantic Spanish temper, finds Pointer improvising elegantly along a tense minor line, dipping deftly into a poignant lower register. His most stirring performance herein, though, is on the lachrymose *Wayfaring Stranger*, where he plays a stately folk melody, classically imbued. Conversely, the catchy Latino *Rainstorm* is jolly and ingratiating, suggesting a natural, amiable melodic sense that Pointer too often covers in other spots with non-musical humdrum dives and weepy stings. The sundry funkisms (*Phantazia*, *Living For The City* and—*are you ready?*—*Fiddler On The Roof*) are expendable, as much for non-compatibility with Pointer's tidy tonality as their own clichéd fabric.

If Noel Pointer is willing to let his schooling merge more naturally with his acute melodic senses—which show signs of being majestic—he will probably produce some urbane and sophisticated music, worthier of his talents than these primary rehashings.

—gilmore

### URBIE GREEN

THE FOX—CTI 7070: *Another Star*; *Goodbye*; *Mertensia*; *You Don't Know What Love Is*; *Manteca*; *Foxglove Suite*; *Please Send Me Someone To Love*.

Personnel: Green, trombone; Toots Thielemans, harmonica, whistle; Eric Gale, guitar; Joe Farrell, soprano sax; Jeremy Steig, flute; Mike Abene, piano; Fred Gripper, piano; Barry Miles, synthesizer; Mike Mainieri, vibes; Anthony Jackson, electric bass; George Mraz, acoustic bass; Andy Newmark, drums; Jimmy Madison, drums; Sue Evans, percussion; Nicky Marrero, percussion; David Mathews, footsteps.

\*\*

What does a busy crew of studio musicians do after a hard day grinding out other people's boring sessions? Why they grind out boring sessions of their own, of course. I doubt that Urbie Green would try to pass off this kind of musical librium on a club audience, but under the tutelage of producer Creed Taylor and arranger Dave Mathews his mellow trombone is imprisoned in a geriatric disco formula that ought to be marketed as a cure for insomnia.

Urbie's post-hop mainstream style is not at all suited to this modal matrix, and without any chordal or melodic direction the music simply stagnates. Interminable solos seem to meander through a tapestry of vamps going nowhere, taking on a funereal cast to the glacial tempo of a dirgelike disco beat. Up and down go the riffs, with a hypnotic regularity that penetrates to the sleep center of the brain like an electrode.

Urbie does try to create a little music behind this mess, most notably in his duets with Toots Thielemans on *Goodbye* and *You Don't*

*Know What Love Is*, but his phrases are so low-keyed that rigor mortis threatens to set in. The other solo efforts are pretty tame—Eric Gale picks a few bluesy licks, Jeremy Steig does a breathy Ian Anderson imitation and Joe Farrell plays some polished but perfunctory soprano. The catchiest tune, in fact the only catchy tune, is a turgid disco thumper called *Mertensia*.

—birnbaum

### BRIAN AUGER'S OBLIVION EXPRESS

HAPPINESS HEARTACHES—Warner Bros. BS 2981: *Back Street Bible Class*; *Back Island*; *Gimme A Funky Break*; *Never Gonna Come Down*; *Happiness Heartaches*; *Got To Be Born Again*; *Paging Mr. McCoy*.

Personnel: Auger, piano, organ, synthesizer; Alex Ligertwood, rhythm guitar, vocals; Lennox Langston, congas, percussion; Lenny White, drums, percussion; Jack Mills, lead guitar; Clive Chaman, bass.

\* 1/2

In these pallid times, when Stevie Wonder is doing the best Stevie Wonder imitations possible, it seems rather pointless for a bunch of cliché-imbued, third rate composers to take turns writing the definitive Wonderish cosmofunk message of meaningful relevance. When the playing takes these trite astral snippets and makes them little more than banal finger exercises, credibility is impossible.

Brian Auger, central figure in this symphonette of plastic, is an adequate organist. However, you can go to the soul club "cross town and hear the same shit—meaningless triads, pedal-pushing fortissimo sweeps, lack of modulation in the bridge, oompapa bass lines with the left hand. Thousands of Hammond pumpers hold American Federation of Musicians cards and scale-paying lounge gigs for playing the same stuff Auger does.

Auger's bard input into this vinyl frisbee is so laughable it makes one think of brilliant Atlanta satirist Darryl Rhoades' many spoofs on disco music. Jazz-disco and soul-disco aren't enough; Brian's prolific pen brings us gospel-disco. Nothing is sacred on *Back Street Bible Class*. Admittedly, the congas of Lennox Langston are quite useful, but all five minutes is dominated by the metronomic beat of Lenny White. A consummate drummer like White playing nothing but high hat on all but one track is like Hunter S. Thompson becoming editor of an obscure county weekly in New Hampshire.

Save for an interesting tom-tom and cymbal ride on *Paging Mr. McCoy*, that's all Lenny White does. The other players offer little improvement; guitarist Mills' lead on *Got To Be Born Again* is melodic, but quite aimless; Ligertwood's garbled vocals and imprecise playing on *Gimme A Funky Break* makes one feel like crossing out the word "funky;" and the cheap shot "mystical" Rhodes of Auger during *Spice Island* obviously shows fealty to the spiritual cornball of Lonnie Liston Smith. If *Oblivion Express* went back to the pub where they belong, the world would be no poorer.

—shaw

### HAMIET BLUIETT

ENDANGERED SPECIES—India Navigation IN1025: *Between the Raindrops*; *Sobre Una Nube*; *The Other Side Of The World*; *Ayana Nneke (Dedicated To My Daughter)*.

Personnel: Bluiett, baritone sax and flute; Jumma Santos, balafo; Junie Booth, bass; Olu Dara, trumpet; Phillip Wilson, drums.

\* \* \* 1/2

Bluiett is a fresh face to be clenching the big bari horn in his lips. His voice is an expressive

one, with his forms owing much to AACM/BAG influences. That he apprenticed with Charles Mingus as well should add to his reputation.

*Endangered Species* is his debut LP. It was recorded at a June, 1976 concert in New York City's Ladies' Fort, and progresses from an intertwining sombre line through bari and trumpet solos, to a determined counterpoint duet, with the rhythm section knocking free time around the horns.

Wilson's precise drums begin *Sobre*, followed by Booth's dancing bass, while the horns enter with their warrior strength. Bluiett is all shrieks, vocalizations, overtones, honks, displayed with control, and curiously, considering the live environ, not given to developing long solos. Dara's trumpet is direct, sending open, broad ideas out—they almost bounce back at him, but he knocks them away and the resulting lines are surprisingly plotted. The space in this group is well balanced—Santos may be busy, Booth too, and Wilson never drops his attentions; so their statements seem forthright, deliberate.

As for being endangered, as a species young experimenters like Bluiett et al seem to have a signal sense of self-preservation. There is a naïve, folkish, raw faith in the simple creations here, a respect for definition—the classic concentration of patterns opening to *The Other Side*.

The long relatively free form depends upon individual thrust and group reaction: Dara is panmelodic, all phrases but little thread, a cat's cradle of hummables. Bluiett rolls his eyes under his brows to blow the split octave solos that weave around the rhythmic pulsation. —mandel

## THE CLAU OGERMAN ORCHESTRA

GATE OF DREAMS—Warner Bros. BS 3006: *Time Passed Autumn*; *Caprice*; *Air Antique*; *Night Will Fall*; *A Sketch Of Eden*.

Personnel: Ogerman, arranger, conductor, composer; Joe Sample and Ralph Grierson, keyboards; John Guerin, drums; Chuck Domanico, electric bass; Peter Maunu, rhythm guitar; George Benson, solo guitar (track 2); David Sanborn, alto sax (tracks 3 and 6); Michael Brecker, tenor sax (track 4); Larry Bunker, percussion; Chino Valdes, congas.

\*\*\*

Claus Ogerman may be the new Don Sebesky or Bob James. One could suffer from worse fates, but hardly less bland ones. Like Sebesky and James, Ogerman is a virtuosic arranger with an impressive classical facility and a ravenous ear for jazz trends. With *Gate Of Dreams* he has attempted to align his orchestral dreaminess with the present day funk idiom, a hybrid that succeeds more for technological reasons than musical ones. *Gate* is a collection of random compositions strung together via recurrent themes, imparting a notion of internal consistency. The end product is akin to an outline without particulars, a fluffy harmonic density that lacks memorable melodic shape.

The album's focus piece, *Time Passed Autumn*, never establishes a mood or provokes an emotion until the soloists, George Benson and David Sanborn, extract a melodic profile from the airy ambience, lending it a gravity. In *Night Will Fall*, Ogerman juxtaposes a romantic fanfare opening with a leisurely blues setting, clocking in at a mesmerizing Pink Floyd pace. Again, the marriage is more compatible for effect than substance.

But when Ogerman provides the picture as well as the frame, the results are compelling, as in the Debussy lushness of *Air Antique*, unforgettable for the lone oboe that wings a doleful course throughout. Similarly, *A Sketch Of Eden* draws its character from the transcendent opening clarinet passage, which is replaced by an equally alluring underlayer of turbulent string triplets that intertwine with a serene orchestral sway. The tension is riveting until Ogerman deftly resolves it with a rotund crescendo.

Claus Ogerman may be seeking to tap the crossover market by issuing fare for the ever increasing throng of classical-funk aficionados, but he's leaving his own familiar waters way behind. Too many idioms have been fused that would have benefited from remaining friendly strangers, and too many substantial talents are consequently atrophying. We need more of the romantic vision that Ogerman evinced on Jobim's *Urubu*, and less of this bunny hop jazz. —gilmore

## ED THIGPEN

ACTION-RE-ACTION—GNP Crescendo 2195: *House Of Poets*; *Danish Drive*; *Action-Re-Action*.

Personnel: Palle Mikkelborg, trumpet; Kjell Ohman, piano; Lennart Aberg, reeds and flute; Mads Vinding, bass; Thigpen, drums, vibes; Sabu Martinez, congas; Carlinhos Pandeiro de Ouro, percussion.

\*\*\* 1/2

After a career spent largely as one third of various trios from Oscar Peterson's to Bud Powell's or in the demanding but anonymous sterility of studio work, Ed Thigpen has assembled a musical project to his own specifications.

Sometimes though it sounds as if he bor-

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"*Dancing In Your Head*" is Ornette Coleman's first album in five years. It is also the first time he has used electric guitar. It is the first time he has recorded with his new band. And it is filled with music designed to completely envelope the listener.

For years now Don Cherry has been a European star with charismatic performances and mystical bearing. This album is a radical departure for him. It is truly accessible yet filled with eerie electric horn lines soaring over tough irresistible rhythm tracks. Possibly what links these two artists together more than anything else is that there is no name for their music. It is not jazz. Not rock. It is, as it always has been, *new music*.



Ornette Coleman, "Dancing In Your Head" and "Don Cherry." On Horizon.

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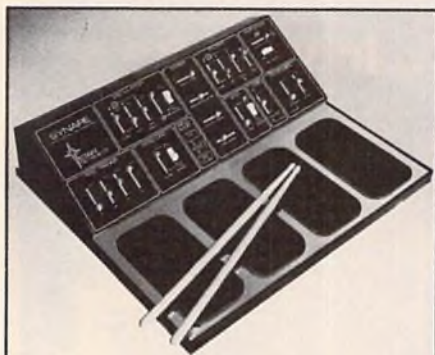
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rowed the blueprints from *Bitches Brew*.

Quite aside from the obvious fact that Thigpen is an instrumental craftsman of the first order, much of this album reflects the extent to which the studio-oriented musician has been influenced by the technology he confronts daily. The music too often tends to become the servant of the machinery. The mixing board is as much an instrument on this session as the leader's drums and vibes.

I suppose this would have to be considered as a jazz/rock date, although it seems more alive with the feeling of '60s jazz than '70s rock. Coltraneisms abound throughout the work of Aberg on soprano and tenor. Hard stoney notes flit from his horn like popcorn. Mikkelborg's trumpet (and presumably fluegelhorn) shimmers like an icicle. Together they create some ensembles of space age lyricism. Thigpen's vibes join the voicing on the *Illusions* part of *Action*.

A three and a half minute percussion piece (the second part of *Action*) is as boring as longer drum solos. Perhaps if I was stoned. . . .

—mcdonough

## DANNY STILES 5

IN TANDEM—Famous Door HL-103: *Dirty Dan; It Had To Be You; Blue Room; Myrtle Lee; In A Mellow Tone; The Skipper-Flipper Blues*.

Personnel: Stiles, trumpet, fluegelhorn; Bill Watrous, trombone; Milt Hinton, bass; Derek Smith, piano; Bobby Rosengarden, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

Although Stiles has paid dues in the trumpet sections of some of the major big bands and as co-leader of Bill Watrous' late Manhattan Wildlife Refuge, until recently this mainstreamer has labored in obscurity, receiving, for instance, no listing in the inclusive *Encyclopedia Of Jazz In The Seventies*. But this spring Stiles began heading up a Monday night band at the Village Vanguard, and perhaps this exposure coupled with a quality release under his own name, like *In Tandem*, will give Stiles' reputation the boost it deserves.

*In Tandem*, a natty combo date, was recorded several years ago, but there's little danger of this music's seeming outmoded, for it's refreshingly free from the fads, fancies and assorted gizmos prone to show up on one-shot blowing dates of this ilk.

This is a conservative release, in the sense of its valuing in an informed, selective way that which is best in the past. Such a musical posture should not be confused with the mindless, moldy fig reverence for the capriciously selected mannerisms of a narrow musical period.

Instead, Stiles' frame of reference is expansive, extending from swing to early bop. For example, there's Rodgers and Hart's 1926 *Blue Room*, sporting a cleverly refurbished head, plenty of kick and snap from Rosengarden, and a free-spirited outing from Stiles, graced with snatches of Gillespie and Ferguson styled stratospheric runs. Another reworked chestnut, *It Had To Be You*, opens with a lyrical Joe Wilder *a cappella* section, shifting into a playful medium walk. *In A Mellow Tone* receives a similarly intelligent reworking, but is marred by one of pianist's Smith numerous up-dated barrelhouse forays. If there is a lick in sight, this pianist will inevitably gleefully run it into the ground.

*Myrtle Lee*, a Stiles original, opens with a masterful, unaccompanied trumpet/bone statement. Perfect articulation, perfect phras-

ing, luscious brass colorations. And a pointed reminder that playing in tandem need have nothing to do with serving in musical bondage.

Two blues round out the session. *Dirty Dan*, a bit of driving funk, sports further simple but effective touches: during a Stiles/Watrous duet the rhythm section tacets and the horns slip into some wistful collective improvisation reminiscent of that of Jimmy Giuffre and Bob Brookmeyer. A companion piece, *Skipper-Flipper Blues*, is in a raw, no nonsense mood, with crisp ensemble passages and nasty growls from Watrous.

A postscript: the choice of bassist Hinton greatly enhances the stylistic depth and integrity of this session. This man's a living, pithy course in traditional double bass playing: given ample solo space here, he wastes not a semiquaver of it. These virtues of economy, wit, precision and respect for tradition are happily characteristic of this session as a whole.

—balleras

## VAN MORRISON

A PERIOD OF TRANSITION—Warner Bros. BS 2987: *You Gotta Make It Through The World; It Fills You Up; The Eternal Kansas City; Joyous Sound; Flamingos Fly; Heavy Connection; Cold Wind In August*.

Personnel: Morrison, vocals, acoustic guitar, electric guitar (track 1); Mac Rebennack, keyboards, electric guitar (track 1); Reggie McBride, bass; Ollie E. Brown, drums; Marlo Henderson, guitar; Jerry Jumonville, tenor and alto saxes; Joel Peskin, baritone sax; Mark Underwood, trumpet.

★ ★ ★ ★

Van Morrison is the finest living white male singer. Admittedly, that's an indulgent—perhaps unnecessary—statement, considering that Sinatra can still inspire shivers on a hot night, that Torme and Bennett have rejuvenated, and that Paul McCartney, Bob Dylan, Boz Scaggs, Mick Jagger, Burton Cummings, Bruce Springsteen and countless others in the rock field continue to inject a new vibrancy into the art. But Van can hold his own with any of them, anytime. In the span of a single phrase he can tread so many idioms—from swing to blues, from soul to country—while binding them with consistent passion, that he shatters any traditional, linear conceptions of singing. In his throat, a vocal becomes an expansive, chatoyant instrument, an aperture into spiritual and emotional realms rarely tapped. Even few black singers can match Morrison's gift for insinuation.

But in the aftermath of the critical dismissal and commercial failure of *Veedon Fleece* (one of his strangest and finest albums), Van has been "inactive" for a while. *A Period Of Transition* is a prudent but emphatic return. As the title suggests, it is a transitory outing, more notable for its crests than its continuity. Van has enlisted the often impeccable, often eccentric Dr. John (Mac Rebennack) to assist in the production and arrangements, and, as one might expect, the pairing has yielded a gospel-tinged, rhythm and blues sound. Unfortunately, Van too often allows the tenor of the affair to cast the songs in a tedious and samey groove. Both *You Gotta Make It Through This World* and *It Fills You Up* are stretched but unfulfilling blues riffs. Van growls, snarls and coos over a lumbering backup that never matches his drive.

The groove succeeds, however, when it hits a nice easy roll or gives way to a fleshier song structure, thus striking the magic chord. *The Eternal Kansas City*, a tribute to Parker, Young and Basie, features a stately choral intro and a milky-sweet vocal, while *Joyous*

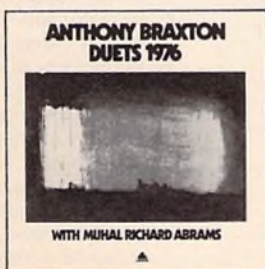
# Musician Of The Year: Anthony Braxton



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## DID YOU MISS THIS?

### DAVID FRIESEN

STAR DANCE—Inner City 1019: *Winter's Fall; Duet And Dialogue; Dolphin In The Sky; Star Dance; I Rue Brey; Fields Of Joy; A Little Child's Poem; Clouds; Children Of The Kingdom; Mountain Streams.*

Personnel: Friesen, acoustic bass, compositions; Paul McCandless, oboe, English horn; John Stowell, electric guitar; Steve Gadd, drums.

\*\*\*\*\*

David Friesen is destined to become one of the premier bassists in contemporary improvised music. Born in Tacoma, Washington in 1942, Friesen has already made significant contributions to groups led by Stan Getz, Joe Henderson, Billy Harper, Woody Shaw, Sam Rivers, Marian McPartland and Ralph Towner. Currently, he is providing the fire from below for Ted Curson's surging septet.



Curson in fact, has said: "He's a genius."

Friesen's gifts are multiple. At first, he impresses with his awesome technique. Then, as Curson points out, comes the realization of the richness of his ideas. In acknowledging his debt to LaFaro, Friesen says: "A lot of players seem to think that the main thing to learn from Scott was to play fast and all over your instrument. But if you listen to what he actually did, Scott opened up the bass like a guitar and then went on to tell a story, a beautiful story." Finally, it is Friesen's ability as an impassioned raconteur—in his improvisations and compositions—that stamps his work as exceptional.

While each of the tracks presents a different facet of Friesen's musical persona, there is a consistency that gives coherence and depth to the album as a whole. *Winter's Fall* with its 13/8 meter, Friesen's exuberant arco work and McCandless's sheets of reedy sound, create a dancing set of lines with a dash of Eastern European folkiness. *Duet And Dialogue* is a virtuosic combination of pizzicato rhythmic figures played with the right hand and melodic strokes plucked with the left. *Dolphin In The Sky* features a strummed bass background with an overdubbed solo fitted on top. *Clouds* is an appropriately lyrical tone poem while *Mountain Stream* presents a flowing main current against which are set richly overlaid sonic eddies.

In sum, *Star Dance* is an emphatic declaration by a new talent who promises to push forward the horizons of his instrument. It is also a mature collaboration among a quartet of equal and uninhibited musical spirits.

—berg

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*Sound* is pure gospel-rock, infectious and driven. In either instance, Van's voice takes on the character and tonality of a sly saxophone, ringing with a clear bell tonality. That approach reaches fruition on *Heavy Connection* and the punchy *Flamingos Fly*. As in Morrison's best past moments, his singing transcends the musical setting, weaving a surging melodic strain in which lyrics flow effortlessly and phonetically, all the more entrancing for their elusiveness.

Although *A Period Of Transition* may be intermediate Van Morrison, it still blends vision and motion into a durable form. When he reasserts his skills as a singer as well as a songwriter, he will likely turn our world around once more.

—gilmore

### TERUO NAKAMURA

RISING SUN—Polydor PD-1-6097: *Morning Mist/Steppin' With Lord; Cat; Rising Sun; Red Shoes; Precious One; Sweet Pea & Collard Greens.*

Personnel: Nakamura, bass, Yamaha bass guitar, Morley Echo Pedal, Mountain Takao's bells, Temple Asakusa's clay bells, Korg synthesizer; Shiro Mori, guitar, Mu-Tron, Arp synthesizer, Univox Stringman, Korg synthesizer, bamboo chim; Steve Grossman, tenor & soprano saxes; Carter Jefferson, soprano sax; John Mosley, trumpet; Art Gore, drums; Lonnie Smith, Korg synthesizer; Bob Neloms, electric piano; Harry Whitaker, electric piano; Onaje Allan Gumbs, electric piano; James Sidey, Univox Stringman (track 5); Keiji Kishida, drums, Indian cowbells, voice; Douglas Heller, Indian bells; Craig Haynes, African bells; Peter D'Agostino, Indian chanting bells; Sandi Hewitt, vocal; Pricella Baskerville, vocal; Don Hahn, Afuche.

\*\*\* 1/2

Although marginally more tasteful than most of the "jazz" product currently flooding the market, bassman Nakamura's first outing as leader never transcends the lightweight division. A surefire stumper on anybody's blindfold test, it so lacks any distinctive touch of character or originality that the most seasoned listener would be hardpressed to identify the performers. The tunes include a few catchy heads in the manner of Horace Silver or with saxist Steve Grossman riding over the keyboard cliches in his customary derivative fashion.

The mood is, for the most part, laid back and dreamy to the point of somnolence, with a dab of funk here and there and a few barely noticeable Oriental effects thrown in for coloration. Grossman and ex-Messenger Carter Jefferson both play in the hackneyed post-Coltrane idiom best exemplified, perhaps, by Grover Washington—well played and not unsavory, but thoroughly without inspiration. Shiro Mori's comping chords are merely adequate and Nakamura's own playing, while satisfactory enough, is hardly the sort to give Mingus sleepless nights.

If your ears are in no mood to be challenged and you're looking to hear something pleasant and relaxing, this is really not a bad album. You may have heard it all before, but on the other hand there is none of the wretched excess so common in commercial jazz today. Not least of all there are some pretty tunes, most notably *Cat* on side one, which if not imperishable may at least afford some transient pleasure.

—birnbaum

## WAXING ON . . .

The modern jazz listener interested in the music's history might at this point in time be likened to Robinson Crusoe. Awash in a be-

wildering sea of reissues, he struggles bravely to reach an island of knowledge that itself seems a mirage, kept illusory by the ensuing wave after wave of "new-old" albums. Contending with the vinyl oceans becomes a full-time, day-in-day-out job, and our heroic listener (despite his best intentions) finds himself just hanging on till Friday rolls around.

Nonetheless, a couple of the reissue programs poke up out of the engulfment, distinguishing themselves for various and specific reasons. One such series is Savoy's, which has usually shown admirable care in the combination and presentation of material from its poorly ordered vaults (according to rumor, the Savoy tape trove could qualify as Natural Wilderness Territory). In addition to making available much vital and important music, Savoy producer Bob Porter often selects and arranges the sides at his disposal to serve as subtle, imaginative evidence for well-grounded observations, both historical and aesthetic: choice footnotes to the standard jazz text.

A case in point is Milt Jackson's *The First Q* from the batch of Savoy's considered here. Guided by Bob Blumenthal's snappy, well-researched liner essay, the music provides a peek at the origins of the Modern Jazz Quartet; actually, the seeds it displays are of the Milt Jackson Quartet (MJQ all the same) before it, in turn, grew into the more famous ensemble. The three dates assembled here feature Bags, John Lewis and shifting combines of bass and drums which finally coalesce into the fateful personnel—Percy Heath and Kenny Clarke, the first MJQ drummer—on the April, 1952 session. It would sum things up nicely to say that this session (which is aided by a recording technique vastly improved over the earlier dates) is the one where everything finally jells. But the truth is that the Jackson-Lewis hegemony, itself controlled by the vibist, is clear and present on all the cuts. On the first date, which includes the famous take of *Devil And The Deep Blue Sea*, a young Ray Brown turns in a memorable performance; on the second date, drummer Al Jones is not bad, but certainly not right for the music. Other than that, this is a fairly homogenous set of great Milt Jackson solos with his first band: much of their 25-year-old vibrancy remains, as does the novel sense of understatement that he and Lewis brought to the bop idiom.

As the undisputed leader of these recordings, Bags' solo style is lavishly featured, and *Round Midnight*, *Bluesology* and *Softly As In A Morning Sunrise* are classics. Jackson is not as authoritatively silky as he would later become: his improvisations pulse with behind-the-beat lambency, but he was yet to develop his timing into the soft-focused, maddeningly relaxed rhythmic concept that is his trademark. Lewis, very much the sideman, still contributed some telling touches to the performances' structures, and he slips into nearly every solo with his typical arrangement grace. His sparse and subtle comments frame Jackson's lines in such a way that they are invariably shown to best advantage. On the last session, Clarke manages to be both busy and unobtrusive at the same time, and if you don't think that's hard, try it. *The First Q* is Bags' unencumbered swing, but it is ultimately something more: a gentle history lesson. No matter how well executed, these are fairly straightforward soloist-with-rhythm dates; and that essentially unamazing orientation serves to clarify Lewis' role in guiding the Modern Jazz

Quartet (so christened in '53) to its exalted niche.

Thoughtful planning and programming also infuse *Encores*, a collection of Charlie Parker alternate takes (which, like the Jackson LP, is a single disc). Actually, perhaps the major point to make about *Encores* is in fact the way it was assembled. Rather than slapping every master and all the alternates of Bird's seminal recordings onto a massive five-album set—as was done when these tracks were pressed by BYG a few years back—Porter has redesigned the selling of the saxist. He began with the masters (*Bird: The Savoy Recordings*—SJL 2201), follows up here with some of the alternates (no partial takes are included), and will pick up on a third album the remaining versions of classic tunes like *Billie's Bounce*, *Donna Lee* and *Barbados*. Personally, I'm not completely won over to this plan; while I can appreciate the uncluttered breeziness that would have been spoiled by a strict chronological progression, I also miss the chance to directly compare the master take with the varied versions that led up to and followed it.

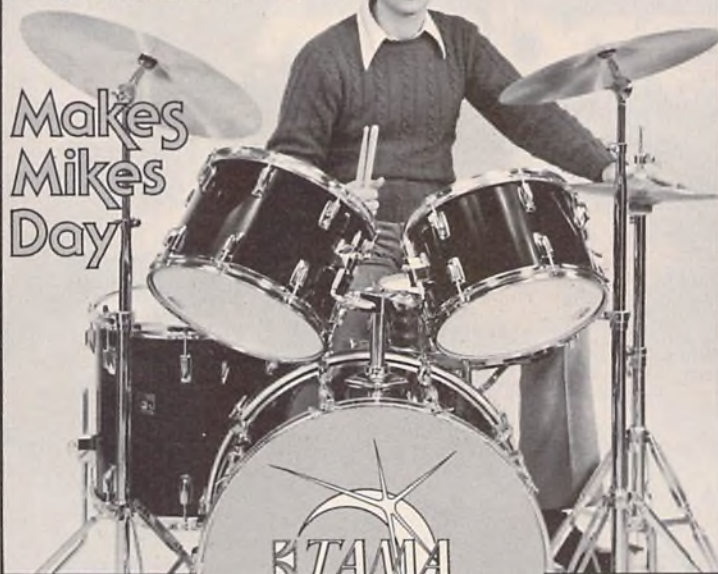
Substantive commentary on the music, at this late date, seems almost pretentious. With Miles Davis, Max Roach, Bud Powell, the aforementioned John Lewis and others, Bird was quoting the rules for a musical generation on these dates. Even these unissued alternates speak with a virulent command unmuted through the decades. There is, of course, a certain weirdness to hearing a tune like *Anthropology*—whose every note has been memorized into the collective jazz unconscious—followed by a totally different solo than the one we have grown up with. It seems almost heretical. (Yet Bird's solo on *Now's The Time*, his tenor work on *Bluebird* and Miles' audibly maturing trumpet arc each a vivid rush.) But as an album, *Encores* can't really be recommended of itself. As J. R. Taylor mentions in his expectedly sage notes, the main value of these tracks lies in comparison with the master takes, showing the extent to which Bird was a total improviser. *Encores* is a fine companion piece, but certainly not the place to either start or finish one's Bird watching.

Stan Getz' early years are the subject of *Opus De Bop*, the last of the single-LP reissues in this set of Savoy's. The first of the three sessions—which neatly precede and directly follow Getz' famous stint with Woody Herman and the Four Brothers—is a 1945 Kai Winding date which Getz made at age 18. The band, which included some blistering trumpet work by Shorty Rogers and the unflappable Shelly Manne on drums, plays a sort of transition bop, hovering between the cooler swing stylings of the Basic-Lester Young style and the impossible-to-ignore bop accents that were flooding New York at the time. Both Winding and Getz sound pretty comfy in this kind of set-up; it was broad enough to encompass solo concepts still rooted in swing. Getz in particular has some moments that leave no doubt as to his then-prodigal status, the two takes of *Loaded* and the tenor lead on the "cutely" arranged *Always* standing as fine examples.

The second date, the one from which the album takes its title, is an out-and-out bebop session, a 1946 recording with Hank Jones, Curley Russell and Max Roach. Getz, however, was still in transition, and although his lines are as hot and blatantly boppish as perhaps anything he's ever recorded, one can still hear his effort in correlating the influences of Pres and Bird. It is as if he is stretching his personality to meet the demands of the new music, and succeeding more

# Ron Di Stefano

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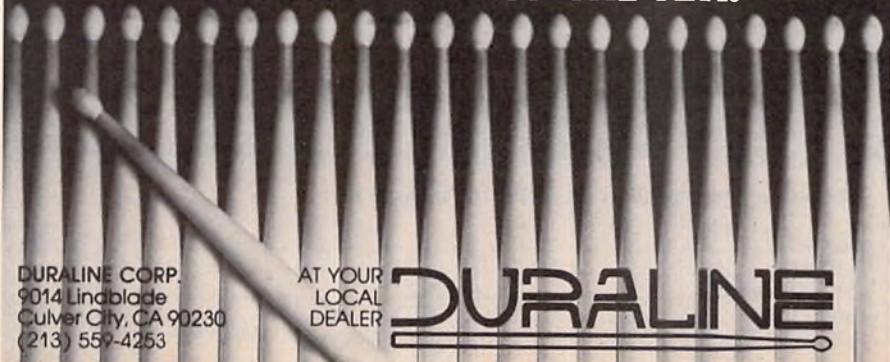
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through personal bravura than through a full-fledged incorporation of the bop ethos. (But don't misread me; this is my favorite date of the set.) The album closes with a 1949 collection that features several other Woody Herman alumni—Al Cohn, Zoot Sims, trombonist Earl Swope, guitarist Jimmy Raney, bassman Mert Oliver—playing Cohn charts that hint at the coming cool school in their smooth contours and tonal flow; the tune *Slow* is especially indicative of Miles Davis' *Birth Of The Cool* tracks (two-thirds of which had already been recorded when this Getz date was performed). *Opus De Bop* is a likable, at times memorable, set that is an important addition to Getz' history, rounded out by Ira Gitler's generally informative notes. (None-theless, a little proofreading would have been in order; while it's nice to hip the listener to a certain notable quote in a certain notable solo, it's nicer still to attribute the incident to the correct track.)

The placement of alternate takes also figures prevalently on the Art Pepper twofer *Discoveries*. Here, though, it causes a small spate of confusion. Included are one entire disc of masters and a second LP of alternates—but you'd never know it from the sleeve information, where no mention of alternates is made. The only indication that this is really a duplicate look at one record's worth of material is on the record labels themselves, lending a shoddy edge to the whole affair. In addition, the barely satisfactory liner notes make no explanation of why the material was so packaged, or of the comparative benefits of the different versions of each tune. Luckily, the music rears up its intensely sparkling head and rides herd over most other considerations.

*Discoveries* comprises four 1952 tracks (and their seconds) with a quartet featuring pianist Russ Freeman, and eight 1954 tunes (with their seconds) that display a quintet pairing Pepper's alto and Jack Montrose's tenor in the often contrapuntal front line. For many reasons, the second date is far more enticing. The extra horn proved a strong booster to both saxists, and much of their playing is of the highest quality. The heat of the second session also stems from Pepper's growth in the intervening two years, heard most clearly in the boundless assurance of his ripened style and in his burnished tone. And heat is something Pepper knows how to channel. A Los Angeles native and Kenton alumnus, Pepper was that rare anomaly among West Coast jazzmen, a cool-school grad who nevertheless reveled in a celebratory power and emotional flame. Like Phil Woods and Cannonball Adderley, he was working out of Parker's mold by emphasizing the broader aspects of Bird's sound and style; unlike most others, he was drawing perhaps equal inspiration from Lee Konitz.

The 1954 date took as an obvious model the Konitz-Marsh teamwork of the late-'40s, but the fresh energy applied to improvisation in counterpoint—as well as Montrose's meaty, darkly speeding shadow to Pepper's blazing trails—stands on its own. The format was rich enough to turn a crooning ballad like *What's New* into two-part lace, and a standard swinger like *The Way You Look Tonight* into a Hollywood chase. The blistering tempo and surging strength of *Straight Life*, my favorite tune here, is reminiscent of nothing so much as Parker's *Ko Ko*, though; the chain of influences is thus joined. (A final note on those alternates: none come up to the masters, and while they certainly aren't bad, I harbor real doubts as to whether *Discoveries* need have

been quite so plural.)

Five sessions starring the wholly remarkable, startlingly original, flamboyantly brilliant and sorely missed Fats Navarro make up *Fat Girl*, overall the finest of these Savoy. The world was robbed of Navarro's monumental size and talent when he was just 26; still, his influence was considerable. It lay as much in the environment as in the genetics of his skill, for Fats was the first bebop trumpeter to present a style that didn't pledge allegiance to Dizzy. Fats had different things to say, new and stirring ways to say them. His was a torch that would be passed on to Clifford Brown (himself dead at 26), in part to Booker Little (a fatality at 23), and to Lee Morgan (dead at 34). How ironic that such bristlingly alive music should engender so tragic a line of descendancy.

*Fat Girl* documents Navarro's development over a 15-month span, and the evidence is nearly extraordinary. Whether it was simple growth or the increasing comfort of the various groups heard here—sides three and four are made up of quintets that pivot on Fats' friend and colleague Tadd Dameron—the excellent playing that opens up the album is deftly metamorphosed into something altogether timeless. Fats' full, brassy tone and cornucopic ideas share the spotlight with some superb Sonny Stitt, some workmanlike Bud Powell and some tremulously brilliant Kenny Dorham on the first side, a 1946 blowing date that bogs down with a couple of forgotten saxists. A 1946 session led by Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis takes up side two; Davis' talking tenor style is less sophisticated than it would become in the '60s, but Fats' second-fiddle breaks are a resounding cut above the

first side's work. His muted breaks are especially appealing in their hint of cute mystery and lack of any strain.

The remaining two sides are marvelous Fats; they also bear out liner writer Dan Morgenstern's observation that Dameron's presence "was always an insurance against merely routine results." The pianist's clever arranging and chunky, alert chording help anchor Navarro and the different saxists on each of three 1947 dates—baritone man Leo Parker, altoist Ernie Henry and pre-Monk Charlie Rouse on tenor (the latter two were members of Dameron's regular sextet at the time). Fats is sweet and fleet throughout, and proves his probing sense of structure on the two takes of *A Bebop Carol*. His was a warm, ebullient (yet not frothy) art that was still far from its final flowering. *Fat Girl* (which serves as introduction to other recent Navarro twofers on Blue Note and Milestone) presents a fine picture of a doomed style's progenitor.

Finally there is *All-Star Swing Groups*, one of several "compilation" twofers in the Savoy series that bunches several sessions of like persuasion into an aural montage of a time and place. In this case, it's New York, the summer of 1944 and January of 1946, and the musicians are a fairly impressive array of great swingmen: the album is listed under the names Pete Johnson and Cozy Cole, but the appearances of men like Coleman Hawkins, Ben Webster, J. C. Higginbotham and Eddie Barclay are at least as important to the album's concept. There are certain undeniable delights, such as the chance to hear long unavailable contributions by Johnny Guarnieri, one of the great and often nowadays ignored swing pianists; the opportunity to watch saxist

Budd Johnson progress from a rhythmically shaky 1944 contributor to a solid master by 1946; a number of affecting Ben Webster *homages* to Hawkins, the patron saint; a couple of cool and glassy vocals by a young Etta Jones. One side also contains a rather intriguing historical artifact, an "add-an-instrument" series of eight tunes that begins with a solo piano track by Pete Johnson and grows, an ax at a time, into a full-fire octet. But apart from the individual virtues of various songs, *All-Star Swing Groups* is a less successful total picture than any of the previous "compilation" twofers on Savoy. The music doesn't stand with quite as much conviction; that's part of the problem. Another part is the lame liner essay by Stanley Dance, who might have been expected to tie much of what we're hearing together. Instead, he makes scattershot observations on the music and finds time to carp about bebop, seriously suggesting that whether the musical innovations of this period were "for better or worse is still an arguable matter." That kind of attitude, coupled with music of uneven quality, undermines the jazz footnote *All-Star Swing Groups* might have provided. —tesser

Milt Jackson, *The First Q* (Savoy S.J.L. 1106): \*\*\*\*

Charlie Parker, *Encores* (Savoy S.J.L. 1107): \*\*\*

Stan Getz, *Opus De Bop* (Savoy S.J.L. 1105): \*\*\*\*

Art Pepper, *Discoveries* (Savoy S.J.L. 2217): \*\*\*½

Fats Navarro, *Fat Girl* (Savoy S.J.L. 2216): \*\*\*\*

Pete Johnson, Cozy Cole, *All-Star Swing Groups* (Savoy S.J.L. 2218): \*\*

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# BLINDFOLD TEST



## Art Farmer by Leonard Feather

When Art Farmer won the **db** Critics Poll in 1958 as New Star on trumpet, it was already a little late. A decade had elapsed since he had begun freelancing in New York. In the interim he had played in the bands of Benny Carter and Lionel Hampton, co-led a combo with Gigi Gryce, and joined the original Horace Silver quintet in 1956.

Milestones in the Farmer career since then have been his co-direction with Benny Golson of the Jazztet, from 1959-62; his memorable partnership with Jim Hall, and his transition from trumpet to flugelhorn, with which he has become exclusively associated.

In 1968 Art took his lyrical, sensitive sound (a clear reflection of his soft-spoken personality) to Vienna, where he has had a job with the Austrian Broadcasting System house band. His leaves of absence became increasingly lengthy and his return visits to the U.S. more frequent.

Recently Farmer decided he had reached a point of security where he could afford to leave the steady job and the polka playing in favor of life as a full-time jazzman. Helped by a new contract with CTI Records, he recently spent an extended visit in the U.S., and while playing a San Francisco gig hopped to Los Angeles to apply his singular honesty to a Blindfold Test—his first since 1/28/65. He was given no information about the records played.

**1. DON CHERRY.** *Buddha's Blues* (from *Hear & Now*, Atlantic). Cherry, trumpet, flute, composer.

You got me, Leonard. I don't have any idea who it was, or who was playing anything—the trumpet, flute or any of the instruments in the rhythm section. I didn't care for it. It didn't have any theme to it; there wasn't any development that I could hear. There was some kind of harmonic pattern, but no theme. Nothing happened, so I can't say more about it.

There's some people in Europe who do things like that very well. There's a trumpet player up in Denmark—Palle Mikkelborg—who is very good... one of the best players I've ever heard.

This reminds me of something I tried to do a few years ago but failed. But it doesn't sound commercial to me—it's not even that. I'd like to not even rate it at all. We can forget it.

**2. TED CURSON.** *Flip Top* (from *Flip Top*, Arista). Curson, trumpet, composer; Zita Carno, arranger; Bill Banon, tenor sax.

I could make a guess and say that that was Don Ellis with his band. It doesn't have to be that, but I would guess that since the trumpet player took the first solo and played some at the end also.

It was well executed; they accomplished what they wanted to do. Their baritone saxophone, I think it was, sounded... had a rather original style on the horn. It was an exciting record. I would give it three stars.

The arrangement didn't interest me all that much. It started off at the top and stayed at the top all the way through. As a listener, I like to listen to things that have some tension and release instead of just going at one level all the way through. It gets a little uninteresting. You keep waiting for something different to happen.

But it is exciting, and within the context of the whole album, maybe it works.

**Feather:** It was the Zagreb Radio Orchestra with Ted Curson.

**Farmer:** Oh wow! I played with those guys years ago, and Ted was there. Ted did a date and I did a date and a very good friend of mine, Bosko Petrovic played the vibes. Being that it comes from Zagreb, it sounded good.

**3. WARREN VACHÉ.** *All Of Me* (from *First Time Out*, Monmouth Evergreen). Vaché, cornet; Kenny Davern, soprano sax; Bucky Pizzarelli, guitar; Wayne Wright, guitar; Mike Moore, bass; Connie Kay, drums.

I would say that was a European recording—perhaps Oscar Klein from Switzerland or Papa Bue from Denmark—in the dixieland style, fairly well done for what it was. I couldn't find any fault with it the way it was played, except that I don't like that kind of music. I like some people like Red Allen and Roy Eldridge and people like that... but other than that, it doesn't have too much interest to me, even when it's well done. But they accomplished what they tried to do—a good lively thing, but just not my cup of tea.

The soprano was good—as good as the trumpet player; and the rhythm section, they were steady. They had a good feel and stuck in there and played very enthusiastically. But I like to hear something like that just for a change of pace, but it's nothing I'd go out of my way to listen to. Maybe they feel the same way about what I do! So it's fair enough. I'd give it three stars.

**4. ANTHONY BRAXTON.** *Side Two, Track One* (from *The Montreux/Berlin Concerts*, Arista). Braxton, saxes.

Sounds like the soundtrack for a Mr. Magoo short subject. It might be okay with something visual to go along with it. The players were good, but it was boring as all hell—it's like musical masturbation to me. I didn't get nothing out of it. Give it no stars. I don't have any idea who it was, and if you tell me I won't buy any of their records.

I just can't hear anything in the damn thing. I don't see any direction to it at all. At least if you

play dixieland it has a beginning and an end and some sort of thing that you can go along with; but here there's no rhythm, there's no melody, there's no harmony.

Music is supposed to consist of rhythm, melody and harmony, in that order. Those are the three basic elements, so I've been told, and if I can't see any of those—if there's an abstraction made of everything—then there's nothing that I can really relate to, so I can't give it no stars.

I have an idea who it is. Anthony Braxton?

**5. OSCAR PETERSON-CLARK TERRY.** *On A Slow Boat To China* (from *Oscar Peterson & Clark Terry*, Pablo). Peterson, piano; Terry, trumpet.

I don't need to hear any more. That was Clark Terry and that was Oscar Peterson on piano, and if there are any people who can play with a duo, well then it's Clark and Oscar. Fantastic players, and they have the whole gamut, the whole spectrum of jazz music—up to a point. What they do you can't argue about because they know what they're doing, and you either like them or you don't like them.

I liked Clark since the first time I heard him when he played with the Jeter-Pillars band, going back to 1946 when he just got out of the Navy. And Oscar Peterson, the first time I heard him was on his record of *Tenderly*. That's a world of knowledge right there—these people know what to do, and they know what they want to do, and they know how to do it. You just can't find any fault with them at all.

Strangely enough, Clark and I worked together in Yugoslavia the last time, with this radio band conducted by Miljenko Prohaska, but we never did any extended work in the same band together. But he was an inspiration to me when I was living out here in Los Angeles and he came out here...

He was a very sweet man and he plays very good, for sure. There's absolutely nothing that I can say against him. He's a musician and he's a trumpet player and he's Clark Terry. When you hear a few notes you know who you're listening to. And that's what's so important I think—an identity. You hear the person; it's just not a matter of hearing the horn.

What we call it is transcending the horn, and that's when the individuality comes out—the humanity comes out in music, when you don't think about this is a trumpet and this is a saxophone... you think about the player. And all of the great players who make their mark, they do so because of this—because of being able to play the hell out of their instrument. They take their instrument and sort of meld it into an extension of themselves—they make a statement and say, "This is me; this is the way I feel." That's what I like to hear, and I can always hear that from Clark.

And Oscar too, because Oscar is just terrifying with his technique, and somehow it doesn't come across on the records as it does in person, in my opinion. I cannot get as much out of him on records as I can in person. I think the problem is that he just plays too good—like Clifford Brown. I used to feel that way about Brownie. I would think, "Damn, he doesn't have to play all that! He's already generations ahead of everybody else." But like if you got it, well then use it. I have to give Oscar credit for playing with such taste, because his technique is awesome.

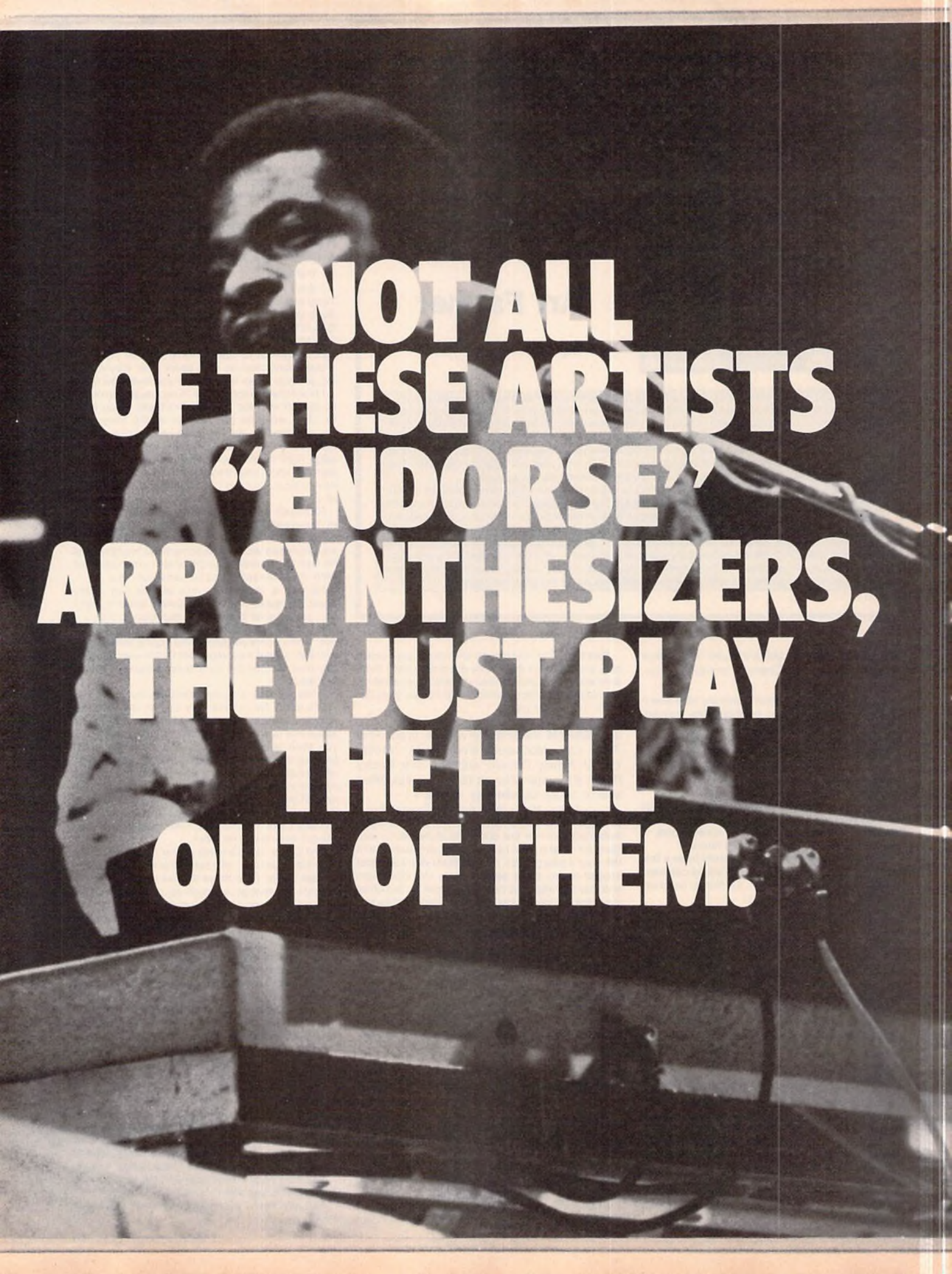
If a person has a choice—has many choices—then you have to give them credit for discarding a whole lot of things—knowing what not to do. On the other side of the coin, there are a lot of people who don't have that choice. But for a person who has a seemingly endless technical ability and then they can settle on one thing, I think "Well, that's something."

Some people have a lot of technique in playing or writing and it's hard for them to make up their mind what they can do because they can do so many things. I guess they haven't really looked into themselves enough. But I think Oscar knows.

**Feather:** What I think you're trying to tell me is that this is a five star record.

**Farmer:** Yeah, you could say that. Without a doubt.

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# Profile

## EMIL RICHARDS

by sam bradley

Brought together for the accompaniment to an upcoming 'futuristic' space epic are three of Hollywood's top percussionists: Vic Feldman is playing Trinidadian steel drums, Gary Coleman's on Tibetan brass gongs and Emil Richards, shoulders arched, mallets in hand, is standing over a set of 24 tempered chromatic frying pans. A well known screen-composer is doing the film's score, yet much of today's session is directed by Emil; the pans furnishing the rhythmic clangs and cosmic crashes of a battle in space.

Watching from the sidelines one might take the small dark-haired gentleman for being Tibetan or Indian, yet Emil Richards, a native of Connecticut, of Sicilian heritage, is a man for whom the term "ethnic music" carries with it a universal application. "I do have some jazz roots and orientation, but over the years I've been moving towards ethnic music more than any other. 'Ethnic' meaning, really, every type of music. Being involved in it you can stay up on top of everything going on in whatever you might term 'contemporary music'; it all seems to be an evolution of some folk music of the past—of course with new twists and all. I believe that I can still create things of interest to players that are using today's new musical elements; they're freaked over the different wild sounds they hear, yet those sounds are nothing new. They're really things that have been around in some tribal or village music for centuries."

Emil's involvement in the world's ethnic music has been the catalyst for his collection of over 500 unusual percussion instruments: marimbas from Mexico to Africa, Guatemala to Thailand; Gamelon gongs, and various drums, shakers, bells, chimes, rattles and blocks. His own invention, the waterchimes, consists of four brass clock discs suspended over a water trough. They produce a bright sustained set of pitches that, as each disc is lowered into the water, bend microtonally. One of the newest additions to his arsenal are the Tubulongs invented by Erv Wilson. A 31-pitch-per-octave instrument, struck in prime numbered cycles, the Tubulongs produce an ethereal glissando resembling the sounds of dripping waters inside a drain pipe echoing into infinity. Says Emil, "Erv's now completing a keyboard version of the 31 system that's going to be one of the most important instruments to come along since the synthesizer."

While still a high school student, Emil performed with the Hartford Symphony, and during his army hitch in the Orient played with Japan's mistress of bebop, Toshiko Akiyoshi. Returning to the States, Emil did "some road gigs with the Ray Charles Singers, and some corny dates with Perry Como." Then came two years with George Shearing, which brought him to Los Angeles and the studios with his then only two axes, vibraphone and marimba.

"It was after a recording session," says

Emil, "that Milt Holland told me to go over to the Pro Drum Shop and pick up a tambourine or a triangle, just in case I'd ever need one. 'Me man?' I said. 'I'm a mallets player'. Well, today I probably own more tambourines than Pro Drum Shop."

In addition to becoming the most versatile and sought-after percussionist in town (it's been said that if a percussion instrument exists, Emil owns and plays it), his own musical direction has been an important part in many prominent ensembles, most notably The Roger Kellaway Cello Quartet, the Harry Partch orchestra and several groups under the baton of Frank Zappa.



JIM McGRARY

Screen-composers come to Emil seeking that "new instrument"—the latest addition to his collection—to achieve a sound-score in some way "different" from what has come before. "It would be nice," says Emil, "if they were to apply those concepts of harmony and blendings with percussion that they've used with horns and strings for years. It's gratifying when I'm able to turn them on to authentic sounds and things, and on the other hand they're always coming up with things that add to my knowledge as well. They'll come over to the house after going to a library and show me a picture of an instrument, or play a tape of a sound I've never heard before, and it starts me going. I really respect the composers out here, from Hank Mancini on up. I don't care how successful or how commercial they are because they work hard at it."

When asked for a list of Hollywood's top percussionists, Emil began: "Vic Feldman could top that list. Larry Bunker is another fine player, and Larry's ears are wide open—he's always listening to the string and brass sections, helping the composers to weed out some of the bad notes. Larry's line is 'they're trying to make it so I won't care.' Yet Larry does care, he cares a lot. Of course my friend Joe Percaro would have to be on the list... and Joe has three sons that are fine up-and-coming players."

When the so-called "Rock Revolution" began during the mid-'60s the role of the studio musician changed; it became a matter of adapt and play rock for many players whose background and preference was jazz. "When the whole thing really broke around '65 and '66," says Emil, "you couldn't find a bassist in town willing to pick up the Fender bass. Carol Kaye was originally a guitarist; she picked up Fender because the upright players couldn't

play it. A lot of the older drummers refused to play rock, they thought it was 'dumb' music. So if a kid came along and played it honestly, he worked. He was out there doing what was contemporary and playing it most honestly. But if he stopped developing and growing they'd find someone else.

"Now guys like John Guerin and Harvey Mason have much more going for them than just today's sound. They're both excellent musicians. John doesn't just play drums, he plays music on his drums and always adds something special to any context he's a part of. Harvey, of course, is a fine all around percussionist and composer."

When George Harrison assembled two groups for his first U.S. concert tour, Emil performed with both Harrison's band and Ravi Shankar's Indian aggregation. "I feel very close to George," says Emil, "and have total respect for him as a musician. George may not have a schooled musical background, yet he's written many beautiful melodies. During the tour I'd always see him playing his guitar. He's not embarrassed to play and sing in a hotel room filled with five or 50 musicians, and wouldn't be uptight if Patagorski was in the room and he hit a wrong note."

When Frank Zappa assembled a group of some 35 players, most of them L.A.'s finest studio players, for two performances of orchestral compositions at U.C.L.A.'s Royce Hall, there, behind marimbas and assorted percussion, was Emil Richards. About his association with Mr. Zappa, Emil says, "Way back in '65 when we did *Lumpy Gravy* (Zappa's first totally instrumental album) he brought out some of the best players in town. Frank came on very humble, as if he really didn't know what was going down. A lot of the guys were surprised at the complexity of his compositions, yet when asked about the parts he picked up his guitar and played each figure for each instrument he wrote for. ... At Royce Hall, a couple of the players had trouble performing his compositions, and later sent someone a little more competent to do it. All of the players who did the gig completely dug what Frank was trying to do, and signed a paper indicating that they'd be willing to go out on the road with him. ... Every once in a while Frank would get up to conduct. He had been trying to explain some concept to the conductor, and was far superior in communicating what he wanted to get across than the man he hired. I don't think there's anything jive about him, and he's finally proven that to every prominent player in town. He's not as humble as he used to be, and rightly so, cause he's a deserving hard working composer who demands excellence. He did one piece without percussion, that utilized more strings and brass, that was one of the most interesting and impressive works I've ever heard. It was like the complete evolution—everything that has gone down with the blues—in color form."

Sound engineers play a large part in the working dues of studio players and are the cause of Emil's major gripe. "I've gone into the studios to record a really good chart, where the engineer who runs the studio has miked the same drums in the same damn place 92,000 times, so he's got to have some idea about what the balance is going to be. It's frustrating to be told to 'Keep playing your part over and over till I get a good balance,' while he's inside the booth turning knobs under the guise of creativity. There's something that happens when musicians play together for the first time—

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there's a spark and a rapport and a feeling during that first take that you might never get again. I don't care if you're there five nights in a row, you may get it on the fifth night. But only after you've used up all your energies; out of frustration you might pull together and get one good take. I just feel that too much valuable time is wasted."

The rewards to some players are measured through their economic gain, with guys carrying briefcases into sessions and looking all set for a day in court. "There are a lot of guys," says Emil, "who do look at it as a business. After all, it is their livelihood. But something is lost when you do it like that. There's something about music that has nothing to do with that briefcase, and I find that with the guys that do it for financial reasons alone, many have no interest in music after they leave the studio. You don't see instruments in their homes, you don't find manuscript paper or see any of the latest records. You just see golf clubs, tennis rackets, etc. A lot of the guys are into race horses, airplanes, they'll talk to you about everything but music. I even know some players that are more successful than myself, that when you talk music to them will shut you off—they don't even want to hear about it. My only answer to you is that their lifespan in the music business may not be that long, and they have to take it like a business and make it while they can. They have to talk about breaking the one-hundred-and-fifty grand barrier this year because next year they might not be around to make anything."

Upstairs in Emil's home is a room that conspicuously lacks the percussion instruments scattered through the rest of the house. In it are a table and lamp, a desk and three oils that hang from the walls. One is a Picasso of Stravinsky, another a hand embroidered work of multi-colored birds and plants done by an Indian tribe in Southern Mexico. The third is an oil of Harry Partch, characterized by a primal flash of intense red-hued eyes and creviced forehead. It was in Emil Richards that the avant garde composer Partch found a player with not only the technical proficiency to perform on his unique 43 non-octave microtonal instruments, but a friend who helped him move from an abandoned chicken farm in Northern California to Los Angeles—where Partch's first performing ensemble was established.

"It's funny," says Emil, "we've been talking today about some people who have been a part of my life. Well, whenever I've worked with Harry Partch in performance the three composers that were always in the audience were Roger Kellaway, Frank Zappa and Erv Wilson (who was often one of the musicians in Harry's ensemble). I mean I can't even name another musician or composer who was even there. It says a lot about their openness as artists that, when something important has gone down, they were there. Zappa's use of choreography and musical textures are a direct result of Harry, who at all times believed in multi-media performance, using musicians and instruments as part of the set, as well as the players being dancers, singers and mimes. All of Harry's instruments were both fascinating to listen to and works of sculpture. He used to say 'I'm not doing anything new, I'm just remembering something of the very distant past.' When, as in tribal and 'primitive' cultures, the various expressions of creativity were not separate, but all a part of the celebration of life and death."

Richards is one of those invisible men who creates many of the interesting percussive effects heard on TV and motion picture soundtracks. Yet it is in his association with composers like Roger Kellaway, Frank Zappa and Harry Partch that his own personal musical vision is most apparent. It is in his knowledge of ethnic music that one senses that 'music of the distant past' that Harry Partch spoke of, and something of the cultures and peoples from whence those instruments came. db

TONY DUMAS

by lee underwood



PHIL BRAY

Tony Dumas' pride and joy is his hand-made instrument, the Blitz bass. Originally created by one John Dawson, but now owned and commercially manufactured by Dumas, the Blitz features an upright bass fingerboard, a hand-made neck, and an extension at the top which enables the performer to reach E<sup>b</sup>, D, D<sup>b</sup> and C below low E.

Because the Blitz is made to be played through an amplifier and not acoustically, the traditional rotund sides have been stripped away. The back is hollow, and the hand-made body is only slightly wider than the neck, a size and shape that makes it ideal for traveling.

In effect, the Blitz bass is a traditional upright acoustic bass, streamlined, designed to be played through an amp—acoustic sound, acoustic action, but electric volume and convenience.

Dumas' claim to fame, however, rests not on his new musical instrument, but on the music he makes with it.

Born in Los Angeles on October 1, 1955, Dumas is only 21 years old, yet he has already performed and/or recorded with numerous jazz luminaries.

"My first gig was with organist Johnny Hammond," said Dumas in his Pasadena home. "I was 19 and innocent, and it was my first time on the road—Detroit, Cincinnati, Cleveland. Johnny was constantly telling me about the road and giving me lots of insights. I guess he was my on-the-road Father Figure. We also recorded Gambler's Life and a new Fantasy LP to be released this summer.

"Then I went with Freddie Hubbard for a year, 1974, I think, just after High Energy, when Freddie was starting to get heavy into his funk thing. During that time I was also

working spot-gigs with Kenny Burrell. Very recently I recorded with Art Pepper, and just before that I recorded *Until Goodbye* with pianist John Wood."

As a boy of 10, Tony played the piano by ear, teaching himself harmony and theory. When he was 15, he picked up the bass and began taking classical lessons at school.

"I never got very good at classical, however, because I was always listening to jazz—the MJQ, old Quincy Jones and a lot of organ trios—Jimmy Smith, Groove Holmes, Jack McDuff. I learned how to walk the bass by listening to those organ trios. Then I got turned on to Ray Brown, Ron Carter and Reggie Johnson, my main influences.

"About two or three years after beginning the bass, I discovered Miles Davis—*ESP*, *Miles Smiles*. That floored me. I had missed that music when it originally came up, so I started listening to Miles—and to Coltrane—trying to figure out what they were doing."

From Johnny Hammond, Tony learned how to apply his organ trio bass lines: from Kenny Burrell, he learned how to play standards; and from Freddie Hubbard, he learned how to play funk lines.

"I've reached a kind of compromise," said Dumas. "I missed a lot of that '50s and '60s era that I love so much, but it's probably not going to come back. I would like to play that kind of jazz exclusively, but, realistically speaking, I also have to play what is happening now. I love playing jazz, but I also enjoy playing funk-oriented contemporary stuff as well.

"I have nothing against electronics or funk if they are done with ideas and taste—Herbie Hancock comes to mind.

"People tend to call me only when they need an acoustic bassist, but I do play Fender and I play it well. I purposely play both, because I don't want to be musically limited.

"A lot of true musical talent is being weeded out by electronics. Everybody's getting into a trick bag, using a thousand electronic hook-ups, but not really having that much musical talent happening. They may sell, but they are engineers, not musicians.

"There are other cats, however, who have paid their dues and know their music, people like Herbie or Chick Corea. They happen to be into electronics right now, but they sound good.

"I myself like to maintain the tradition of the bass, where I'm playing an upright string bass, where I'm playing notes with my fingers, not with machines, and where the sound is acoustic, even though it's coming through the amplifier. That way, all of the ideas are what I make of them at that instant when I play them.

"I guess it's hard for young bass players. You can't be just a 'pure' jazz player, because you'll probably starve to death, especially in Los Angeles. So I play both Fender and acoustic."

In May of this year Tony returned from a tour of Japan with J. J. Johnson, Nat Adderley, Billy Childes, and J. J.'s son, Kevin Johnson. Several of the performances were recorded live.

"We toured for two weeks, playing places like Tokyo, Osaka and Yokohama. The response was great. They loved us everywhere. They appreciated us and other American jazz musicians much more than American audiences do.

"I guess that's because they don't seem to be so commercially brainwashed by advertising

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the way we are here. And, too, over there they play jazz constantly on the radio, the television and in clubs and concert halls."

At home with his lovely wife Debbie and several pets (dog, cat, fish, bird—and a baby boa constrictor), Tony spends much of his time composing.

"I don't have a preconceived direction I'm going in," he said. "As I create and improve, I come up with new ideas and directions that I would not have known before. I work in all veins—jazz, rock, ballads, funk, etc.—trying to stay away from the prefabrications of commercially oriented music. Hopefully, J. J. Johnson will use one of my tunes on the live

album, a song called *It Happens*."

The studio cliques in Los Angeles are hard to crack, but Tony has made considerable progress over the last two years. "I progressively get more calls as my name becomes known, because I play both Fender and acoustic, and because I know the different types and styles of music.

"Do I enjoy it? Sure I do. I enjoy doing it for the experience, the money is good, and so is much of the music. It is an excellent way to not only make a living, but to meet other good musicians and to be constantly exposed to new and technically often very demanding music." db

## caught... Benson's Mini-Fest ... Crumb's Grand Design ...

### GEORGE BENSON

Metropolitan Museum Of Art  
Palladium Theatre  
Avery Fisher Hall  
New York City

**Cumulative Personnel:** Benson, Les Paul, Bucky Pizzarelli, Gabor Szabo, guitar; Ronnie Foster, electric piano and mini-Moog; Jorge Dalto, Clavinet and acoustic piano; Joe Sample, keyboards; Stanley Banks, Alphonso Johnson, electric bass; Ralph MacDonald, percussion; Harvey Mason, drums; Grover Washington, Jr., tenor and soprano saxes, flute; Minnie Riperton, vocals; Dennis Davis, drums; The Dance Theatre of Harlem.

Think real hard. How many artists throughout the history of music can you mention who could give four separate concerts on four consecutive evenings, making them as diverse as possible, in varying musical idioms, and sell out each night? It happened here on a recent weekend when Ron Delsener and Ken Fritz produced Benson X4, a concert quartet extravaganza that felt like a festival surrounding one man, guitarist George Benson.

The guitarists who gathered at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, a magnificent auditorium for such a concert, hardly jammed with the star save for a concluding hodge-podge on *Undecided* and *C-Jam Blues*. Prior to the fast-paced trading of licks, which was muddled by an awful sound system, there was some rock-based Benson which I found unsettling considering the multiplicity of talent that was left waiting until the Top 40 Benson set was over. There was nothing impressive about *Take Five* or the others, but George did get down with some bluesy vocal improvisations on *Georgia On My Mind*. He showed some of his chops in a double-time coda.

Szabo paled in comparison. His set became tedious almost from the outset. Mercilessly, Benson returned to do a duet with him on a tune that Szabo had recorded almost a decade before Benson did, *Breezin'*. Szabo should have sat it out. He was no match for the almost frivolous Benson attack. Where Szabo struggled through some heavy-handed picking, Benson flew through fast changes with his thumb.

Paul and Pizzarelli did three tunes where the former's weird sense of humor over

shadowed the latter's firm strumming. Paul, whose patents have virtually put the electric guitar where it is today, fooled with a tape machine and produced sounds reminiscent of the halcyon '50s when he was teamed with wife Mary Ford and produced such hits as *The World Is Waiting For The Sunrise*, *Tiger Rag*, *Vaya Con Dios* and *How High The Moon*, which he recreated this night. He was the best received artist on the bill. Bucky, however, was the only artiste out there. What we were able to hear from *C-Jam* sounded like some good exchanges between Pizzarelli and Benson, but the hum got in the way. Even *This Masquerade*, which we would come to know very well by the end of the weekend, had some fine Benson chops in the out chorus which was done a cappella: just Benson, his guitar and the system hum.

The show at the Palladium was just that—a show. It was Benson on tour in his best form with his best sides from the Warner Brothers albums. The audience loved it. Ms. Riperton with her reputed five and a half octave range was content to use the upper areas, and she does those rather well.

So far we'd come 50% of the way and nobody had raved about the mini-festival taking place. But nobody had seen the Dance Theatre of Harlem perform. Here was the finest performance of the weekend. Arthur Mitchell's corps de ballet is considered to be among the most disciplined in the country. They did an opening set which drew a standing ovation and sustained applause. The music alternated between classic ballet and contemporary modern dance. Picture a bandana-clad troupe dancing to Tchaikovsky, seguing into the various movements which integrate with *He's Not Heavy*, *He's My Brother*. I have not seen its equal for sheer drama.

After intermission, Benson did some of his schtick which became tiresome only to those of us who had seen it twice before. The majority of the audience obviously had not been to the Met or the Palladium, so their enthusiasm was as bright as ever. The three choreographed numbers should stay in the Dance Theatre's permanent repertoire. Virginia Johnson and Paul Russell did a pas de deux to the music from the motion picture *The Greatest*. The tune, *The Greatest Love Of All*, was played by Benson's group and a string section conducted by Dalto. The dancers were perfection. The rhythmic patterns were all done in a

danced syncopation that can only be described as, well, jazz. The ballerinas started their leaps and falls on the beat but landed after the beat.

*El Mar* was properly Spanish with the male company flashing toreador capes. *Breezin'* was in effect three pas de deux in tandem with nary a step out of place. Mitchell and Benson have much to be proud of. Mitchell's dancers are exclusively his; they do not take private lessons. "Arthur wants us to dance his way, with his style. He prefers we take all our hints and pointers from him," one ballerina told me. These are accomplished dancers. They obviously are devoted to their art.

Benson, with Dalto's aid, was in control of the music throughout. There must have been many rehearsals keeping the dancers and musicians in synch. It was an unusual combination in that there was no major augmentations, no copout brass section or surrogate leader wielding a baton. Just Benson's group, some strings and a great deal of love.

George's friends, MacDonald, Johnson, Mason, Sample and Washington, were on hand to send off the weekend in style. The group's regular drummer was replaced by Mason about halfway through the first half, and the change was remarkable. Where Davis was pounding away sans dynamics, Mason's studio touch was soft, direct, but nonetheless forceful. He allowed the others room by not forcing them to play harder and louder.

I had not seen Johnson since his Weather Report days, and the improvement has been dramatic. Here was Alphonso on fretless electric moving about the strings like a great cat, making music like he invented the thing.

Benson, too, warmed to the occasion. He displayed more chops during the all-star session than at any other point throughout the weekend. He fast-funked us with strong chords and breathtaking runs. Even Washington discarded his patented one solo for some real improvisation. He fared better on soprano and flute than he did on tenor for the most part. Sample sat down at acoustic piano and played the soul out of it. At one point Foster was so gassed by Sample that he broke up right in the middle of a solo. Ronnie is no keyboard slouch himself. He handled synthesizer with full knowledge of what he was doing, not an easy thing these days.

George reproduced *El Mar* in a virtuoso setting, this time allowing himself some dextrous maneuvering. The concluding *Mr. Magic* featured its composer, MacDonald, who used everything from conga to baby rattles as he traded with and propelled Mason. Grover was alive this time on tenor.

What must we conclude from these events (or this event)? That George Benson is as multifarious as so many have claimed? That Warner Brothers, who almost blew away the critics by not having enough seats reserved, has taught the record world how to market an artist? That Ron Delsener is indeed the prima promoter in the world? Or was everyone just lucky?

The errors stand out glaringly. Why have a guitar jam night where there is very little jamming between the guitarists? Why have the star perform his hits every night in the same manner? Perhaps I am being picky. Perfection gets boring, too, doesn't it? Benson X4 was just the beginning. I hope that the people who note these things realize that true musical history took place on this weekend.

—arnold jay smith

## GEORGE CRUMB Avery Fisher Hall New York City

**Personnel:** Irene Gubrud, soprano; Edward Herman, Jr., trombone; New York Philharmonic, conducted by Pierre Boulez, David Gilbert, James Chambers and Larry Newland; Boys' Choirs of the Little Church Around the Corner and Trinity School and the Bell Ringers of Trinity School, directed by Stuart Gardner; the Brooklyn Boys' Chorus, directed by James McCarthy.

Near the end of his tenure as music director of the New York Philharmonic, Pierre Boulez rendered a signal service to the music world by featuring the world premiere of George Crumb's *Star-Child* in a concert that also included works by Mendelssohn, Ravel and Stravinsky. Crumb certainly deserved to be heard in such distinguished company, and this excellent rendition of his new work pointed the way toward a day when, in Boulez's words, contemporary music will again be "the standard repertoire of symphony orchestras."

*Star-Child* is Crumb's largest orchestral composition, and his first since the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Echoes Of Time And The River* (1967). Like many of his works, *Star-Child* incorporates songs; in this case, they are settings of 13th century Latin fragments and quotations from John's *Revelations*.

In his programme notes, Crumb wrote that the idea of using a Latin text had led him to score the work for large orchestra and chorus to suggest a "monolithic" quality. Nevertheless, *Star-Child* was as sparsely textured and fragmented as any of his smaller-scale compositions.

The need for four conductors arose from the fact that the various orchestral sections and the vocalists were all performing at different tempos. In effect, the participants comprised four chamber ensembles, all playing more or less in sympathy with one another.

While the work was not much more structured than Crumb's previous output, several formal elements bound it together. First, there was the text itself, which presented a drama of death and resurrection. This "story line" was paralleled by the music, with its progression from dark to light. In addition, the elemental string chords (*Music Of The Spheres*) which opened the work persisted all the way through it, maintaining continuity (like a raga drone) when other parts were silent.

In some passages, Crumb expressed himself rather elliptically. One example was the duet (in *Voice Crying In The Wilderness*) between the soprano soloist, singing snatches of the *Dies Irae*, and the trombonist, blowing jazz-tinged riffs through a mute. On the other hand, in the fortissimo orchestral passages of *The Powers Of Darkness In Ascent*, one could almost see the chaotic legions of Satan streaming up from Hades. Here there was no possible way to misconstrue Crumb's intent.

Similarly, in one of the work's most gripping moments, the seven trumpets of the apocalypse were literally represented by those very instruments, five of them played from the auditorium's mezzanine. An even more arresting effect was created at the work's conclusion by string and chime players located in the rear of the hall. Ascending to very high notes behind the listeners' backs, the final violin tune suggested vast distances and ineffable, superhuman power.

—kenneth terry

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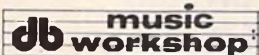


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## HOW TO

## convene a Happening

by Dr. William L. Fowler

The general public might picture a typical national convention as a legion of roisterers in funny fezzes hell-bent on zany antics and madcap revelry. Not so the NAMM Show!

Members of the National Association of Music Merchants attend their yearly International Music Expo with serious intent. They're aware that this convention serves as a center for communicating advances in the quality and quantity of musical products worldwide. They know that at the Expo any music dealer from anywhere can acquire for hometown customers the latest, the finest, the most specialized musical equipment from everywhere. They recognize that their association annually revitalizes music as a whole.

In June of this year the friendly host city of Atlanta caught the spirit of NAMM's 76th convention, offering its Georgia World Congress Center and an array of gorgeous new hotels to a record-breaking NAMM assemblage and handling with aplomb in its scores of classy restaurants the astronomical gastronomic needs of some several thousand appetites.

For all those well-housed and well-fed NAMMers, the daytime labor of discovery among hundreds of exhibits yielded at night to luxury in live music. Every evening brought its own bonus of exhibitor-sponsored concerts, like Leblanc's, Slingerland's, and Avedis Zildjian's mutual gift, "NAMM Night with Maynard Ferguson" (and the whole band!). And after several such musical treats, the down beat/NAYMM (Y for young) Happening, coming as it always does on the last night of the Expo, culminated the after-dark show series.

Promptly at 8 p.m. of June 13th, rehearsals accomplished, sound checks completed, spotlight positioned, audience expectant, and the brief welcoming intro from db's Ed. ed. made, a countdown from Sgt. Ernest Hensley sent his mighty Airmen of Note roaring off into that rarified musical atmosphere only great jazz performing groups reach.

After their short but stratospheric opening set, these official Air Force artists welcomed to their section of the huge tiered stage a sizeable contingent of guest players: one-man-bandist Shorty Stumpf (his Stumpf Fiddle's old-time auto honker helped authenticate an ensuing Spike Jones effect); Atlanta percussionists Mike Cebuski and Laurel Ellison (feeling joy in joining Chicago's percussion expert, Mike Balter); Georgia State U.'s trumpet-playing Music Chairman, Steve Winick, and french-hornist students, Steve May and Mike Egan; plus a Barcus-Berry equipped electric string quartet of young Georgia peaches picked by teacher Kathleen DeBerry. And to underpin securely this Airmen-turned-studio-orchestra aggregation, Harvey Phillips lent his virtuoso tuba chops. Despite the tricky task of three percussionists and one Stumpf Fiddler threading through some thirty extra trap sets, tympani, vibes, xylophones, bass drums, congas, gongs, cymbals, timbales, glockenspiels, bongos, cowbells, woodblocks, and other color and rhythm intensifiers crowded among and around the Airmen rhythm section, that augmented orchestra sat

ready for guest composer/conductor Ladd McIntosh in merely minutes. Following his thank-you smile for the high quality of all those performers and all those extra instruments (courtesy Baldwin, Deagan, Latin Percussion, Leblanc, Ludwig, Slingerland and Avedis Zildjian), Ladd plunged into his newly-composed and typically-titled *Un Collage du Garbahj au Fromage*.

During the sequence of musical events in his complex 25 minute work, Ladd delineated sixteen distinct musical styles, segueing from one to another as if a radio dial were being twisted. From an Academy Award intro complete with announcer through successive paraphrases of Spike Jones, the '60s Twist, romantic drama, jazz waltz, gutsy funk, lush ballad, Broadway two-beat, polytonal chord-stacking, atonal mish-mash, Sousa march, regal fanfare, Basie swing, Mozart classicism, Chick Corea melodic line, and rock, Ladd flashed his tonal images on an aural screen, developed them, then flashed on, eventually to reach his powerful percussion-ensemble finale, a *tour de force* of relentless rhythm propelling strings and reeds and brass constantly faster and higher into a final explosion of sound.

If contrast in programming had been the sole aim of the Happening, it could not have succeeded more than it did when the spotlight shifted across the stage from Ladd's massed acoustic orchestra to Emmett Chapman standing alone with his electric Stick, a dual-fingerboard, touch-activated fretted instrument. And Emmett continued the contrast in his gentle treatment of the three familiar favorites, *Waltzing Matilda*, Bach's *Jesu, Joy Of Man's Desiring*, and *My Favorite Things*. His musical sensitivity drew an ovation and his consideration for the tight schedul withstood insistent demands for an encore from his cheering supporters.

Back swung the spotlight along the stage to Phil Wilson, also standing alone ready to begin the Happening's trombone segment. Phil's solo multiphonics immediately intrigued everybody: How could any lone trombone emit all those block chord progressions? Phil didn't explain. Instead, he called up fellow-brassist Rich Matteson and guitarist Jack Petersen to recreate some *Sounds Of The Wasp* (recorded on ASI-203). Joined then by a full rhythm section and Airmen trombonists Dave Steinmeyer and Rich Lillard, Phil and Rich got into some four-bone straight ahead jazz chorus trading. Result: a real bash.

With the simultaneous featuring of four trombones, the Happening reached one of its objectives—to combine similar instruments into performing groups. And this objective carried throughout the remaining segments. Back again across the stage, for example, the ARP NAMM Jammers fielded five synthesizers plus drums in easy listening arrangements of *Star Trek, My Way* and *Song for America*. Mike Brigida and Tom Piggot manned the four keyboard synthesizers while Bill Singer took care of guitar synthesizer and vocals, backed by drummer Larry Manzi. They, too, resisted repeated calls for an encore while guitarists across the stage prepared



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for some fancy multiple and solo picking. First, Howard Roberts, Mike Elliot, Jack Petersen and Airman Rick Whitehead teamed in a Johnny Smith composition commissioned by Norlin, the charming yet difficult *Yorkie Ballet Suite*, proving thereby that at least some guitarists really can read notes. . . . Then, in keeping with the international flavor of the Expo, Frenchman Marcel Dadi demonstrated his Western Europe country's version of American country-western. Then Texan Maurice Anderson capped the guitar segment by showing how well the electric steel serves almost any American music style.

To close the Happening, Harvey Phillips and Rich Matteson brought their Matteson-Phillips TUBAJAZZ Consort on stage. Individual tubists capable of jazz soloing are not, of course, unique. But six tubists racing along complex bop lines in absolute rhythmic unison certainly are! It was not, though, for such feats of tuba technique nor for its collective high musicianship that the Consort earned their American Music Conference award. It was for "New and Significant Contribution to the Advancement of Instrumental Music," as inscribed on the plaques presented during the Happening by AMC's Board Chairman, Vito Pascucci, a ceremony made the more impressive by a spontaneous standing ovation for Mr. Pascucci himself plus an NBC network filming of the proceedings (Look for a projected *NBC Weekend* documenting Harvey Phillips and the astonishing breadth of his musical activities). The Consort's contribution to instrumental music recognized by AMC has been nothing less than bringing to jazz all the warmth and suppleness of the multiple members of the tuba family, a texture characteristic of Wagnerian orchestration. The Consort, though, extends Wagner's low-brass concepts into high pitch registers, complex rhythms and jazz improvising. Wagner's tubas could sing, but they couldn't swing. (One listener described the Consort as, "like Basie down an octave.")

Maybe the Consort members' meticulous musicianship stems from their being teachers and clinicians. Of the tubists, Rich Matteson (Getzen) teaches at North Texas State University; Ashley Alexander (Holton) at Mr. San Antonio College; Buddy Baker (C. G. Conn) at University of Northern Colorado; Harvey Phillips (also Conn) at Indiana University; Daniel Perantoni (Custom Music) at the University of Illinois; and R. Winston Morris (Miraphone) at Tennessee Tech. Pianist Tom Ferguson (presently President of NAJE) teaches at Memphis State and guitarist Jack Petersen (Norlin) at North Texas. Alternate drummers Louis Bellson and Jim Vaughan (both Pearl) teach privately. And bassist Steve Rodby is at Northwestern University. The Consort members' contributions to education ought to earn them still more recognition!

To all its participants—audience, performers, and producers alike—the Happening offered more than its program alone, rewarding as that music was. The audience could find new friends and renew old friendships under unhurried social conditions. The performers could stretch out more than might have been possible in daytime demonstration booths and could get a close listen to what other performers might be into. And those closest to the production of Happening VII—my down beat colleagues, the NAYMM coordinators, the Dimension 5 sound engineers—surely must have felt, as I still do, a rather special glow.

"When we came to the second album, we all decided we wanted to have a background of real strings on some of the tunes, which is very different from synthesized strings," del Barrio states.

Strunz doesn't think the group loses its earthiness by employing strings. "Of course, strings do present a slicker more sophisticated backdrop, but that is not the only mood or style on *Sky Islands*. We feel that the string arrangements are appropriate on those tunes, that they complement and enhance them.

"Also, we did not sell that many records our first time out, and we want to stay together as a group. To stay together and grow, we must evolve and experiment. One of our new approaches was to experiment with strings."

"We are sort of like Weather Report, in that they continue to write new tunes, they still play to their creative limits, and the people happen to like them, which makes them commercial," Tavaglione says.

"Generically, we belong to fusion music," Strunz believes, "but we produce a different expression within that genre. We utilize finesse and subtlety wherever it is suitable and effective, and we also generate a lot of energy, especially in live performance. Every successful group is hip to the fact that people want to feel that energy."

Steve points out that, "*Caldera* made it to the Top 40 on the jazz charts, and now, because of us, Capitol has Raul de Souza and Gary Bartz, and they are interested in others.

"We feel good that we were able to make an album even though none of us had previously-established names. That proved to us that you don't have to use the biggest names in the business in order to make it. If you have a concept and you stick with it, you can do it."

George backs up this feeling. "For us there is no conflict between artistic integrity and good business. The music we write is artistically organic to us, as well as being danceable and accessible to a lot of people. And, too, within those rhythmic contexts, you can still play your butt off. There can be a careful marriage between the two elements if the music is organic to your personality. Integrity can be applied to any medium. 'Commercial' is not a nasty word."

"As great as Bill Evans is, it is not in his conception to write what the Commodores write," Steve emphatically states. "My point is not whether he would like to do that, but can he? Does such a musician have the skill or the talent to write something like that without sounding like just another jazz musician playing jazz lines over a funky bass line?"

"The music must be a synthesis of your own experience. Otherwise, it does not flow," Strunz declares.

Del Barrio is a firm believer that the heyday of fusion music lies ahead. "This fusion music is only beginning, but I do not think we should think of it as going someplace, because once it goes someplace, then we are stuck.

"When Charlie Parker played, everybody thought, 'This is it.' Musicians stopped expressing themselves and started copying Charlie Parker. Everybody played like him until John Coltrane broke out of the mold. The moment we think This is it, we start copying formulas and repeating ourselves.

"To us, this is just today. We will keep going and going, always taking it as far as we can. There. So much for my eight bars of improvising!"

up on a roof and playing drums by myself. It is like having sex with a statue. You put somebody up there with me, though, and I'll get a lot out of it.

**Shaw:** It is obvious by your comments that your learning experiences have been through work and spontaneity rather than through the educational process. Do you have any thoughts on ways of picking up percussive pointers? Do they jibe at all with some of the things taught in music curricula?

**MacDonald:** Now, this rap is getting hip. Like I went to Africa, right? Almost immediately, I found out how little I knew about percussion. You gotta go away to see this shit. You see some ten-year-old kid, he's never had no kind of nothing, just natural ability. Then you'll see this group of ten or twelve, sitting down, playing these intricate rhythms. People hire you and everything, but you go around the world, and you don't have a clue.

Take Greece, for instance. They can be in anything from 5/8 to 19/8. It took some learning on my part. Or how about some of those Indian tabla players? You go hear one of those guys, and you wanna leave. But you have to go there and experiment if you consider yourself a complete musician.

**Shaw:** How do you react the view that, besides the experiences you talk about, the most legitimate training is acquired in formal instructions?

**MacDonald:** Schools say how it should be done. Sure, it teaches you basics, but it doesn't let you be flexible. Those educators—they look down on people who are unlettered. If they want to sit down and theorize, cool. Theories, though, have nothing to do with music. Let them take their Ph.D.'s and theories to Africa and see what they have to say about it.

**Shaw:** Besides your standard gear, what non-instruments do you use on recording dates?

**MacDonald:** In many situations, I like to take these toy hammers that babies have in the crib. I take the sound and apply rhythm to it. Also, I like telephone jacks—especially those with two prong cords. You play them together against your leg, and they sound like castinets. They are unreal and beautiful. I've used them with Melba Moore, and on *Suzanne* with Roberta Flack.

**Shaw:** Ever get into playing traps?

**MacDonald:** Never, really, although I've owned a trap set since 1962. Let's see, once I played regular drums on an Eric Gale date, but the album was never issued. Then I played traps on an off-Broadway show, *Young, Gifted And Black*, and I think there's an album of that floating around somewhere. But to tell you the truth, I've never gotten into it. They are all right—but they are a different instrument from conga drums. I just prefer percussion.

**Shaw:** Now that you've released solo albums, you've become well-known in your own right. How do you feel about your chart success, and will this interfere with your studio work?

**MacDonald:** Of course, I feel good about charting, even in the disco area. The dance crowd is another part of the market, and I feel good because a couple of tunes are getting disco play. I don't fit my music into categories—I'm a musician first. I'll always record for the George Bensons and Carly Simons. I think I perform a useful function. **db**

been using the Micro-Moog lately, for about the past year. But I'd never worked on soloing techniques like bending notes, like George Duke does so well. I'm doing that now.

**Silvert:** Who are your favorite synthesizer players?

**Hancock:** I have a few—George Duke, because his sound is so human and he can really play the blues, and I like the blues (laughs). And I like Jan Hammer and Chick Corea and Joe Zawinul.

**Silvert:** What about Tomita, for his programming?

**Hancock:** I didn't mention him because he has less of an immediate effect on my own playing. I sit down and listen to Chick's records and Zawinul's records about once each. I haven't really sat down and analyzed how he gets those sounds. I put Tomita and Pat Gleeson and Walter Carlos into this other category of people who really know the synthesizers in an entirely different way. Their knowledge of complex wave forms and modifications is staggering compared with what me and my

poor three or four favorites know. We don't know shit compared to what— (laughs).

**Silvert:** Do you think that the more you know of electronics, it's to your benefit, or that if you got too hung up in technicalities it could deduct from your music?

**Hancock:** I realize that in all areas of life, there's a danger that when people spend a lot of time gaining knowledge, sometimes the knowledge begins to override the goal, or become the goal itself, instead of becoming a tool for something more important, which with me would be the music. But it's not the fault of the knowledge. It's really the person who is responsible. But I'm aware of that pitfall, so I hope I'm intelligent enough not to fall into it.

**Silvert:** What methods have you been using to practice lately on the acoustic piano?

**Hancock:** There's a book called Oscar Beringer, a scale book. And also Slonimsky's *Thesaurus Of Scales And Exercises*. I bought that book during the Coltrane days because I heard that McCoy used to practice out of it, and that *Trane* used to practice out of it.

**Silvert:** But you don't have an acoustic piano any more.

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**Hancock:** No, I don't own one, because when I left New York I sold my piano—it was old and not getting any better. I was hoping that in a year or so somebody would give me a free piano (laughs), and nobody's given me one yet, so it looks like I'm going to have to buy one. I'm going to get either a Yamaha or a Steinway, probably.

**Silvert:** What kind of touch do you like on a piano keyboard?

**Hancock:** I would say a medium one, but I'm not sure if that's medium or not. Somebody else might say, "That's touch."

**Silvert:** Is the reaction the V.S.O.P. band has been getting on the road what you expected?

**Hancock:** More. More. It strikes me we're getting almost a response of surprise, these new jazz listeners can feel the music and it has meaning for them, and I think they're surprised.

**Silvert:** To find that in themselves.

**Hancock:** Yeah, and I think it's a pleasant surprise.

**Silvert:** You're talking of people who were only peripherally interested in jazz, but got into it through the stuff you've been doing,

Chick has been doing, etc?

**Hancock:** Right. Those people make up the majority of the audience. I've been into the funk thing, and many of those people have been introduced to jazz through me and Chick and Weather Report. And some of them have moved on into jazz even further and don't like what I've been doing now (laughs). It's so funny. For example, there's a writer who used to write for *Crawdaddy*. When I first met him, he was a rock & roller, and I had my far-out sextet band, and he didn't know what that music was about. I did a whole number on him about how to really listen to music, and the responsibility of this and that. And he gained a lot of respect for me. And then, when I started getting into funk, he turned on me!

**Silvert:** It seems to me that since *Thrust*, which seemed like the peak of your funk playing, in terms of complexity and total involvement, that your records have gotten simpler since then, especially the stuff you did with Wah Wah Watson.

**Hancock:** That's exactly right.

**Silvert:** Is that something you feel good about, because to me there's less to listen to on *Secrets* than on *Thrust* or even *Man-Child*. Was that a deliberate simplification?

**Hancock:** Definitely. *Thrust* sounds to me like an album compiling material from four other albums. The differences between tunes are great, a wide spectrum for an album with so few tunes. After *Head Hunters*, I didn't want to repeat myself so on *Thrust* I brought in more of the jazz elements. Like *Actual Proof*. And the character of *Butterfly* is an extension of *Maiden Voyage*, which was also a model for *Vein Melter* on *Head Hunters*. And *Palm Grease* on *Thrust* has a funny bass line, not a straight 4/4, it's got an odd number of beats. You're accurate in saying that *Thrust* is more complex than *Head Hunters*, but the reason I got into funk was to get away from complexity.

**Silvert:** Because left to your own devices you tend to get more and more complex?

**Hancock:** Well, we jazz listeners tend, 90% of the time, to like clever, complex treatments of simple ideas. That's what we respect. You and I have the same feeling about that from our jazz ears.

**Silvert:** It's also being out there on thin ice and doing something new. Extensions and expansions.

**Hancock:** Right, complexity fits in there. But what I found out is that it's even harder to

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## down beat 42<sup>nd</sup> annual readers poll

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GROUP AWARDS

HALL OF FAME (see rules)

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- Use official ballot only. Please type or print.
- Jazzman and Rock/Blues Musician of the year:** Vote for the artist who, in your opinion, has contributed most to jazz/rock/blues in 1977.
- Hall of Fame:** Vote for the artist—living or dead—who in your opinion has made the greatest contribution to contemporary music. The following previous winners are not eligible: Cannonball Adderley, Louis Armstrong, Count Basie, Sidney Bechet, Bix Beiderbecke, Clifford Brown, Charlie Christian, Ornette Coleman, John Coltrane, Miles Davis, Eric Dolphy, Roy Eldridge, Duke Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie, Benny Goodman, Coleman Hawkins, Fletcher Henderson, Jimi Hendrix, Woody Herman, Earl Hines, Johnny Hodges, Billie Holiday, Stan Kenton, Gene Krupa, Glenn Miller, Charles Mingus, Thelonious Monk, Wes Montgomery, Jelly Roll Morton, King Oliver, Charlie Parker, Bud Powell, Django Reinhardt, Buddy Rich, Sonny Rollins, Pee Wee Russell, Bessie Smith, Billy Strayhorn, Art Tatum, Cecil Taylor, Jack Teagarden, Fats Waller, Ben Webster, and Lester Young.
- Miscellaneous Instruments:** Instruments not having their own category, with these exceptions, valve trombone, included in trombone category; cornet and fluegelhorn, included in the trumpet category.
- Jazz and Rock/Blues Albums of the Year:** Select only LPs issued during the last 12 months. Do not vote for singles. Include full album title and artist's name. If your choice is part of a series indicate volume number.
- Make only one selection in each category.

here's your ballot

who's a different color, is he supposed to say, "Hey, you're different. What are you?" What's the difference? Is he a nice cat or isn't he?

**Lyons:** So you're only interested in whether the music is good or not. ... Last week I spoke to Mary Lou Williams who is on a 'Save Jazz' crusade because she feels that no one else is playing it, at least no one born after the bebop era. She says the so-called avant garde, Cecil Taylor, for one, isn't playing jazz at all. Do you agree with that point of view?

**Manne:** I think she's unduly worried because when a company like Columbia can sign Dexter Gordon to make new albums, it's a healthy sign that the elements we're talking about are still endearing a lot of people. I made Ornette Coleman's first album, and those same elements that make all jazz good have to be in avant garde. The player has to have good time and good roots. He has to learn how to play blues before he can play avant garde well. If a guy has good roots and can swing, then if he wants to go outside, he can do it. But the same elements hold true even if the drummer isn't playing  $\frac{3}{4}$  to show everyone where the beat is. Time is within the body, and if a guy's time is good it's going to be good no matter what kind of music he plays. I'm not building a wall because new music broadens you. I want to hear it all.

**Brown:** Jazz isn't going to disappear. I don't think it's as serious as she (Miss Williams) thinks it is. Roy Eldridge used to tell me he played so many notes they wouldn't let him sit in. He was the Ornette Coleman of his time. If you didn't play like Louis Armstrong, you didn't have it. Well, that's how the music always turns over. It happened with Dizzy, Bird, Milt Jackson and I when we came out here with Al Haig and Stan Levi. We were playing Billy Berg's in Los Angeles in 1945, and after two nights he told us he'd have to close the place unless the band sang.

**Manne:** The musicians are always years ahead of the audience. Cecil Taylor feels what he has to do. It's not my cup of tea because there are elements of music I appreciate that I don't hear in his playing. But this is a personal preference. I still like swing, romanticism, emotionalism, harmonic structure, melodic lines. ...

**Brown:** Form.

**Manne:** Exactly ... form. When I hear Coleman Hawkins' *Body And Soul* today, it's still a fantastic improvisation to me. Cecil and Ornette create a feeling of such intensity through tension and release, which is another approach. To hear every bar filled with notes is just not my cup of tea. I'm a fan of those Japanese single brush stroke paintings. If one stroke tells you it's a tree, why use 50 strokes? I'm a firm believer in that. The notes you don't play are as beautiful as the notes you do play. But I don't want to stay in either camp exclusively. You've got to keep your head open.

Here's a good example of why. 20 years ago drummers didn't know what to do playing jazz in  $\frac{3}{4}$ . You took one beat away from me, so I can't go ding-a-ding-ding anymore. What do I do? Nowadays you play  $\frac{3}{4}$  as if you were playing  $\frac{4}{4}$ , you play  $\frac{3}{4}$  as if you were playing  $\frac{4}{4}$ , and you play  $\frac{3}{4}$  as if you were playing  $\frac{4}{4}$ . The willingness to try something new is what's important. If you always reach beyond yourself, you'll broaden your scope as a musician and never grow stale. **db**

nization that was set up by 15 musicians. I was one of the original 15 along with people like Dave Liebman, Richie Beirach, Jeff Williams, Badal Roy, Randy Brecker, Mike Brecker and Clint Houston. With the collective we were able to get some funds from the New York State Council of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. The space we had was used for various performances. I did some bass trios with Dave Holland and Glen Moore. Also, some things with Collin Walcott on sitar. At the same time, we were doing clinics, workshop clinics with lectures and demonstrations.

In 1971 I worked with Horace Arnold and the Hear and Now Company for Young Audiences. Aside from Horace on drums and myself on bass, Mike Lawrence played trumpet and Dave Friedman was on vibes. We went into the public schools and performed and talked about the fundamentals of improvisation. I did that for about a year and I really enjoyed it because verbalizing about the music helped clarify a lot of things for me. I've also done some clinics with Nick Brignola up in the Albany area.

**Berg:** Tell me about working with Badal Roy.

**Tusa:** Badal and I have known each other for a long time. Even before Lookout Farm we had done some playing. The relationship just flourished. We love to play together. So, I'm very much into Indian music. I had been into it for at least ten years, but going to India really clinched it.

Basically, what we're doing is combining Indian classical music with jazz improvisation. The whole thing started on the road because of the boredom from sitting around while traveling. To make it more interesting, we exchanged things. I taught Badal Western notation, and he taught me about Indian music. We just kept getting more and more deeply involved. You can hear a kind of Eastern quality in some of my music that was recorded on *Father Time*.

I guess the reason I'm so attracted to the music is because of its emotional feeling, its high demand for technical proficiency and for the fact that Indian musicians are never in a rush. You know, they're very slow at developing an idea. They'll play something and play it and play it and play it until it gradually changes. I love playing with that attitude. Indian music also has a message. Each raga has an emotional, spiritual and intellectual meaning.

**Berg:** How does the emotional feeling of Indian music differ from that of Western music?

**Tusa:** Well, it has to do with how music is taught. I would say that Western music is generally approached from the intellect as opposed to the emotions. Here, we are taught to know what a C is. You know, here it is on the bass. Indian music is not taught that way. You are taught to *feel* the notes, to feel what a C is, to feel its sound in your body. It's a much more subjective art form.

So in India you're taught to feel the music first. Later you're told what it is. Then you can think about it and get a better understanding of the formal structure of ragas and the scales. The difference is that one is approached from an intellectual level while the other is approached from more of an emotional or intuitive level.

**Berg:** What about jazz? Aren't the emotion-

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## HANCOCK

continued from page 56

create something new, but without that complexity. We've been getting away from repetition for so many years, it becomes difficult to play something with a familiar sound and still make it new and fresh. So there's a much more subtle kind of challenge in going toward the simple than in going toward the complex. It's much more difficult.

**Silvert:** The compositions on *Maiden Voyage* and *Speak Like A Child* had both qualities—there was a simple, fresh feeling and yet the voicings were very advanced.

**Hancock:** Right, the melodies and rhythms were simple, but the harmonies and the instrumental colors were advanced.

**Silvert:** That combination of the simple and the advanced, is that what you're trying to get into now in terms of funk, in terms of electronics?

**Hancock:** On my next album, yes, but not with my previous ones, because after *Thrust I* felt I had to meet the challenge of going toward the simple. And I think with *Doin' It*, I met it.

**Silvert:** For a few minutes, *Doin' It* is wonderful, but then it goes on too long.

**Hancock:** It's seven minutes long and it should have been four. It repeats itself too often. Usually when I record with David Rubinson, we record everything long and then cut it down to the size it should be. And that's what we did with *Secrets*. The only time it was different was with *V.S.O.P.* We only took one solo off. Anyway, with *Doin' It*, we got so used to it, especially coming through those clear studio speakers where you can really hear everything, that we got inside of it and it really sounded good. Maybe we were too subjective about it. We thought it would be hypnotic rather than monotonous.

**Silvert:** Like *Chameleon* was hypnotic?

**Hancock:** No, a better example would be Ravel's *Bolero*. That was what I was trying to do. I think I got close enough to that in my studies, so now I can start revamping everything, gathering everything together without only that specific purpose, that one approach to simplicity. I can start adding the complex into it and see what I can come up with.

**Silvert:** Will you do that with the existing instrumentation of your previous records?

**Hancock:** More or less. On some of the tracks, I'd like to use Tony Williams and Ron Carter, and Jaco Pastorius on one. I'd like to have a singer on a couple of tracks. I have a particular tune for Jon Lucien, for one.

**Silvert:** This next record will have a bigger shake-up, a variety of sounds.

**Hancock:** That's my purpose right now, but things sometimes get changed by the time you get in the studio.

**Silvert:** Would you have, let's say, Jaco contribute a tune, or would they be yours?

**Hancock:** I'd like to have mostly mine, or all my tunes, 'cause I need the money. Not that I'm starving, but I've had so much co-authorship in the past. Like, the year I put out *Maiden Child*, I would have made a profit if I had written all the tunes, but as it was I broke even.

**Silvert:** Was that a question of not wanting to do it, or just not getting around to writing your own tunes?

**Hancock:** Well, sometimes we get together and I don't have a whole lot of ideas to begin with. . . .

**Silvert:** That's just not doing the homework, though.

**Hancock:** It's just that the ideas aren't coming out, like a writer sometimes sittin' in front of the typewriter and nothing's happening. . . . At times you need input from other people. I needed Wah Wah's input in order to get the point I wanted.

**Silvert:** Are you feeling a surge of songwriting energy coming through you now?

**Hancock:** Not a surge, but more self-sufficiency.

**Silvert:** How is this tour affecting it, playing with these guys again?

**Hancock:** We're recording several albums on this tour, a domestic quintet live album, another quintet album for Japan, and two different trio albums in the studio, with Ron and Tony. So all of us have a lot of new material to write.

**Silvert:** But the quintet isn't going in the studio, only live?

**Hancock:** Right, we're not really planning to.

**Silvert:** So this quintet is a one-time thing?

**Hancock:** I'd like to get together again in a year or a couple of years.

**Silvert:** I know people want to know to what extent is Miles's spirit permeating this tour?

**Hancock:** It can't help but be there, because we're basically playing music that came into being in the '60s, and Miles Davis' name became associated with it.

**Silvert:** He did so much to create the music. . . . Did Miles come see the band in New York?

**Hancock:** No, he really wanted to, but he said he couldn't deal with all those people. Because you know that when Miles comes around, especially since he's been off the scene. . . .

**Silvert:** Everybody's going to jump on him.

**Hancock:** The night of the concert, me and Ron went to see him at his house in between shows. He looked great, he looked great. He's been playing a little, I think, but not a lot.

**Silvert:** I know that you and Chick Corea have a tour planned roughly for early 1978, where you'll both be playing strictly acoustic grands, solo and in duet. Is this V.S.O.P. tour a kind of warm-up to that?

**Hancock:** I hadn't thought of it in that way, but I guess you could say that, yes. I guess this tour is a preview for me, a chance to get used to looking at the acoustic piano again in a public way.

**Silvert:** A lot of people have said that as a leader you sometimes don't play as well as when you're on someone's date, someone you respect.

**Hancock:** Yup, that's true, when I don't have that responsibility, when I'm free to play somebody else's music, and interpret it, many times I can come up with something more dynamic than when it's my record and my responsibility. Maybe because if another leader sets up a new direction, it can be an exciting kind of challenge, and I can be more objective about the music because it's not all coming from my own head.

**Silvert:** Well, translating that idea to your own records, wouldn't that mean that the better sidemen you have, the better you're going to be?

**Hancock:** Well, a lot of bands go through musicians like drinking water. But what I try to do, rather than, for instance, always looking for another drummer to play a specific thing, is try to see what my drummer has to offer already, and function from that.

**Silvert:** That's Miles' philosophy.

**Hancock:** Exactly. It's not easy to do, though. The best, of course, is to have a guy who can do it all.

**Silvert:** When Keith Jarrett heard a few months back that you and Chick were planning an acoustic piano tour together, he was both pleased and skeptical. Here's what he said: 'I have negative feelings about them returning to the piano now, because historically it's the wrong time—unless their feelings about what they're doing are stronger than

they ever were before. And it's hard to imagine that being true given that they're returning to it exactly the time when people will say, "Wow, I'm really glad they did that."'

**Hancock:** I agree with him. But see, remember we wanted to do it last year? Actually, Chick was ready, but I wasn't. And now I want to, I feel personally *ready* to do it. I just hope that between now and early next year that I'll have the time to get to the point I want to get to on the acoustic piano. **db**

## TUSA

continued from page 57

al and intuitive aspects central to improvisation?

**Tusa:** Right. It really parallels Indian music and that's why you find people like Don Cherry and Sonny Rollins going to India. While you can study chords, scales and rhythm, jazz is really a spontaneous music of the moment. That means that you have to really develop your ear to a very high level so that you can respond to the moment.

It's like an athlete. You don't have time to think about the ball when it's coming to you. You just try to get that glove up. If you calculate that you have to move your elbow two and a half inches up and bend your wrist, you're in trouble. What you need to do is to intuitively balance all the different aspects. And that's how you have to approach improvisation.

I remember recording with Don Cherry. It was a score for a film called *The Sacred Mountain*. Don had a few sketches but nothing written out. He would come over and sing what he wanted me to play. There were a lot of Indian scales that he used. Don is into combining the Eastern style of music with Western jazz. He lived and studied in India for awhile, you know. So with people like Carla Bley and Ed Blackwell, we watched the film and improvised the music. It was a great experience.

I'm very interested in performing for people, but at the same time I have to be honest with myself. It's not that I'm afraid to play a vamp, or to cook, or whatever else some people might consider "commercial." I'm not. I feel there's a balance—a balance of artistry, communication with people and something that's a viable product. That's what I'm striving for. **db**

## NEW PRODUCTS REPORT...

by Charles Suber

We and ten thousand or so buyers were very impressed with what was played and displayed at the recent International Music Expo in Atlanta.

Visually and aurally, the show was a knockout. Thousands of musical instruments and related products were handsomely displayed by 400 exhibitors in the vast and luxurious Georgia World Congress Center while scores of musicians—George Benson, Chet Atkins, Santi Latora, Clark Terry, Ed Shaughnessy, Harvey Phillips, Howard Roberts, Les Paul, Emmett Chapman, and the like—demonstrated their companies' wares at various performance centers.

Behind the fanfare and glitter, the buyers found a lode of fine instruments, many of which will be in your local music store\* this fall and winter. You will find new-and-improved instruments in all categories—brass/reeds/percussion/strings/keyboards—both acoustic and electric. This across-the-board improvement fulfills a prophecy made by Bob Moog to us several years ago: "The development of sophisticated electronic instruments will not diminish but will rather stimulate the development and use of better acoustic instruments."

What follows is a brief summary of these new products. Because of the musical quality standards of the average *down beat* reader, the items mentioned are only top-of-the-line, professional type instruments and related equipment. If your local dealer\* is not aware of a particular item, drop us a card (at our Chicago

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\*Your best buy is from a local dealer rather than from a distant discount house. Balance the convenience and availability of expert local service against the increased cost and risk of sending your horn or amp or whatever to a far-away place. Buy local, it's a better deal.

### Brass & Woodwinds

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### Percussion

Slingerland has a new "personalized" drum set available with Coca-Cola logo or anything you provide (match your *db* T-shirt?); Slingerland also showed its new 2-1 (12 lugs on top, 6 on bottom) snare drum, cymbal stand, and conga drum ... Ching-O-Heads, jingling metallic discs set into drum heads, from Drumland/Ralph Kester, Inc. ... Gretsch offers a new ten-page full-color drum catalog ... Ludwig has a new Challenger snare drum, Ringer timpani, a Pack N' Roll trap case, Tivoli drum set with built-in space-age lighting "sparkling through transparent multi-colored Vistalite"; the Musser division has a 4½ octave Kelon marimba and "Good Vibe" mallets ... Pro-Mark introduced a new heavy duty hi-hat stand (a French import) and the

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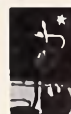
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Yamaha showed an in-production model (CP70) of its Electric Grand introduced last year in prototype; plus five new models in the Yamaha combo organ series ... Rhodes' new suitcase piano models feature slide-type controls and improved stereo vibrato ... Austin-Weight has an upright grand with extra heavy harp and "post-less" soundboard construction ... Roland's new Piano Plus (model MP-700) has a 75 keys and mechanical action ... Baldwin hosted Bechstein grands (from Germany) in the \$15,000 to \$35,000 range ... Super-scope unveiled the Pianocorder which records on tape cassettes and plays a "live" performance on any upright or grand piano ... the Multivox (model MX-20) electronic piano ... the NovaLine Concert 88 electronic piano ... The Stringer, compact lightweight electronic keyboard from Hohner.

#### Synthesizers (keyboard-activated) and Sound Modification Devices

Roland premiered its Micro-Composer for electronic music with "interfaces with tape recorders and all synthesizers", also the Roland System 100 mini-synthesizer for under \$2000 ... Ibanez' new overdrive ... Yamaha has three new models of its portable synthesizer ... the RMI (model KC-LL) Digital Keyboard Computer ... new Cat and Kitten synthesizers from Octave Electronics ... Musitronics' new Mu-Tron Octave Divider, about \$160 ... Music Technology showed the Crumar Polytron, reputed "to convert any keyboard into full fledged synthesizer", also Crumar Digital Synthesizer, and Crumar Orchestrator (OR-15) with polyphonic brass, string, piano, and bass sounds ... Univox has the new Korg system of modularized, fully polyphonic synthesizers and the Korg Minipops, 35 rhythm special effects ... the MXR Analog Delay System ... Electro-Harmonix Memory Man—echo/reverb/delay unit ... Oberheim's Polyphonic Synthesizer Programmer.

#### Sound Reinforcement Equipment

All-new Lab Series Amps from Norlin Music, developed by Gibson and Moog engineers "in consultation with working musicians and studio players" includes the SynAmp, specially designed for synthesizer amplification ... Pro-Line Voice and Instrument mikes and floor monitor from Electro-Voice ... DiMarzio pickups include a Precision Bass Replacement, Super II fits "practically all guitars", and a Transducer & Mixing system for acoustic piano which also serves as a mixer for two or three guitars playing together ... Marshall's 30 watt combo amp ... Multivox "Express Four" PA system ... Road has new series of self-contained guitar and bass amps ... Heil's professional series includes: 8-channel mixer, Pro-Ora dual channel graphic equalizer, Pro-XO two-way crossover, Pro-100 (85 watt), Pro-200 (150 watt), and Pro-400 (250 watt) amps ... Amanita Sound has new line of protective loudspeaker enclosures ... Roland showed its Boss (GE-10) Graphic Equalizer ... Kaman Corp.'s ATD (VI-1) Violin transducer pickup ... Hohner showed its "completely redesigned" line of amps ... the Uni-Sync Trouper series of Live Music Modular Systems ... the Neptune (model 910) Graphic Equalizer ... the Dirty Works EMG guitar pickup ... Barcus-Berry has the new Audio-plate speakers (recently featured in *Newsweek*) ... Dallas Music Industries showed the Kelsey 8, 12, and 16 channel stereo mixers ... the RMI 360 series amp ... Anvil's ATA-type amp rack case ... TAPCO now into pro power amps ... Polytone showed new Mini-Brute amps (models III and IV) and new Mini-Brute PA ... Dynacord showed its full line of sound equipment ... ditto Echolette ... Shure has Equalization Analyzer System (M615AS) and Audio Equalizer (SR107) and compact Loudspeaker Systems (SR112, SR116) ... Randall has several new amps and now offers the option of building its amp systems into "Anvil-type" cases ... Sunn/Magna introduced new power amp series with multi-use in-and-out Jacks—600 ohm, 3X1r phone and RCA ... Biamp Systems' new line of interface equipment ... Kustom all new line of amps and sound reinforcement equipment ... Acoustic introduced a professional amp line ... Road Electronics has a new line of compact, high power amps ... Rowe-DeArmond has new humbucking pickup for electric guitars, the

Superbucker ... Anvil Cases making custom ATA-type cases for TAPCO mixers ... Petillo pickup (model 20) mounts on any guitar with special 2-sided tape ... Peavey's 260 monitor ... Univox' Stage Micro Amp series—lead, bass, and keyboard ... Foxx Electronics has new Velvet Hammer line of replacement pickups ... Moog's new Signal Processors include a ten-band Graphic Equalizer and a Parametric Equalizer.

#### Some other good things

Voice Mirror analyzes the frequency of a sound wave as it relates to the chromatic musical scale and displays it in simplified musical notation on its grand staff LED panel ... D.J. Disco consols from Earth Sound Research ... Seiko audio-visual electronic tuner now available in the U.S. from Selmer ... computerized lighting systems from Nicholson Electronics ... Stereo Pro Disco from Samson Music Products ... Leather accessories—guitar straps, drumstick bags, cymbal bags, etc.—from Reunion Blues/MS Perc ... LaTec lighting equipment includes effects projectors for wheels and cassettes interfaces with LaTec audio equipment, consoles, amps, etc. Malatchi Electronic Systems has new club/lounge lighting system for about \$800. **db**

## CITY SCENE NEW YORK

**Gulliver's** (West Paterson, N.J.): *Phil Woods Quintet* (8/12 & 13); *Roland Hanna & N.Y. Jazz Quartet* (8/19 & 20); *George Coleman* (8/26 & 27); *Atilla Zoller & Frank Luther* (8/15); *Pat Mahoney* (8/22); *Carl Barry* (8/29); *Bioya* (8/10); *Mac Goldsbury* (8/17); *Derek Smith* (8/24); *Janet Lawson* (8/31); *Don Coates* (8/11); *Red Richards* (8/16, 18, 23, 25); *Gene Favatella* (8/30, 9/6).

**Village Gate:** *Memphis Slim* (thru 8/21); *Dizzy Gillespie* (opens 8/30).

**Olive Tree:** Middle Eastern music.

**Manny's** (Moonachie, N.J.): *Morris Nanton Trio* (Wed.)

**Barbara's:** *Bob January & the Original Swing Era Big Band* featuring *Shahida Sands* (Sun. 3-7 PM); other weekdays and weekends.

**Westchester Premier Theatre** (Tarrytown, N.Y.): *Tony Orlando & Dawn* (thru 8/14); *Shirley Bassey* (opens 9/8).

**Studio Wis:** *Warren Smith Composers Workshop Ensemble* (Mon.).

**Village Corner:** *Jim Roberts Jazz Septet* (Sun. 2-5 PM); *Lance Hayward* or *Jim Roberts*, piano (weeknights).

**Eddie Condon's:** *Red Balaban & Cats* (Mon.-Sat.); guest artist (Tues.); *Scott Hamilton & guests* (Sun.); jazz lunch (Fri.).

**Larson's:** *Ellis Larkins w/ Billy Popp*.

**Small World** (Harrison, N.J.): jazz (Mon.-Fri.).

**The Office** (Nyack, N.Y.): *Arnie Lawrence & Jack DiPietro & the Officers Band* (Wed.); name groups (weekends).

**Madison Square Garden:** *Isley Brothers* (8/26). **The Barber Shop** (Pt. Pleasant Beach, N.J.): Jazz seven nights.

**All's Alley:** *Frank Foster & the Loud Minority* (Mon.); call club for balance of week.

**Angry Squire:** Jazz weekends.

**Beefsteak Charlie's Jazz Emporium:** Jazz (Wed.-Sat.).

**Boomer's:** Call club for hot groups.

**Broadway's:** Music (Thurs.-Sun.).

**Bar None:** *Dardanelle* (the piano).

**Changes:** Jazz of all shapes (Mon., Thurs., Sat., Sun.).

**Cookery:** *Chuck Folds* (Sat., Sun.); *Sammy Price*





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